

Reporting Timeline

Even years:

On or before November 15 of each even-numbered year:

- (a) Prepare a report describing the findings of the study conducted pursuant to subsection 1 and any recommendations for legislation; and
- (b) Submit the report to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) for transmittal to the Senate and Assembly Standing Committees on Education.

(Nov 13, 2026; Nov 15 is a Sunday)

Odd years:

On or before November 15 of each odd-numbered year:

- (a) Prepare an interim report describing the activities taken by the Commission during the immediately preceding fiscal year; and
- (b) Submit the report to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) for transmittal to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education.

Commission Report Timeline:

June 2026: Preview the report format. Begin thinking about recommendations.

July 2026: Begin drafting recommendations.

August 2026: Draft report presented. Propose edits, revisions, content. Draft recommendations.

September 2026: Approve final report with technical edits as necessary.

Approve Commission Chair and Vice Chair to speak/present on behalf of the Commission at LCB and State Board of Education if requested.

October 2026: Tentative meeting as backup to September meeting.

November 1, 2026: Report transmitted to LCB.

**This page is not included in the report. It is provided at Commission Meetings as information on the Commission's responsibilities and report timeline.*

Nevada Commission
on
Recruitment and Retention
Annual Report

November 15, 2026

NRS 391.390- 391.392

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Introduction

The Commission on Recruitment and Retention (the Commission) created by section 37 of Senate Bill 460 (2025) is tasked with conducting a study of issues concerning the recruitment and retention of educators in this State, including, without limitation (NRS 391.392):

- (a) The use by school districts of a minimum salary scale for the compensation of teachers that would reflect the cost of living and include an annual cost of living increase;
- (b) Providing health insurance to educators through the Public Employees' Benefits Program;
- (c) The allocation of funding for mentorship programs for educators;
- (d) The allocation of funding for scholarships for students seeking to become a school counselor, school social worker, or school psychologist;
- (e) The provision of Nevada Teacher Advancement Scholarships pursuant to NRS 391A.650 to 391A.695, inclusive;
- (f) The allocation of funding to school districts to assist a licensed teacher with obtaining an endorsement in a subject area in which a shortage of teachers has been identified by the Department or the School District; and
- (g) The establishment and funding of a program to provide forgiveness of student education loans to licensed teachers who have taught in this State for at least 5 consecutive years and are ineligible for other forms of loan forgiveness.

NRS 391.392 states on or before November 15 of each even-numbered year, the Commission will prepare a report describing the findings of the study conducted and any recommendations for legislation and submit the report to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Senate and Assembly Standing Committees on Education.

This 2026 report provides the Commission's findings and recommendations.

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Members

In accordance with NRS 391.390, the current membership includes five nonvoting, ex officio members and seventeen (17) voting members:

Ex- Officio Member	Statutory Position
Christy McGill	State Superintendent of Public Instruction designee
Dr. Lindsay Couzens	Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education designee
Dr. Bernell Peltier-Glaz	Dean of the College of Education, Nevada State University
Jannet M. Vreeland	Interim Dean of the College of Education, University of Nevada, Reno
Joseph Morgan	Interim Dean of the College of Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Member	Appointed by
Douglas Owen	Governor of Nevada
Grant Hanevold	Governor of Nevada
Dana Crowley	Majority Leader of the Senate
Alexandria Shelton	Majority Leader of the Senate
Janelle Sazon-Valdez	Speaker of the Assembly
Beth Smith	Speaker of the Assembly
Jenny Hunt	Minority Leader of the Assembly
Rachel Croft	President of the Nevada State Education Association (NSEA)
Misty Olmos	The Education Support Employees Association (ESEA)
Monica Bryant	The Clark County Education Association (CCEA)
Gregory Cole	The Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
Jackie Zavala	The Nevada Parent Teacher Association (NVPTA)
Angie Joye	President of the Clark County Education Association (CCEA)
Tim Logan	The Nevada Association of School Superintendents (NASS)
Christine Hull	The Nevada Association of School Boards or its successor organization (NASB)
Anna Colquitt	The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA)
Vacant	Minority Leader of the Senate

The work of the Commission was supported by the following personnel and educational partners:

Nevada Department of Education (NDE)

- Dr. Victor Wakefield, Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Jeff Briske, Director, Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE)
- Kathryn Hoyt, Assistant Director; EDLiFE
- KellyLynn Charles, Education Programs Professional, EDLiFE
- Scott Haag, Education Programs Professional, EDLiFE
- Heather Crabtree, Management Analyst II, EDLiFE
- Geri Mendiola, Administrative Assistant III, EDLiFE

American Institutes for Research (AIR)

- Kyosin Kang - Senior Project Specialist
- Lisa Merrill - Senior Researcher
- Cheryl Krohn - Senior Technical Assistance Consultant
- Wrandi Czulno - Researcher
- Sarah Mae Olivar - Researcher
- David Prudente - Senior Researcher

Presenters and Data Partners

- Education Commission on the States
- Public Education Foundation
- Public Employees Benefit Programs
- Commission on School Funding
- Carson City School District
- Churchill County School District
- Clark County School District
- Douglas County School District
- Elko County School District
- Esmeralda County School District
- Eureka County School District
- Humboldt County School District
- Lander County School District
- Lincoln County School District
- Lyon County School District
- Mineral County School District
- Nye County School District
- Pershing County School District
- Washoe County School District
- White Pine County School District
- State Public Charter School Authority
- Great Basin College
- Truckee Meadows Community College
- Nevada State University
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas
- University of Nevada, Reno

Attorney General's Office

- Christena Georgas-Burns, Deputy Attorney General

Acknowledgements

Effective leadership begins with listening. The Commission and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) sincerely thank the Nevada Legislature for its steadfast dedication to public education. Legislative funding for this initiative enabled critical research and data analysis, directly supporting our mission and ensuring the Commission was far better positioned to put forth evidence-based, high-impact recommendations to advance educator recruitment and retention across Nevada.

