

July 7, 2025

Deputy Superintendent Ford, State Board Members, and Governor Lombardo:

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for the position of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Since actions speak louder than words, I am including letters from an instructor, an administrator and a board chair with whom I worked in [REDACTED]. I would rather you learned from them who I am and what I've done than throw some jargon at you. Also, since it has been a few years since I worked with those folks, I have two recent colleagues who have been more involved politically than I have and have offered to submit letters of reference separately. Phone numbers for all five of these references are in their letters. Lastly, I encourage you to call a board member and a colleague from a 2-year interim superintendent gig I did at a charter district near my daughter's home in Oregon: Todd Redfern, school board [REDACTED]; Jeanne Swift, assistant superintendent and SpEd director [REDACTED].

Outside of relevant information references might offer, I would like to address my qualifications regarding a few themes in your position announcement:

Classroom teaching experience (especially in regards to innovation and diverse populations)-

I was a secondary teacher and coach for roughly two decades. Though I taught math and shop classes as needed, I was mostly an art instructor. There were often waiting lists to get into my classes, and we had state champions in high school art competitions. I developed a secondary art curriculum that was used as a model by the local university, and co-wrote Washington's first Essential Learnings (standards) for the arts. After my basketball teams consistently led the state in scoring, I was asked to speak at coaches' clinics in four states about the fast-break drills I had developed. When I was athletic director, I wrote a Parent Involvement Policy that was adopted by the WIAA and later by several Nevada districts. And, as superintendent, I have spoken at conferences in several states regarding both innovative school safety ideas and novel ways educators can protect their physical, mental and emotional health.

I have been innovative outside of education, as well. As a young adult, I created a board game for hunters and fishers that sold out two editions nationwide. As a stained-glass artist, I developed a method for bending zinc that allowed it to be used unobtrusively in curved support lines.

Throughout my career, I have worked with students, employees, parents and community members from diverse ethnic, racial, gender, and socio-economic backgrounds. The communities I served as a teacher, principal and superintendent had very diverse populations, some ethnically, others economically. I understand and appreciate cultural diversity. The largest portion of my life was spent on the Yakama Indian Reservation, where we grew up with an appreciation of the richness that the blending of Asian, European, Latino, and Native cultures brought to the community. It was just a way of life; it wasn't until I became an adult that I realized what a special opportunity that was.

Nevada experience, knowledge and commitment- I have been a Nevadan for 20 years. As a site and district administrator, I worked with NRS, Board Policy and Negotiated Agreements almost daily. I served a small district (Eureka) and a mid-size district (Douglas), and have two Las Vegas brothers who are former Clark County

teachers. Former Governor Sandoval appointed me to three state commissions. I worked with Senator Goececcia to write a small-school funding bill that passed both houses and was signed into law by the governor, with the support of the Nevada Teachers Association, the state's superintendents, and Nevada Association of School Boards, on its first try. The last few years, I have visited all of the Nevada school districts, most more than once, and have provided staff training in many of them. My home is outside Genoa, and I am not going anywhere.

Committed, to education reform, students and educators- I have spoken passionately for years about our need to make education more outcomes driven and student centered ("All Nevada students are equipped and feel empowered to attain their vision of success."). College prep is great for some kids, but less than half of those who start finish, and less than half of those who finish obtain a family-wage job within three years of graduating. Let's get back to serving "All Nevada students..." There are articles in NRS and portions of the Portrait of a Nevada Learner that support this, but in practice a mind-shift needs to take place in schools and NDE.

In regards to supporting students and educators, I was named Nevada Star Administrator for my support of and involvement in student activities. This is my favorite of all my awards as it was voted to me by Nevada's leadership students. And, for eight years, I wrote a weekly blog for educators on how we can all protect our health and sanity.

A collaborative, team player- When I retired, my daughter, who had been back east for eight years, called and said, "Dad, last time we talked, you said retirement was boring. A school district (Corbett Charter District) near me needs an interim superintendent; why don't you come on up for a few months?" I did, and it turned into two years. The board and community were quite divided over a great many issues, but of utmost importance was passing a construction bond, which had failed five times in eight years, to replace a condemned middle school. I brought representatives from all stakeholder groups together (including students; why do we always seem to forget to ask them?), convinced all to "play nice" for the sake of the kids, and we passed the bond. We also updated the book of Board Policies with the involvement of a similar group and our attorney, a big undertaking. At my last board meeting there, the chair said, [REDACTED] you were like the bumpers on the beginners' bowling lanes; if we started to veer left or right you nudged us back to the center, where the students are." I think he meant referring to me as an inert piece of plastic as a complement...

