

Recommendations to the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force

About the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Cabinet and Principal Advisory Cabinet

As key stakeholder groups, the primary purpose of the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Cabinet (STAC) and Principal Advisory Cabinet (PAC) is to provide feedback to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) on initiatives and opportunities. Members not only provide insight from their experiences, but also gather feedback from peers to help inform the NDE. Members also expand their understanding of each NDE Department, as well as the NDE's Mission, Vision, and Goals.

The mission of the Superintendent's Advisory Cabinets is to elevate educators as experts and leaders in and beyond the classroom. STAC and PAC Members collaborate with colleagues, NDE leaders, and various stakeholders in order to:

- Develop small work groups to focus their work
- Improve effective strategies for teacher recruitment, retention, and recognition
- Capitalize on personalized learning to improve educational access
- Innovate in education in Nevada
- Implement family engagement and systems of support in schools

The STAC and PAC meet at least quarterly with the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and NDE Leadership. Their respective Recruitment and Retention Workgroups met independently to formalize their recommendations.

The recommendations below reflect the discussions and deliberations of the STAC and PAC to date.

STAC Recommendations:

1. Salary/Compensation/Benefits: **Implement a statewide minimum salary schedule with an annual COLA increase.**

Specifics: This would be a minimum salary scale for all districts that takes into account the cost of living and includes an annual COLA increase that is in line with cost-of-living indices. Districts could still negotiate salaries higher than the minimum.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If all school districts offer a competitive salary that takes into account the cost of living, districts will be able to recruit and retain educators at the level necessary to meet student needs.

Evidence Base: [NDE folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

2. Strategic Recruiting or Retention / Staff Funding: **Increase allocation of funding to education to hire educators**

Specifics: Increasing the funding to districts will support the hiring of additional educators and specialists to provide essential services to students.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If provided more funds, districts will be able to hire more adults in schools to meet the diverse needs of the school population; support the hiring of specialists to focus on CBT, PBIS, behavior plans; and support teachers with closing the achievement gaps. Additional funds will provide for increased school safety and increased professional development on restorative practices.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

3. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Provide funding outside the general fund to create and manage a loan forgiveness for teachers after 5 years in the classroom and who continue to teach in a classroom.**

Specifics: After teaching in a classroom for 5 years, teachers would be eligible to submit for reimbursement of their student loan payments up to a set amount each year. For example, a teacher may request up to \$2,500 per year they continue to teach in the classroom.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If educators are provided loan forgiveness funds, then districts will maintain a higher retention rate of educators by reducing the financial burden associated with a low starting salary and high cost of living.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

4. Strategic Recruiting or Retention / Staff Funding: **Provide funding to focus on Teacher Retention Incentives**

Specifics: Nevada does not currently retain educators at a sufficient rate to meet demand. Providing an incentive to educators who stay in the classroom shows Nevada values educators.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If districts are provided additional funds for teacher incentives each year they stay in the classroom, districts will report a higher retention rate.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

5. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Provide funding to create and manage a zero-interest loan for in-state tuition for teacher preparation programs.**

Specifics: A portion of tuition would be forgiven each year the educator teaches in a public-school classroom in Nevada. This would be similar to the Home is Possible for Teachers home loan program.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If students are provided no interest loans for teacher prep programs, then the enrollment and completion rates will increase, thus decreasing the teacher shortage rate in Nevada.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

6. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Provide additional funding to districts to provide affordable housing/rental assistance to educators.**

Specifics: A lack of affordable housing contributes to the teacher shortage. Rural and urban school districts that can offer affordable housing options such as district-owned housing or low-interest mortgage or rental rates are more appealing to teachers looking to relocate for a teaching position.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If educators are provided housing assistance, then districts will maintain a higher retention rate of educators by reducing the financial burden associated with a low starting salary and high cost of living.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

7. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Provide increased funding for school safety and behavior management support for families and educators.**

Specifics: With an increase in school violence against teachers and students, many staff and students do not feel safe at school. Students learn best in a safe and welcoming environment. Funding should be increased to provide schools with the necessary supports to protect staff and students from acts of violence and to ensure a safe and positive learning environment.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If an increase in funding for school safety is provided, then teachers are supported with student discipline and feel empowered to manage their classrooms resulting in increased employee retention rates.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

8. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Provide funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop, implement, and analyze the results of a Statewide Exit Survey given to educators when exiting their school, district, and/or state.**

Specifics: High teacher turnover can negatively impact student achievement and increase district new teacher training costs. A teacher exit survey can help districts and schools better understand why teachers leave and better target efforts to improve retention.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If a statewide educator exit survey is funded and implemented, then State, District and Schools would have access to quality data around educator exit decisions to make data-driven policies to positively impact working conditions to support retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

9. Work Conditions / Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Allocate Funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop, implement, and analyze a statewide working conditions survey of current employees**

Specifics: To understand why teachers chose to stay or leave their positions, they must be asked. A quality teacher working conditions survey can provide a complete understanding of how teacher working conditions affect student achievement and teacher retention. Targeted support can be provided to prevent teachers from leaving their positions.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If a statewide educator working conditions survey is funded and implemented, then State, District and Schools would have access to quality data around educator working conditions/student learning conditions to make data-driven decisions to positively impact working conditions to support retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Research- Working Conditions](#)

PAC Recommendations:

1. Strategic Recruiting or Retention / Staff Funding: **Competitive PERS benefits will attract employees to the field of education and enhance probability of long-term retention in the career.**

Specifics: The details around this recommendation will most likely need to be assigned to the [Retirement Board of NVPERS](#)

Rationale: Nevada does not currently retain educators at a sufficient rate to meet demand. Providing competitive PERS incentives to educators who stay in the classroom will encourage teachers to stay long term.