Additionally, the Commission expresses its deep appreciation to the numerous presenters, subject-matter experts, and NDE staff who shared critical data and research, and graciously made themselves available to address the Commission's inquiries.

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Report Overview

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) contracted with the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to analyze available data and conduct targeted research on educator workforce topics prescribed under NRS 391.492. At its initial meeting, the Commission grounded its work prior to prioritizing focus areas by receiving three foundational briefings:

- A national and state landscape analysis by the [Education Commission of the States](#) on teacher recruitment and retention;
- An introductory briefing on the [Nevada Educator Survey Results](#); and
- A comprehensive baseline presentation on [Nevada teacher vacancy data](#).

Informed by this initial context, the Commission prioritized its statutory directives under NRS 391.492 and formally directed the American Institutes for Research (AIR) to initiate research across key primary focus areas:

- (b) Providing health insurance to educators through the Public Employees' Benefits Program.
- (c) The allocation of funding for mentorship programs for educators.
- (d) The allocation of funding for scholarships for students seeking to become a school counselor, school social worker or school psychologist.
- (e) The provision of Nevada Teacher Advancement Scholarships pursuant to NRS 391A.650 to 391A.695, inclusive.
- (f) The allocation of funding to school districts to assist a licensed teacher with obtaining an endorsement in a subject area in which a shortage of teachers has been identified by the Department or the school district.

The Commission evaluated items (d), (e), and related scholarship provisions and felt they were best studied together, in conjunction with supplemental data regarding the broader impact of Nevada educator stipends and financial incentives. Throughout subsequent meetings, AIR presented iterative research findings and educator survey results, while local school districts, the State Public Charter School Authority, higher education institutions, and the Public Education Foundation provided additional contextual briefings.

Definitions

This section outlines the functional definitions for the primary categories of educational professionals referenced throughout this report:

Educator: A broad, overarching classification encompassing any professional who actively facilitates learning, develops instructional content, or directly supports student academic and personal growth within an educational institution.

Aspiring Educator: An individual actively preparing to enter the education profession. This includes students enrolled in educator preparation programs (EPPs), candidate teachers completing clinical practice or student teaching, and non-licensed staff pursuing formal certification.

Teacher: A licensed professional responsible for designing, delivering, and evaluating instruction within a classroom or designated learning environment. Teachers hold primary responsibility for curriculum alignment, classroom management, and assessing student progress toward academic standards.

Administrator: An educational leader responsible for the operational, financial, instructional, and strategic governance of a school, district, or educational organization. Roles include principals, superintendents, department heads, and directors.

Mentor: An experienced professional within the school system who provides ongoing, non-evaluative guidance and comprehensive support including instructional, emotional/relational, and professional assistance to fellow educators.

Other Licensed Educational Personnel (OLEP): Certified professionals within the educational system who do not serve as classroom teachers or school administrators. This category includes school counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and speech-language pathologists.

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Informational Items and Expert Briefings

To establish a baseline of knowledge when addressing educator recruitment and retention study issues, gathering direct information from school districts, charter school networks, educational partners, and other boards, councils, and commissions provided critical insight into localized staffing challenges, pipeline strategies, school funding dynamics, and workforce stability measures across Nevada.

In the Clark County School District (Clark), support staff recruitment and retention efforts focus heavily on connection- and relationship-based outreach. This strategy yielded a 107% increase in recruitment events from the 2023–24 school year to 2025–26, utilizing key channels such as military partnerships (Patriots to Education), high school outreach ("Your Journey Started Here"), Skills for Success career sessions, local family support center partnerships, and university pathways like NV|FORWARD. On the retention front, Clark implemented key structural improvements, achieving a 92% retention rate alongside a 30% reduction in application processing time and an 88% reduction in fingerprint processing time. The district also reinstated its first district-wide, in-person support staff orientation in over five years and offers ongoing professional development through Clark Employee Onboarding and Development Department. As a result of these coordinated initiatives, support staff vacancies steadily decreased from 1,295 in 2022-23 to 410 in 2025-26.

[Include information on the "grow your own" support staff presented on Sept 30]

Rural School Districts across Mineral, Nye, Eureka, and Elko counties face unique operational barriers to classified staffing, including a shortage of bus driver trainers, severe local housing shortages, lack of funding for non-certified incentives, budget deficits leading to Reduction in Force (RIF) measures, and high competition with outside industries offering higher pay. To proactively address these shortages, rural districts expanded applicant pools by leveraging lowered state ParaPro testing thresholds (455 vs. 460), community mobilization programs like "Hero to Educators," parent outreach, retired expert re-hires, and four-day workweek schedules in select communities. They also promote an "everywhere" marketing strategy spanning digital platforms, DETR partnerships, and grassroots community outreach. Retention efforts emphasize total compensation packages, notably 100% district-paid medical benefits and 100% district-paid Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) retirement alongside student-centered culture initiatives, resulting in retention rates ranging from 83.4% in Nye County to 96.7% in Eureka County.

The Carson City School District significantly reduced vacancies over the past three years, achieving a 3.4% vacancy rate and a 96.6% fill rate, with only one remaining vacancy reported. With staffing levels stabilized, the district's strategic focus shifted from filling open positions to sustaining a strong workforce under tighter financial constraints. Carson City's workforce development strategy focuses on strengthening pipelines, streamlining hiring, and investing in competitive retention practices. By preparing teachers for Day 1 success, providing a structured two-year mentorship program, and guiding career growth through Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF)-aligned pathways, the district dramatically improved early career retention: while early career teachers previously accounted for up to 52% of district resignations, that proportion dropped to 12%-25% following the implementation of these support systems.

Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas (CASLV) maintains a 12.09% overall support staff turnover rate across 182 support staff members. CASLV sources candidates through local and regional job boards (NDE, SchoolSpring, Indeed, LinkedIn), university partnerships (UNLV, Nevada State University), alumni networks, international pipelines (J-1 visa exchanges and H-1B sponsorships), and the Nevada PERS Critical Needs Return program for retired professionals. While general support roles such as front office, campus monitors, and maintenance are filled in under 30 days, severe structural bottlenecks persist for specialized roles including school psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and special education aides taking over six months to fill due to national shortages and private-sector compensation competition. To address workload intensity and

competitive pressures, CASLV utilizes 60 - 90-day onboarding support, targeted SPED training pathways, internal career ladders, and stay interviews.

Academica-supported charter networks, which span eleven networks and thirty-one total campuses (including Civica Academy, Pinecrest Academy, Somerset Academy, YWLA Las Vegas, SLAM! Nevada, Doral Academy, Mater Academy of Northern Nevada, Oasis Academy, and Mater Academy of Nevada), reflect high staffing stability. Across these specialized positions, the network filled six positions during the 2025–26 school year and entered the 2026–27 school year with only one open position (a Speech Pathologist opening at Mater Academy of Northern Nevada). Academica's recruitment approach combines continuous postings on platforms like Indeed, an annual hiring fair held in early March, word-of-mouth referrals, and a "Grow Our Own" tuition reimbursement program that helps support staff earn education degrees and teaching credentials. Retention is sustained by maintaining lower student-to-staff caseloads, offering retention and holiday bonuses, providing structured professional development and mentorship, and cultivating a positive school culture.

To add to the baseline of knowledge on educator workforce pipelines, analyzing the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) colleges of education highlights how postsecondary institutions recruit, train, and retain future educators across the state.

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) College of Education maintains a expansive reach, supporting over 2,000 Education Preparation students and more than 250 Mental Health students, extending services across thirteen of Nevada's 17 counties, and impacting over 30,000 K–12 Title 1 students. UNLV's flagship NV FORWARD™ Pathways program has reached 1,200 students, produced seven hundred licensed teachers, enrolled over five hundred registered apprentices, and achieved a 97% graduation rate. Additionally, its Teacher Leader Advanced Apprenticeship Program equips experienced educators to mentor peers, align curriculum, and direct data-driven instruction while remaining active classroom teachers. Beyond core degree pathways, UNLV is expanding its Lynn Bennett Early Childhood Education Center preschool campus and operates community-focused programs such as the Youth Rebel Start Academy and Rebel Start Summer Camp alongside mental health pipelines, digital access initiatives, and policy research. To retain candidates and working educators, UNLV provides comprehensive student supports, including academic assistance, financial aid, community-building, flexible program access, and field experiences paired with teacher-focused support like direct-to-employment pathways, career readiness, and licensure navigation. Looking forward, UNLV aims to expand statewide apprenticeship models, strengthen community college transfer pathways, increase candidate financial incentives, co-develop workforce tracking systems, and better align university licensure with school district hiring processes.

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) College of Education & Human Development has demonstrated significant growth in candidate recruitment and pipeline conversion over a three-year period (AY24 to AY26). Applicants rose from 682 to 933 (a 36.8% increase), admitted candidates increased from 229 to 348 (a 52.0% increase), and enrolled students jumped from 62 to 159 (a 156.5% increase). This momentum is driven by statewide outreach strategies that leverage Slate targeted marketing campaigns, regional events such as "Nevada Bounds" and "Nevada Exclusives," admitted student receptions, active high school and transfer engagement, direct candidate outreach, digital campaigns, and a new Student Success Series.

Great Basin College (GBC) Teacher Education serves rural and remote communities across an 86,000-square-mile service area by offering fully online and hybrid Zoom course delivery tailored for working adults, resulting in over 90% of its graduates remaining in Nevada to teach. GBC offers Bachelor of Arts degrees in Elementary Education (K–8) and Secondary Education (7–12) across multiple content areas, each structured around a 120-credit curriculum featuring extensive practicum placements and a paid student teaching internship. It also provides Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) programs across Elementary, Special Education Generalist, Early Childhood, and various Secondary disciplines. GBC embeds a "Grow-Your-Own" model for paraprofessionals and long-term substitutes, supporting 16-week student teaching residencies paired with a \$9,600 internship stipend and CCAST rubric evaluations.

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Between 2020 and 2025, GBC produced 164 program completers (80 Elementary, 27 Secondary, and 57 ARL). In the 2024–2025 academic year alone, snapshot data showed:

- 28 enrolled with 18 completers in Elementary Education,
- 11 enrolled with 6 completers in Secondary Education,
- 83 enrolled with 21 completers in ARL programs, and
- 43 enrolled with 16 completers in the Early Childhood Education Associates of Arts program.

Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) focuses its recruitment efforts on early-pipeline engagement by participating in high school career fairs, conducting targeted K–12 campus visits, and establishing dedicated Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways for prospective educators. A key component of this initiative is the 15-unit Education Paraprofessional Skills Certificate (SC), which serves as a pathway into the Paraprofessional Apprenticeship program and stacks directly toward the associate degree in Elementary Education Teacher Preparation. This program prepares future educators and paraprofessionals to support classroom teachers, manage learning environments, work with diverse and special needs learners, and implement foundational literacy instruction aligned with Nevada’s *Read by Grade 3* goals. To sustain student retention and program completion, TMCC pairs structured faculty advising with authentic classroom field experiences, an active student EDU Club, and campus networking events that keep future teacher candidates connected and on track toward degree completion.

