

# Nevada's District Performance Framework

Draft – March 10, 2026

## Introduction

Senate Bill 460 (SB460) charges the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) to develop a District Performance Framework (DPF) that produces annual ratings with respect to district-wide performance targets. The development of the new DPF also necessitates review and potential revisions to the current Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) to ensure the systems are aligned, coherent, and work together to promote improved outcomes for Nevada students

The NDE is working closely with the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Assessment (The Center) and a broad range of leaders across the state to prepare a framework for the DPF. In particular, key policy and design decisions rest with the Metrics Subcommittee on Accountability Redesign (SAR).

## Statutory Summary

Senate Bill 460 requires the Nevada Department of Education to implement a statewide District Performance Framework (DPF) as part of Nevada's broader accountability system. The law establishes district accountability as an annual process for evaluating how school districts and charter sponsors are performing overall, based in part on aggregated school-level results and progress toward clearly defined district-wide achievement and performance targets.

SB 460 further requires the establishment of district-wide targets for specific student groups, including economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, English learners, and major racial and ethnic groups, and requires public reporting on progress toward those targets. District ratings should be used to inform supports and interventions.

## Users and Uses

DPF is intended to be used by a wide variety of users who require clear, credible, and accurate information on the performance of school districts and where improvement is required. The SAR identified primary users to include policymakers, such as school board members, legislators, and elected officials, who require information on school district performance to inform decision-making and governance. Education leaders and practitioners, such as district and school leaders, teachers, staff, and the NDE, might use the DPF as a tool for improvement, planning, and practice. The DPF may also be used by students, families, and caregivers who require information on the quality and opportunities available in the educational arena, as well as community and public constituents, such as taxpayers, advocacy groups, and civic leaders. Other users include economic and workforce stakeholders, post-secondary institutions, and media groups that assist in the interpretation, communication, and utilization of school district performance information.

Across these audiences, the DPF is intended to serve multiple purposes. At the system level, it may inform leadership and policy decisions such as strategic planning, goal setting, and evaluation of district leadership and staff. Operationally, it could support resource allocation and

school improvement by helping districts and the state identify needs, target supports, and guide instructional and staffing decisions. For families, students, and communities, the DPF will provide accessible information that can shape engagement, school choice, and postsecondary pathways. Public reporting also plays an important role in shaping understanding, trust, and motivation. Finally, district performance information has broader economic and workforce implications, informing decisions by employers, workforce partners, and other sectors.

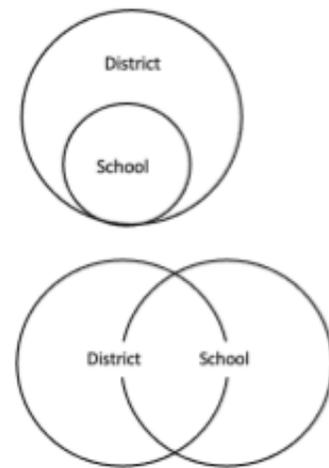
### **Design Principles**

In the creation of the DPF, the SAR understood the importance of finding design principles that should inform the process, which can include setting priorities among competing options. In considering change versus comparability over time, the members were largely in favor of moderate change, recognizing the value of specifying what is changing and why, and not changing for the sake of change. Notwithstanding, the SAR agreed that the NSPF has a strong core that should be maintained to ensure stability and longitudinal validity. However, change may be necessary for indicators that are not federally mandated and for the strategic inclusion of new and innovative indicators, especially where the district structure can extend beyond current school-level accountability mandates.

The SAR also considered the balance between flexibility and within-year comparability. Members were generally supportive of within-year comparability in a consequential system, citing the fact that if flexibility is excessive, it can lead to greater burden, greater complexity, and greater risk of inconsistent implementation. However, flexibility can be useful in particular contexts, such as in high schools or small districts.

Members were also generally supportive of a comprehensive framework (includes a broad set of indicators), although it was noted that comprehensiveness does not necessarily translate into complexity, and priorities must continue to be those that will have the greatest value added. Although there was support for additional information, particularly at the high school level and in relation to workforce and postsecondary outcomes, the group emphasized the importance of keeping it manageable, building on strengths, and keeping an eye on reporting burden and existing data limitations.

The DPF and the NSPF are conceived as complementary and overlapping accountability systems. Although each has a unique purpose and unit of analysis, these frameworks will share a common core of indicators to ensure coherence, alignment, and consistency in state accountability efforts. The visuals at right represent two ways to approach this. The first portrays the NSPF as a full subset of the DPF. The second portrays the NSPF and DPF and has some shared and some unique elements. This relationship will be further developed in subsequent meetings.