Corbett is a charter district, and I saw what can happen if that is done well. They have K-8 standards-based advancement, multi-age classrooms, place-based learning, and project-based learning, all wrapped around an arts theme and in dual language. 9-12 students are in an AP-4-All program, where all core instruction is at the AP level. They call it "co-seated," where all kids get the same high-quality instruction and those who are college-bound take the AP exams while the others take a standards-based performance exam.

A Superintendent of Public Instruction needs to be a visionary leader, a collaborator who can bring stakeholders together, and someone with the patience and persistence to take initiatives through to completion. I believe my experiences, as documented above and through my references, demonstrate that I possess those qualities.

[REDACTED]



Career Highlights	Achieved the state's top rating each year while superintendent of Eureka County Schools; appointed to the Governor's Educator Ethics Commission, the State Grants Commission and the Nevada School Emergency Management Team; led Kingsbury Middle School to the highest parent satisfaction ratings in the district, highest teacher performance growth in the region and highest student achievement in the state; taught state academic and coached state athletic high school champions.
Education	BA, Whitworth College, Spokane Washington MA, Heritage University, Toppenish Washington
Professional Experience	Interim Superintendent; [REDACTED] Oregon Superintendent; [REDACTED] School District, [REDACTED] Nevada Principal, [REDACTED] High School, [REDACTED] Nevada Principal, [REDACTED] Middle School, [REDACTED] Nevada Assistant Principal and Athletic Director, [REDACTED] NV 24 years teaching art, physical education, mathematics, health and wood shop 47 seasons coaching basketball, track and football
Other Work Experience	Speaker, school climate and education reform issues, throughout America; hundreds of pieces of artwork on commission, including designing and building stained glass windows for custom homes and churches; US Forest Service, summer engineer; basketball camps and clinics throughout the West, including my own; farm work for parents, grandparents and neighbors growing up.
Activities	Creator, "Outdoorsman Game," a nationally distributed board game for hunters and fishers that sold out two editions nation-wide; published author, short humor; member of the champion Senior Dream Team (50+ basketball); avid hiker.
Honors	Recipient national "Gate Keeper" award for leadership in advancing student and staff safety, 2019; recipient FFA "[REDACTED] Star Superintendent" award for support of and involvement in student activities, 2017; named "[REDACTED] Most Visionary Educator," 2009; League "Coach of the Year," 1996 and 1998; District "Coach of the Year," 2001 and 2002; designs featured in "The Score," an international stained glass quarterly, five times; Conference Champion and Inspirational Athlete awards, college track.

"Life is a great big canvas; throw all the paint on it you can." Danny Kaye

VISION and PLAN



2025

In my opinion, the vision of the state's top educator and the Nevada State Board of Education should not differ. "All Nevada students are equipped and feel empowered to attain their vision of success." Seems enough. My plan? To continue what has brought success to those I have served in various capacities throughout my career: Work hard and keep student outcomes at the center of my decision making. Before spending some time in the role, it is difficult to know exactly what that would look like at NDE. However, the best predictor of future performance is past performance. As a teacher, I returned to the school from which I was graduated, on the Yakama Indian Reservation, and chaired the Learning Improvement Team (It's a Washington thing). In three years, our leadership transformed the school from what the Governor's Office called a "School in Crisis" to one receiving state, then national, recognition for the quality of our graduates. As an administrator, I led a middle school in one Nevada district, a high school in another Nevada district, and then a Nevada school district to the highest ranking in the state.

Planning more specifically, my first priority would be to get the state board, NDE, NASS, and NASB to find 1-3 things that we can all agree will positively impact student outcomes and begin moving forward together. Good work has been and is being done by each of those groups, and they each have their own role and mission. But, that doesn't mean there cannot be more communication and collaboration, from which our students would ultimately benefit. The Portrait of a Nevada Learner is a solid tool to guide overall efforts, but a shared focus leading to early success on a small number of items would go a long way toward inspiring further communication and collaboration, which then further improves student outcomes.

In the last few years, I have been to several states to make presentations, provide in-service, and serve on "panels of experts." Additionally, I spent ten months completing a project as an NDE contractor, for which I visited all of Nevada's K-12 districts and talked with teachers, counselors, administrators and students. The message from educators through both of these recent experiences has been clear and consistent: Since the pandemic, student engagement and school climate have both been their biggest challenge. Those may be a good choice, then, for some of the shared focus mentioned above. As a bonus, research consistently demonstrates that improving either engagement or climate has a stronger impact on test scores than improving instruction (although I have no idea how "quality instruction" does not include developing a positive climate and keeping kids engaged in the curriculum). Imagine the impact of improving both!

