

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Nevada Revised Statutes 218E.605

The following is a summary of recommendations adopted by the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE, Committee) at the August 5, 2014, meeting. The Committee submits the following recommendations and bill draft requests (BDRs) to the 78th Session of the Nevada Legislature.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO SCHOOL SAFETY

1. **School Safety Planning**—Propose legislation relating to State-level planning, coordination, and responding to crisis and emergency situations, requiring school districts to submit their emergency plans to Nevada's Department of Education (NDE, Department) instead of the State Board of Education (SBE, Board). The proposed changes require NDE to develop a sample emergency plan, with specified contents, for use by Nevada's school districts. **(BDR -404)**
2. **Bullying Prevention**—Send a letter to the Nevada Association of School Superintendents and the Nevada Association of School Boards encouraging their members to consider implementing the student bullying survey, a tool used annually by the White Pine County School District, which has received national recognition for its effectiveness.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

3. **Equal Access to Public Funds**—Include a statement in the final report that NDE should provide the governing body of each charter school in this State equal notice of opportunity to apply for funding when opportunities are made available to school districts.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO PERSONNEL

4. **Educator Professional Development Governance**—Propose legislation to conduct an interim study of professional development for teachers and administrators in Nevada to include, but not limited to, content delivery, governance, program quality and evaluation, required funding, and standards. The study is to address professional development provided by school districts, charter schools, and the Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs), as well as the relationship of each to NDE. Further, the study will determine the impact of professional development on instruction and achievement. The results of the study will be reported to the 2017 Nevada Legislature. **(BDR -406)**

5. **Teacher Reemployment Notices**—Propose legislation to allow local school boards, in odd-numbered years, to extend from May 1 to May 15 the deadline to notify post-probationary employees of their reemployment status for the next school year. Further, require notice of such an extension be provided by April 1 to the recognized employee organization that represents the employee, or directly to an unrepresented post-probationary employee. For any licensed employee receiving notice under this optional extension, the deadline shall be extended from May 10 to May 25 for the employee to notify the local school board of his or her acceptance of the employment offer. **(BDR –405)**
6. **Long-term Substitute Teachers**—Include a statement in the final report urging Nevada’s school districts to track both the number and duration of long-term substitute teachers employed in the classroom so this data may be used to determine the impact of substitute teachers on student or school performance.
7. **Personnel Demographic Data**—Include a statement in the final report urging school districts, whenever practical and possible, to track and report school-level personnel demographic data.
8. **Teacher Preparation**—Send a letter from the Committee to the SBE encouraging the Board, through policy or regulation, to:
 - a. Link the State’s databases on teacher licensure and teacher performance evaluation;
 - b. Create minimum performance standards for courses of study and training for the education of teachers based upon metrics that consider graduate effectiveness;
 - c. Prescribe improvement plans for teacher preparation programs not meeting performance standards; and
 - d. Collect and report qualitative feedback from individuals enrolled in teacher preparation programs.
9. **Training for Paraprofessionals**—Include a statement in the final report urging Nevada’s school districts and the RPDs, whenever possible and practical, to deliver paraprofessional training simultaneously to the paraprofessional and the teacher with whom they work.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO STUDENT LITERACY

10. **Expand Student Demographic Reporting**—Propose legislation to require the annual report of accountability, prepared by the board of trustees of each school district, to include information regarding pupils in each reported racial demographic group, including those who are identified as multi-racial and who are eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch under federal guidelines. The information reported about such pupils shall include their:

