

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Nevada Revised Statutes 218.5352

The following is a summary of the recommendations adopted by the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) at its August 21, 2008, meeting and further developed at its meeting on October 7, 2008. A bill draft request (BDR) number corresponds to each recommendation for legislation.

STATEWIDE TESTING OF PUPILS AND REPORTING OF RESULTS

The members of the LCE adopted the following proposals relating to statewide testing of pupils and reporting of the results.

1. Amend the statutes to require the Department of Education to adopt an official model to measure and report pupil academic growth from year to year. Require schools, school districts, and the State Board of Education to apply the model and report findings, based on the use of the model, in their annual accountability reports along with the measures used to determine adequate yearly progress. **(BDR 34-294)**
2. Amend the statutes to provide that a pupil may be eligible to obtain a high school diploma, according to alternative criteria, if the pupil has failed the writing portion of the high school proficiency examination at least twice before beginning grade 12, rather than as existing statute requires that the pupil must have failed the writing portion at least three times. **(BDR 34-294)**

FUNDING AND BUDGET REDUCTIONS

The members of the LCE took the following actions with regard to proposals relating to funding and budget reductions.

3. Amend the statutes to provide for a waiver of required expenditures for textbooks, instructional hardware, and instructional supplies, which includes a process for application by a school district, a definition of economic hardship, a limitation on the length of time of the waiver, and prohibitions on the use of money that would have been required to be expended as maintenance of effort. **(BDR 34-295)**
4. Send a letter to the Governor, with copies to the chairs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, expressing support as funds become available for restoration and continued funding of the staff positions in the

Department of Education provided by the 74th Legislature and the 23rd Special Session, including the following positions:

- Parent involvement coordinator;
- Gifted and talented coordinator; and
- Empowerment coordinator.

5. Send a letter to the Governor, with copies to the chairs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, expressing support as funds become available for restoration and continued funding for specific educational programs provided by the 74th Legislature and the 23rd Special Session, including the following programs:

- Expansion of full-day kindergarten;
- Planning for and establishment of empowerment schools;
- Biennial funding of educational technology;
- Expansion of career and technical education programs;
- Support for gifted and talented programs;
- Allocations to the school districts in meeting electricity, heating, and cooling costs; and
- Appropriations to the Account for Programs for Innovation and the Prevention of Remediation to be awarded as grants by the Commission on Educational Excellence.

6. Amend the statutes and appropriate funds as follows:

- a. Provide an appropriation from the State General Fund to the Distributive School Account for transfer to the four school districts serving as fiscal agents for the continuation of the four Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs). Provide an appropriation to the RPDP Statewide Coordinating Council for statewide administrator training. Also provide an appropriation for the Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation to evaluate RPDPs. **(BDR 34-296)**

- b. Provide the following with regard to educational technology:

- (1) Provide an appropriation from the State General Fund to the Department of Education to allow the Commission on Educational Technology to continue the grants to the school districts for educational technology **(BDR 34-296)**; and
- (2) Amend the statutes to require each school district to submit in its application to the Commission on Educational Technology the following: its priorities for purchasing and maintaining educational technology, whether the funding is for the continuation of a program or for the establishment of a new program,

and all funds requested and received from all other sources for the same or similar proposals. **(BDR 34–296)**

- c. Provide an appropriation from the State General Fund to the Interim Finance Committee to continue contractual services to provide a web-based program designed to provide parents with individualized criterion-referenced test results and resources aimed at improving student performance. **(BDR 34–296)**

CHARTER SCHOOLS

The members of the LCE took the following actions with regard to proposals relating to charter schools.

7. Amend the statutes to establish a charter school institute as an independent entity, including provisions creating a board, repealing the authority of the State Board of Education to sponsor charter schools, the payment of administrative fees, and an appropriation for initial costs. **(BDR 34–297)**
8. Amend the statutes to provide that a sponsor of a charter school may appoint one member of a charter school governing body in addition to those required by statute. **(BDR 34–298)**
9. Amend the statutes to provide that the current yearly payment of administrative fees from the charter school to its sponsor shall be changed to quarterly payments. **(BDR 34–298)**
10. Amend the statutes to require the submission of a charter school’s renewal application not less than 120 days prior to the expiration of the current charter. **(BDR 34–298)**
11. Amend the statutes to require each regional training program to provide services to teachers and administrators who are employed in charter schools sponsored by the State or the Nevada System of Higher Education, or in any university school for profoundly gifted pupils, if the school is located in the region of the training program. **(BDR 34–298)**

SCHOOL AND CAMPUS SAFETY

The members of the LCE adopted the following proposal relating to school and campus safety.