July 6, 2025

To whom it may concern. I would like to take this opportunity to recommend [REDACTED] for any job related to education. He and I worked closely together for 2 1/2 years. He served as the Superintendent of Schools in the [REDACTED] County School District while I was the School Board President and an officer in the [REDACTED] Association of School Boards.

[REDACTED] is very well thought of by the District's employees and administrators. He was both a competent manager and a motivating leader. The district's academic performance was very good during his tenure and our finances were in good order.

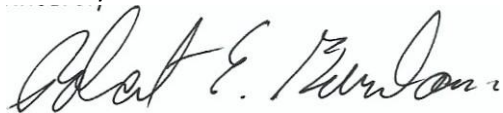
[REDACTED] relationship with the school board was quite good. The board came to trust his judgment and support. He did a good job of implementing directives from the board.

I have found [REDACTED] to be a man of honesty, integrity, and humility. His breadth of experience is a valuable asset. He has been asked to provide advice and instruction in numerous forums both inside and outside of Nevada.

[REDACTED] had an excellent relationship with the other Superintendents in the state. Additionally, he had a good relationship with the Department of Education and represented us well with state political leaders.

If anyone would like to further discuss his suitability for service in your organization feel free to call me at [REDACTED] My mailing address [REDACTED]

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Burnham", written in a cursive style.

Bob Burnham

Former President: Eureka County School Board

Former President: Nevada Association of School Boards

June 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

This is a letter of recommendation for [REDACTED] who is applying to be Nevada Superintendent of Public Instruction. [REDACTED] was my immediate supervisor for three years when he was superintendent of [REDACTED] County School District.

Let me get right to the point: [REDACTED] was the best superintendent I've ever had, and I've had 18 of them. His greatest strengths are his ethical integrity, his impeccable judgement, and his calmness in crisis. [REDACTED] always gently speaks the truth — he is the same whoever he is talking to. He sees through complex problems, correctly identifies the core issues, and calmly addresses them. He is an accomplished public speaker who is in regular demand as a keynote presenter at symposia and conferences.

[REDACTED] makes a point of being in the schools — hardly a week went by without a visit from [REDACTED] to every classroom. He is also comfortable and effective in the much larger context of state politics. [REDACTED] represented us often and well in Carson City and, in the words of our Board President, allowed our district to "Punch above our weight" in the legislature. He helped our school board make effective decisions in efficiently-run board meetings.

Under [REDACTED] leadership, our district had some of the highest test scores, highest climate survey scores, and highest high school graduation rates in the state. He took a good district, and made it better. I think he will do that wherever he leads.

I give [REDACTED] my highest recommendation, and strongly urge you to give his application your most serious consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Bruce Williams", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bruce Williams, Principal (retired)

[REDACTED]

Churchill County High School



1 Greenwave Circle • Fallon, Nevada 89406
Phone (775) 423-2181 • Fax (775) 423-8968

July 14, 2025

Nevada State Board of Education
700 E. Fifth Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Members of the Nevada State Board of Education,

It is with the utmost confidence and respect that I write this letter in enthusiastic support of [REDACTED] as a candidate for the role of **State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Nevada**. [REDACTED] embodies the very best of educational leadership—visionary, grounded in student success, and committed to systemic excellence across all domains of public education.

Throughout his 23-year career in education—as a teacher and coach, a site administrator, and finally as a district superintendent—he worked alongside and observing many exceptional educators. Very few, however, have demonstrated the depth of dedication, breadth of impact, and consistency of excellence that [REDACTED] has shown throughout his service.

As a four-time Coach of the Year and co-author of [REDACTED] State’s first Essential Learnings in the Arts, his commitment to innovative, standards-based education was deepened through collaborative policy development. [REDACTED] shares that same devotion to meaningful standards, policy clarity, and educational equity. His work such as the parent involvement policy I authored in [REDACTED] that was later adopted by multiple districts across Nevada—a testament to the long-lasting value of thoughtful leadership.

As a site administrator, he led [REDACTED] Middle School and [REDACTED] High School to the top ranking for student achievement in Nevada—experiences that shaped his belief in high expectations and strong school culture. He was honored to be named [REDACTED] Most Visionary Educator (2007) and Star Principal (2016), but what mattered most was the success of students under his care. [REDACTED] has consistently modeled that same student-centered leadership, emphasizing achievement, wellness, and purpose.

As a district superintendent, I saw [REDACTED] County School District rise to first in the state for student achievement, school climate, and college/military placement. They achieved the highest percentage of seniors graduating with college credit in [REDACTED] and the highest 10-year graduation rate in the nation. In 2019, I was honored with the “National Gatekeeper” award for leadership in student and staff safety—an area I know [REDACTED] also holds as foundational to successful schools.

