

Joe Lombardo  
Governor

Dr. Victor Wakefield  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction



Southern Nevada Office  
2080 E. Flamingo Road, Suite 210  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-0811  
Phone: (702) 486-6458  
Fax: (702) 486-6450

**STATE OF NEVADA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
700 E. Fifth Street | Carson City, Nevada 89701-5096  
Phone: (775) 687-9200 | [www.doe.nv.gov](http://www.doe.nv.gov) | Fax: (775) 687-1116

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education and State Board of Education (SBE)  
**FROM:** LaNesha Battle, Director, Office for a Safe & Respectful Learning Environment (OSRLE)  
**DATE:** January 26, 2026  
**SUBJECT:** NRS 388.890 Report

---

This report, prepared by the Nevada Department of Education, is based on information submitted by county school districts with populations exceeding 100,000 and includes the following:

1. Introduction
2. District Strategies to Improve SISP Ratios
3. Baseline Data
4. Annual updates

**1. Introduction**

NRS 388.890 requires the State Board of Education in Nevada to establish recommendations for the appropriate ratios of pupils to teachers and specialized instructional support personnel. Schools must post the approved pupil-to-teacher ratios for each class on their website. Additionally, the State Board must adopt a strategic plan to achieve recommended pupil-to-staff ratios for specialized instructional support personnel, such as counselors, psychologists, and social workers, ensuring adequate support for student needs.

During the 2021 Legislative Session, these efforts were advanced further by introducing a requirement for Nevada school districts with populations exceeding 100,000 (Clark and Washoe counties) to develop and submit plans to improve pupil-to-SISP ratios. The goal is to meet the ratios adopted by the State Board of Education.

Staff from the Nevada Department of Education's (NDE or Department) Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment (OSRLE) provided a template to assist local education agencies (LEAs) in building these plans, incorporating resources and best practices from research and national associations.

According to NRS 388.890, each district plan must include, at a minimum:

1. Strategies to recruit and retain specialized instructional support personnel (SISP), and
2. Annual targets for improvement.

Additionally, NRS 388.890 mandates that the board of trustees of a school district in a county with a population exceeding 100,000 submit an annual report to NDE detailing the implementation of the plan.

This is the fourth year of implementation, and thus the qualifying districts (Washoe and Clark) have submitted their data to NDE. This report represents strategies Washoe and Clark used, baseline data, and statewide progress. For reference, below lists the ratios approved by the Nevada State Board of Education in April 2020.

<b>Specialized Instructional Support Personnel</b>	<b>Recommended Non-Binding Ratio</b>
School Counselors	1:250
School Psychologists	1:500
School Social Workers	1:250
School Nurses	1:750

**2. District Strategies to Improve SISP Ratios**

**A. Recruitment Strategy Updates for School Year 2024-25**

**Clark County School District (CCSD):**

During School Year 2024–25, CCSD implemented a comprehensive, role-specific recruitment strategy to strengthen its school-based mental health workforce. To attract school counselors, the district invested in high-visibility national outreach, including advertising in the American School Counselor Association magazine and maintaining a recruitment booth at the ASCA National Conference. The recruitment of social workers focused primarily on financial incentives, with sign-on stipends proving highly effective. This approach resulted in the hiring of 35 new social workers during the project year and supported a total of 143 new hires over the full five-year grant period. These targeted strategies enabled the district to address workforce shortages while maintaining competitiveness in a challenging labor market.

In contrast, recruitment of school psychologists emphasized long-term, “home-grown” workforce development rather than immediate, grant-funded advertising. CCSD prioritized internal pipelines by supporting psychological services assistants in transitioning into licensed roles through sponsored internships, while also strengthening university partnerships with UNLV and Nevada State University to support practicum students and trainees in school psychology programs. Additional efforts included recruitment interviews and job postings through the National Association of School Psychologists.