Expected outcomes: If competitive PERS benefits are provided, then districts will see a long-term retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

2. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Increase the allocation of funding to education to prioritize the use of those funds for retention incentives for educators.**

Specifics: Nevada does not currently retain educators at a sufficient rate to meet demand. Providing an incentive to educators who stay in the classroom shows Nevada values educators.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If there is a prioritization of the use of funds provided for retention incentives, then districts will report a higher educator retention rate.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

3. Work Conditions / Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Allocate funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop, implement, and analyze a statewide working conditions survey of current employees**

Specifics: To understand why teachers chose to stay or leave their positions, they must be asked. A quality teacher working conditions survey can provide a complete understanding of how teacher working conditions affect student achievement and teacher retention. Targeted support can be provided to prevent teachers from leaving their positions.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If a statewide educator working conditions survey is funded and implemented, then State, District and Schools would have access to quality data around educator working conditions/student learning conditions to make data-driven decisions to positively impact working conditions to support retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Research- Working Conditions](#)

4. Strategic Recruiting or Retention: **Allocate funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop, implement, and analyze the results of a Statewide Exit Survey given to educators when exiting their school, district, and/or state.**

Specifics: High teacher turnover can negatively impact student achievement and increase district new teacher training costs. A teacher exit survey can help districts and schools better understand why teachers leave and better target efforts to improve retention.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If a statewide educator exit survey is funded and implemented, then State, District and Schools would have access to quality data around educator exit decisions to make data-driven policies to positively impact working conditions to support retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

5. Salary/Compensation/Benefits: **Implement a Statewide minimum salary schedule for licensed personnel to include an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) in line with the cost-of-living indices.**

Specifics: This would be a minimum salary scale for all districts that takes into account the cost of living and includes an annual COLA increase that is in line with cost-of-living indices. Districts could still negotiate salaries higher than the minimum.

Rationale/expected outcomes: Competitive compensation is a means to both recruit and retain educators in Nevada. During a national shortage of educators, appropriate and competitive compensation assures a dignified standard of living that is sustainable for many years of service and makes Nevada more attractive to current and future educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

6. Salary/Compensation/Benefits: **Increase allocation of funding to education for salary and benefits with increases each year to cover cost of living adjustments.**

Specifics: Districts can offer salaries that keep pace with or surpass the regional inflation rate distinguish themselves from other states and attract and retain educators.

Rationale/expected outcomes: Districts would be able to offer competitive salaries and benefits packages commensurate with level of education and experience to increase their ability to recruit and to retain educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

7. Professional Learning and Supports - PD Admin: **Allocate additional funding to education and prioritize the use of those funds for targeted training of administrators in building systemic supports for educator efficacy and increasing job satisfaction.**

Specifics: Building and district administrators would participate in professional learning to help them reduce workload and improve life/work balance for themselves and the educators they oversee. This would include learning how to leverage initiatives or requirements already in place to reduce duplicative efforts and build systems of support for their staff.

Rationale/expected outcomes: Educators will report higher job satisfaction due to reduced workload (improved life-work balance) and districts report higher educator retention rates.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder Research- Professional Learning and Supports- Admin Training](#)

8. Professional Learning and Supports - PD Admin: **Commission a study to evaluate educator workload, and statutory and regulatory requirements.**

Specifics: The study would provide clear information on the requirements within statute and regulations and reveal the true status of educator workload in all Nevada districts, and charter schools. This information would be used to guide reviews and changes to statutes, regulations, and policies. SB 353 during the 2021 Legislative Session required NDE to review examinations and assessments and to adopt regulations that prescribe certain limitations on examinations and assessments. This recommendation goes a step further in that it is asking for a complete study of educator workload.

Rationale/expected outcomes: The study would provide clear information on the requirements within statute and regulations and reveal the true status of educator workload in all Nevada districts, and charter schools, to guide revisions to statutes, regulations, and policies.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Research- Working Conditions](#)

9. Strategic Recruiting or Retention / Staff Funding: **Allocate additional funding for the creation of and training for student support teams (MTSS, Wrap around services, etc.) at every school.**

Specifics: Schools that have the funds necessary to provide well-rounded educational opportunities and supports for students' school success have a higher teacher retention rate. Schools will be able to fund mentor programs, chronic absenteeism programs, social worker positions, and many other supports for educators. These supports have a history of reducing teacher burn out and increasing student success.

Rationale/expected outcomes: If funds are provided for additional support services in schools, educators will be supported in meeting the needs of all students

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder- Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)