His leadership would be an asset at the state level, especially at a time when we need strong, visionary guidance. He understands what makes schools successful, what educators need to thrive, and what systems must be in place for long-term improvement.

From co-authoring successful legislation with Senator Goicoechea to presenting nationally on school safety, staff wellness, and leadership, I've seen firsthand how strong leadership can lift entire communities.

██████ deserves a superintendent with both a proven track record and a deep understanding of what works. ██████ brings that. He is the kind of leader who not only gets results but builds trust, unites stakeholders, and elevates those around him.

I give him my highest possible recommendation and stand ready to offer further insights should you need them.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sue Segura, Work Based Learning Coordinator

30 year Nevada High School Principal

President of the State Professional standards 2001-2005

2024 NASB District-Level Administer of the Year Impacting Student Achievement

Eureka County Teacher Association Box 880 Eureka, NV 89316

Allen Gumm, ECTA Past President

June 23, 2025

To Whom it Concerns:

I am pleased to recommend [REDACTED] for your consideration in any capacity of education leader. I've had the pleasure of working with [REDACTED] in several circumstances over the past 16 years. First, [REDACTED] was a site administrator at [REDACTED] Middle School, where he was also my direct supervisor. Next, I was hired at [REDACTED] County High School where he was principal. Finally, I worked with him during his tenure as [REDACTED] Superintendent in my capacity as a leader of the teacher's association. Through all levels and years of working interaction, [REDACTED] has been a positive and professional colleague, proactive agent for change, and a steadfast leader in the education community.

At the state level, [REDACTED] was active on multiple committees. The state safety committee was one where he was very impactful, drawing on his experience in both education and law enforcement, to guide the state to adopt funding and policies to make Nevada schools safer. He brought that knowledge and leadership to [REDACTED] where he was very effective in making changes to the facilities and providing appropriate training for the staff and students. The relationships built with the county agencies and community at large made parents, staff and students feel as safe and prepared as possible.

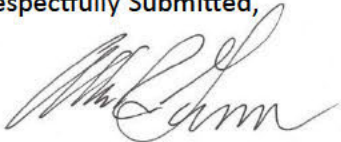
[REDACTED] also had an instrumental role on the Nevada Educator Code of Ethics Advisory Board and through his leadership on that board, facilitated the development of ethics training in the school districts of Nevada. Specifically, a pilot program of training was engaged in [REDACTED] County which was well received and provided data for implementation throughout the state.

During a legislative session, [REDACTED] worked tirelessly on multiple measures to promote education and safeguard school funding. Working in solidarity on some measures with the teacher's association, and gaining unanimous support from the state's superintendents, several gains were made and measures passed. More important than the measures themselves is the relationship building that he demonstrated in bringing together agents of action from a variety of interests and leading them to a common purpose.

As an educator and administrator [REDACTED] was approachable, hands on, and very accessible. It was common to find him in the classrooms engaging with the staff and students, not hidden away behind closed doors like so many. His genuine interest in the delivery of great content and sincere interest of student life and success created a wonderful rapport with staff, students, and their families. [REDACTED] shared his interests and talents with the schools and the community as well. Students in the music program truly appreciated his drumming workshops, his participation in their performances, and the community enjoyed the performances and productions as well. He offered art classes to the adult community which were in high demand.

In conclusion, [REDACTED] is a person of good character who possesses a varied set of skills, expertise, experience and is well suited to the tasks he sets himself to. I hope you discover the person I have come to know and respect. Know that he is the person for the job.

Respectfully Submitted,



Allen Gumm, Eureka County Teacher Association Past President

Letter of Recommendation for [REDACTED]

June 24, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

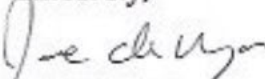
By this time you have most likely read [REDACTED] resume and know all about his work and accomplishments. Wow! Talk about impressive!

It's easy to recommend [REDACTED] based on the work he's done in the past. However, I'm recommending [REDACTED] for two reasons. The first is character. Martin Luther King, Jr. states: "The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education." [REDACTED] is a true educational leader, who leads by example. He embodies the type of character that we want to see in all of our students. Leadership requires followership. Students and educators alike want to follow [REDACTED]

The second reason I am recommending [REDACTED] and possibly the most important, is simply that he's good for kids. In every decision he makes, his first thought is student centered. He is a courageous leader and will fight for our students. The evidence is easy to find, as you can look at the transformation and success of the schools he has lead.

I truly believe that [REDACTED] is the person Nevada needs to lead us into the future. I have five (soon to be six) grandchildren, and their success depends on a quality education system.

Sincerely,



Joe de Braga

Governing Board Chairman, Nevada Classical Academy Elko
Milken Educator Awardee 1999