

**Nevada Department of Education
Nevada State Board of Education
June 25, 2025
9:00 AM**

Office	Address	City	Meeting
Department of Education	2080 E. Flamingo	Las Vegas	Room 114
Department of Education	Virtual/Livestream	Virtual	YouTube Link

Summary Minutes of the Board Meeting

Board Members Present

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

Board Members Absent Excused

Dr. Katherine Dockweiler, President

Department Staff Present

Dr. Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction
Lisa Ford, Interim Deputy Superintendent for the Student Achievement Division
Christy McGill, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement
Megan Peterson, Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment Division
Candance Bortolin, Program Officer, Office of a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment
Angie Castellanos, Administrative Assistant
Ann Marie Dickson, Contractor

Legal Staff Present

Greg Ott, Chief Deputy Attorney General

Audience in Attendance

Anna Binder
Dr. Sheburra Haugsness
Shannon Hessenthaler
Debbie Kaye

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

Meeting called to order at 9:05 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

- a) Dr. Sheburra Haugsness, President, Academy of Universal Metaphysics (AUM)
- b) Craig Statuki, Member of the Public

(A complete copy of the statements are available in Appendix A)

3. Approval of Flexible Agenda

Member Hudson moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Orr seconded. Motion passed.

4. Vice President's Report

Vice President Hughes welcomed the new student member, Evana Lan, from Washoe County. Ms. Lan introduced herself and expressed excitement to serve on the Board.

Vice President Hughes also provided an update on the Innovation and Excellence Commission. He noted that while related legislation did not pass, certain elements were embedded into other bills. The Commission's next steps will focus on updating the accountability system metrics.

Board Member Updates

Member Else shared that he attended the Stellar AI Conference and praised the Department for organizing it.

Member Dawson Owens highlighted the graduation celebration for 100 youth in foster or kinship care, noting the participation of local leaders and community support.

Member Orr reported on the At-Risk Subcommittee's June 12 meeting, which included presentations by Superintendent Canavero and Deputy Peterson. The group requested further analysis from the Department and planned to reconvene on June 30. She also shared her experience attending the Dean's Future Scholars program event at UNR.

Member Braxton reported that she had the opportunity to interview one of Clark County's oldest living principals, Mother Helen Tolen, through the Howard University Alumni Association.

5. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, delivered the Superintendent's Report, providing updates on Department operations, post-legislative work, federal funding, and strategic initiatives.

He began by acknowledging audio-visual issues affecting the Northern Nevada office, which delayed the start of the meeting. He then highlighted recent events, including his attendance at the Dean's Future Scholars 25th Anniversary Celebration and the Stellar AI Conference. Dr. Canavero noted both events emphasized innovation and equity, which continue to be themes the Department is working to integrate into policy and practice.

He reported that the Department had completed the school year data validation process and was preparing to release updated state reporting dashboards. He stated that this year's focus was on ensuring accuracy, as this data serves as the foundation for the state accountability framework and federal reporting requirements.

Dr. Canavero provided a brief overview of key bills from the 2025 Legislative Session. He explained that, following passage of the state budget, the Department was working to implement new legislation and load the new biennial budget into the state financial system. The Department was also preparing guidance documents for school districts to clarify policy and funding implications.

He highlighted Senate Bill (SB) 81 and SB 460 as two major pieces of legislation. SB 81 made several changes to the Read by Grade 3 initiative, including increased flexibility in the use of MAP assessments for early literacy. SB 460 introduced new requirements for foundational literacy training, a STEM literacy pilot

program, adjustments to educator performance evaluation policies, and the creation of a statewide Education Service Center intended to support all districts and charters.

Dr. Canavero also addressed the future of the state assessment system. He explained that Nevada's current MAP contract was extended by one year and emphasized that the Board would need to provide direction regarding long-term assessment planning. He noted that an upcoming agenda item would allow for deeper discussion about the Department's approach to the next procurement cycle.

Finally, Dr. Canavero shared that the Department was developing internal work plans to support strategic priorities and address recommendations from the Efficiency Assessment Report. He affirmed that while capacity remained a challenge, the Department remained focused on improving communication, service delivery, and stakeholder engagement.

Board members asked clarifying questions about the Read by Grade 3 changes, assessment flexibility, and the implications of the Education Service Center legislation. Dr. Canavero confirmed that the Department would provide additional updates in future meetings as implementation plans progressed.

