



NEVADA
Department of
Education

Strategic Priorities

March 2026
State Board of Education

Set a Shared Direction

Clarify our statewide priorities, align efforts around what works, and celebrate success.

Strengthen State Capacity

Continue making progress toward a more agile, responsive, and service-driven Department of Education.

Lead Through Partnership

Listen deeply, learn from those closest to the work, and strengthen trust across Nevada's education community.

Benchmarks:

- ✔ **March 1 (100 Days):** Complete NDE context-building, signal priorities, and deliver early wins that demonstrate clarity and momentum
- ✔ **September 1 (10 Months):** Release multi-year framework; FY 27-29 budget proposal aligned to priorities

8

Districts/LEAs with enrollment ranging from 400 students to 280,000 students

25

Classroom visits

22

District Trustees participated in small group meetings

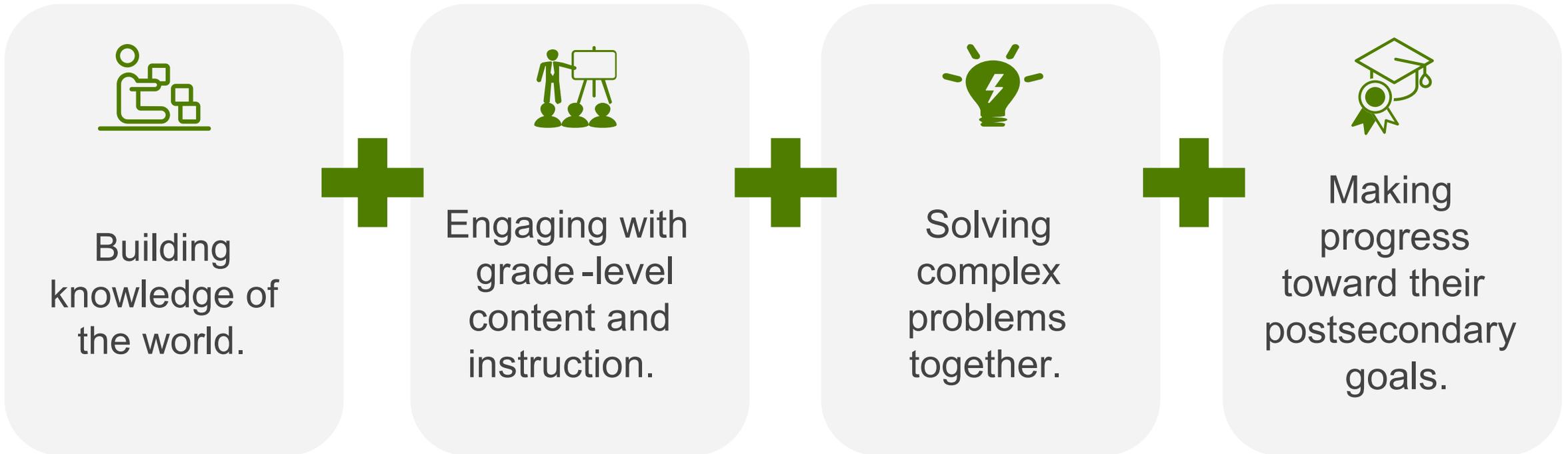
9

Structured dialogues with groups of NDE staff, students, educators, and leaders

5

Guiding Questions

Every day, students are...



NDE will achieve this vision by focusing on five core priorities.

Our Strategic Priorities



Together, these priorities focus collective efforts and ensure Nevada students thrive in school and graduate prepared for success in college, career, and life.



Strong Foundations



**Informed and
Connected Families**



Empowering Pathways



Aligned Systems



**Equipped Educators &
Leaders**

Strong Foundations



Strong Foundations



Academic foundations are improving, but remain inconsistent.

