

**Nevada Department of Education  
Nevada State Board of Education  
March 11, 2026  
9:00 AM**

<b>Office</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
Department of Education	2080 E. Flamingo	Las Vegas	Room 114
Department of Education	700 E. Fifth St.	Carson City	Silver Ore
Department of Education	Virtual/Livestream	Virtual	<a href="#">YouTube Link</a>

**Summary Minutes of the Board Meeting**

**Board Members Present**

Tim Hughes, Vice President  
Tamara Hudson, Board Clerk  
Tricia Braxton  
Amy Carvalho  
Annette Dawson Owens  
Tate Else  
Danielle Ford  
Evana Lan  
Angela Orr

**Board Members Absent Excused**

Dr. Katherine Dockweiler, President  
Susan Neal

**Department Staff Present**

Dr. Victor Wakefield, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Christy McGill, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement  
Lisa Ford, Interim Deputy Superintendent, Student Achievement Division  
Zachary Khan, Administrative Assistant  
Andrew Snyder, Education Program Supervisor  
Amanda Hughes, Education Program Professional  
Amelia Thibault, Education Program Professional  
Mike Pacheco, Education Program Professional  
Mandy Leytham, Education Program Professional  
Lisa Calvert, Education Program Professional

**Legal Staff Present**

Christena Georges Burnes, Senior Deputy Attorney General

**Audience in Attendance**

Susan Keema, Executive Director, Nevada Association of School Superintendents  
Adam Young, Superintendent, White Pine School District

**1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance, and Land Acknowledgement**

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Vice President Hughes. Quorum was established. Vice President Hughes led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided a land acknowledgement.

**2. Public Comment #1**

None

**3. Approval of Flexible Agenda**

**Member Dawson Owens moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Hudson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

**4. Vice President's Report**

**Vice President Hughes** provided an update regarding Nevada Reading Week. He reported enjoying his participation reading in different classrooms throughout the week. Vice President Hughes announced that the meeting materials related to the previous day's Metrics Subcommittee for Accountability Redesign were available online for public viewing. He shared that the Subcommittee is making progress on finding frameworks for district performance and the metrics used to measure performance. He encouraged members of the public to participate. Vice President Hughes solicited additional comments from members of the State Board of Education (SBE).

**Member Braxton** provided an update on Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 388G Subcommittee, of which she is the current Chair. She provided an update regarding Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) draft language which is under review by the Legislative Counsel Bureau. Upon completion of their review, the proposed NAC shall be approved by the Nevada Legislative Commission as final authority. Member Braxton also shared that she enjoyed participating in Nevada Reading Week.

**Member Orr** provided an update on the SBE's At-Risk Subcommittee. The At-Risk Subcommittee was unable to convene before the March SBE meeting. Member Orr was able to meet with Superintendent Wakefield, Deputy Superintendent Peterson, and Guy Hobbs, Chair, Commission on School Funding, instead. During the meeting, the four discussed potential methods of collaboration around the issue of At-Risk funding during the upcoming Nevada Legislative Session. The meeting also allowed the four to consider what recommendations the Commission on School Funding might make to the Nevada Legislature before making any decisions as the State Board of Education. Member Orr reported that stability has been a key tenant of the At-Risk Subcommittee. She also reported that she has been holding informal conversations with stakeholders to gather input and feedback regarding the new state assessment and issues around the Read by Grade 3 retention policy. She expressed a desire to discuss the two topics at each SBE meeting and emphasized the importance of transparency and having as much feedback from the public as possible around these topics. Member Orr reported that the timeline of the At-Risk Subcommittee has slowed due to ongoing legislative priorities, but that they will convene again soon to provide recommendations to SBE.

**Member Lan** provided an update on her obtaining a more holistic view of Nevada's student voices. She has contacted numerous schools throughout Nevada's 17 counties to inquire as to whether schools have student advisory groups or student board members. In doing so, she has connected those groups to one another. Vice President Hughes

encouraged Member Lan to continue that work and requested a full analysis and any recommendations that might help promote student voices in Nevada.

