

Draft Summary Minutes of the Nevada Commission on School Funding Meeting September 19, 2025

This summary is not official until voted on and approved at the October 17, 2025, meeting of the Commission on School Funding.

The Nevada Commission on School Funding met on Friday, September 19, 2025, at 9:19 a.m. The meeting was not streamed due to technical constraints from a recent cyber incident but was recorded for later public access.

Roll Call and Introductions

Chair Guy Hobbs called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees. The following members were present:

- Chair Guy Hobbs
- Vice Chair Joyce Woodhouse
- Member Punam Mathur
- Member Nancy Brunie
- Member Ryan Reeves
- Member Justin Dayhoff
- Member Ray Ritchie
- Member Cassandra Stahlke
- Member Dusty Casey
- Member Mark Mathers (absent)
- The Commission was also joined by Deputy Attorney General Edgar Pando.

The meeting was the first for this interim session, and introductions were made for new and returning members. Several new members were introduced, and they shared their professional backgrounds and reasons for joining the Commission, including Justin Dayhoff, Cassandra Stahlke, Ray Ritchie, and Ryan Reeves.

Public Comment and Administrative Items

The first public comment period was opened for agenda items only. No public or written comments were submitted.

The Commission approved the December 6, 2024, Commission minutes summary and transcription.

The Commission addressed the appointment of a Vice Chair. Member Punam Mathur nominated Joyce Woodhouse, citing her dedication and expertise. The nomination was seconded by Member Dusty Casey. A vote was taken, and the motion passed, with Joyce Woodhouse continuing her role as Vice Chair.

The Commission adopted the

Rules of Engagement for the interim period, which included a reminder for members to turn off their phones and mute microphones when not speaking.

Legislative Changes and Commission Work

Deputy Superintendent Megan Peterson provided an update on legislative changes and their implications for the Commission.

- **Cyber Incident:** The State of Nevada experienced a cybersecurity attack, which caused delays and technical issues, including the inability to stream the current meeting. The department worked closely with the Governor's Finance Office to ensure PCFP payments were made, and they expect future meetings to run more smoothly.
- **Department Changes:** The department is in the process of hiring a new Superintendent. Three names were forwarded to the Governor for recommendation. An efficiency study of the department led to the approval of eight new positions, including a budget analyst to help with modeling scenarios for the Commission.
- **Legislation:** Several of the Commission's recommendations were adopted into bills for the 83rd legislative session, including SB 81 (2025) which removed the minimum expenditure recommendation report requirement and moved quarterly expenditure postings from print newspapers to websites to reduce financial burden. SB 460, a major accountability bill, charged the Commission with reviewing the at-risk definition and evaluating its effectiveness. The Commission will also collaborate with the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education.

- **PCFP Updates:** Due to a transfer from the education stabilization account, the statewide per-pupil amount increased by \$2 in fiscal year 26 and approximately \$78 in the second year, reaching \$9,486 per pupil. SB 500 (2025) provided funds for raises for school district employees, and an additional \$38 million was awarded to charter schools for similar raises. The Commission will review how to incorporate these funds into the funding model. The Commission's recommendation to expand opportunities for school districts to apply for capital improvement funds was also passed into a bill, with an appropriation of \$100 million for counties with fewer than 15,000 people.

Pupil-Centered Funding Plan Model Review

Melissa Willis, State Education Funding Manager, reviewed the updates to the funding model. She highlighted that the attendance area and Nevada Cost of Education Index adjustments were approved, but the attendance area adjustments would continue to be reviewed due to their impact.

Willis presented tables on the State Education Fund and Education Stabilization Account. She noted that the state education fund had a permanent transfer of roughly \$95 million in FY25. She also pointed out that for the first time, two districts reverted money back to the education stabilization account because their reserves exceeded the 16.6% threshold.

Willis also showed a trend line of statewide enrollment, which has not recovered post-pandemic due to factors like declining birth rates, housing markets, and the age of families relocating to Nevada. The Commission discussed the challenges this presents for school funding and the need for improved enrollment projections.

A new category, targeted reallocation, was added to the Contingency Account for Special Education. The intent of this is to establish more equity in funding for special education across LEA's.

At-Risk Update

Megan Peterson and Melissa Willis provided a presentation on the history of the at-risk student definition. Peterson explained that the State Board of Education is currently reviewing the metrics for identifying at-risk students. The Commission will continue to monitor the work of the State Board as they look at alternative metrics like chronic absenteeism and direct certification students.

The Commission reviewed a matrix of 26 tasks they are mandated to address during the interim, including topics on funding stability, expenditure reporting, and optimal funding. Leads for each working group were tentatively identified to tackle these tasks in a more efficient manner. The Commission agreed to receive the detailed list of tasks to consider which work groups they would like to join.

