

MEMO



Connecting People to Policy

DATE: November 18, 2022

TO: Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education Members

FROM: Jen Sturm, Principal Policy Analyst; Alex Drozdoff, Senior Policy Analyst; and Jennifer Ruedy, Deputy Research Director, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)

SUBJECT: **Follow-Up Responses to Questions by the Committee**

At its May 18th meeting, the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education (COE) heard testimony from various presenters, including Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada's Department of Education (NDE). This memorandum contains additional information given to staff after the meeting in response to questions posed by COE members concerning the content of the presentations provided by NDE.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS RAISED DURING THE MAY 18, 2022, MEETING

1. Is it possible to get more information on the plans in place for schools and classes that exceed certain class sizes? This question and request for information was specifically focused on the plans and strategies that schools have to put in place to get within recommended class size parameters.
2. Is it possible to get updates and information on the work being done in response to [Senate Bill 89 \(2019\)](#) in terms of the working group, the members, meeting dates, and information from the group?
3. Can the data from the school climate survey (in the [School Safety Requirements and Initiatives presentation](#)) outlined in slide 24 be further disaggregated to compare sixth graders in an elementary school building and sixth graders in a middle school building?
4. Would it be possible to receive an updated slide for the [School and School District Performance Plans](#) presentation, as the graphic on Slide 14 seemed to get cut off?
5. Can you please provide us with questions that students are asked in the survey? Christy McGill, Director, the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment, NDE, mentioned this during her presentation on Agenda Item VI concerning school safety.
6. Assemblywoman Hansen asked a question about how else the state can help lighten the load for recruitment and retention topics. Superintendent Ebert explained the various things done during the pandemic, including providing flexibility with assessments and end-of-course exams. She added that she would provide a list with additional information on other recommendations for consideration now that we are on the other side of the pandemic. Would it be possible to receive that list?

RESPONSES TO FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS PROVIDED BY NDE

Attached to this memorandum is NDE's response to the questions outlined above. In its response, NDE references several Appendices. Due to file size constraints, the information contained in the appendices may be accessed by contacting the Research Division Library, LCB, at 775-684-6827 or library@lcb.state.nv.us.

CONCLUSION

We hope this information is helpful to you. Please contact us if you would like additional details regarding the information contained in this memorandum.

JAS,AD/jk:W222061

Att.

Steve Sisolak
Governor

Jhone M. Ebert
Superintendent of
Public Instruction



Southern Nevada Office
2080 East Flamingo Rd,
Suite 210
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-0811
Phone: (702) 486-6458
Fax: (702) 486-6450

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
700 E. Fifth Street | Carson City, Nevada 89701-5096
Phone: (775) 687-9200 | www.doe.nv.gov | Fax: (775) 687-9101

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alex Drozdoff, Senior Policy Analyst, Research Division

FROM: Dr. Seng-Dao Yang Keo, Chief Strategy Officer, Nevada Department of Education

DATE: June 13, 2022

SUBJECT: May 18th Meeting of the Joint Interim Legislative Committee on Education

This memorandum is a follow-up to the questions received following the Nevada Department of Education's (NDE or Department) presentations during the May 18, 2022, meeting of the Joint Interim Legislative Committee on Education.

- 1. Is it possible to get more information on the plans in place for schools and classes that exceed certain class sizes? This question and request for information was specifically focused on the plans and strategies that schools have to put in place to get within recommended class size parameters.**

Each district submits an annual class size reduction plan, indicating their overall district plan to meet class size ratios. For each quarterly variance request, each district must provide a class size reduction plan specific to each school that reports grades exceeding the ratio. In the event that the district-wide ratio changes over the course of the year, districts must re-submit their district-wide plan. Attached, in the Appendix A folder, please find copies of all variance requests submitted for fiscal year 2022 quarter three, which include information specific to the strategies schools have in place regarding their specific class size ratios.

- 2. Is it possible to get updates and information on the work being done in response to [SB 89](#) (2019) in terms of the working group, the members, meeting dates, and information from the group?**

The work addresses both SB 89 and AB 490. Please find attached the updates and requested information in the Appendix B folder.

- 3. Can the data from the school climate survey (in the school safety PowerPoint) outlined in slide 24 be further disaggregated to compare 6th graders in an elementary school building and 6th graders in a middle school building?**

NDE connected with its research partner, American Institutes for Research (AIR), and has confirmed that the data can be disaggregated to compare sixth graders in an elementary school with sixth graders in a middle school. However, the data disaggregation will require additional time. NDE will provide this information to the Joint Interim Legislative Committee on Education upon receipt of the disaggregated data.

4. Would it be possible to receive an updated slide for the Performance Plans presentation please, as the graphic on [Slide 14](#) seemed to get cut off?

Please see the attached presentation for the Update on School and District Performance Plans in the Appendix C folder.

5. Can you please provide us with questions kids are asked in the survey? Christy McGill mentioned this during her presentation on Item VI.