## 5. Superintendent's Report

**Superintendent Wakefield** provided a report around four items: The District Superintendent of the Year, Nevada Reading Week, Youth Art Month, and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) Listening Tour and Strategic Path Forward.

**Dr. Adam Young**, Superintendent, White Pine School District was chosen as Nevada's Superintendent of the Year. Superintendent Wakefield congratulated Superintendent Young, reading a short biography into the record, speaking to Superintendent Young's exemplary education leadership.

**Susan Keema**, Executive Director, Nevada Association of School Superintendents explained the history of the Nevada Superintendent of the Year award and the reasoning behind the selection of Dr. Young. The Nevada Superintendent of the Year award recipient is nominated among Nevada's District Superintendents using four criteria: leadership for learning, communication, professionalism, and community involvement. Executive Director Keema spoke to Superintendent Young's accomplishments, including improvements to student graduation rates, college and career readiness, early literacy, attendance, and overall community confidence. Ms. Keema also spoke to Superintendent Young's effectiveness in stakeholder engagement, communicating effectively to students, families, staff, local education agencies, and the Nevada Department of Education. Finally, Executive Director Keema emphasized the importance of Dr. Young's commitment to professionalism and continuous improvement, including fostering professional growth and motivation among education colleagues and Dr. Young's completion of a doctorate degree.

**Member Else** spoke about his experience working with Dr. Young over the last seven years, emphasizing Dr. Young's long-serving tenure as a District Superintendent in Nevada, his effectiveness as an educator, and irreplaceability as an education leader in the state.

**Dr. Adam Young** thanked Executive Director Keema and Member Else for their recognition and extended further gratitude to the State Board of Education. Additionally, Dr. Young expressed his appreciation of Member Hughes, former Board President Felicia Ortiz, and former member Renee Cantu for their visiting White Pine School District. Continuing, Dr. Young emphasized his belief in the power of public education, and feels that the institution is under attack and has been for years. Dr. Young spoke about the evolution of his career in the field of education and expressed the importance of human-

centered growth and development throughout the education system. Dr. Young acknowledged the work and dedication happening in White Pine School District and acknowledged there is still work to be done and progress to be made.

Continuing the Superintendent's Report, **Superintendent Wakefield** gave a brief history on Nevada Reading Week, shared what occurred for Nevada Reading Week 2026, and read into the record two cards written by students of Arturo Cambeiro Elementary School. Superintendent Wakefield emphasized the importance of literacy and visiting schools, expressing his willingness to continue Nevada Reading Week events well into the future. Next, Superintendent Wakefield shared an update regarding Nevada's Youth Art Month, highlighting planned events and encouraging participation. Finally, Superintendent Wakefield presented findings from his [Listening Tour](#) and the [Nevada Department of Education's Strategic Priorities](#)

**Member Braxton** emphasized the Empowering Pathways strategic priority and highlighted the importance of the theme of Career Technical Education. She asked whether there were any limitations to providing alternative pathways to students, and whether labor unions or business owners are included in pathways discussions to mitigate said limitations. Superintendent Wakefield explained various existing barriers to Empowering Pathways including infrastructure, workforce development, and workplace learning.

**Member Orr** emphasized the importance of "reducing the noise" for practitioners in the field to avoid overwhelmingness and burnout. She appreciated the guiding "north stars" provided during the presentation, applauded "taking things off plates," and highlighted the focus on clarity and coherence.

**Vice President Hughes** discussed translating the Strategic Priorities into the Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP). He summarized two key findings throughout ongoing STIP conversations: 1) incremental progress stemming from too many competing priorities; and 2) outcomes versus inputs and how we measure our progress. He stresses the importance of focused strategies instead of "checking boxes" while not changing any results downstream.

**Member Dawson Owens** expressed strong support for the Strategic Priorities and believes they provide a strong foundation. She feels that informed and connected families can be an "after thought" in Nevada and appreciates the emphases on disconnected youth and pathway empowerment. She reported that, in her capacity as Vice Chair of the [Henderson Community Education Advisory Board](#), she helped create a Quick Response (QR) Code which shows school availability in relation to school choice and other

available education resources. Member Dawson Owens expressed agreement and praised the cohesiveness of the Nevada Department of Education's plans.