The Public Education Foundation (PEF) Teacher FastTrack addresses Nevada's teacher shortage through a two-pillar model centered on recruitment and retention. Teacher FastTrack Recruit, partners with UNLV’s Nevada Forward Undergraduate Pre-Apprenticeship Program (UPAP) to assist school support professionals and paraprofessionals in transitioning into fully licensed teachers. High school graduates can also enter through the "TFT HS Recruit" track to earn a degree debt-free while working. To support these candidates, the program provides experienced Nevada teacher mentors, free Praxis study materials via Study.com, Praxis exam fee reimbursements, and a \$500 annual mentee stipend paid at \$250 per semester. The recruitment arm currently serves 11 out of Nevada's 17 counties. Teacher FastTrack Retain addresses long-term educator retention by providing three years of tailored support for newly licensed educators. Its key resources include an interactive website hub, a curated Teacher Toolkit, weekly virtual office hours held on Tuesdays via Google Meet, and "Guides on Demand" a system that pairs struggling new teachers with master practitioners for personalized assistance within 24 hours. In terms of growth and impact, overall program participation expanded significantly from ninety-two participants in 2022 to 237 participants and 148 UNLV graduates in 2025. Placement data shows that 72% of graduates are placed within the Clark County School District (CCSD), while 28% serve in rural or charter school communities. Survey and outcome metrics indicate high program satisfaction, with 91% of mentees expressing high satisfaction with program support. Additionally, 95% of mentees set career-based goals with their mentor, and 92% collaborate on key professional development areas such as classroom management, instructional strategies, and parent communication. Historical analysis also highlights a notable 90% retention rate for special education educators from initial cohorts, significantly outperforming national burnout trends.

The Commission on School Funding plays a pivotal role in guiding Nevada K-12 education policy, overseeing the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP) to ensure state and local revenues are distributed through a unified, equitable model. Under NRS 387.12463(1)(b), the Commission on School Funding evaluates the funding formula, works to eliminate systemic deficiencies, assesses student support weights, and identifies sustainable revenue streams aimed at raising Nevada per-pupil spending to the national average within 10 years. Revenue generated from local school support taxes, net proceeds of minerals, property taxes, room taxes, and cannabis compliance fees flow directly into the State Education Fund, which maintains both operational dollars and a dedicated Education Stabilization Account to safeguard school budgets during economic downturns.

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The PCFP allocates these dollars across four distinct operational tiers. Tier 1 covers auxiliary operations, funding student transportation based on a two-year expense average and food services based on a four-year average. Tier 2 delivers the adjusted base per-pupil allocation, which funds core instructional costs while accounting for regional cost variations and attendance demographics. Tier 3 provides local Special Education funding for students with Individualized Education Programs. Tier 4 applies weighted multipliers to the statewide base per-pupil amount to direct additional resources to specific student groups, offering a 0.45 weight for English Learners, a 0.35 weight for At-Risk students, and a 0.12 weight for Gifted and Talented students.

To optimize equity and fiscal efficiency, the Commission on School Funding has put forward several key policy recommendations that could reform the system if enacted. Proposed adjustments to enrollment protections include lowering the Average Daily Enrollment hold harmless cap from 5% to 3% and setting the Exceptional Enrollment Growth threshold at 15 percent, alongside funding flexibilities for new campuses or expanded grade levels. The Commission on School Funding also recommends modernizing the At-Risk definition by removing the rigid quintile limit, as well as shifting transportation calculations to a streamlined two-year average that excludes capital expenses. Furthermore, lawmakers could enable stacked weights for students qualifying under multiple categories once Nevada base per-pupil funding reaches approximately 90 percent of the national average. Finally, the Commission on School Funding recommends a major reform to Special Education funding by consolidating the local tier directly into the PCFP at a 1.34 weight, eliminating the 13 percent enrollment cap, and establishing a biennially reviewed hold harmless provision.

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Recommendations and Findings

The Commission's findings and recommendations are organized as follows:

Study topic: *The NRS that directs the topic for the Commission to study.*

Status: *Denotes current project standing within the condensed timeframe between contract execution and the required reporting deadline.*

Findings: *Summary of the research and presentations made to the Commission*

Recommendation: *Recommendation language.*

Specifics: *Additional details and background on the intent of the recommendation.*

Rationale: *Reason why recommendation was made.*

Expected Outcomes: *Intended results of successful implementation of the recommendation.*

Supporting Entities: *Stakeholder groups putting forth this recommendation.*

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: *Alignment to the priorities in Governor Lombardo's 3-Year Plan.*

Research: *Links to the research findings supporting the recommendation.*

Study topic (a): The use by school districts of a minimum salary scale for the compensation of teachers that would reflect the cost of living and include an annual cost of living increase. NRS 391.392(a)

Status: Pending further study

Findings: Minimum educator salaries have been used in states as a key policy lever for recruitment and retention across the teacher pipeline. State-level policy examples show varied approaches to setting minimum compensation standards: New Mexico passed House Bill 156 to increase teacher compensation across three professional tier levels, South Carolina established a statewide salary schedule to mandate minimum teacher pay, and South Dakota enacted Senate Bill 127 to establish a statutory minimum salary baseline.

Recommendation: The Commission is taking no formal action on the minimum salary scale and cost-of-living proposal at present. This area requires further comparative study and stakeholder input, which the Commission plans to undertake ahead of its 2028 final report.

