

Nevada State Board of Education Position Statement

Education is a major economic driver for the State of Nevada. Organizations that publish the national education ranks believe a state's level of funding education is a major factor in the academic success of the state's students. Nevada's low relative per-student funding directly results in Nevada's low overall education ranking. The State Board of Education believes Nevada's children can achieve academically in the top ten nationally if, optimal funding levels are allocated, and we continue to implement Competency Based Education with integrity. Every person in Nevada is impacted by the lack of funding for education. In preparation for the upcoming 2023 Legislative Session, the State Board of Education has developed recommendations to improve Nevada's national rankings:

- Educator recruitment, training, retention, and support
 - An effective teacher is the most important in-class factor correlated with improving student achievement. The pressure on teachers during the pandemic has pushed many to leave the teaching profession. There is a statistical decline in the number of individuals seeking post-secondary education degrees. The current number of educator vacancies across the State is approximately 3,000 and worsening annually. Increased investment in teacher preparation programs and teacher pipeline is imperative for the State of Nevada. Additionally, there is an identified need for approximately 2,863 more school psychologists, school counselors, and school social workers. Without funding to support the mental health of our educators and students, Nevada will continue to lose teachers and our most vulnerable students. Failure to increase education funding will result in further vacancies and impact Nevada's ability to retain quality educators. Additional funding will provide for lowering class sizes, increasing wages, and replacing outdated instructional materials, all factors in attracting and retaining effective teachers.

- Pre-K Programs
 - Because access to Pre-K education set kids up for academic success later in K-12, the percentage of students in Pre-K programs is a major factor in state education rankings. It is estimated that the total number of 4-year-olds eligible for Pre-K is 39,241. Nevada currently funds less than 2,750 Pre-K students which is only 7% of the total eligible students. If the State of Nevada is committed to making Pre-K available to every family, the legislature must address funding.

- Infrastructure (physical and technological)
 - The State of Nevada's education system is currently deficient in technology (broadband, laptops/devices, classroom equipment, software (data capture/analysis), HVAC systems, buses, buildings, etc. Additional funding will improve Nevada's rankings while fixing solvable infrastructure issues.

The following State of Nevada representatives are committed to the action steps required to increase funding with accountability and explore other ideas which will improve Nevada's delivery of a high-quality education to all students and thus improve our national education ranking.

Sincerely,
The Nevada State Board of Education

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