45.6%

Percent of grade 3 - 8 students proficient on ELA state assessment

+4.4 percentage point increase from prior year

35.4%

Percent of grade 3 - 8 students proficient on Math state assessment

+2.9 percentage point increase from prior year

18.0%

Percent of 4 - year - olds enrolled in high - quality pre - K (2025 - 2026)

+9.0 percentage point increase from prior year

14.2%

Percent of grade 3 - 8 English Language students proficient (vs. 46% all students)

+3.0 percentage point increase from prior year

Listening Tour Takeaways:

A recurring theme was **inconsistency** : in outcomes, instructional quality, and system direction. This is especially felt by English Learners and students with disabilities

Bright spots point the way:

Schools with strong leadership and culture, focused learning environments, aligned Tier 1 instruction with high-quality materials, and effective interventions are showing what's possible and seeing gains.



Strong Foundations: Ensure students start strong and build the academic foundations that deeper learning depends on.



How will we measure success annually?

% of eligible 4 year olds in high -quality Pre -K

% of schools that have adopted HQIM in ELA, math, science, social studies, and digital literacy

% grade 3 proficient in ELA/Reading

% grade 8 proficient in math

Pre -K

Expand pre -K access to high -quality seats.

Curriculum

Support educators in adopting and using high quality instructional materials (HQIM) across core subjects.

Early Intervention

Provide early academic interventions for students who need additional support.

Priority 1: Strong Foundations

Empowering Pathways



Empowering Pathways



Nevada has strong models, but too few students can access them.

85.4%

Percent of students graduating (Class of 2025)

+3.8 percentage point increase from prior year

24.3%

Percent of 2025 graduates earning a CCR diploma

+2.9 percentage point increase from prior year

48.4%

Percent of high school students (74,510) enrolled in CTE

15.2%

Percent of Nevada youth aged 16 - 24 who are disconnected - neither in school nor working

Listening Tour Takeaways:

Access remains uneven. Resourcing, regulatory, and operational barriers limit the ability to scale postsecondary readiness opportunities.

Bright spots point the way: Across district visits, there was evidence of exceptional CTE, dual credit, and hands-on learning driving engagement and results.



Empowering Pathways: Expand access to high-quality pathways that help students develop skills, explore interests, and prepare for their future.



Graduation Plans

Ensure every student beginning in middle school has a yearly conversation and a clear plan for graduation and beyond.

Career Pathways

Make it easier for students to access coursework and experiences aligned with high-wage, high-demand careers.

Postsecondary Success

Ensure every diploma is a pathway to postsecondary success.

How will we measure success annually?

% of students entering high school credit sufficient in ELA, math, and CTE exploration

% of secondary students accessing advanced, specialized, or CTE courses

% of students graduating with the CCR diploma

Equipped Educators and Leaders



Equipped Educators and Leaders



Pipeline progress has been made, but there are new challenges ahead.

- 26%

Percent decrease in classroom vacancies compared to the previous year

+10.0

Percentage point increase in teacher pay from 2023 state investments (varies district to district)

16.3%

Percent of highly effective employees based on professional qualifications of teachers, employees, principals, and other school leaders

Listening Tour Takeaways:

Shortages persist in hard-to-staff schools, subjects, and rural areas, and educators shared concerns about workload, burnout, student behaviors, and misaligned expectations between families and schools.

Bright spots point the way: New entry pathways bring strengths, and highlight the need for stronger onboarding and support.



Equipped Educators and Leaders: Attract, support, and retain strong educators and leaders to meet evolving student needs.



Preparation

Increase the quality and quantity of new teachers and leaders prepared to serve Nevada's students.

How will we measure success annually?

% pipeline growth in high - need subjects areas

Career Growth

Match educator pay and growth opportunities to their role, skills, and impact.

% of teacher vacancies filled

Support

Equip teachers and leaders with the tools and training they need to provide strong aligned instruction.

% of students taught by a certified, in-field teacher

% of effective teachers & leaders retained

Informed and Connected Families





Trust is uneven and must be rebuilt.