6. Information Updates (*Information Only*)

The Board received an initial recap of the 83rd Legislative Session and an overview of Delta Academy's participation in the Nevada Alternative Performance Framework. Vice President Hughes encouraged members to review materials and consider raising follow-up items during future agenda discussions.

7. Consent Agenda (*For Possible Action*)

Member Hudson moved to approve the consent agenda. Member Braxton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action Regarding the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) Redesign Field Study Year 1 Review and Recommendations for Year 2
(*Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action*)

Kathryn Hoyt, Assistant Director in the Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement (EDLiFE), and Sue Moulden, Vice Chair of the Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC), presented the Year 1 review of the NEPF Redesign Field Study and provided recommendations for Year 2 implementation. The field study was originally approved by the State Board in June 2024 with the goal of piloting streamlined NEPF rubrics and tools to improve clarity, reduce administrative burden, and enhance educator feedback.

Ms. Hoyt explained that the redesigned system preserved the original NEPF standards and scoring domain weights: 65% instructional practice, 20% professional responsibilities, and 15% student performance, while shifting the focus from individual indicators to overall standards. This change simplified the evaluation process by reducing the number of required evidence pieces per standard, consolidating evaluation forms, and shortening the total number of rubric pages. The final summative evaluation form was reduced from five pages to two.

Approximately 85 schools across the state participated in the Year 1 field study, including schools from Elko, Lincoln, Lyon, and Clark Counties, as well as the State Public Charter School Authority. Washoe County initially declined participation but may be included in the second year. Throughout the year, NDE conducted workgroup meetings with participating educators, offered training, maintained an online resource toolkit, and provided office hours for technical assistance. Participants included teachers, principals, supervisors, and district NEPF liaisons.

Ms. Hoyt and Ms. Moulden shared results from the winter survey and spring workgroups. Survey data indicated that 83% of administrators and 67% of teachers agreed that the streamlined rubrics improved clarity and understanding. Sixty percent of teachers found the revised descriptors helpful for guiding their professional growth. Administrator feedback on the efficiency of the new system was mixed, with some requesting clearer guidance on implementation timelines and evaluation pacing.

The presentation included a timeline of major field study milestones from July 2024 to May 2025. The presenters outlined lessons learned and identified areas where TLC recommends adjustments in Year 2, such as:

- Providing stronger training resources and pacing guidance,
- Further clarifying summative evaluation scoring,
- Increasing principal and supervisor participation in workgroups, and
- Enhancing communication between districts and NDE around expectations.

The Teachers and Leaders Council recommended continuing the field study into the 2025–2026 school year with these improvements in place. Board members expressed support for the continuation of the study and emphasized the importance of clear guidance and consistent implementation across districts.

No formal motion was made, but the Board accepted the update and supported the Department and Teachers and Leaders Council in continuing the field study into its second year with the proposed adjustments.

9. Information and Discussion Regarding the Nevada Department of Education Efficiency Report *(Information and Discussion)*

Interim Superintendent Canavero presented the Nevada Department of Education's (NDE) Efficiency Report, which was developed by Public Works LLC. He explained that the report was an external assessment conducted in response to concerns raised during the 2023 Legislative Session regarding the Department's capacity, structure, and responsiveness to districts and schools.

The report included over 50 recommendations to improve efficiency and effectiveness within the Department. These recommendations were organized into themes such as governance, strategic planning, internal communication, staffing, service delivery, and structural reorganization.

Interim Superintendent Canavero highlighted several key findings from the report. First, the Department has significant capacity issues, largely due to under-resourcing and difficulty with recruitment and retention. He noted that the NDE operates with considerably fewer staff than education agencies in similar states. Second, the report emphasized that current organizational silos within the Department create confusion for both internal and external stakeholders. As a result, the report recommended rebranding and restructuring several offices to improve clarity and service.

He also acknowledged concerns raised in a written public comment submitted by Craig Statuki, which was read earlier in the meeting. The comment criticized the report's heavy reliance on jargon and questioned the practicality of rebranding efforts without first addressing core issues like staffing shortages. Mr. Statuki emphasized that such shortages were the primary cause of inefficiencies and that reorganizing offices alone would not solve the problem.