## The District Performance Framework

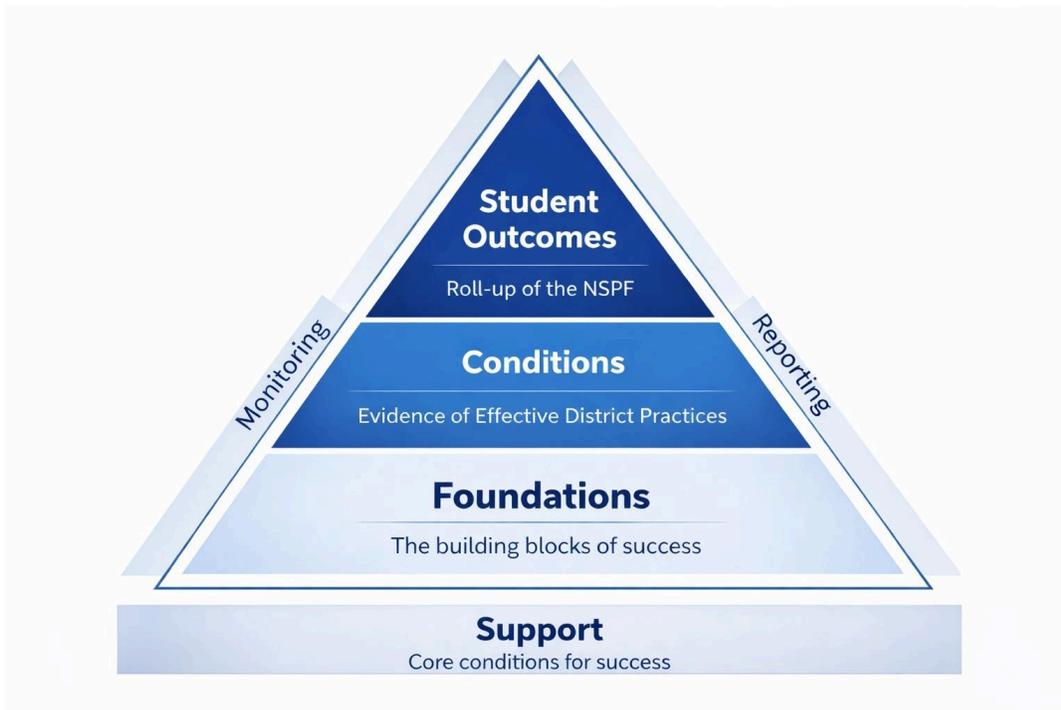
### Framework Overview

The DPF is designed to reflect the wide range of conditions, practices, and outcomes associated with effective districts and sponsors (or governing bodies) of charter schools.<sup>1</sup>

**Foundations** reflect the core practices associated with effective districts and charter sponsors. They are not sufficient on their own to produce desired actions or outcomes, but they provide essential building blocks for success. **Conditions** refer to evidence of effective practices at the district or sponsor level. Indicators in this category reflect areas under district or sponsor control and go beyond inputs; they are intended to demonstrate progress toward (or attainment of) factors that help provide an opportunity for students to learn and thrive. **Student Outcomes** reflect key performance aggregated from the school level. We envision this category as a roll-up of the current or revised Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF).

These categories describe groups of indicators that will inform district performance ratings. However, other indicators may be used differently to include internal **monitoring**, public **reporting**, and/or to inform **support** initiatives.

The figure below illustrates how these indicators work together.



<sup>1</sup> While we generally refer to charter sponsors in this document, as this language is consistent with SB460, we acknowledge that there are different models for how governance and oversight is handled for charters. Some functions may be handled at the sponsor level. In other cases there are separate governing bodies or the function may be handled at the school level. We acknowledge that these individual circumstances must be detailed in the operational model.

## Candidate Indicators

We draw on multiple sources to inform the proposed indicators in the framework to include:

- The priorities identified by the Nevada Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (CIEE).
- Feedback from the statewide survey and interviews with a small number of Nevada education leaders.
- Discussions at prior SAR meetings
- NDE’s strategic priorities
- Acing Accountability
- The current NSPF

What follows are indicators by category we believe could be developed in the near term and either implemented in summer 2026 or piloted during the 2026-2027 year.

### *Foundations*

At the February SAR meeting, members reviewed an extensive set of indicators across six domains associated with district effectiveness. Feedback from the SAR surfaced at least two drawbacks with an approach that involves collecting data on a large number of indicators. First, it would be unwieldy to collect and evaluate all the indicators individually. Second, the indicators provide little discriminating information about effectiveness. While the SAR generally agreed that the indicators reflected important core conditions or practices, a more streamlined approach should be identified for the framework. Consequently, we propose to consider a smaller number of essential indicators collectively (not individually) which could be addressed in an **annual district performance plan** or similar report submitted by the district or charter sponsor. In other words, the report would be evaluated for completeness and sufficiency as a whole as opposed to an ‘indicator checklist.’ The purpose of the plan would be to provide transparent information about core practices that all districts and charter sponsors should support. Moreover, this aspect of the DPF is intended to consolidate other reports and requirements to reduce duplication.