Specifics: TBD

Rationale: TBD

Expected Outcomes: TBD

Supporting Entities: TBD

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Education & Workforce 1.2.1

Research: [Education Commission of the States - 50-State Comparison](#)

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Study topic (b): Providing health insurance to educators through the Public Employees' Benefits Program. NRS 391.392(b)

Status: In progress

Findings: A statewide pulse survey revealed widespread dissatisfaction among school staff with current district and charter plans particularly regarding high deductibles, limited specialist availability, and high expenses for family coverage leading 75% of respondents to report they are unlikely to recommend their current insurance. While individual/self-coverage under district plans can sometimes have lower monthly premiums than PEBP, the state-administered PEBP plan consistently offers lower family premiums, lower annual deductibles, and lower in-network out-of-pocket maximums. In many cases, transitioning educators to state-level coverage reduces total premium and out-of-pocket costs for both self and family coverage. Consolidated, state-administered models in Oregon and Georgia have demonstrated long-term stability and longevity benefits by allowing local education agencies to pool together. Aggregating educators into a unified, larger risk pool significantly lowers overall administrative costs and expands collective purchasing power, giving participants stronger leverage and the option to negotiate for lower costs across healthcare networks. Comparative models show that some states directly provide state-level funding to cover baseline employer costs for educator benefits. In Nevada, discussions around collaborating with regional trust models (such as the Teachers Health Trust [THT]) look promising as potential vehicles or partners for state-supported health insurance expansion. Research supports a model where school districts are allowed to opt in or opt out based on local needs. However, to maintain risk pool stability and prevent high-cost adverse selection, structured rules must govern when and how districts opt in or out.

Recommendation: Amend NRS 287.025 and NRS 287.043 to authorize a school district, subject to collective bargaining and actuarial requirements, to elect participation in PEBP for an eligible or defined employee population without requiring the district to transfer its entire workforce and retiree population to PEBP.

Specifics: Amend state statute to allow school districts, local associations, and employee bargaining groups to negotiate entry into the PEBP state health plan during local contract negotiations.

Rationale: Contributions to healthcare plans currently range widely across Nevada, as costs depend heavily on the specific health plan selected by each school district or charter school. Family and dependent coverage remains particularly costly for individual employees and is frequently cited by educators as a primary concern. Allowing districts to negotiate and switch insurance providers, specifically by allowing participation in PEBP for an eligible or defined employee population without requiring the district to transfer its entire workforce and retiree population to PEBP, would expand the eligible enrollee pool, stabilize premiums, lower out-of-pocket costs, and afford educators peace of mind regarding their medical care. Furthermore, consolidating coverage reduces administrative overhead by taking complex benefit administration off district plates, ultimately allowing critical funds to be redirected back into classrooms and student support. Establishing state-level consistency in benefits also ensures seamless coverage when teachers move between districts, serving as a powerful tool for educator retention statewide.

Expected Outcomes: Districts will report an increase in long-term teacher retention rates if educators are provided with access to better benefits and educators will report higher levels of satisfaction in the working conditions survey.

Supporting Entities: TBD

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Health & Wellness 3.5.2 and 3.5.3

Research: [Learning about Current NV Public Employees Benefits Program \(AIR\)](#)

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Study topic(c): The allocation of funding for mentorship programs for educators. NRS 391.392 (c)

Status: Pending further study

Findings: State models demonstrate that comprehensive induction and mentoring programs serve as a critical lever for early career support and teacher retention along the educator pipeline. Across the country, states structure these initiatives through multi-year induction mandates, such as two-year requirements in Idaho and three-year requirements in Michigan and Utah. Effective policy frameworks emphasize specific mentor qualifications and targeted operational supports to ensure program quality; for example, Kentucky requires mentors to possess at least three years of experience and complete formal training, while New Mexico mandates advanced licensure levels for mentor teachers. Furthermore, states support implementation by addressing logistical capacity, with Georgia authorizing professional learning funds for mentor release time and Texas requiring local education agencies to schedule dedicated release time or reduced teaching loads for participating educators. However, national findings also highlight persistent challenges, including inconsistent application of programs across schools and a widespread lack of dedicated funding for mentorship across school districts.

Recommendation: Allocate dedicated state funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop and deploy a statewide toolkit highlighting best practices, standardized frameworks, and implementation resources for effective mentor programs to support districts/LEAs in establishing and sustaining robust mentorship programs

Specifics: Funding should be provided to develop or sustain mentor programs through which experienced educators not only build the capacity and skills of novice educators, but to also provide career pathways for experienced educators.

Rationale: Teacher attrition exacts a high financial and operational toll on Nevada's schools; dedicated state funding for mentorship directly protects the state's investment in its educator pipeline by driving long-term retention for both novice and veteran teachers. Quality mentorship creates an empowering environment where new educators rapidly develop instructional competence, while compensating and training experienced mentors honors their time, improves working conditions, and provides clear career advancement that keeps veteran talent in classrooms. Supplying state funds to scale and modernize local mentoring programs builds collective educator efficacy statewide ensuring every student benefits from better-prepared teachers while strategically preserving existing federal Title II-A funds for complementary district initiatives.

Expected Outcomes: Providing robust, sustained mentorship will directly improve early-career retention and mitigate the high financial costs associated with recruiting and onboarding replacement teachers. By supporting educators through their critical early years, school districts can retain a higher percentage of teachers beyond the crucial three-year milestone, where attrition rates traditionally peak. The positive impact of these structured supports will be directly reflected in improved sentiment and higher satisfaction metrics across future administrations of both the Staff Working Conditions Survey and the Staff Exit/Transfer Survey.