#### **6. Informational Updates** (*Information Only*)

The informational topics listed in this agenda item are solely for informational purposes and do not require formal approval by the State Board of Education. This information is designed to satisfy reporting requirements by districts and charter schools while also conveying current information from the Nevada Department of Education. The item includes updates on operational activities, compliance reports, and educational initiatives, ensuring that all stakeholders remain informed about progress and developments that support state-wide educational excellence.

**Vice President Hughes** corrected the list of Informational Update items, pointing out that Item C, FY26 Class Size Reduction Report, should be itemized under Agenda Item 7. Consent Agenda.

- a. NRS 385.230: The Annual Report of the State of Public Education
- b. Financial Literacy Council Biennial Report
- c. FY26 Class Size Reduction Report.
- d. NRS 388.890 Report: Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP) Ratios and Strategic Plan Updates (School Year 2024-25)

#### **7. Consent Agenda** (*For Possible Action*)

Information concerning the following consent agenda items has been provided to Board members for study prior to the meeting. Unless a Board member has a question concerning a particular item and asks that it be withdrawn from the consent list, all items are approved in one action.

- a. [Possible Approval of Dual Credit Request: Leadership Academy of Nevada \(LANV\), in partnership with Truckee Meadows Community College \(TMCC\)](#)
- b. [Possible Approval of State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 10, 2025, Revised](#)
- c. [Possible Approval of State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, January 14, 2026](#)
- d. FY26 Class Size Reduction Report.

**Member Braxton** requested that Consent Agenda Item b (Possible Approval of State Board of Education Meeting Minutes, December 10, 2025, Revised) be pulled from Consent Agenda for separate discussion. Regarding Item b, **Member Braxton** pointed out the lengthiness of the proposed meeting minutes. Vice President Hughes reminded Board members of Member Ford's previous request that meeting minutes be produced verbatim.

**Member Orr** raised concerns around the focus of “transparency” in that the Board has inadvertently made documents less helpful to members of the public. She feels there is a need to reconsider producing verbatim meeting minutes since State Board of Education meetings are available online for public viewing. **Member Orr** suggested the use of timestamps in meeting minutes corresponding to the start and end of agenda item discussions.

**Vice President Hughes** asked Member Orr to raise this concern again in Agenda Item 14, Future Agenda Item Requests. Member Braxton agreed with Member Orr and related the experience of receiving verbatim meeting minutes to her time as parent receiving a “flood of information” to review from her children’s teachers. She considered raising a question around the State Board of Education’s Audio/Visual technological capabilities in Agenda Item 14, Future Agenda Item Requests. Member Dawson Owens voiced agreement and support for the previous style of modified verbatim minutes as well as Member Orr’s suggestion of utilizing timestamps.

**Action Taken: Member Braxton moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Member Dawson Owens seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**

**8. *Aligning Board Goals with Current Measures and Metrics (Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action)***

The Board will engage in discussion regarding Board goals connected to measures and metrics that may no longer fully reflect current priorities. The Board may consider action to determine an appropriate process, such as forming a subcommittee or convening a special Board meeting, to review these goals and develop recommendations for consideration by the full Board.

The Board discussed the best process for engaging in future goal-setting to ensure strategic alignment and coherence with the Department and stakeholders.

**Member Braxton** recommended holding a full Board retreat, possibly on a Saturday, to allow sufficient time to process, synthesize, and fully understand the depth and breadth of the topic.

**Member Dawson Owens** and **Member Hudson** voiced strong support for a full Board retreat over a subcommittee structure, emphasizing the benefit of collective digestion and collaboration.

**Action Taken: Member Else moved to create an environment for a Board retreat setting to discuss goals moving forward. Member Hudson seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Next steps will include working on potential dates and developing the agenda.**

**9. *Update on Deferred Department Presentation (Information and Discussion)***

The Department requested additional time to prepare the presentation regarding age criteria for Developmental Delay. As a result, the presentation will be rescheduled and delivered at the May meeting. There was no further discussion on this item.