**Washoe County School District (WCSD):**

In School Year 2024–25, WCSD advanced recruitment strategies aimed at stabilizing and expanding its specialized instructional support personnel workforce, particularly in the areas of school social work, counseling, and psychology. Efforts prioritized increasing the competitiveness of school-based positions through revised job descriptions, clarified eligibility pathways, and negotiated pay increases supported by state and local funding. These strategies were paired with targeted advertising and outreach to address persistent vacancies in high-need schools and service areas.

Grant funds were leveraged to support recruitment stipends, licensing and certification cost offsets, and expanded internship and practicum opportunities, resulting in the successful onboarding of new school-based mental health providers across multiple disciplines. Recruitment materials were refreshed to highlight school-based practice, student impact, and alignment with MTSS frameworks and were disseminated through higher education partners, professional associations, and regional workforce networks. Collectively, these efforts contributed to increased provider hiring during the reporting period compared to pre-grant baselines, particularly in high-need and rural settings.

WCSD prioritized engagement with higher education institutions as a core recruitment strategy, conducting outreach to college and university faculty and students to promote internship and employment opportunities within the district. Stipends and structured supports were provided to internship supervisors and interns to strengthen participation and improve the quality of the training experience. These efforts contributed to improved applicant interest and helped reduce vacancies, particularly in school social work roles, which have historically been difficult to fill.

## **B. Training and Professional Development Strategy Updates for School Year 2024-25**

### **Clark County School District:**

CCSD implemented a large-scale professional development strategy designed to strengthen clinical practice, support licensure maintenance, and promote workforce retention across school-based mental health roles. CCSD supported 323 school counselors in attending the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Annual Conference (July 2025) and 33 school psychologists in attending the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) Annual Convention (February 2025). In addition to conference participation, grant funds were used to directly support professional credentialing, including 725 Nevada School Counselor Association (NVSCA) memberships and 620 ASCA memberships for school counselors during the reporting period. These investments reduced financial barriers to professional engagement and ensured continued alignment with national best practices.

Qualitatively, CCSD reported that professional development participation increased provider confidence, strengthened evidence-based practice implementation, and enhanced consistency of services across school sites. Conference participation supported advanced learning in areas such as trauma-informed care, suicide prevention, MTSS-aligned mental health supports, and culturally responsive practices. District leadership noted that access to national professional learning opportunities also contributed to staff morale and professional identity, particularly for counselors and psychologists working in high-need schools.

### **Washoe County School District:**

WCSD leveraged grant funds to support targeted professional development and licensing support for school-based mental health providers, with an emphasis on maintaining workforce readiness amid staffing transitions. WCSD supported participation by school counselors, school social workers, and school psychologists in district-led training and external professional development opportunities aligned to trauma-informed practices, crisis response, and MTSS implementation. Grant funds were also used to offset licensing and credentialing costs, helping providers maintain required professional qualifications and reducing out-of-pocket expenses associated with continued employment in school-based roles.

From a qualitative perspective, WCSD reported that professional development opportunities contributed to improved staff confidence, strengthened clinical skill development, and enhanced collaboration among school-based mental health professionals and site administrators. Providers identified training focused on trauma, student engagement, and complex behavioral needs as particularly valuable given increasing student mental health demands. Professional learning also supported continuity of services during leadership and staffing changes by reinforcing shared practices and expectations across the district.

## **C. Retention Strategies Updates for School Year 2024-25**

### **Clark County School District:**

CCSD implemented retention strategies focused on maintaining workforce stability across a large and diverse school-based mental health system. Quantitative data indicate that CCSD retained the majority of its school-based mental health workforce during the reporting period, including approximately 189 school counselors, 189 school psychologists, and 64 school social workers. Attrition rates remained relatively low compared to historical averages, with reported losses of 9 school psychologists, 6 school counselors, and 4 school social workers during the academic year. These figures reflect continued

progress toward stabilizing the workforce and minimizing service disruptions in high-need schools. Qualitative exit interview data and narrative reporting indicate that staff departures were largely driven by personal or life-related factors, such as retirement, relocation, or changes in career trajectory, rather than dissatisfaction with school-based practice or working conditions. CCSD identified professional development, licensure support, and access to national professional organizations as key retention supports, noting that these investments increased professional satisfaction and strengthened provider commitment to school-based roles. The district reported that the grant’s emphasis on professional growth and financial support for credentials contributed meaningfully to reduced attrition and improved workforce morale, reinforcing retention as a core sustainability strategy.