Board members discussed the report and its implications. Member Orr expressed appreciation for the analysis but echoed concerns about staffing. She stated that many inefficiencies result from being understaffed, not from lack of effort or intent. She emphasized that any restructuring should not place additional burdens on already limited personnel. Member Braxton asked for clarification on how the recommendations would be prioritized and implemented. Interim Superintendent Canavero stated that the

Department was in the process of reviewing the report's recommendations and integrating them into its internal work planning process for the upcoming biennium.

The item was informational, and no action was taken. Board members expressed interest in revisiting the report in future meetings to track implementation progress.

10. Information and Discussion Regarding the State Testing Calendar *(Information and Discussion)*

Mike Pacheco, Education Program Supervisor in the Office of Assessment, provided an overview of the state assessment calendar, highlighting both federal and state constraints as well as areas where limited flexibility may exist. He explained that Nevada is federally required to administer assessments in English Language Arts and Math for grades 3 through 8 and once in high school, and Science at least once within each of three grade spans. These assessments must align with rigorous academic standards and meet federal approval.

He noted that state law, specifically Senate Bill 75 passed in 2015, mandates that students must receive a minimum of 120 instructional days before standardized testing can begin. This requirement aligns with the Smarter Balanced Consortium's recommendation that assessments occur after approximately two-thirds of the school year.

Mr. Pacheco stated that the current testing calendar mirrors that of prior years, with minor adjustments due to shifts in the school calendar. The calendar had recently been approved and distributed to districts. He also emphasized that data reporting constraints, including statutory requirements to publicly release the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) data by September 15, limit the state's ability to extend testing timelines. With the passage of Senate Bill 460, that deadline may now move even earlier, to as soon as the third week of August. These constraints result in a tight timeline for test scoring, validation, and public reporting, especially as districts have requested faster return of results.

Member Orr, who had requested this agenda item, expressed interest in exploring greater flexibility, especially for districts with longer instructional calendars. She referenced other states that allow assessments to extend into June without violating federal requirements and questioned whether Nevada could do the same. Superintendent Canavero and Mr. Pacheco clarified that, while federal regulations provide some room for interpretation, Nevada's state laws and reporting deadlines currently prevent extending the testing window into June.

Vice President Hughes and DAG Ott confirmed that legislative changes would likely be needed to adjust testing timelines meaningfully. Member Else and Member Walker echoed concerns about the usefulness of assessment data when results arrive after students have moved on to the next grade. They expressed hope that future innovations, such as artificial intelligence, might accelerate the scoring and reporting process.

The Board did not take action on this item, but members expressed interest in continued discussions with stakeholders about potential adjustments to the state testing calendar.

11. Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action Regarding the Nevada Ready Assessments and the Procurement Timeline and Key Activities *(Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action)*

Dr. Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction; Ann Marie Dickson, Contractor for the Student Achievement Division; Bill Taylor, State Purchasing Director; and Ryan Vradenburg, State Purchasing Officer, presented the proposed timeline and key activities for the upcoming procurement of the federally mandated Nevada summative assessments.

The presentation outlined the process to procure the next assessment system for grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics, grades 5 and 8 Science, and the Nevada Alternative Assessment. The presenters explained the importance of starting the procurement process in the 2025–2026 school year to allow adequate time for vendor selection, onboarding, training, and technical readiness before the expiration of the current contract following the 2026–2027 school year.

Representatives from Nevada State Purchasing reviewed the state’s procurement protocols and confirmed that the Board has a formal role in the assessment adoption process, including approval of vendor recommendations. The Board was asked to consider its preferred level of engagement throughout the process.

Discussion also addressed the possibility of Nevada developing its own state-designed assessment system. Member Ford advocated for this option—referred to as “Option 4”—emphasizing the potential for a homegrown solution to better reflect Nevada’s priorities and reduce long-term dependence on third-party vendors. She highlighted the opportunity to leverage local expertise and resources, including educators, the tech community, and public media platforms.

Vice President Hughes, DAG Greg Ott, and Purchasing Officer Vradenburg clarified that the current agenda item did not allow for action on Option 4. A separate agenda item would need to be added at a future meeting in order for the Board to explore and vote on the concept of developing a Nevada-owned assessment system.

In the context of the current procurement process, the Board was presented with three engagement options:

1. Remain informed throughout the process
2. Co-lead the process with the Nevada Department of Education
3. Take the lead in the process with support from the Department

Board members discussed the value of collaborative leadership and emphasized the importance of remaining involved in decision-making, while acknowledging the Department’s limited staffing capacity.