**10. Presentation on the 2026–2031 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils:  
STIP Target 1 (*Information and Discussion*)**

In alignment with Senate Bill 460 of the 83<sup>rd</sup> Nevada Legislative Session and amendments to NRS 385.111, Lisa Ford, Interim Deputy Superintendent, Student Achievement Division, presented the 2026 data informing STIP Target 1 as part of implementation of the 2026–2031 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils.

**Member Orr** raised questions regarding data showing that only 8 of the 18 school districts, plus the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), currently meet the criteria for High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). She questioned how this was possible given statutory requirements for state-approved lists. Interim Deputy Superintendent Ford clarified that the SPCSA is exempt from certain adoption statutes, and while districts are aligned in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, inconsistencies remain in other content areas.

**Member Orr** expressed concerns that historical state adoption lists were overly lengthy and did not necessarily filter for the best evidence-based programs. Interim Deputy Superintendent Ford confirmed that an HQIM Task Force will be reconvened under incoming leadership to review existing lists, rate materials, establish sunseting processes, and work with organizations like CCSSO to align systems. Member Orr requested that the SPCSA be included in these robust conversations.

**Member Else** noted that fulfilling the entire curriculum list requires extensive time and resources, making it a multi-year hurdle for rural districts where curriculum adoptions like social studies have not been a primary focus. He emphasized that high-quality teaching practices remain the primary driving force for student results, regardless of materials. He also stated that achieving the 75% "access to rigor" target across rural Nevada presents extreme scheduling and course-offering challenges.

**Vice President Hughes** inquired whether career technical education (CTE) courses are automatically categorized as "rigorous" or if they undergo scrutiny regarding standards and materials. Interim Deputy Superintendent Ford and Deputy Superintendent Christy McGill explained that the college and career-ready diploma framework has been strengthened; CTE is now reserved for pathways that result in either an industry-recognized credential or a direct pathway to engineering.

**Member Braxton** referenced a Guinn Center policy report on national K-12 education rankings, noting Nevada's historically low performance. She questioned whether best practices from curriculum yielding positive results could be standardized to ensure statewide consistency. Interim Deputy Superintendent Ford and Vice President Hughes discussed balancing local district control with the structural need to share implementation efforts and prevent districts from working in silos.

**Member Else** reiterated concerns regarding accountability metrics, noting that his district opts to prioritize concurrent enrollment math courses through Western Nevada College (WNC)—where the district cannot dictate university-level curriculum—even

if it fails to "check a box" on state accountability documents. He also expressed long-standing concerns that Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) representatives previously questioned using the 65th percentile growth target as the appropriate measure.

**Member Hudson** emphasized the importance of including active classroom educators in curriculum decision-making and ensuring they receive robust professional development to understand and differentiate high-quality instruction. Vice President Hughes added that future iterations of the STIP must clearly reflect the day-to-day experiences of parents, families, and educators so they understand their roles in achieving these goals.

**Member Dawson Owens** highlighted the *Kids Count* rankings, noting that even when Nevada improves on internal indicators, its ranking may remain stagnant if other states improve faster. She inquired about the accountability mechanisms for the four districts that failed to meet the 5-point literacy gain and questioned whether data explicitly correlates the lack of HQIM use to lower outcomes.

**Superintendent Wakefield** acknowledged the Board's feedback, noting the crucial need to resolve misalignments where positive district choices are penalized by current accountability metrics.

**Member Hudson** inquired whether the Department had explored leveraging existing certified educators who possess specific technical skills or hobbies (e.g., mechanics or sewing) to teach CTE pathways, helping to mitigate workforce barriers and teacher burnout. Deputy Superintendent McGill stated she would gather information and report back.

**Member Carvalho** stressed the importance of creating a deeper partnership with the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) to better align robust institutional CTE programs with K-12 student demands.

**Member Orr** requested that Superintendent Wakefield ensure the Board has an active, collaborative role in writing and developing future iterations of the STIP, rather than simply receiving it as a final presentation.