Supporting Entities: TBD

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Education & Workforce 1.2.1

Research: [Education Commission of the States - 50-State Comparison](#)

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Study topic (d): The allocation of funding for scholarships for students seeking to become a school counselor, school social worker or school psychologist. NRS 391.392(d)

Status: In progress

Findings: Nevada continues to face severe, persistent shortages of specialized instructional support personnel, specifically school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists leaving schools drastically understaffed relative to nationally recommended student-to-provider ratios. Data from statewide staff exit and working conditions surveys reveal that classroom teachers frequently cite unmanaged student behaviors and inadequate mental health support as primary drivers for leaving the profession. At current credentialing and hiring rates, existing candidate pipelines fall far short of filling open vacancies, let alone meeting state-mandated staffing targets. Addressing this critical need requires expanding the allocation of state scholarship funds under NRS 391.392(d) to eliminate financial barriers for students entering these specialized degree and certification programs. Directly funding targeted scholarships will grow the overall pipeline of qualified mental health professionals, helping schools approach recommended ratios, better support student behavioral needs, and alleviate systemic burnout across the educator workforce.

Recommendation: Allocate additional funding for scholarships to increase the number of qualified specialized instructional support personnel (including counselors, social workers, psychologists, Speech Language Pathologists, school based mental health professionals, etc.) to ensure students have equitable access to qualified service providers.

JISCE wording: To include a statement in the Committee's final report to encourage the Governor and the Governor's Finance Office (FIN), and Ways and Means Committee (WM) of the 2027 Legislative Session to increase funding and expand the eligibility for the Teacher Advancement Scholarship, Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching, Teach Nevada Scholarships, and the NV Institute on Teacher and Educator Preparation to include specialized instructional support personnel, CTE educators, and special education specialists.

Specifics: The Legislature should not only continue to invest in pipeline initiatives such as the Teacher Advancement Scholarship, Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching, Teach Nevada Scholarships, and the Nevada Institute on Teacher and Educator Preparation through increased funding, regardless of future program renaming or administrative restructurings, but it should also expand the scope of eligibility to include candidates pursuing credentials as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, mental health professionals, and Other Licensed Educational Personnel.

Rationale: The cost of higher education has escalated dramatically over the past few decades, creating a formidable financial barrier for candidates seeking the specialized, advanced coursework required to become school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists. These specialists provide essential, wrap-around support services that serve as a direct front-line response to mounting challenges with student behavior, which teachers consistently highlight in exit and working conditions surveys as a primary driver of classroom disruption and job dissatisfaction. Beyond supporting general campus climate and behavioral management, these personnel are integral to delivering required Special Education accommodations, multi-tiered behavioral interventions, and crisis prevention. Expanding funding and scholarships eligibility authorized under NRS 391.392(d) directly removes these steep financial hurdles, enabling a broader, more diverse pool of candidates to enter these critical professions, fulfill Special Education compliance standards, and provide teachers with the targeted behavioral relief needed to remain in the classroom.

Expected Outcomes: Districts will report an increased retention of qualified service providers in our schools in hard-to-staff positions and a reduction in the ratio of specialized instructional support personnel to students served.

Supporting Entities: Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Education & Workforce 1.1.3

Research: [Understanding Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Teachers and Student Support Staff \(AIR\)](#)

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Study topic (e): The provision of Nevada Teacher Advancement Scholarships pursuant to NRS 391A.650 to 391A.695, inclusive. NRS 391.392(e)

Status: In progress

Findings: Findings on the Teacher Advancement Scholarship highlight its crucial role as an effective lever for veteran teacher retention and leadership development across Nevada. Commission research demonstrates that financial barriers often prevent experienced teachers from pursuing advanced degrees, specialized endorsements, and higher-level licenses particularly in critical shortage areas like Special Education and English Language Acquisition. By offsetting tuition costs, the Teacher Advancement Scholarship incentivizes skilled educators to remain in the classroom while upgrading their qualifications and stepping into specialized instructional roles.

Recommendation: Increase the funding for the teacher advancement scholarship.

JISCE wording: To include a statement in the Committee's final report to encourage the Governor and the FIN, and WM of the 2027 Legislative Session to increase funding and expand the eligibility for the Teacher Advancement Scholarship, Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching, Teach Nevada Scholarships, and the NV Institute on Teacher and Educator Preparation to include specialized instructional support personnel, CTE educators, and special education specialists.

Specifics: Funding should continue to be provided at an increased level for teacher advancement scholarships, regardless of future program renaming or administrative restructurings to those who would like to become counselors, psychologists, social workers, mental health providers, or other support professionals to ensure qualified service providers are in our schools in hard-to-staff positions.

Rationale: The rising cost of higher education presents a major financial barrier for educators seeking to pursue advanced coursework and specialized credentials required to provide essential, wrap-around support services to students. Expanding state funding for these scholarships creates an accessible entry point and financial bridge for dedicated candidates, enabling them to fill hard-to-staff positions and critical shortage areas across Nevada schools. By removing financial hurdles, the scholarship incentivizes effective teachers to advance their careers and remain in the classroom, directly strengthening workforce retention while equipping schools with the specialized talent needed to serve high-need student populations.

Expected Outcomes: Districts will report an increase in teacher retention across a diverse body of educators including classroom teachers, school counselors, social workers, school psychologists, library media specialists, and other support professionals as evidenced by improved sentiment on future administrations of the statewide Staff Exit/Transfer Survey and Working Conditions Survey. By expanding candidate pipelines to fill hard-to-fill specialist roles, districts will directly alleviate the high caseloads, unmanaged student behaviors, and excessive workplace burnout consistently identified in survey data as primary drivers of educator turnover. Over time, this targeted financial support will stabilize school environments, build long-term career pathways for diverse staff, and result in measurably higher retention rates across all professional support categories.