12. Amend the statutes to define bullying and include bullying in the training, data collection, and reporting required of school districts for a safe and respectful learning environment. **(BDR 34–303)**

COMMISSION ON EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The members of the LCE adopted the following proposal relating to the Commission on Educational Excellence.

13. Amend the statutes to require that in funding commercially available remediation programs, the Commission on Educational Excellence must only approve grant applications that include approved programs on the list of effective remedial programs. **(BDR 34-299)**
14. Amend the statutes to provide that the Legislative Auditor shall include in his biennial audit of the programs funded by the Commission on Educational Excellence a study that reviews the movement of funds from the Commission to the grant recipients, a determination whether the funds were used at the school or consortia level for the program for which the funds were received, and recommendations for the most efficient use of State funds at the school or consortium level. **(BDR 34-299)**
15. Amend the statutes to provide for the following changes to the grant application: require an applicant to indicate whether the funding is for the continuation of a program or for the establishment of a new program and list all funds requested and received from all other sources for the same or similar proposals. **(BDR 34-299)**

EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

The members of the LCE took the following actions with regard to proposals relating to school personnel.

16. Send letters to the deans and heads of the colleges, schools, and departments of education at the institutions of the Nevada System of Higher Education and to the State Board of Education, asking them to work together to ensure that teacher education programs, at all levels of licensure and in all subject endorsements, include instruction in specific areas. Require them to report on the status of this request to the Legislature and the chairs of the standing committees on education by December 1, 2008.
17. Amend the statutes to eliminate the requirement that an applicant for licensure from another state, pursuant to a reciprocal agreement, must have previous experience in teaching or other educational functions, if the applicant has successfully completed licensing examinations that are substantially equivalent to the exams required in Nevada. **(BDR 34-300)**
18. Amend the statutes to require the Commission on Professional Standards in Education provide regulations on training programs for substitute teachers. Include a waiver for those applicants for substitute licenses that hold a current or expired Nevada teaching license or hold a license from another state. Provide that a regional training program

shall provide instruction for substitute teachers for the member school districts of the region and that a school district, providing an equivalent program, may opt out of the program provided by the regional training program. Require the Department of Education to record completion of a training program on a substitute teacher's license. Require an individual seeking licensure as a substitute to complete a training program and prohibit a school district from employing a substitute who has not completed a training program. **(BDR 34-300)**

19. Take the following actions regarding incentives to recruit and retain teachers:
 - a. Provide an appropriation to continue a program of signing bonuses in the amount of \$2,000 to newly hired teachers. **(BDR 34-296)**
 - b. Provide for a transitory section directing the Superintendent of Public Instruction to conduct a study of the effectiveness of signing bonuses. **(BDR 34-296)**
 - c. Send a letter to the Superintendent of Public Instruction expressing the intent of the Committee that he monitor the impact of signing bonuses and that he report to the Committee before the beginning of the 75th Session of the Legislature.
20. Take the following actions regarding teacher pay-for-performance programs:
 - a. Send a letter to the Governor, with copies to the chairs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, expressing support for restoration and continued funding for the pilot program of performance pay and enhanced compensation program for the recruitment and retention of licensed teachers provided by the 23rd Special Session.
 - b. Provide for a transitory section clarifying that the component of career leadership advancement options to maximize the retention of teachers in the classroom includes the support of a teacher mentoring program. **(BDR 34-300)**
21. Amend the statutes to require that school district boards of trustees and the State Board of Education report in their annual accountability reports the ratio of pupils to counselors at each school level. **(BDR 34-300)**
22. Take the following actions regarding training for teachers to qualify to teach Advanced Placement (AP) courses:
 - a. Send a letter to each of the regional training programs, urging the governing body to determine the need in the region for teachers to be trained to teach AP courses offered by the College Board. Urge them to set aside funds for the purpose of providing support for teachers in the region to obtain training to qualify to teach AP courses.

- b. Amend the statutes to include in the annual report of the regional training program the estimated need and the actual number of teachers who participated in the AP training program and a description of the training received by teachers that year. **(BDR 34-300)**

STATEWIDE GOVERNANCE OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The members of the LCE took the following action with regard to a proposal relating to the statewide governance structure for elementary and secondary education.

23. Request a resolution calling for a study of the system of public education in Nevada during the 2009-2010 Interim. **(BDR R-301)**

MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL

The members of the LCE took the following action with regard to a proposal relating to middle school and high school.

24. Amend the statutes to require the Commission on Educational Excellence to give priority to grant applications to fund certain summer school programs for certain pupils who are deficient in credits necessary to be promoted from eighth grade to ninth grade. **(BDR 34-302)**
25. Provide an appropriation from the State General Fund for a research study to measure the alignment of assignments in certain mathematics courses in grades 8 and 9 to standards upon which portions of the high school proficiency examination are based. **(BDR 34-296)**