Member Braxton moved to proceed with Option 2, to co-lead the RFP and stakeholder engagement process in partnership with the Nevada Department of Education. Member Hudson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board agreed to revisit the broader vision for the future assessment system during the July 30, 2025, meeting and potentially agendaize a discussion about a Nevada-developed solution at that time.

12. Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action for the Finalization of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Search Criteria and Recruitment Process (*Information, Discussion, and for Possible Action*)

The Board reviewed and discussed the finalization of the job description, qualifications, and recruitment process for the next State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The discussion was informed by prior Board meetings, stakeholder feedback, and analysis of community survey responses regarding desired attributes in the next Superintendent.

Vice President Hughes provided a brief recap of previous actions, including the Board’s April 3, 2025, special meeting in which members discussed and recommended superintendent qualifications. During the

May 14, 2025, meeting, members reviewed initial trends from public input, and in advance of the current meeting, all Board members received the full set of community survey data.

The Board was presented with a proposed posting and asked to finalize its contents to enable a public launch of the application on July 1. The proposed timeline included a 20-day posting window, redaction and preparation of applications by NDE staff, public posting of candidate materials, and candidate review during the July 30, 2025, Board meeting. Finalist interviews would be scheduled for early August.

Board members discussed the draft job posting and debated whether certain qualifications should be made more specific. In particular, Member Orr raised a question about whether prior classroom teaching experience should be a mandatory qualification. Several members agreed that while educational expertise is essential, the posting should not exclude candidates with strong leadership experience outside of the classroom. The consensus was to maintain language that invites diverse candidates with relevant education leadership backgrounds.

Member Ford expressed concern that the existing draft job posting lacked specificity and failed to reflect the depth of the community survey results and the Board's prior discussions. She emphasized the importance of prioritizing candidates who are pro-public education, demonstrated understanding of Nevada's education governance and regional diversity, and exhibit strong communication skills both internally and externally. Other members expressed a desire to maintain a streamlined and broadly accessible posting to attract a wide pool of candidates, with the evaluation process used to assess the nuanced qualities the Board seeks.

Chief Deputy Attorney General Greg Ott advised the Board that if they wished to approve the revised posting as a full body, it would require calling a special meeting, which could delay the planned July 1 launch. To remain on schedule, the Board instead chose to delegate final review of the posting to Member Braxton, with NDE staff responsible for incorporating the Board's guidance and making minor edits.

Board members then discussed the structure of the application process. They agreed that candidates would be required to submit a resume, cover letter, and a video presentation. The video would allow applicants to present their qualifications and educational vision.

Legal guidance was provided regarding open meeting law and confidentiality, including the requirement that application review and candidate interviews comply with public meeting requirements and that personally identifiable information must be redacted prior to public posting.

Board members expressed interest in using rubric to evaluate applications and agreed to revisit and finalize the rubric criteria at the July 30 meeting.

No formal motion was required, as the Board reached consensus to proceed with the July 1 job posting and delegate final review to Member Braxton.

13. Public Comment #2

Public comment was received by the following:

a) Anna Binder

(A complete copy of the statements are available in Appendix A)

14. Future Agenda Items (Information and Discussion)

1. Discussion on the Development of a Nevada-Owned Assessment System

Member Ford requested that the Board formally consider "Option 4," which would involve the state designing and owning its own assessment system. Due to Open Meeting Law constraints, this item was

not eligible for action during the June 25 meeting and would need to be placed on a future agenda for formal consideration.

2. **Clarification of the Board’s Vision for Statewide Assessments**
Vice President Hughes and Interim Superintendent Canavero suggested that the Board engage in a deeper discussion to define its long-term vision for the state assessment system. This conversation is anticipated to occur during the July 30, 2025, meeting.
3. **Monitoring Implementation of the NDE Efficiency Report Recommendations**
Board members expressed interest in revisiting the Nevada Department of Education Efficiency Report in future meetings to monitor implementation progress. While no specific date was set, the item is expected to return in subsequent updates.
4. **Finalization of Rubric Criteria for Superintendent Candidate Evaluation**
The Board agreed to revisit and finalize the rubric criteria used to evaluate candidates for the Superintendent of Public Instruction position during the July 30, 2025, meeting.
5. **Continued Review of the State Testing Calendar and Statutory Constraints**
Member Orr raised concerns about the rigidity of the state testing calendar and whether Nevada could explore more flexible testing windows. While the Board did not take action, the topic was identified as one to potentially revisit in consultation with stakeholders and legal counsel.

15. Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 2:22 P.M.

Appendix A: Statements given during public comments

1. Dr. Sheburra Haugsness, President of Academy of Universal Metaphysics
2. Craig Statucki, Member of the Public
3. Anna Binder, Member of the Public

Appendix A, Item 1: DR. SHEBURRA HAUGSNESS

Hello everybody. Thank you for having me. I just wanted to make a quick comment just expressing my gratitude and excitement about a new public I used to be a public school teacher but now I'm running a private school called the Academy of universal metaphysics, AUM. It is the first Academy of holistic education grounded in metaphysics and universal love as its spiritual framework. So, thank you for having me here. Our school is on the agenda for your review and approval today so thank you so much.

Appendix A, Item 2: CRAIG STATUCKI

President Dockweiler, Members of the State Board of Education, and Interim Superintendent Canavero: I am submitting public comment on agenda items 9 and 11 of the June 25, 2025, State Board of Education meeting.

Regarding Item 11:

I urge the Board to re-evaluate the current timeline for administering the high school science assessment. Presently, students take the exam at the end of ninth grade—often before they’ve begun, let alone completed, their career and technical education (CTE) programs. Despite this, CTE programs are held federally accountable for science assessment outcomes through performance indicator 2S3 under Perkins V.

If the Board reviews performance data submitted to the U.S. Department of Education prior to the 2024 Perkins program year, it will note a consistent decline in pass rates—from 30.47% in Perkins Program Year 2021 to

16.74% in Perkins Program Year 2023 This trend does not reflect the strong performance and graduation rates of CTE program completers, and it raises serious concerns about the appropriateness and alignment of this assessment being taken by ninth graders.

I respectfully request that the Board direct the Nevada Department of Education to conduct a comprehensive review of the science assessment's timing, alignment with standards, and the instructional support provided to districts. The assessment should accurately measure students' knowledge and readiness—not penalize programs before students have had meaningful engagement in CTE coursework.

Regarding Item 9:

As the former Director of the Office of Career Readiness, Adult Learning, and Education Options, I participated in the efficiency study process. At the time, I voiced concerns about inconsistencies in both qualitative and quantitative data collection. I hope these issues have been addressed in the process of developing the final report.

However, I remain concerned that the report, while extensive at 469 pages, relies heavily on educational jargon and buzzwords. If the Department is considering rebranding offices and divisions as recommended, it should prioritize clarity and accessibility for the public. Names like "Future Ready" may sound aspirational, but they do not clearly communicate the office's function to families or educators seeking support.

Ultimately, the most pressing need for improving agency efficiency is increasing and retaining staff. Challenges such as conflicting district guidance, inconsistent technical assistance, and slow response times stem from understaffing and a lack of clear role documentation. Without sufficient staffing or a plan to reduce turnover, reorganizing offices will amount to little more than rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic.

Though Idaho was not included in the staffing comparison, I offer this for context: when I served as Nevada's CTE director, my Idaho counterpart received approximately \$5 million less in federal Perkins funding, yet had 50 more CTE staff and \$57 million more in state funding. If we expect our students to be globally competitive, we must ensure our state is equipped with the resources to support them. Right now, we are not even competitive with Idaho.

I urge the Board and Department to focus on addressing the root causes of inefficiency—particularly staffing shortages—before undertaking structural or branding changes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Appendix A, Item 3: ANNA BINDER

I'm Anna Binder. I'm a parent advocate and proud member of Nevada's disability and education communities and the interim chair and vice chair of the Nevada governor's council on developmental disabilities. I'm speaking today with a simple but important ask that we commit to using person first language when referring to students who participate in alternative assessments. These are students with the most significant cognitive disabilities not cognitively disabled students. They are children first learners first and humans first. Federal guidance already models this language, and so should we, when we reduce a child to a diagnosis, risk reinforcing stigma even unintentionally. But when we say students with disabilities or students with the most significant cognitive disabilities we uphold both dignity and clarity. It's not just respectful, it's accurate and aligned with how. Expect to be seen. These students are held to high expectations and are achieving real academic gains under alternate academic standards. Our language should reflect the same belief in their humanity and potential. Thank you for considering the small change that sends a powerful message, Of Inclusion, for all of Nevada's students and for the record I've been attending these meetings well before Danielle joined this board.