

The state's teacher shortage.

What are the challenges your district has recruiting teachers?

Carson City: Difficulty in recruiting teachers is an industry-wide problem. Until education is valued to a higher degree, the industry will continue to languish. Pre-service students and post-degree teachers are seeking higher compensation, less challenging working conditions, and greater job satisfaction.

Churchill: Not knowing the funding until late in the hiring season hurts our recruiting. Being able to start early helps immensely in the recruiting and hiring process.

Douglas: The cost of living in Douglas County is high and most of our positions are for special education. The overall pool of teachers is very small across the country.

Elko: Recruiting to our rural areas. We supply a \$10,000 signing bonus and supply reasonable priced housing at some of our schools sites and it is still difficult to fill positions. Filling hard to fill positions, science, math, counselors, CTE, librarians. We are now seeing a shortage in the Elementary teaching field as well.

Esmeralda: Remoteness, no amenities, no relief from the desert, multi grade classes though small require more preps, relatively low salary and healthcare benefits.

Eureka: In our small rural area, we have struggled to find qualified applicants willing to move to our remote location. We are very concerned with the upcoming vacancies that we will have in the future. We have several teachers that will be retiring within the next 5 -10 years

Humboldt: The state and federal legislated requirements has created a scenario in which the desire of potential teacher candidates is extinguished. Education has become over legislated and under-funded. This dis-incentivizes potential teachers. Colleges are seeing fewer teacher candidates which creates challenges to hiring.

Lander: Pure and simple – finding enough candidates to be able to choose qualified hires.

Lincoln: Location and housing.

Lyon: It is extremely difficult to fill teaching positions in LCSD. The rural nature of the schools, located in five different locals within the county, with lack of urban-style living makes it a challenge to fill positions. There is also difficulty retaining teachers as they leave to move closer to urban life.

Nye: Remote rural schools, housing, medical facilities, and lack of incentives for teachers to go to remote rurals. We are competing with Washoe and Clark for Nevada teacher graduates.

Mineral: Our rural location, the fact that Mineral County is 16th of 17 counties in pay, lack of housing and child care, we are a remote location that detracts from socialization activities, and our online application program is not convenient for applicants.

Pershing: Difficulty in recruiting teachers is an industry-wide problem. Until education is valued to a higher degree, the industry will continue to languish. Pre-service students and post-degree teachers are seeking higher compensation, less challenging working conditions, and greater job satisfaction.

Storey: Math and Special Education seem to be critically short.

White Pine: Remote location--proximity to shopping and entertainment. Small town life in general is something that not everyone enjoys--hence why small towns remain small. Also, employment for spouses can be an issue. Last, the amount of work it takes to be a teacher is not commensurate with the salary they earn.

If you had vacancies you could not fill, in what areas did the vacancies occur?

Carson City: Educators with specific license types are always in short demand. Special Education, Math teachers, and speech pathologists top our list

Churchill: Music, Special Education, Math, Elementary positions.

Douglas: Our vacancies occurred in special education.

Elko: This really depends on the communities in our district. We always have the SPED, math, science, and counselor openings. In some of our schools we have had to place long term subs into our elementary and high school positions.

Esmeralda: K8 in all areas, Literacy, SPED, Counselor.

Eureka: We were unable to fill a 4th grade elementary education position for one half of this school year. Several rural districts have cut positions in recent years due to the lack of qualified applicants.

Humboldt: Annually we are unable to fill special education positions. In addition, we are now struggling to hire math, music and CTE staff.

Lander: Elementary education, Special Ed, Math, Science, CTE, counseling, speech, literacy specialist

Lincoln: Part time PreK

Lyon: Elementary Ed, Pre-K, Sped Resource, Sped CLS, Psychologists, Early Childhood, School Nurse. Music, English Language Arts (secondary)

Mineral: High School – world languages, physical education, STEAM, Business Computer applications, mathematics, and special education. Ongoing elementary positions (K-6) that vary year to year, this year it was a second grade position filled with a long term substitute.

Nye: Math, Instructional coaches, Special Education, ELA, Science, Pre K, Elementary teachers

Pershing: We have vacancies in Elementary Education, Music, Automotive, Alternative Education and SPED.

Storey: None

White Pine: Special education.

What has been your best recruiting method (Ex. career fairs? On-line advertising?)

Carson City: Any honest thing that works.

Churchill: We are collecting better data this year to see what the best method is for us. We are attending 8 career fairs and are advertising on 3 online forums in addition to social media

Douglas: Recruiting online has been most fruitful. We do attend career fairs, but often the candidates really do not want to leave their state.