Table 1 provides proposed elements to include in the plan.

Table 1. Proposed Elements in Annual District/ Charter Performance Plan

Domain	Required Elements
Effective Educators and Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Strategy for recruiting and retaining highly qualified educators and leaders.</li><li>● Approach for induction and mentoring of new educators and leaders.</li><li>● Process for supporting educator professional learning aligned to instructional priorities.</li></ul>
Instructional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Method to ensure that high-quality reading and mathematics programs and primary instructional materials are used; all primary materials are on State-approved lists.</li><li>● Access to interventions (e.g., tutoring, special education, language learner supports).</li></ul>
Student Well-Being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Policies and procedures to monitor attendance and address appropriate behavior.</li><li>● Mechanism to provide access to behavioral, mental, or other supports.</li></ul>

Governance and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process to provide regular training to board members on governance roles, responsibilities, and ethics.</li> <li>• Approach for providing opportunities for families, community members, and partners to engage in district decision making.</li> </ul>
Systems and Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to establish and maintain data systems capable of supporting required reporting and internal decision making.</li> <li>• Approach for ensuring regular cycles of school and district improvement planning are conducted.</li> </ul>
Resources and Finances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How established budgeting, auditing, and financial oversight procedures are established and maintained.</li> <li>• Means to access transparent reporting on budgets allocations.</li> </ul>

*Conditions*

While the **foundations** component addresses core elements that are necessary to support effectiveness, it does not differentiate among more or less effective practices that help further establish conditions for success. The **conditions** category, then, refers to evidence at the district or sponsor level that signal students will have an opportunity for success. These indicators do not fully cross all six domains, as some domains are addressed in foundations, student outcomes, or in supplemental reporting.

Table 2. Proposed Indicators for Conditions

Conditions: Proposed Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective educators in classrooms               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Coverage rate (percent of classrooms taught by a licensed educator in endorsed area) meets target OR</li> <li>◦ Increase in coverage rate (or decrease in vacant positions) meets target</li> <li>◦ Percentage of vacancies at Title I schools compared to non-Title I meets target</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Student survey addressing climate and student experience (e.g., access to trusted adults at school, sense of belonging etc.). Credit awarded separately for participation and percent meeting threshold</li> <li>• Supporting readiness and cross-cutting skills               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Percent of elementary school students who participate in qualifying enrichment courses or experience (e.g., clubs, technology, arts, service)</li> <li>◦ Percent of high school students who participate in qualifying courses or experiences (e.g., internships, advanced, specialized or CTE courses)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Financial stability: The district ends the fiscal year with no deficit or reduces the prior year deficit</li> </ul>

We recognize that this is a streamlined set of **conditions** indicators, in part because many related elements are addressed in the **foundations** component. We also believe it is prudent to begin the first-year, preliminary version of the DPF with a focused indicator set that can be expanded over time. The SAR’s feedback on additional elements to consider in the near and longer term is encouraged

Some near term discussions about this component should address the following:

- Feedback from the SAR’s February review raised a concern that districts could increase the “coverage rate” by raising class sizes. One way to address this is to include a guardrail indicator that would negatively affect ratings if class sizes increase beyond a defined threshold. What are the pros and cons of adding such a guardrail to the model?

- Should this component address targets for the percentage of educators rated effective? Or does the risk of Campell’s law suggest this information should be decoupled from consequential uses?
- If you support the climate survey’s inclusion, should it include both participation and performance? Or just participation?

*Student Outcomes*

The **student outcomes** category reflects key outcomes at the school level. We envision this category as a roll-up of indicators in the current or revised NSPF for the first year. However, a decision is pending regarding how the results will be aggregated. At the February meeting, SAR members expressed an interest in methods that account for the pattern of performance and the results by school, rather than treating the district like a large school.

Table 3. Proposed Indicators for Student Outcomes

Student Outcomes Proposed Indicators
Indicators from the NSPF <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Academic Growth in mathematics and ELA in grades 4-8 as measured by MGP and % Meeting AGP*</li> <li>o Proficiency in grades 3-8 in mathematics, ELA , and science</li> <li>o Progress toward English language proficiency</li> <li>o Chronic absenteeism rates</li> <li>o Percent of 8th grade students students meeting high school readiness criteria</li> <li>o Percent of 9th grade students earning sufficient credit</li> <li>o Percent of MS students with academic learning plans</li> <li>o Participation and Completion of qualifying advanced coursework (i.e., AP, IB, dual enrollment) or approved CTE program</li> <li>o 4 and 5 year adjusted cohort graduation rates</li> </ul>

As with the **conditions** category, we recommend a streamlined set of **student outcomes** indicators particularly in year one. The NSPF may be suitable to fulfill this function initially, even as ongoing discussions about revision and expansion continue.