## **11. Update to 2025 Legislative Statutes Requiring State Board of Education Action** *(Information and Discussion)*

The Board received an update on education-related statutes enacted during the 2025 Legislative Session and reviewed an implementation matrix outlining upcoming responsibilities and timelines calling for action by the State Board of Education. Amelia Thibault, Legislative Liaison for the Nevada Department of Education, presented the update, accompanied by a handout of presentation materials.

The presentation outlined the statutory evolution of roles, noting a gradual legislative shift over the last 15 to 20 years away from granular, administrative oversight (such as individual educator scholarship and grant administration, which shifted to the Department in SB 81 to improve response times) and toward higher-level strategic governance. Seven key pillars of Board authority were highlighted: Regulatory Authority, Assessment Systems, Licensure Actions (including whistleblower and

retaliation appeals), Strategic Policy, Reporting/Data Dissemination, Waivers/Approvals, and Courses of Study.

**Member Orr** sought clarification on the legal governance structure in the event of a fundamental disagreement between the Board and the Department or Superintendent. Deputy Attorney General Christina Georges Burns clarified that while the Attorney General's office represents both entities as part of the Department of Education, an inherent conflict of interest in a legal dispute would require the assignment of separate, unbiased counsel—either internally or via conflict counsel—to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

**Ms. Thibault** detailed assessment modifications under SB 460, noting that while the Board maintains the authority to fund and approve a master list of eligible Read by Grade 3 assessments, school districts are now permitted to select their own assessment from that approved list. The Board remains responsible for setting proficiency cut scores and uniform data standards.

**Ms. Thibault** also outlined changes to the STIP and the Annual State of Education Report under SB 460, noting that the statutory order of operations has inverted: the Department is now responsible for creating these documents in collaboration with the State Board. It remains explicitly clear that the State Board is responsible for adopting its own vision and mission statement to track progress, which may run on a separate but aligned track from the Department's.

**Ms. Thibault** highlighted a significant new accountability mechanism under SB 460 regarding school or district intervention. The Department may designate a school district or charter school sponsor as "low performing" if the State Board issues a formal written complaint for material non-compliance with statutory authority. The entity then has 60 days to respond with a remediation plan.

**Member Orr** inquired whether these material non-compliance complaints would be brought to the Board exclusively by the Department, or if individual citizens/principals would have standing to initiate them. Ms. Thibault noted that SB 460 leaves the intake mechanism open; she suggested bringing this back as a standalone agenda item to co-create an internal process and issue a clear guidance memo to school districts and charter sponsors.

**Member Orr** commented on the K-3 STEM Literacy Pilot under SB 460, urging the Department to provide continuous informational updates throughout the life of the pilot rather than presenting data only at the end of the cycle. This will allow elected Board members to embed critical questions early on and make fully informed decisions regarding future model curricula.

**Ms. Thibault** concluded by discussing Courses of Study, noting that SB 343 repealed the Council to Establish Academic Standards (which had not met in several years), officially placing the direct responsibility of approving academic content standards onto the State Board of Education.

**Vice President Hughes** requested that an updated reference sheet outlining the exact line-by-line boundaries of the Board's purview be provided ahead of the upcoming Board retreat. He reminded members that systemic statutory changes or structural

issues should be funneled through the Board's Legislative Subcommittee to build an advocacy agenda for the next legislative session.

**Member Braxton** emphasized that public transparency is critical, noting that community members and state legislators often do not understand the distinct organizational separation between the NDE and the SBE.

**Member Ford** raised objections to the historical framing of Slide 2, stating it misrepresented the magnitude of the 2011 legislative changes (SB 197). She stated as fact that SB 197 fundamentally stripped power from the electorate by shifting the Board from a fully elected body to a hybrid body (majority appointed), and by transferring direct oversight of the State Superintendent from the Board to the Governor. Ms. Thibault clarified that the presentation focused exclusively on 2023 and 2025 board authority changes, and that Member Ford's request for a comprehensive 2011 historical review was actively scheduled for the next Legislative Subcommittee meeting. Ms. Thibault added that legally, per statute since 1979, the NDE has jointly comprised both the Superintendent and the State Board.