Elko: Utilizing our local college (GBC) as a partnership to “grow our own”. They have been a pipeline for us. They just do not have as many prospective teachers as we need. ARL programs have helped. This year we are sending teachers to the career fairs that we hired them from in hopes of them selling our district to prospective teachers. We are also allowing an administrator to attend with hiring powers. We shall see.....

Esmeralda: On-line and word of mouth.

Eureka: Meeting individually with college education programs. (Word of mouth from existing staff)

Humboldt: Career fairs and “growing our own” through HCSD graduates returning to the district, or through the ARL program

Lander: We attended more than a dozen career fairs last year and only actually hired one person from that. We have offered employees \$1,000 finder’s fee to recommend someone to come to our district. We have not found anything yet that ‘works’.

Lincoln: Building capacity within our current employees who seek their teacher degree and students who come back with their degree.

Lyon: LCSD has started a Grow Your Own program through a competitive grant from the NDE. We are excited and hopeful that this program will significantly increase the pool of teachers in hard-to-fill areas of need. The program provides financial assistance to current employees who are seeking teaching degrees in exchange for teaching in LCSD for three years.

Mineral: Face-to-face interaction with potential teachers.

Nye: Our new board approved employee recruitment process with money offered for successfully employed staff (employee referral program).

Pershing: We have relied on word of mouth and online job postings. We do not have the resources to go to career fairs or pay for on-line advertising.

Storey: Phone Calls

White Pine: Zero success at career fairs. Online advertising produces a few applicants. Many positions have been filled by local folks through the ARL route. That has been our most successful method.

Do you have any recommendations to the Legislature that could assist in alleviating the shortage?

Carson City: Reduce education legislation that adds to the workload and stress of staff. Increase funding levels so that 1st year teachers can be on financial par with other bachelor degreed graduates

Churchill: Money and benefits always talk. Health insurance continues to rise. PERS is great. Continue to improve on the licensure process, it has improved noticeably over the last two years.

Douglas: Limit the amount of new regulations and legislation that is piled upon the profession each session. Teachers are overwhelmed and frustrated with all of the new requirements imposed upon them. Focus on streamlining the requirements already in place.

Consider a way to obtain new funding for increasing the wages of teachers across the state.

Elko: Raise the per pupil base to adequately pay teachers and fund education. Remove the bureaucratic over site that is added each year in the legislature and treat teachers like professionals.

Esmeralda: Pay increases and school loan assistance? sorry. Long term offer of some tuition help for students going into Nevada Colleges to be teachers.

Eureka: Hosting an in-state teacher fair for all districts. Partner with Higher Ed institutions from across the nation and provide reduced accommodations for teacher candidates to come to Nevada. The uncertainty of SB543 is discouraging teachers to relocate to rural districts.

Humboldt: Treat teachers as the professionals that we all expect them to be. Over legislating every aspect of education leads to a lack of desire to enter the profession. Every legislative session adds additional requirements, without the compensation or teacher ratios, to provide incentives.

Lander: We genuinely appreciate the leeway the dept. of licensing has given in allowing us to work with long-term subs, etc. as needed while we put qualified people in the classrooms.

Lincoln: Elevate the inconsistent pay structure from one district to another with adequately funding all.

Teachers leave Lincoln County School District usually after 28 to 30 years of service. They retire. If they do leave sooner it is the spouses employment opportunity outside of the County.

Lyon: New hire incentives are wonderful, however; every other year, we receive the funding too late for recruitment. It would be more effective to approve funding for the incentives at the beginning of the legislative session. Funding must be legislated, then the State Board of Education must approve it and then Districts receive the funding. Recruitment begins in February, which is when Districts must advertise the incentives. Hiring has already occurred by the time Districts receive funding in late winter of every odd year.

Eliminate the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF). Nevada educators are professionals working in one of the noblest professions we have. Requiring them to be evaluated by a statewide system when no other state employees are required to do so is a demeaning practice that prohibits new educators from entering the profession. It is also causing an exit of existing educators from the profession.

Create a statewide recruitment initiative with incentives attached. This can't simply fall on each individual school district. There are federal loan forgiveness programs for new teachers who teach in Title I schools. Perhaps the state could create a loan forgiveness/reimbursement program for new teachers who teach at Title I schools (or 1-2 star schools) in Nevada for 5 or 10 years.

Initial teacher licensure and re-licensure needs to become less arduous with more acceptance of out of state and out of country licensure. Additionally, all the extra requirements for teacher licensure need to be eliminated.

Mineral: Support to rural district for affordable housing and child care.

