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Position Statement

Education is a major economic driver for the State and a social equalizer for the State. Nevada has consistently been ranked low on national rankings and the Board believes that our educators and scholars have the potential to reach the Board's goal of being in the top ten Education Week's Quality Counts Rankings. The following investments will ensure that we create the conditions for Nevada to improve. In preparation for the upcoming 2023 Legislative Session, the State Board of Education has developed recommendations to increase investments the following areas:

- Educator recruitment, training, and retention,
 - Whereas the current capacity/output of the NSHE Educator preparation programs is X and our current number of vacancies for Educators across the state of Nevada is approximately 3000. Investing in Teacher Preparation programs (additional funding to NSHE) and Teacher Pipeline (Teacher Academies in HS via CTE, K-12 Funding) Similarly, investing in school-based mental health workforce training programs (additional funding to NSHE) will support educators and students. Nevada currently has one school psychology training program in the state which produces approximately 5 practitioners in Nevada's K-12 schools annually. Based on our current adopted ratios ([Nevada Department of Education, 2020](#)) there is an identified need for approximately 740 more school psychologists and the current annual production rate from our one training program falls well short of the much-needed number. In addition, pipeline frameworks, stacked degree programs, and expanded higher education graduate training programs are also needed. This aligns with recommendations 4 and 11 regarding school psychologists from the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education Work Session document dated August 30, 2022.
- Pre-K Programs
 - The major national rankings such as Education Week's Quality Counts Rankings and Annie E Casey Foundation's Kids Count Rankings, consider Full-Day Pre-K a major factor in the success of an educational system. It is estimated that the total number of 4-year old's eligible for Pre-K is 39,241. Nevada currently funds less than 2,750 Pre-K students; this is only 7% of the total eligible students. A recent study funded by the DOE and conducted by WestEd indicated that it will cost NV ~ \$8400/student to add seats. We recommend increasing the number of seats by 3000 per year or investing ~\$25M more per year until full-day Pre-K is available for all eligible students. Not only will this guarantee an improvement in student outcomes, but it will also be a drastic economic advantage for the families in Nevada ([Lynch & Vaghul, 2015](#)). Students who attend pre-K programming are estimated to have average annual earnings up to 10 percent greater than their

- peers who did not attend pre-K ([Bartik et al., 2012](#))
- Educator Support
 - Whereas the National Teacher Shortage has encouraged us to rethink our teaching model so that we are giving educators the resources and support that they require to be successful and stay in the teaching profession. Nevada has the opportunity to lead the nation in providing more support for educators such as; (novice educators in the classroom with experienced educators), more on campus support, more peer collaboration time, more well-paid support staff (with specialized/differentiated skill sets).
- Infrastructure (physical and technological)
 - Whereas the Covid Pandemic revealed our state’s deficits in technology (broadband, laptops/devices, classroom equipment, software (data capture/analysis), HVAC systems, busses, buildings, etc. All of which contributes to the quality of education that a student can/should receive. Our state lead the country in solving the device shortage by using private/public partnerships to quickly procure devices. We recommend creating additional opportunities for public/private partnership to ensure that we close the gaps in the most fiscally efficient way. Eg: partnering with local commercial real-estate to obtain low-cost leases for building space to accommodate Pre-K, CTE programs, and collaboration spaces for online students and teachers.

Nevada’s national rankings fall drastically because of our low-level funding. We believe this is a direct reflection of the amount of funding that the State of Nevada invests on education and we as Board would like to change that. We understand that this is a major undertaking and all our school districts and higher ed institutions will have to collaborate to help drive change to policy and regulations to make our education system more flexible and connected. We are ready and willing to build the bridges and implement the tools to ensure that our investments result in the student outcomes that lead to long term economic prosperity for our state.

Sincerely,
The Nevada State Board of Education

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Appendix:

References

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