23%

Proficiency Gap between Title 1 and non - Title 1 qualifying schools in ELA and math

41.4%

Percentage of schools rated 1 or 2 Star by the Nevada School Performance Framework

+5.8%

Increase in percentage of 5 Star Schools from the previous year

26.6%

Percentage of students chronically absent in 2024 - 2025

-9.2 percentage point decrease from prior year

Listening Tour Takeaways:

While family engagement is strong at individual schools and in pockets, system -level trust has frayed.

Bright spots point the way: Positive stories surface in small, tight -knit communities where students grow up learning together; and in schools families actively choose.



Informed and Connected Families: Enable families and communities to be active, informed partners in education.



Transparency

Provide clear, timely, and actionable information to families through Nevada's accountability frameworks.

Access

Ensure families without high-quality zoned options have priority access to specialized offerings.

Quality

Escalate supports, oversight, and options to accelerate school improvement and expand access to effective instruction.

How will we measure success annually?

% of families reporting the report card is clear/easy to use

% of students attending low-performing schools

% of historically underserved students enrolled in 4- or 5-Star schools

Aligned Systems



Aligned Systems



Nevada needs clearer definitions of success and better -aligned systems.

69%

Percent of LEA staff rating the Customer Service role of NDE as "Fair/Poor"

81%

Percent of LEA staff who report receiving duplicative or inconsistent directives from the NDE

41%

Percent of districts with declining ending fund balance trends

- 28,500

Statewide enrollment decline since the 2019-2020 school year

Listening Tour Takeaways:

District leaders described fragmentation across data, funding, and accountability, which makes planning harder.

Bright spots point the way:

Bright spots exist where steady governance is in place, where spending is aligned to priorities, and where funds have been braided together (e.g., apprenticeships).



Aligned Systems: Define success and align expectations, resources, and supports to accelerate progress.



Coherence

Set a shared vision for what strong schools and districts do, and align NDE's funding, accountability, and support to match it.

Streamlined Submissions

Streamline district and school planning submissions, remove redundant reporting, and modernize processes.

Coalitions

Contribute NDE capabilities and target resources to aligned coalition efforts.

How will we measure success annually?

% positive customer service experience with NDE

% reduction in districts with declining ending fund balance

% reduction in total number of distinct district planning processes

% reduction in duplicate submissions or resubmissions

Strong Foundations

- Pre-K
- Curriculum
- Early Intervention



Informed and Connected Families

- Transparency
- Access
- Quality



Empowering Pathways

- Graduation Plans
- Career Pathways
- Postsecondary Success



Aligned Systems

- Coherence
- Streamlined Submissions
- Coalitions



Equipped Educators and Leaders

- Preparation
- Career-Growth
- Support



Role of the Nevada Department of Education



NDE, in partnership with the legislature, Governor's office, and other state agencies, has the ability to create an education ecosystem in which every student in the state thrives.

States have **levers** they can use routinely to incentivize each actor in the system to play their role to make the state's vision a reality, such as:

- Policies, Programs, and Guidance
- Funding
- School and District Accountability
- Standards, Assessments, and Credentialing
- Support and Training
- Communications

Every state action presents the opportunity to center end users and lead with coherence in order to achieve their priorities:

-  **Signal quality** intentionally, mostly through communications, policy, and guidance
-  **Make the right choice the easy choice** for all actors, often through funding and regulations
-  **Clear out the noise** by inventorying what must be stopped, including mixed signals or unnecessary complexity that reduces focus on achieving the priorities.

What Comes Next?



Next Steps:

1. Update the Nevada Strategic Improvement Plan (STIP) to reflect the priorities, strategies, and measures - **March 31st**
1. Align NDE Divisions & Offices and enact performance management routines
March - June 2026
1. Invest in priority - aligned planning grants for up to 3 districts
April - July 2026
1. Align accountability efforts: District Performance Framework (publish **August 2026**) followed by revisions to School Performance Framework
1. Align NDE's 2027 Legislative Agenda and Biennial Budget - **Summer - Fall 2026**