



Fact Sheet

FACTS ABOUT ELEMENTARY-SECONDARY EDUCATION

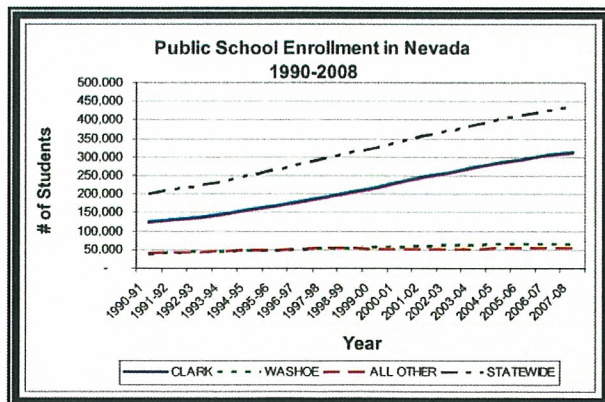
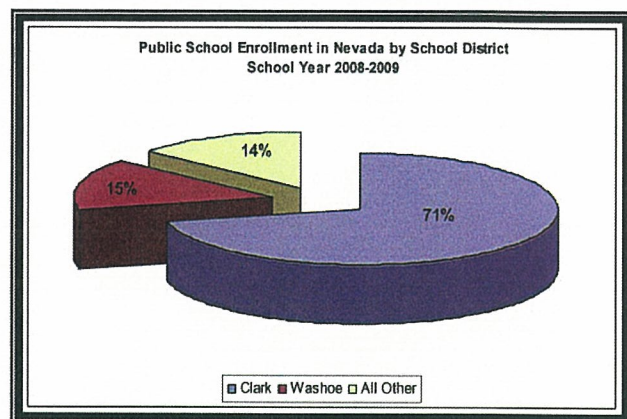
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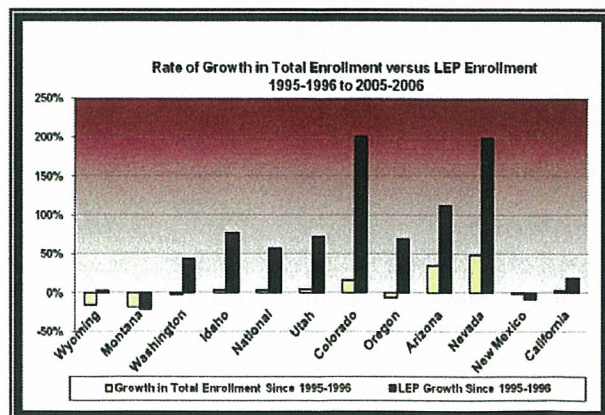
The Legislature is responsible for establishing the public school system. The *Nevada Constitution* in Article 11, Section 2, makes the Nevada State Legislature responsible for the establishment of the public school system. Title 34 of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (Chapters 385 through 395) deals with K-12 education.

Schools, Enrollment, and Student Demographics

- **Nevada Public Schools:** For the 2008-2009 school year, Nevada had **613 public schools**, of which 60 percent were elementary schools, 18 percent were middle schools, 16 percent were high schools, and 6 percent were special schools.
- **Current Enrollment:** On “count day” for fall 2008 (the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year), the full enrollment for Nevada public schools was **437,433 students**. Approximately 71 percent of the student enrollment is in Clark County School District, 15 percent is in Washoe County School District, and 14 percent is in the remaining 15 rural school districts.



- **Nevada has led the nation in the growth of its student population.** According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), from 1970 to 2006, Nevada’s school age population grew by 255 percent, leading the western states and the nation. Throughout the 1990s until the 2001-2002 school year, enrollment growth in Nevada averaged 5 percent per year. Beginning with the 2002-2003 school year, enrollment growth began to level off with 4 percent growth in the 2003 through 2005 school years, 3 percent growth during the 2006 and 2007 school years, 2 percent growth during the 2007-2008 school year, and 1 percent growth for the 2008-2009 school year.



