

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Nevada Revised Statutes 218E.605

The following is a summary of the recommendations for bill draft requests (BDRs) adopted by the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) for transmittal to the 76th Session of the Nevada Legislature.

PROPOSALS RELATED TO RACE TO THE TOP CRITERIA

1. Include a statement in the final report urging the Superintendent of Public Instruction to, when establishing the State system for a growth model for teacher evaluations, give consideration to the length of time during the school year a student has been at the school and in the classroom.
2. Send a letter from the LCE to the State Board of Education and to the Superintendent of Public Instruction expressing the support of the LCE for ensuring that the assessment model to be used in evaluating teachers provides for tests that present an accurate measure of student academic growth and will provide a measurement that is geared toward assessing the quality of the educator in the classroom. Further, express the sense of the LCE that the State Board and the Superintendent must ensure that all subject matters and grade levels be included.
3. Send a letter from the LCE to the Superintendent of Public Instruction requesting the Department of Education (DOE) include in its application for Race to the Top program funds, utilization of a portion of the State's share of those funds, to the extent authorized, to implement programs to assist the most at-risk youth to improve their access to education.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

4. Send a letter from the LCE to the Governor with copies to the chairs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, expressing the support of the LCE for the continued funding of the charter school staff positions in the DOE provided by the Legislature.
5. Include a statement in the final report in support of encouraging the Regional Professional Development Programs to make a concerted effort to target the staff of charter schools for the professional development activities that it offers, including leadership training for charter school administrators.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO EMPOWERMENT SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL CHOICE

6. Amend statutes to remove the prospective expiration of the empowerment schools statutes.
7. Amend the empowerment school statutes to remove the cap on the number of empowerment schools statewide. Further, provide that each school district must provide the Superintendent of Public Instruction with a timetable and process to convert all of its public schools to empowerment schools before July 1, 2013. Further, provide that empowerment schools are not required to revert surplus funds from State appropriations for empowerment.
8. Send a letter from the LCE to each of the presidents of Nevada's school district boards of trustees encouraging the adoption of policies and programs pursuant to Nevada's site-based management statutes.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO ACCOUNTABILITY AND ASSESSMENT

9. Amend the statutes concerning the State Improvement Plan (SIP) to change the due date for reporting the SIP from December 15 to January 15 of each year.
10. Amend the statutes concerning the SIP to require that the Plan include a five-year planning component for recurring issues; further specify that such a component of the Plan build upon data from prior years and track measurable goals.
11. Amend statutes to allow for the later administration of the Statewide Criterion Referenced Tests used to determine if schools are making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), providing the districts at least another 30 days of instruction prior to testing. Revise the AYP preliminary and final reporting deadline from June to accommodate this change.
12. Send a letter from the LCE to the Superintendent of Public Instruction noting that the Superintendent is required to consult with various representatives of the education community, including the Nevada State Education Association (NSEA), concerning their recommendations regarding school and district accountability reports. Request that the Superintendent consult with the NSEA and these other entities with regard to the method of determining average class size.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO FUNDING AND BUDGET MATTERS

13. Provide an appropriation of \$7,797,804 in both Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 and FY 2011, from the State General Fund to the Distributive School Account (DSA) for transfer to the three school districts serving as fiscal agents for the continuation of the three Regional Training Programs (RTPs). Further provide a \$100,000 appropriation for each of those

fiscal years to continue statewide training for educational administrators. In addition, provide a \$100,000 appropriation to contract with a consultant to review the evaluations of the RTPs.

14. Amend statutes to establish the K-12 Public Education Stabilization Account. Provide that funding which reverts back to the State DSA at the end of odd-numbered years would instead be transferred to the Stabilization Account. The Superintendent of Public Instruction would be authorized to request a transfer of funds from the Stabilization Account to the DSA when there is a shortfall in the DSA.
15. Amend statutes to allow the Superintendent of Public Instruction to grant a waiver from the requirement that a school year consist of 180 school days. If the Superintendent makes a determination of economic hardship, the Superintendent may issue a waiver for up to ten days from that requirement if it is used in lieu of staff layoffs.
16. Adopt a resolution urging Nevada's Congressional Delegation to enact the necessary legislation to grant additional school trust lands to the State.
17. Send a letter from the LCE 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 following education programs: planning for and establishment of empowerment schools; biennial funding of educational technology; career and technical education; RTPs; grants by the Commission on Educational Excellence; the DOE's parental involvement coordinator; the DOE's school empowerment coordinator; and funding for the Parental Involvement Council.
18. Send a letter from the LCE to the Superintendent of Public Instruction requesting the DOE to study the cost and practicality of converting or amending the Nevada Plan for school finance to allow for additional "weighted" formulas which take into account the extraordinary needs of hard-to-serve students.
19. Send a letter from the LCE to the Governor with copies to the chairs of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, expressing the support of the LCE that funding should be provided to continue to fund or expand programs which are effective in improving student achievement.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL

20. Amend the statutes governing school district evaluations of teachers and principals to require the use of certain student achievement data in these evaluations, with growth in student achievement accounting for at least 33 percent of the evaluation. Further, revise evaluation classifications so that teachers and principals are identified as "highly effective," "effective," and "ineffective."

21. Amend statutes to require that, upon the request of a school district, charter schools shall transmit the personnel records of employees who have taken a leave of absence from a district and returned to employment with that district.
22. Amend statutes to specify that retired teachers rehired under the critical labor shortage provisions of statute may be hired by the school district at the rate of pay assigned to beginning teachers without experience.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

23. Require, by statute, that the State Board of Education adopt regulations to prescribe an adjusted adult diploma and set forth the requirements for receipt of an adjusted adult diploma for pupils with an Individualized Education Program prior to turning age 18.
24. Include a statement in the final report emphasizing the importance of representation from the Nevada Association of School Boards on all committees and groups formed by the Legislature to address issues involving K-12 public education. Future legislation creating such bodies, as well as legislation amending statutes concerning existing bodies, should consider adding such representatives.