At least two areas raised during the February meeting warrant further discussion. First, what, if any, K–2 metrics should be included? Second, should the student outcomes category incorporate information from district benchmark assessments (e.g., MAP, i-Ready)?

*Alignment to Strategic Priorities*

It is important to check alignment between the DPF and NDE’s Strategic Priorities. Those priorities reflect a statewide vision in which, every day, students build knowledge of the world, engage with grade-level content and instruction, solve complex problems together, and make progress toward postsecondary goals. To advance that vision, NDE organizes its work around five core priorities: *Strong Foundations* (early learning, strong instructional materials, and timely interventions); *Empowering Pathways* (high-quality coursework and experiences aligned to students’ goals and high-demand opportunities); *Equipped Educators and Leaders* (a stronger educator pipeline, supports, and development); *Informed and Connected Families* (clear

communication and meaningful partnership with families); and *Aligned Systems* (shared expectations, streamlined planning and reporting, and coordinated supports). Table 4 presents an initial crosswalk between the candidate DPF indicators and these priorities. A shaded circle denotes a primary connection, while an open circle denotes a secondary connection.

Table 4. DPF Indicators Mapped to Strategic Priorities

DPF indicator	Strong Foundations	Empowering Pathways	Equipped Educators and Leaders	Informed and Connected Families	Aligned Systems
<b>Foundations</b>					
Talent strategy	○		●		○
Induction & mentoring			●	○	
Aligned prof. learning	○		●	○	
HQ ELA/Math materials	●		○		
Intervention access	●		○		
Attendance/behavior systems	●		○		
Behavioral/mental health supports	●		○		
Governance training				○	●
Family/community engagement				●	○
Data systems	○				●
Improvement planning cycles	○				●
Fiscal oversight	○				●
Transparent budget reporting				○	●
<b>Conditions</b>					
Educator coverage/vacancies			●		○
Climate/experience survey	●				○
Elem. enrichment participation	○	●			
HS experiences (intern/adv/CTE)	○	●			
Balanced budget / deficit reduction	○				●
<b>Student Outcomes</b>					
Growth (4–8 ELA/Math)	●				○
Proficiency (3–8 ELA/Math/Sci)	●				○
EL progress	●				○
Chronic absenteeism	●				○
Grade 8 readiness		●			○
Grade 9 on-track		●			○
MS learning plans		●			○
Advanced coursework / CTE		●			○
Graduation rate (4/5-yr)		●			○

●: Primary connection ○: Secondary Connection

*Monitoring, Reporting, and Support*

The DPF framework should also address indicators that will not be used to inform ratings, either initially or at all. A broader set of indicators may be used for internal monitoring, public reporting, and/or to inform or evaluate support activities. In fact, NDE already collects and reports a wide range of information, including:

- Enrollment/ Demography
- Attendance
- Personnel
- Class size
- Safety
- Climate
- Finances
- Technology
- Academic Achievement and Growth
- CTE

As the SAR continues its work it is important to discuss what additional information should be provided and approaches to best support its interpretation and use. Based on SAR discussions to date priorities for additional indicators may include:

- Information that extends beyond K–12 and offers clearer evidence of students’ readiness for postsecondary pathways
- Indicators focused on foundational preparation in grades K–2
- A more comprehensive set of indicators that provides evidence of preparation and attainment across durable skills and workforce readiness
- District specific indicators that account for local context and priorities

### **Moving Toward Implementation**

As the work moves ahead, it is important to describe implementation more clearly.

The plan is to deliver an initial blueprint at the end of Phase 1. That blueprint will inform a preliminary DPF in summer 2026, which will then be refined, along with the NSPF, throughout 2026–2027.

For the preliminary DPF in summer 2026, we propose first to identify which elements of the blueprint can be operationalized this year using current- or prior-year data. At a minimum, the current NSPF, using lagged data if necessary, can serve this purpose. We also propose to determine which elements will require additional development and piloting before they are ready for inclusion in the refined 2027 framework.

*Key decisions for discussion*

- **Foundations:** Which elements are reasonable to include in the preliminary DPF in summer 2026? What guidance should be used to judge the completeness and sufficiency of evidence within the Foundations category?
- **Conditions:** Which elements are reasonable to include in the preliminary DPF in summer 2026, and which should be further researched, developed, and piloted before implementation?
- **Student Outcomes:** Are there any elements that should be added to or removed from the NSPF for use in the preliminary DPF?