- **Part of the State’s overall growth involves an increase in ethnic minority student populations.** According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, United States Department of Education, from 1995 to 2006, the number of enrolled students classified as English Language Learners in Nevada increased nearly 200 percent.

Student Achievement

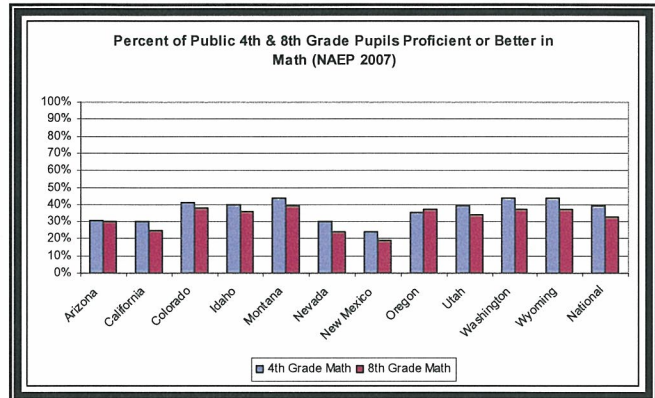
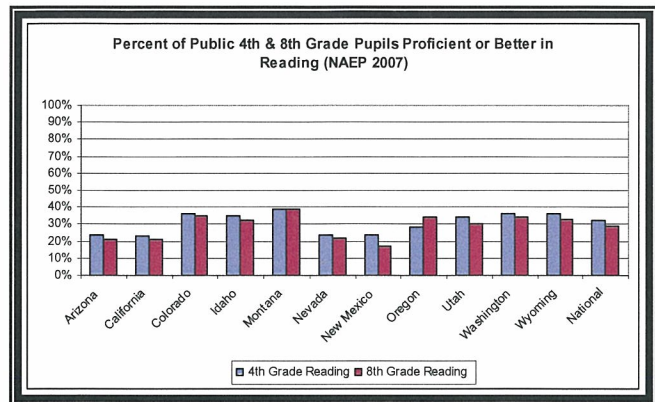
- **Nevada has a poor dropout and school completion rate.** The State's annual dropout rate over the past ten years has averaged 6 percent, which is one of the highest dropout rates in the country. It also has a 55.8 percent average freshman graduation rate, one of the lowest in the nation.

- **Reading:** Nevada ranked 45th in the nation for the percent of fourth graders scoring proficient or better in reading on the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and ranked 44th for eighth graders' performance on the 2007 NAEP reading assessment.

- **Mathematics:** Nevada ranked 44th in the nation for the percent of fourth graders scoring proficient or better in mathematics on the 2007 NAEP and ranked 42nd for eighth graders' performance on the 2007 NAEP mathematics assessment.

- **Federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB):**

For the 2008-2009 school year, 60 percent of Nevada's schools made Adequate Yearly Progress under the NCLB; this is a slight decrease from 62 percent in the 2007-2008 school year.



Education Personnel

- **For the 2008-2009 school year, Nevada's school districts employed 27,365 licensed personnel;** of these, 22,886 (84 percent) were teachers.
- **The National Education Association's (NEA) 2008 salary survey** reported Nevada's average teacher salary at \$47,710; the national average was reported at \$52,308. (NOTE: The NEA estimates do not include the percent employee portion of the retirement contribution, which the local school districts pay for employees.)

Financing

- **Legislatively approved appropriations** for K-12 education account for nearly 40 percent of the State General Fund expenditures during the 2009-2011 Biennium.
- **Budget Reductions:** A budget shortfall of \$900 million is estimated for the 2009-2011 Biennium. It is anticipated that the State's spending plan will be reviewed in the near future to balance the budget.
- **Race to the Top Federal Program**

Through the federal Race to the Top program, states are asked to advance reforms in K-12 education around four specific areas: (1) Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy; (2) Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction; (3) Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and (4) Turning around our lowest-achieving schools. The program offers discretionary/competitive grants to states totaling \$4 billion. Although the State of Nevada has not yet applied for these grant funds, the Legislative Committee on Education is studying the program during the 2009-2010 Interim.