

Audit Highlights



Highlights of performance audit report on Family and Community Engagement Strategies for Clark County School District, Washoe County School District, and State Public Charter School Authority issued on August 20, 2026.

Legislative Auditor report # LA26-17.

Background

Family engagement is a shared responsibility between schools, families, and communities where all receive equitable access to tools and support needed to successfully work together toward the development of children and youth for college, career, and lifelong learning.

Parental involvement focuses on activities initiated by the school, often with limited two-way interaction. Family engagement emphasizes a collaborative approach where educators, families, and the community work together as equal partners.

Research shows that family engagement positively impacts academic achievement, social and emotional development, attendance, behavior, and school-community collaboration, making it a critical factor in education.

Purpose of Audit

The purpose of the audit was to determine the efficacy of CCSD's and WCSD's efforts for selecting, implementing, and evaluating strategies to increase family and community engagement in public schools; and to determine if SPCSA has an adequate process for approving and monitoring the implementation of family engagement efforts at charter schools.

The scope of our audit included a review of activities and oversight related to family and community engagement in public schools for the 2024-25 school year.

Audit Recommendations

This audit report contains four recommendations to CCSD to improve planning and evaluation, CCSD accepted the four recommendations.

This audit report contains one recommendation to WCSD to improve planning and evaluation, WCSD accepted the one recommendation.

This audit report contains four recommendations to SPCSA to improve monitoring efforts and ensure compliance with Title I family engagement requirements. SPCSA accepted the four recommendations.

Recommendation Status

Each district's 60-day plan for corrective action is due on November 17, 2026. In addition, the 6-month report on the status of the audit recommendations is due on May 17, 2027.

Family and Community Engagement Strategies

Clark County and Washoe County School Districts, and State Public Charter School Authority

Summary

Clark County School District (CCSD) and Washoe County School District (WCSD) selected and implemented strategies to provide family and community engagement. Although the rationale, criteria, or processes used to select these strategies were not documented, the strategies reflect recognized best practices. While districts implemented various strategies, additional planning can help guide strategy selection and implementation. Furthermore, a systematic approach to evaluating strategies would help improve their effectiveness. With limited resources, it is important that districts ensure selected strategies are appropriately aligned to their needs and implementation efforts are achieving intended outcomes.

The State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) can improve its oversight of charter schools' family and community engagement efforts. SPCSA did not consistently evaluate schools' engagement efforts as part of the monitoring and recertification processes. Although SPCSA does not control charter schools' engagement activities, as the Local Education Agency (LEA) it has responsibilities to ensure compliance with federal laws and charter schools' contract provisions. Without setting clear expectations and monitoring performance, family and community engagement may not be prioritized by schools and may fall short of approved plans. In addition, noncompliance with federal requirements may put federal funding at risk.

Schools within CCSD, WCSD, and SPCSA implemented family and community engagement strategies to address the unique needs of their families and communities. Our survey of principals also indicated there are areas in which district and school engagement activities can be strengthened. Therefore, the districts have opportunities to enhance their engagement activities through additional coordination with schools.

Key Findings

- The districts implemented widely recognized family and community engagement strategies. Each of the strategies reviewed reflects identified best practices. Since many of the strategies were initiated more than 10 years ago, documentation of strategy selection was limited. (page 6)
- Overall, the districts performed effective planning and evaluation related to their engagement strategies. However, additional planning and evaluation could strengthen strategy implementation at CCSD. Specifically, CCSD's objectives did not clearly align with its strategic plan and its evaluation processes did not seek to correlate success in achieving intermediate or long-term outcomes. Identifying intermediate and long-term outcomes supports strategy implementation and evaluation, and helps staff focus resources appropriately. (page 9)
- SPCSA could improve its recertification and transfer approval processes to monitor and encourage ongoing family engagement activities. While the initial application review process includes an evaluation with standards for family engagement, the renewal, transfer, and site evaluation processes do not. Without setting clear expectations and monitoring performance, family engagement may not be properly addressed by schools. (page 13)
- SPCSA did not always follow Title I family and community engagement requirements. Title I funds were not allocated in accordance with federal requirements and SPCSA did not adopt a family and community engagement policy. Confusion occurred because SPCSA directed schools to assume the role as the LEA, despite Nevada Revised Statutes assigning this responsibility to SPCSA. (page 15)
- Schools implemented many strategies to engage families and the community. For CCSD and WCSD schools, 75% indicated they implemented additional strategies beyond what their districts offer. The primary motivation for implementing school specific strategies came about by a desire to address unique needs of the schools' communities. In addition, schools experience barriers to engagement, with a lack of family time cited most often. (page 17)
- For CCSD and WCSD, survey results indicated there are opportunities to strengthen district and school engagement efforts. Specifically, some schools reported not having family and community engagement plans and a lack of familiarity with district engagement strategies and guidance. In addition, most schools were not sure as to the success of their family engagement strategies. Strengthening family and community engagement efforts at the school level will help ensure district engagement efforts are effectively implemented and can help improve district and school level planning and engagement. (page 19)