Supporting Entities: Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Education & Workforce 1.1.3

Research: [Education Commission of the States - 50-State Comparison](#)

[Understanding Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Teachers and Student Support Staff \(AIR\)](#)

DRAFT

Study topic (f): The allocation of funding to school districts to assist a licensed teacher with obtaining an endorsement in a subject area in which a shortage of teachers has been identified by the Department or the school district. NRS 391.392(f)

Status: In progress

Findings: Statewide workforce and shortage area data demonstrate that persistent vacancies in specialized subjects such as upper-level mathematics, special education, and English language acquisition frequently force schools to rely on long-term substitute teachers or eliminate specialized course offerings altogether. Commission findings indicate that high out-of-pocket costs and time commitments create significant barriers for currently licensed teachers attempting to earn additional endorsements. Nevada school districts, particularly in rural and under-resourced areas, lack dedicated local funding to subsidize these continuing education costs, leaving critical subject-area gaps unfilled year after year. Providing state-funded endorsement subsidies offers a cost-effective, high-yield strategy to expand the internal capacity of the existing teacher workforce without requiring lengthy recruitment cycles.

Recommendation: Provide dedicated funding to current licensed teachers in Nevada to cover the costs associated with gaining an endorsement in a district- or state-identified critical shortage areas.

Specifics: Funding will directly cover tuition, program fees, and/or testing costs required for licensed teachers to complete approved coursework for state- or district-identified shortage areas, enabling schools to flexibly reassign or expand the duties of current staff to meet critical instructional needs. An endorsement is an add-on credential to an existing teaching license that formally qualifies an educator to teach in additional subject areas or specialized instructional assignments.

Rationale: Persistent teacher shortages leave specialized subject-area classes across Nevada staffed by substitutes or cut entirely from school schedules, directly impacting student learning and access to advanced coursework. Out-of-pocket costs for continuing education pose a primary financial hurdle for teachers who are otherwise willing to expand their instructional credentials. Increasing the number of dually certified or multi-endorsed teachers allows school districts to flexibly staff hard-to-fill subjects with fully qualified, highly effective educators. Directing state funds toward endorsement completion maximizes existing talent, provides clear professional growth pathways, and ensures classrooms in critical shortage disciplines are led by credentialed experts.

Expected Outcomes: Districts will report a measurable decrease in the number of unfilled positions in critical shortage and hard-to-fill subject areas, alongside a reduced reliance on long-term substitutes. Furthermore, data from future administrations of the statewide Staff Exit/Transfer Survey and Working Conditions Survey will reflect improved job satisfaction as teachers gain broader instructional flexibility, feel supported in their professional growth, and experience reduced overall staffing strain within their schools.

Supporting Entities: TBD

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Education & Workforce 1.2.1

Research: [Education Commission of the States - 50-State Comparison](#)
[Understanding Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Teachers and Student Support Staff \(AIR\)](#)

DRAFT

Study topic (g): The establishment and funding of a program to provide forgiveness of student education loans to licensed teachers who have taught in this State for at least five consecutive years and are ineligible for other forms of loan forgiveness. NRS 391.392(g)

Status: Pending further study

Findings: State-funded loan forgiveness serves as a powerful financial lever across the educator pipeline, directly supporting both entry into the field and long-term workforce retention. Comparative state analysis demonstrates that dedicated debt relief mechanisms such as Colorado's Educator Loan Forgiveness Program, New Jersey's Teacher Loan Redemption Program, and North Carolina's Forgivable Education Loans for Service effectively incentivize qualified educators to remain in public school classrooms. Establishing a targeted Nevada loan forgiveness program specifically addresses the high burden of educational debt for experienced teachers who are ineligible for existing federal forgiveness programs, creating a crucial financial safeguard that stabilizes the workforce and retains veteran talent in Nevada schools.

Recommendation: *JISCE Wording: Request the drafting of a bill to establish a loan forgiveness program for teachers participating in the Public Employees' Retirement System of Nevada (PERS). A teacher must complete seven years of teaching and receive an evaluation rating of effective or higher each year after their third year of teaching to qualify for full loan forgiveness (one-seventh of a loan forgiven each year). Special education teachers must complete five years of teaching and receive an evaluation rating of effective or higher each year after their third year of teaching to qualify for full loan forgiveness (one-fifth of a loan forgiven each year).*

Specifics: The proposed bill draft request establishes a structured, state-funded student loan forgiveness program for licensed Nevada teachers enrolled in the Public Employees' Retirement System.

Rationale: Educational loan debt creates a severe financial burden that drives qualified educators out of the profession, particularly during their mid-career years. Implementing a PERS-tiered forgiveness model rewards sustained commitment to Nevada public schools while serving as a powerful recruitment tool for high-need fields. Fast-tracking forgiveness for Special Education teachers directly targets Nevada's most acute staffing crisis, offering a strong financial incentive to retain specialists in demanding roles. Furthermore, tying loan cancellation to performance ratings ensures high-quality instruction and accountability, protecting the state's investment while encouraging long-term career persistence.

Expected Outcomes: Districts will experience a measurable decrease in five- and seven-year teacher turnover rates, especially in hard-to-staff disciplines like Special Education. By offsetting the cost of higher education, the program will stabilize the workforce, increase the proportion of veteran teachers remaining in Nevada classrooms, and enhance long-term PERS participation. Additionally, future data from the statewide Staff Exit/Transfer Survey and Working Conditions Survey will reflect improved financial well-being and higher job satisfaction, indicating reduced financial stress among mid-career educators.