Next Steps

The Commission agreed to continue holding its monthly meetings on Fridays. The Nevada Department of Education will circulate a schedule of the meetings for the next several months for members to add to their calendars.

Public Comment and Adjournment

The second public comment period was opened, but no comments were submitted. The meeting was adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Based on the transcript, the Nevada Commission on School Funding has several deliverables to work on during this interim period:

- **Bill Draft Request (BDR):** The Commission will put together a bill draft, which is a rare opportunity for a non-elected body. They will need to decide on the priorities for this bill, with a deadline to have the language ready for the governor's office by May and for budget submissions by June 30th, 2026.
- **Report on Work Groups:** Each workgroup is expected to produce a report or a section of a larger report. These reports will then be compiled into a single document for transmission to the Governor and the Legislature. The final report submitted last November was over 550 pages long.
- **Optimal Funding Recommendations:** The Commission is tasked with identifying a method to achieve an optimal level of funding for education and proposing ways to fund it over the next 10 years. This will be a multi-session effort.
- **At-Risk Student Definition Review:** The Commission must review the at-risk student definition, evaluate its effectiveness, and consider other student populations that could be identified as at-risk. A third-party vendor will assist with this analysis.
- **Review of Legislative Mandates:** The Commission will be working through a list of tasks assigned to them by the legislature, which were compiled into a matrix. These tasks are seen as mandates that the Commission "shall do".
- **Addendum to the Performance Report:** An addendum to the performance report is forthcoming to update the financial data for the same school year as the 387.303 report.
- **At-Risk Results Study:** The results of the at-risk study conducted by a third party will be shared with the Commission for review in preparation for a future meeting.

The meeting transcript outlines the following working groups and their tentative leads for the interim period:

- **School Accessibility:** Chair Guy Hobbs was tentatively identified as the lead for this group, which will revisit the topic of school accessibility, including open enrollment and other opportunities. It was noted that this work was previously led by Jim McIntosh.
- **Weighted Funding (Stacking Weights):** Punam Mathur was identified as the tentative lead to evaluate the impact of stacking weights, as a student currently only receives funding for the highest-weighted category, not for all categories for which they qualify.
- **Weighted Funding (Current Weights):** The lead for this group is Vice-Chair Woodhouse and will evaluate whether current weights for weighted funding categories (English learner, at-risk, and gifted and talented) are sufficient and should be adjusted.
- **Attendance Area and Cost of Education Index:** Vice-Chair Woodhouse is the lead for the Attendance Area working group, and Chair Hobbs is the lead for the Nevada Cost of Education Index.
- **Adjusted Base Per Pupil Amount:** Member Dayhoff is the lead for the study to analyze potential changes to the determination of the adjusted base per-pupil amount. This includes looking at competency-based education and its interaction with the current 180-day instruction requirement.
- **At-Risk Student Definition and Funding:** Vice-Chair Woodhouse is the tentative lead for the evaluation of additional student populations that could be considered for at-risk funding. This includes the third-party evaluation of the grad score indicator's effectiveness.
- **Special Education Funding:** Member Casey is the tentative lead for the work on special education funding, including maintenance of effort and the method of distributing funds.
- **Expenditure Calculations:** Member Casey is the lead for the work on expenditure calculations for the 387 report and its interaction with tiers one and two of the funding plan.
- **Return on Investment:** Member Mathers (absent) was assigned as the lead for this group and will focus on how expenditures are used to inform the return on investment framework.

- **Weighted Funding (Student Count):** Member Mathers (absent) was assigned as the lead for this group, which will examine the actual student count used for weighted funding and whether it should be changed from the current prior-year actuals to a different metric like a quarterly count or a three-year average.
- **Charter School Reserves:** Member Reeves is the lead for this group, which will evaluate the impact of applying the same 16.6% reserve threshold to charter schools as is applied to school districts.
- **Enrollment Trends:** Member Stahlke is the lead for the working group on enrollment trends and general student counts. This includes looking at quarterly counts, annual counts, and three-year averages, as well as the trends of students moving from school districts to charter schools or to homeschooling.
- **Tiered Allocations:** Member Brune is the lead for the evaluation of the tiered allocations for tiers one and two, which will revisit the use of a four-year average for transportation and food services and the prior-year actuals for local special education.
- **Optimal Funding and Revenues:** This is a continuation of prior work and will be addressed by Guy Hobbs, Chair.
- **Bill Draft Request:** This task will be handled by the entire group, with Chair Hobbs as the lead.
- **NDE Capacity Needs Assessment:** This task remains unassigned.