- a. Overall number and percentage;
 - b. Achievement and proficiency in comparison to the general student population;
 - c. Retention rate;
 - d. Graduation rate;
 - e. Dropout rate;
 - f. Average grade point averages; and
 - g. Average scores on examinations administered pursuant to NRS 389.550, 389.805, and 389.807. **(BDR –407)**
11. **Home Language Survey**—Propose legislation to require the SBE to adopt regulations requiring a single, statewide home language survey protocol to be used by public school districts and charter schools to evaluate whether a pupil is required to be screened for classification as an English Language Learner (ELL). **(BDR –408)**
- Prekindergarten Program Evaluation**—Propose legislation to require the SBE to adopt regulations requiring consistent, statewide quality and evaluation measures for public and private prekindergarten programs and requiring the use of appropriate assessment tools to identify Dual Language Learners (DLL). The regulations shall further require that prekindergarten pupils identified, upon enrollment for kindergarten, as DLL be screened for identification as ELL and be classified as either ELL or English proficient according to the screening results.
- Additionally, the SBE must request, on the proposed regulations, the input of the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) and those school districts with more than 10 percent of enrolled students classified as ELL. **(BDR –408)**
12. **Federal Support of Prekindergarten DLL**—Send a letter from the Committee to Nevada’s congressional delegation urging them to propose or support legislation providing federal funding for language services and supports, including those for prekindergarten DLL, and highlighting Nevada’s concerns about ELL accountability related to forthcoming federal sanctions.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

13. **College Readiness**—Send a letter from the Committee to the Nevada System of Higher Education, NDE, each school district, and each charter school encouraging them to collaboratively produce and make available a document that shows pupils and parents the courses and test scores necessary in high school, to ensure a pupil will not need to enroll in remedial courses in college.

PROPOSALS RELATING TO FUNDING OF EDUCATION

14. **K-12 Public Education Stabilization Account**—Redraft Senate Bill 435 from the 2013 Legislative Session to establish the K-12 Public Education Stabilization Account. Funding reverting to the Distributive School Account (DSA) at the end of odd-numbered years would be transferred to the Stabilization Account. Authorize the Superintendent of Public Instruction to request a transfer of funds from the Stabilization Account to the DSA when there is a shortfall in the DSA. The request would be made of the Legislature when in session or of the Interim Finance Committee during the interim period between sessions. **(BDR -409)**

PROPOSALS RELATING TO MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

15. **Committee Alternates**—Send a letter from the Committee to the Legislative Commission urging them to propose legislation requiring the appointment of alternate members to the LCE.
16. **Disparities in Student Discipline**—Include a statement in the final report urging the LCE to study, during the 2015–2016 Interim, disparities in the frequency and severity of discipline among various demographic groups in Nevada’s K–12 schools.
17. **Student Advancement**—Include a statement in the final report emphasizing the necessity for students to demonstrate grade-level competency in English language arts by the end of third grade and mathematics by the end of sixth grade.
18. **Student Advancement**—Include a statement in the final report and send letters to the SBE, the SPCSA, and Nevada’s school districts, encouraging the lengthening of the school day and school year to better enable schools to meet the educational achievement needs of each pupil. Further, urge consideration of school day start and finish times that are responsive to the research showing pupils perform better when receiving adequate rest.
19. **Pupil Wellness**—Send a letter from the Committee encouraging the SPCSA and Nevada’s school districts to make student wellness information available to the public on the Internet. Such information should include:
 - a. Whether the school district has a wellness policy;
 - b. Whether the district completed the Nevada State Wellness Policy Evaluation;
 - c. If available, the district’s Nevada State Wellness Policy Evaluation score for the most recent year; and
 - d. The district’s plan for improving or maintaining the wellness of pupils.
20. **End-of-Course Exams**—Send a letter from the Committee to NDE urging the Department to include in its vendor contract(s) for end-of-course exams a requirement the vendor provide parallel constructed materials; these may include practice exams and

other materials. Furthermore, the letter shall encourage NDE to share such materials with those entities providing professional development to education professionals in Nevada for use in training and the development of further support materials for teachers and students.

21. **School Facilities**—Include a statement in the final report:

- a. Urging the Legislature to explore a State-level public school capital construction fund, similar to those created in Colorado and New Mexico;
- b. Urging the Legislature to explore a per-pupil facilities allowance for each charter school in Nevada based upon historical school facilities costs in the State; and
- c. Expressing the Committee's opinion that no State or local entity should impose any facility- or site-related requirements on a charter school that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools.

22. **Teacher Evaluation**—Propose legislation to reduce, from 50 percent to 40 percent, the percentage of pupil achievement data that must be accounted for in each performance evaluation of a school administrator or licensed education personnel. This provision shall expire July 1, 2017. **(BDR -410)**