Please see the Appendix D folder to see the questions that students and staff are asked in the Nevada School Climate/Social Emotional Learning Survey (NV-SCSEL).

6. Assemblywoman Hansen asked a question about how else the state can help lighten the load for recruitment and retention topics. Superintendent Ebert explained the various things we've done during the pandemic, including providing flexibility with assessments and end of course exams. She added that she would provide us a list with additional information on other recommendations we could consider now that we are on the other side of the pandemic. Would it be possible to receive that list please?

NDE includes the voice of educators—teachers and administrators—in our work through regular meetings of the Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Cabinet, the Superintendent's Principal Advisory Cabinet, the Nevada Association of School Superintendents, and other stakeholder engagements. One of the most frequent pieces of feedback we hear when working with colleagues in the field on implementing new policies in response to statutory changes is, "If you are adding something to our plates, what are you removing from our plates?" As we collectively look ahead to the 2023 Legislative Session, that lens may be helpful in assessing the potential impact of statutory amendments and additions.

As far as specific items to reduce the workload of educators and administrators, NDE staff have received feedback from the field related to the following:

- Permanently suspend End of Course exams (EOCs) per NRS 390.700, NRS 390.800, and NRS 389.0186.
 - Justification: EOCs were developed to comply with federal requirements, but their purpose for federal accountability has been replaced by the college and career readiness exam (ACT) in accordance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act and NRS 390.610. With the adoption of the ACT as the State assessment, EOCs were shifted to district administration. The data from EOCs is not collected by or analyzed at the State level so it serves no purpose related to Statewide goals for student achievement. As the only consumers of this data, districts have expressed a strong and consistent preference for this requirement to end.
- Decrease the burden on administrators of responding to bullying while still ensuring timely and thorough reporting and investigation

- Clearly distinguish in the definition of bullying in NRS 388.122 between bullying and conflict.
 - Justification: Including language to identify that bullying behavior is not a part of a mutual disagreement will help schools clearly identify bullying behavior and help to provide interventions and preventions with fidelity. It also addresses concerns from site administrators that they are spending inordinate amounts of time following up on bullying complaints as incidents will be more narrowly defined.
- In NRS 388.1351 (5), extend the amount of time for a bullying investigation from 2 days to 3 days.
 - Justification: Per NRS 388. 1351 (2), upon receiving a bullying report, administrators must immediately take any necessary action to stop the bullying or cyber-bullying and ensure the safety and well-being of the reported victim or victims of the bullying or cyber-bullying and begin an investigation into the report. Extending the time allowed for an investigation from 2 to 3 days has no impact on the administrators' responsibility to immediately intervene to ensure the safety of students while also giving them time to complete a thorough and accurate report.
- Remove language in NRS 388.1351 (13) requiring the quarterly submission of bullying reports.
 - Justification: District bullying data is currently submitted into Infinite Campus in accordance with NRS 388.1351 (12) and made available to the public via the Nevada Report Card. Quarterly data submissions to the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment are a duplication of the same information. Amending this requirement reduces the burden on site administrators.
- Address outdated parent and family engagement requirements in favor of more meaningful, evidence-based approaches:
 - Remove NRS 392.456 which was established in 2007 and requires NDE to prescribe a form for use by teachers in elementary schools to provide reports to parents and legal guardians of students.
 - Justification: The information prescribed in the form can be communicated and/or found out through parent-teacher conferences, student report cards, student progress reports, and other common forms of school communication. Even though the law states that the report should not be reprimanding, it is difficult to achieve a supportive tone in practice given the requirements. In addition, the form focuses on families attending events as a measure of engagement, which does not address the root issues that may lead families to feel unwelcome in the school community. Effective family engagement is based on schools and families having a trusting, authentic relationship and if such a relationship does not exist, this prescribed form can only worsen the family-school relationship in the short- and long-term.
 - Amend NRS 392.4575 to remove duplicative requirements for Title I schools, enable authentic and meaningful family engagement by removing the prescribed form by NDE and instead requiring schools to co-develop the Educational Involvement Accord (Accord) with families.
 - Justification: The Accord is essentially a Statewide application of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act requirement that Title I schools have school-parent compacts. Because of how the State law is written, Title I schools are

required to both use the Accord and have a school-parent compact under ESSA (and many forgo the State Accord in favor of the federal compact which is co-developed with families rather than prescribed). Further, the essence of the school-parent compact is to provide the school and families an opportunity to create and grow their family-school partnership. It is a document that explains what families and schools can do to help children reach high academic standards of excellence and what schools can do to support families. The Department prescribing the Accord deflects from this essence and purpose. It is also difficult to prescribe an Accord that is relevant to individual school's community and family needs, so an amendment to NRS could direct NDE to provide resources and supports but should not have NDE prescribe the form.

Encl: District Variance Requests for fiscal year 2022 quarter three
Information about SB 89 and AB 490
School and District Performance Plans Presentation
Nevada School Climate / Social Emotional Learning Survey Questions