Supporting Entities: Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment: Education & Workforce 1.2.1

Research: [Education Commission of the States - 50-State Comparison](#)

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Additional Study Topics

Pursuant to NRS 391.492, the Commission on Recruitment and Retention is authorized to conduct studies on additional issues impacting Nevada’s educator workforce. In accordance with this statutory authority, the Commission identified and investigated additional key topics beyond its core mandates to ensure a thorough and responsive analysis of the state's recruitment and retention landscape.

Additional study topic (1): The use of Stay Interviews by schools and districts to improve teacher retention.

Status: Pending Further Study

Findings: Data presented by the American Institutes for Research (AIR) shows that while exit and transfer surveys capture retrospective reasons why educators leave after a decision has been made, stay interviews offer a proactive strategy to assess employee engagement and identify concerns before turnover occurs. Across Nevada, the implementation of stay interviews is currently fragmented and minimal: Mineral County conducts them, Washoe County utilizes them irregularly without standardized protocols, and major districts including Clark County do not conduct them at all. State education agencies in Arizona, Ohio, and Maine, along with districts in Utah, Colorado, and Texas, have successfully deployed standardized stay interview frameworks to strengthen early-career support, improve school culture, and reduce costly turnover. National and regional evidence indicates that proactive, structured conversations allow school leaders to address specific retention drivers such as student behavior support, workload demands, and leadership dynamics while building trust and open communication with staff.

Recommendation: Provide funding to NDE to contract with a third-party for the development, training, implementation, and data analysis of statewide educator stay interviews.

Specifics: The third-party contractor will collaborate with NDE to design a standardized, Nevada-specific stay interview protocol and toolkit. Funding will cover comprehensive training for district and school leaders on conducting supportive, one-on-one stay conversations, as well as pilot testing across participating school districts. Additionally, the contractor will aggregate, analyze, and report statewide stay interview data to identify systemic trends, operational risks, and immediate opportunities for district- and state-level policy improvements.

Rationale: Face-to-face stay interviews allow school and district administrators to collect rich qualitative data, foster relational trust, and demonstrate to educators that their engagement and daily experiences are valued. While exit survey data reveals challenges only after teachers have opted to leave, stay interviews proactively uncover actionable insights regarding workload, administrative support, and classroom challenges while intervention is still possible. Implementing a standardized, state-supported framework ensures all districts—regardless of size or administrative capacity—have access to high-quality retention tools and expert data synthesis.

Expected Outcomes: School districts will experience improved teacher retention by identifying and addressing workplace dissatisfaction before educators reach the point of resignation. The statewide synthesis of stay interview data will equip NDE and local leaders with real-time feedback to refine working conditions, improve administrative support, and implement targeted school-level interventions. Over time, districts will report enhanced workplace culture, increased trust between staff and leadership, and reduced financial and operational costs associated with teacher turnover.

Supporting Entities: Education & Workforce 1.2.1

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment:

Research: [Stay Interviews \(AIR\)](#)

Additional study topic (2): *(if needed)*

Status: Pending Further Study

Findings:

Recommendation:

Specifics:

Rationale:

Expected Outcomes:

Supporting Entities:

Governor's 3-Year Plan Alignment:

Research:

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Conclusion

Commissioners strongly emphasize that no single policy can remedy current systemic challenges; rather, recruitment and retention strategies must target multiple levels of the education system through a multi-faceted framework. For instance, a comprehensive strategy pairs foundational financial support, such as cost-of-living salary scales and affordable healthcare through the Public Employees' Benefits Program with ongoing professional growth via funded mentorship programs. Simultaneously, it addresses pipeline shortages by funding scholarships for specialized positions, supporting teacher advancement and high-need endorsement training, while implementing best practices for conducting stay interviews statewide.

Nevada must balance its recruitment pipelines with an equally rigorous prioritization of retaining current classroom educators. To strengthen recruitment, Nevada must invest in initiatives that cultivate local talent by encouraging Nevada residents to enter the profession. Homegrown recruitment can be accelerated through targeted community outreach, financial incentives, and robust academic support for non-traditional candidates.

Retaining our professionals requires sustained commitment to their long-term professional well-being. This can be achieved through structured mentorship programs, continuous professional development, and comprehensive cultural competency training.

Furthermore, state workforce strategies must be closely aligned with recommendations put forth by the Commission on School Funding and the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education. Achieving sustainable workforce stabilization requires syncing recruitment and retention targets with modernized funding formulas, resource allocations, and innovative instructional models statewide. Even in environments experiencing shifting or lower student enrollment, maintaining adequate staffing remains critical to meeting the diverse academic, social-emotional, and specialized needs of enrolled students, as well as continuously filling ongoing vacancies left by teacher retirements and resignations.

Crucially, while the state is showing signs of fewer classroom vacancies for the first time in more than 30 years, the Commission cautions against complacency. Lower vacancy figures demonstrate that recent initiatives are making an impact, but they do not mean the recruitment and retention crisis has been solved. To prevent backsliding and secure long-term stability, Nevada must expand and sustain its focus on systemic solutions.

DRAFT

Appendix

[Nevada's Statewide Vacancy Data 2025-26 \(NDE\)](#)

[Nevada Department of Education Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[Great Basin College Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[Nevada State University Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[University of Nevada Las Vegas Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[University Nevada Reno Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[Truckee Meadows Community College Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[Carson City School District Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[Clark County School District Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[Nevada Rural School Districts Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[SPCSA - Academica State Public Charter School Authority Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[SPCSA - Coral Academy of Science Las Vegas Recruitment and Retention Efforts](#)

[The Public Education Foundation FastTrack - Recruiting and Retaining Nevada's Educators](#)

Motion to Approve the Report

I motion to approve the November 2026 Commission on Recruitment and Retention report for submission to the Legislative Council Bureau by November 15, 2026 with any technical edits to be made as necessary and with the inclusion of the additional information as requested by the Commission.