**Washoe County School District:**

WCSD focused its retention efforts on sustaining its existing school-based mental health workforce amid organizational and leadership transitions. Quantitatively, WCSD reported retaining the majority of its school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and other mental health providers throughout the reporting period, despite staffing changes at the administrative level. While some attrition occurred, overall provider retention remained stable, and districts reported no widespread vacancy trends that would significantly disrupt service delivery during the academic year.

WCSD indicated that retention challenges were influenced more by system-level and leadership transitions than by job dissatisfaction. The district noted that departures were primarily associated with administrative turnover and external factors rather than working conditions or student-related stressors. In response, WCSD emphasized continuity strategies such as maintaining professional development access, supporting licensure and credentialing costs, and reinforcing collaboration among remaining staff. These efforts helped stabilize the workforce during a period of transition and informed future retention planning, particularly around onboarding, supervision, and leadership continuity to support long-term workforce sustainability.

**3. Baseline Data**

This section details the baseline data as required by NRS 388.890, which is updated each year to demonstrate advancement.

**School Counselors (SCs)**

Clark County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SCs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SCs	# of SCs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	325,081	384	1,301	656	645	50%
SY20	309,456	379	1,237	732	505	59%
SY21	310,556	381	1,242	715	527	58%
SY22	291,930	364	1,168	720	448	62%
SY23	304,568	385	1,218	719	499	59%
<b>SY24</b>	<b>301,697</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>1,207</b>	<b>773</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>64%</b>

Washoe County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SCs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SCs	# of SCs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	64,402	117	258	179	79	69%

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SCs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SCs	# of SCs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY20	61,642	117	246	186	60	75%
SY21	62,540	119	322	195	127	60%
SY22	60,057	102	240	184	56	77%
SY23	60,096	103	240	198	42	83%
<b>SY 24</b>	<b>63,559</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>85%</b>

### School Psychologists (SPs)

#### Clark County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SPs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SPs	# of SPs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	325,081	384	650	164	486	25%
SY20	309,456	379	619	182	437	29%
SY21	310,556	381	621	175	446	28%
SY22	291,930	364	584	180	404	31%
SY23	304,568	385	609	174	435	29%
<b>SY24</b>	<b>301,697</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>406</b>	<b>33%</b>

#### Washoe County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SPs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SPs	# of SPs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	64,402	117	129	45	84	35%
SY20	61,642	117	123	47	76	38%
SY21	62,540	119	125	44	81	35%
SY22	60,057	102	120	45	75	36%
SY23	60,096	103	120	42	78	35%
<b>SY24</b>	<b>63,559</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>43%</b>

### School Social Workers (SSWs)\*

#### Clark County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SSWs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SSWs	# of SSWs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	325,081	384	1,301	274	1,027	21%
SY20	309,456	379	1,238	200	1,122	16%
SY21	310,556	381	1,242	200	1,042	16%
SY22	291,930	364	1,168	131	1,037	11%
SY23	304,568	385	1,218	110	1,108	9%

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SSWs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SSWs	# of SSWs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
<b>SY24</b>	<b>301,697</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>1,207</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>15%</b>

Washoe County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SSWs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SSWs	# of SSWs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	64,402	117	258	53	205	21%
SY20	61,642	117	246	53	232	21%
SY21	62,540	119	250	25	225	10%
SY22	60,057	102	240	22	218	10%
SY23	60,096	103	240	29	211	12%
<b>SY24</b>	<b>63,559</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>10%</b>

\*Note: Washoe County data include endorsed school social workers, contracted social workers, clinical mental health professionals, and professionals with other counseling degrees.