Nye: Offer loan forgiveness to a new college graduate who earns a teaching degree and teaches in Nevada for a minimum of three years following graduation □ Offer college scholarships to any Nevada high school graduate who pursues a teaching degree anywhere in the country but comes back to work in Nevada for a minimum of five years following graduation □ Fund education appropriately. Remove bureaucratic oversight added each year in the legislature and treat educators like the professionals they are. Provide funding for additional CTE educational sequences aligning to postsecondary credits in Nevada. Offering students incentives to go directly into the post-secondary education programs. □ Limit the number of new initiatives passed each legislative session to prevent overwhelming teachers

Pershing: N/A

Storey: I believe we need to be very mindful of the impact bills like AB 168 can have on teacher morale and ultimately recruitment.

White Pine: Yes! Teachers feel trapped and discouraged because of "star ratings." They understand the need for accountability relating to academic performance. They support measures of proficiency and growth as defined in the NSPF. But **there is more, more, more, more to a school and its staff and students than stars! To label a school's performance with a star or even five stars is to insult each and every educator, student, and family and the work they do daily.** If the legislature wants to help encourage people to become teachers, they should revise the NSPF--in particular for elementary and middle schools--to include indicators that provide a more holistic representation of what happens in a school as opposed to only focusing on academic performance. What about music and art programs? What about robotics and other college and career opportunities for students? Where does this play into the NSPF? What incentive is there for teachers to do anything other than drill and kill students in preparation for the SBAC? This demoralizing for educators, students, and parents. It needs to change.

Second, if we want teachers to be viewed as professionals like doctors and lawyers, they need to be paid significantly more. This cannot occur unless the legislature commits wholesale to adequacy in education funding. The APA report lays out figures needed to adequately fund education. And legislators have worked to change the funding model. But

if there is not an infusion of money into the new formula, many districts will be "stuck" on their current number for years and years. This not only stalls progress with regard to teacher pay and benefits, but it actually harms it as the cost of living will most certainly increase but districts will not be able to afford providing any COLAs because the per pupil dollar amount will be frozen. This will **destroy** any progress that has been made in recent

years. As it stands now looking at this model, there is very little reason for any educator to continue to believe in Nevada's public education system.

Do you have any data demonstrating any trends in teacher retention? For example, do you perform any exit surveys to understand why teachers are leaving your district and perhaps the profession when they depart?

Carson City: Teachers in our district leave for a variety of reasons. However, the largest reason for teachers leaving is due to a change in a spouse's employment or retirement.

Churchill: We have recently collected this data in our district. At this time the leading reasons in our community is military transfer and retirement.

Douglas: DCSD has a very low turnover. Our retention rate is 96%.

Elko: We do not at this time. Most of our teachers leave because they are retiring. Transfers of teacher spouses in the mining industry also cause departures.

Esmeralda: Only qualitative and professional data judgement. See all the issues presented above.

Eureka: No, the majority of our teachers finish out their career in Eureka County

Humboldt: Historically we have been fortunate that teachers will spend their careers in HCSD. Recently, we are seeing new teachers coming and going, many citing burdensome requirements, while others have no connection to the rural communities.

Lander: We do not have any such data

Lincoln: Teachers leave Lincoln County School District usually after 28 to 30 years of service. They retire. If they do leave sooner it is the spouse's employment opportunity outside of the County.

Lyon: The following represent data from Lyon CSD exiting employees over the past two years:

- 60% were with LCSD for 11+ years, 4% were 6-10 years, and 36% were with us for 1-5 years.
- 40% cited retirement as their primary reason for leaving LCSD, followed by 36% citing relocation, 8% identified "challenges with supervisor(s)", 4% identified "challenges with colleagues," and 12% identified "other" as their reason for leaving.
- 87.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor provided collaborative opportunities that supported the teacher's professional learning and that they were provided with professional learning opportunities to support their needs.
- 87.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they were empowered to carry out their job successfully.
- 79% agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor treated the staff fairly and consistently as well as promoted cooperation, collaboration and a positive culture.

- 83% agreed or strongly agreed that their supervisor provided ongoing feedback regarding their performance and that their supervisor cared about them and the work they were doing for students.
- 83% agreed or strongly agreed that they would work for their supervisor again.
- 87.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend LCSD to others as a great place to work.

Nye: Yes. In January 2019 we began voluntary exit surveys for all employees and collect data. We have not been collecting data long enough to identify trends at this time.

Mineral: We are currently researching our exit interviews for trends, however, most indicate the lack of salary, financial incentives and housing that would help recruit and retain personnel to Mineral County

Pershing: Increase the pay to a level that entices students to pursue education at an equal level of other professions that require similar education/degrees. Work on legislation that can assist in bringing respect back to the classroom instead of legislation that erodes the classroom.

Storey: I have verbal exit interviews. Our district does not really see teachers exiting the profession.

White Pine: Yes, we perform exit interviews. People indicate that they leave due to the difficulty of the work, the public scrutiny as described above, and the lack of compensation when compared to the difficulty of the work required also as described above.