**Member Ford** expressed deep concern over the long-term trajectory of state governance, citing the creation of the Education Service Center (ESC) under the 2025 session. She noted that the ESC operates outside SBE oversight, is funded and appointed by the Governor, and is led by former Superintendent Steve Cannavaro. She warned that the intersection of these mechanisms could create a pathway to convert low-performing public schools into corporate charter school networks.

**Ms. Thibault** clarified that while earlier iterations of the bill included charter school conversion options, those provisions were explicitly removed from the final passed text of SB 460. She further noted that low-performing designations and interventions under SB 460 are assigned to the State Superintendent, not the ESC, and that the ESC was excluded from this presentation because it functions as a separate technical assistance entity similar to regional professional development programs (RPDPs).

**Member Dawson Owens** noted that public polling and extensive waitlists indicate that parents actively desire choice and educational options, adding that municipalities like Henderson and Las Vegas have chosen to sponsor charter schools in response to community demand. She asserted that both district and charter schools serve as public entities and noted that evolving board compositions often bring necessary expertise alongside elected representation.

## **12. Presentation on the 2026–2031 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils: STIP Target 1 (*Information and Discussion*)**

The Department provided an introductory overview of the Read by Grade 3 literacy risk indicator used to identify kindergarten through grade 3 students who require targeted, additional reading interventions. The presentation was led by Education Programs Professional Katie Fink, who was joined virtually by the Read by Grade 3 team and Mike Pacheco from the Assessment Data and Accountability Management (ADAM) team.

**Ms. Fink and Education Programs Professional Lisa Calvert** clarified that the literacy risk indicator is not a measure of reading proficiency; rather, it serves as an

early screening tool. Currently, K-3 students are flagged for additional instructional support if they score at or below the 40th percentile rank nationally on either the NWEA MAP Growth reading assessment or the Curriculum Associates i-Ready reading assessment.

**Ms. Calvert** provided historical context, noting that the 40th percentile rank threshold was originally established by the State Board in 2016 upon the adoption of the NWEA MAP assessment, following collaborative input from state and district literacy teams. The same threshold was later applied to the i-Ready assessment due to score comparability.

**Education Programs Professional Mandy Leytham** outlined upcoming statutory mandates effective July 1, 2028, under NRS 392.780. Beginning in the 2028 school year, a student must achieve a passing score on the uniform reading examination prescribed by the State Board to be promoted to grade 4, unless they qualify for a "good cause exemption."

Per NRS 392.780, the State Board of Education is legally responsible for establishing regulations for:

1. A uniform reading examination to be administered in kindergarten through grade 3.
2. The specific grade 3 passing retention cut score required for promotion to grade 4.
3. An alternative reading examination and its corresponding passing score for students who do not meet the initial threshold.

Department staff emphasized that this presentation serves as the initial groundwork for future, data-driven Board discussions and timeline sessions required well in advance of the 2028 implementation deadline. Vice President Hughes thanked staff for the thorough presentation and for centralizing past materials in the appendices, noting that timely decisions are vital to give school districts adequate runway for workforce planning and resource alignment. The floor was opened to questions, beginning with Member Orr

### **13. Public Comment #2**

There was no public comment.

### **14. Future Agenda Items Requests**

Board members submitted the following requests for future agenda items:

**Member Orr** requested that a standalone agenda item be scheduled to co-create the internal process and clear guidance memo for school districts and charter sponsors regarding material non-compliance complaints under SB 460. She also requested that the Department provide ongoing informational updates throughout the life of the K-3 STEM Literacy Pilot rather than waiting until the end of the cycle.

**Vice President Hughes** requested that a comprehensive reference sheet outlining the exact line-by-line boundaries of the Board's statutory purview be provided to members ahead of the upcoming Board retreat.

**Member Hudson** requested a follow-up report from the Department regarding the viability of leveraging existing certified educators with specific technical skills or hobbies to teach CTE pathways.

### **15. *Adjournment***

The meeting was adjourned at **12:38 PM** by Vice President Hughes.