**School Nurses (SNs)\***

Clark County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SNs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SNs	# of SNs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	325,081	384	434	195	239	45%
SY20	309,456	379	413	294	119	71%
SY21	310,556	381	414	186	228	45%
SY22	291,930	364	389	210	179	54%
SY23	304,568	385	406	203	203	50%
<b>SY24</b>	<b>301,697</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>402</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>63%</b>

Washoe County School District

School Year (SY)	Total Enrollment	# of Schools	SNs Needed by Student Enrollment	Current # of SNs	# of SNs Needed to Meet Best Practices	% of Best Practice Ratios Met
SY19	64,402	117	86	48	38	56%
SY20	61,642	117	82	70	12	85%
SY21	62,540	119	83	56	27	67%
SY22	60,057	102	80	62	18	76%
SY23	60,096	103	80	53	27	66%
<b>SY24</b>	<b>63,559</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>65%</b>

\*Note: Clark County included 17 part-time nurses in their data in addition to their reported full-time nurses. In addition to the 55 School Nurses for Washoe County, they also reported an additional 17 clinical procedure nurses not reported in the chart.

## 4. Annual Updates

### **Clark County Annual Update for Improving SISP Ratios**

During the 2024–25 school year, CCSD continued to strengthen student to SISP ratios through sustained staffing levels, high retention, and targeted workforce support strategies funded through the SBMH grant. By the end of the reporting period, CCSD maintained a stable workforce of approximately 189 school counselors, 189 school psychologists, and 64 school social workers. Although some attrition occurred during the academic year, including 9 school psychologists, 6 school counselors, and 4 school social workers, the district successfully retained the majority of its workforce. This stability allowed CCSD to preserve service coverage across schools with demonstrated need and prevent regression in student-to-provider ratios despite ongoing statewide workforce shortages.

CCSD employed several intentional strategies to support ratio improvement and stabilization, including financial support for licensure and professional memberships, access to national professional development opportunities, and alignment of training with MTSS and trauma-informed service delivery to maximize provider impact. Retention was intentionally prioritized as a ratio improvement strategy, recognizing that reducing vacancies and turnover is critical to maintaining gains in staffing levels. Exit interview data indicate that most departures were driven by personal or life-related factors rather than dissatisfaction with school-based roles, suggesting that working conditions and professional supports were largely effective. Looking ahead, CCSD plans to sustain and further improve SISP ratios by strengthening recruitment pipelines, expanding onboarding supports, and continuing investments in professional development and credentialing. The district also identified the need to braid funding sources and leverage local and state resources to maintain staffing levels and gradually improve ratios beyond the SBMH grant period.

### **Washoe County Annual Update for Improving SISP Ratios:**

In School Year 2024–25, WCSD focused on stabilizing student to SISP ratios during a period of leadership and organizational transition. Despite limited new hiring, WCSD successfully maintained its existing workforce of school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and other mental health providers. This continuity prevented significant increases in student-to-provider ratios and supported consistent access to school-based mental health services across the district. Maintaining staffing levels during a period of transition was a key factor in preserving ratio improvements achieved earlier in the grant cycle.

WCSD emphasized workforce continuity and efficiency through professional development supports, licensure and credentialing assistance, and cross-role collaboration to ensure coverage during staffing gaps. These efforts helped mitigate the impact of administrative turnover and reduced the likelihood of prolonged vacancies that would negatively affect ratios. Qualitative reporting indicates that departures during the year were primarily influenced by leadership transitions rather than dissatisfaction with school-based roles. Looking forward, WCSD identified several sustainability focused strategies to further strengthen SISP ratios, including improving onboarding processes for new hires, expanding access to qualified clinical supervision, and strengthening long term workforce planning. The district plans to leverage lessons learned during SY 2024–25 to pursue incremental ratio improvements as staffing capacity allows and to sustain services.

cc: Dr. Victor Wakefield, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada Department of Education  
Christy McGill, Deputy Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement