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## Fast Fact: Policy Issues in Nevada Education

UNLV College of Education

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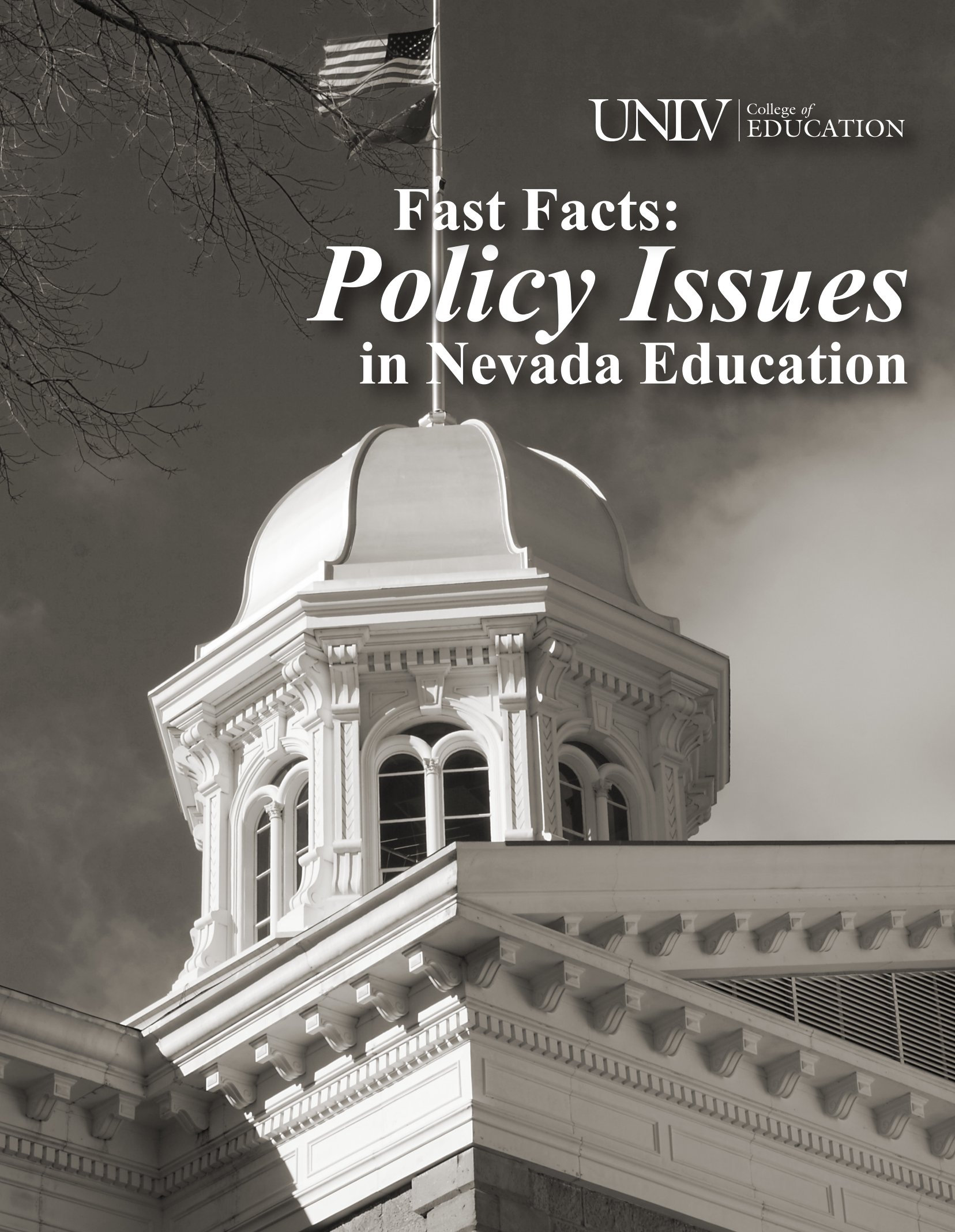
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UNLV | College of  
EDUCATION



Fast Facts:  
*Policy Issues*  
in Nevada Education





# Introduction

The College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas is in a particularly unique and promising position to affect and inform education locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. The College produces more new educators for Nevada’s schools than any other provider—nearly as many as all other providers combined. Situated in the fifth largest school district in the U.S., the College is deeply and collaboratively engaged with research of and in urban settings. As the largest college of education in the state, the College’s faculty comprises the largest single, non-partisan source of information, models, and new ideas associated with educational practice, research, and policy, and understanding the unique needs of education in Nevada is a top priority for us.

The six issues summarized in this document have been researched and outlined with the intent of informing thoughtful policy development around particularly acute educational issues in Nevada. These summaries are accompanied by full articles which can be found in the Third Edition of *Policy Issues in Nevada Education*. The faculty who researched these issues sought to provide policy makers with trustworthy and meaningful summaries on which policy decisions can be made, and legislation can follow, that allows for sustainable, high quality education in Nevada.

We hope that those who develop education policy, as well as those responsible for implementing those policies, will find these papers and the availability of the researchers who prepared them to be of benefit.

### College of Education Vision Statement

*The College of Education will achieve prominence locally, nationally, and internationally as a leading source of significant knowledge and innovative models to inform and affect policy, practice, and research.*



### For More Information...

You are invited to contact the College of Education’s communications and outreach coordinator should you seek further information about any of the issues we have addressed in this publication or comment from any faculty/student experts:  
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Digital versions of this publication and the College’s *Policy Issues in Nevada Education* journal are available at [unlv.edu/education/policy](http://unlv.edu/education/policy)

### College Leadership



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# High Quality Early Childhood Experiences for Children with and Without Disabilities (and Their Families)

It has become common for young children to be enrolled in some form early care or education programs before entering kindergarten. These experiences can encompass a range of programs and many families use multiple programs to meet their needs. Quality early childhood programs help to promote children’s learning and development across all domains of development and prepare them for kindergarten. For children with disabilities, being meaningfully included in early care and education programs can support positive gains in development and learning. Furthermore, these early childhood programs have become vital for parents of young children to seek out employment, further education, and respite from the demands of parenting. However, families of young children with and without disabilities continue to struggle with access to affordable programs that meet the complex needs of families and support high quality and evidence-based early childhood education. As with the rest of the country, Nevada has been working to further the quantity and quality of early care and education experiences for its youngest residents and their families. However, as early childhood programs cross multiple sectors, departments, funding streams, and state and federal policies as well as challenges to serving children in urban, rural, and tribal areas of the state, moving ideas into action has been difficult.

## NEVADA FACTS & STATISTICS

- It is estimated that approximately 136,000 children under the age of 6 in Nevada are in need of early education and care programs. However, across the state it is estimated that we only have the capacity for 60,000 children. In particular, there is limited public preschool programs therefore the burden of quality early education and care experiences fall to a variety of child care programs and

- access to quality program in low-resource areas. Nevada ranks 48th in enrollment of 3- to 4-year-olds in pre-K programs.
- Currently in Nevada, approximately 3 percent of the infant/toddler population receive Part C Early Intervention Services through IDEA. This is similar to the population across the US (i.e., range 1.8 to 9 percent). Since 2008, there has been a 70 percent increase in these very young children receiving

services. For preschool children 3 to 5 years old, approximately 8 percent receive services through Part B, a 47 percent increase since 2008.

## RECENT ACTIONS IN NEVADA

- The Office of Early Learning and Development was created in 2014 to administer state and federal funds for multiple early childhood programs across the state including:
  - Nevada State Pre-K
  - Pre-K Development Grant
  - Head Start State Collaboration Grant
  - Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant
- Continued development and implementation of Silver State Stars Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) has supported programs in increasing or maintaining high quality programs.
- Increased subsidy programs for low incomes families.
- Support for Early Childhood Advisory Council to develop a strategic plan to address the needs of young children, their families, and professionals.
- Nevada has engaged in technical assistance with the Early Childhood Personnel Center (starting 2016)

and National Center on Pyramid Model Innovations (starting January 2019).

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

- Increase family access and affordability of quality early childhood programs.
- Increase professional competence to support quality early childhood programs.
- Increase program quality state-wide.

## STATEWIDE BENEFITS OF FUTURE ACTION

- Providing quality early childhood experiences for more Nevada children will support positive short-term and long-term academic outcomes and reduce the need for and duration of remedial or special education will provide increased employment opportunities for those interested in early childhood education.
- Will provide families with increased choices and access to meet their families’ preferences and needs related to early care and education. This may allow parents to seek more regular or increased employment or continue education that may positively contribute to the local and state economy.

## IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING STATUS QUO

- Continued disproportionality of children of color, children living in poverty, and children with disabilities to begin school lacking appropriate readiness to succeed and impact long-term academic outcomes.
- Increase the need and costs for specialized services and special education for children.
- Impact parents’ and families’ ability to maintain employment or seek out continuing education in order to contribute to local and state economy.



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# Identifying and Referring Young Children with Disabilities and Developmental Delays



Children develop in a predictable sequence across skills in communication, physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and adaptive domains. However, there are many factors that impact a child’s growth and learning that may delay their development or cause disabilities. Some children may be identified before or at birth with conditions that cause developmental delays (e.g., children with Down syndrome, premature infants, babies born with addiction). Other children may present developmental disabilities and delays later in early childhood due to neurological or genetic conditions (e.g., autism, Rhetts’s syndrome, communication delays) or experience environmental risk factors such as housing instability, toxic stress, injury, or maltreatment. Other children still may present changes in development for unknown reasons. These delays in meeting developmental milestones are often missed or overlooked by parents, child care providers, and physicians leading to late referrals into specialized services and education. It is estimated that less than 50 percent of children with developmental delays and disabilities are identified before entering kindergarten. Early identification can reduce the cost and needs for special education and services in the future. The value of early identification for developmental delays and disabilities can have many benefits for children, families, and programs.

## NEVADA FACTS & STATISTICS

- Currently, approximately 3 percent of the infant/toddler population receive Part C Early Intervention Services through IDEA. This is similar to the population across the US (i.e., range 1.8 to 9 percent). Since 2008, there has been a 70 percent increase in these very young children receiving services. For preschool children aged 3 to 5 years, approximately 8 percent receive services through Part B.

This is a 47 percent increase since 2008.

- Project ASSIST is a statewide service to provide information, resources, and referral services to inform and educate families of infants and toddlers with disabilities or special health care needs, and the general public.
- Ten of 14 school districts have Child Find information available on their websites. Information ranges from referral and evaluation processes,

references for Part B and Part C, to minimal contact information for special education departments. Four districts do not have clear information about Child Find, referral and evaluation, or special education.

## RECENT ACTIONS IN NEVADA

- The Part C Interagency Coordinating Council, Child Find Subcommittee supports efforts to increase awareness of Child Find offices and Project ASSIST through flyers to new parents and in medical offices.
- Nevada offers Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV), Early Head Start/Head Start, and Pre-K programs through Nevada Ready and Title I programs to provide families of children with identified disabilities, delays, and those at risk for delays (e.g., families with low incomes) with services.
- The Nevada Registry provides child care providers with training in child development and developmental screening.
- Nevada PEP provides assistance to families in understanding special education services.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

- Supporting parents’ and families’ knowledge of child development.
- Developing professionals’ understanding of available services.
- Increasing public awareness of available services.

## STATEWIDE BENEFITS OF FUTURE ACTION

- Reduces special education costs across the state and for school districts by increasing the need for later and longer enrollment in special education.
- Reduces health insurance and Medicaid services needed, including applied behavior analysis, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology.
- Increased equity of services to underserved populations across the state.
- Supporting positive child outcomes across domains of development including academic outcomes.
- Supports positive family outcomes that may increase parent employment and reduce the use of welfare services.

## IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING STATUS QUO

- Continues and may increase special education costs across the state and for school districts by increasing the amount of teachers and classrooms needed to serve children in elementary and secondary schools.
- Continues and may increase health insurance and Medicaid services needed including applied behavior analysis, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech-language pathology.
- Continued challenges for families (e.g., increased stress, challenges to maintaining employment and education) may impact parents’ ability to contribute economically and increase reliance on welfare programs.



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# Autism & Young Children: Painting Nevada's Picture

**A**utism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological disorder that can cause social, communication, and behavioral difficulties in those impacted. Often people with ASD experience difficulties in social situations and applying skills to new situations. Many young children with ASD show delays in developing language skills and it is estimated that 30-50 percent of people diagnosed with autism will not develop an adequate communication system. Early intervention is key to increasing quality of life for children and families impacted by autism. Not only does early intervention help to improve skills, it also decreases costs associated with autism by up to 66 percent over the course of a child's life. As the cost of autism treatment is estimated to be between \$40,000 and \$60,000 per year, investment in early learning and behavioral intervention programs is critical.

### NEVADA FACTS & STATISTICS

- In 2017, there were 1,281 children ages 3 to 5 (before kindergarten age) receiving services in the schools for ASD and 6,373 school age children receiving services for ASD through the schools.
- From July 2018 through December 2018, NEIS and other Early Intervention providers report 117 children ages birth to 2 identified as having ASD with an average age of 30 months.
- As of November 2018, 662 children were receiving Nevada's Autism Treatment Assistance Program (ATAP) services, with 442 total children waiting at an average age of 7, with an average wait time of 360 days.
- Nevada is experiencing waitlists for initial evaluations to diagnose autism, then once diagnosed receiving treatment for autism.
- There is a lack of fully certified teachers in the schools teaching children with ASD. As of October 2018, only 37 percent of the teachers in CCSD have been fully trained in autism.
- Currently there are 193 Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) certified under the Behavior Analyst Certification Board in Nevada and 732 registered behavior technicians (RBTs), which does not meet current needs.
- Nevada's Medicaid Reimbursement rate is 5th lowest in the nation at \$31.41.

### U.S. FACTS & STATISTICS

- The rate of autism is estimated at 1 in 59 by the CDC and as high as 1 in 40 by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- 30 percent of all children remain undiagnosed at 8 years of age.
- The cost of autism over a lifetime is estimated between \$1.4 million and \$2.4 million. Annually, the cost of autism services in the United States are estimated at \$236 to \$262 billion dollars.
- Noteably, the cost of autism services can be cut across the lifetime by approximately two thirds with early intervention).
- Synergies Economic Consulting (2013) has estimated the benefit to cost ratio at 11-to-3.

### RECENT ACTIONS IN NEVADA

- School districts continue to accept Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) teacher candidates to build capacity.
- Recently increased funding to the statewide ATAP program to \$9.6 million in the 2017 fiscal year.
- Behavior Analysts will be licensed under a separate professional board in the state of Nevada.

- Insurance companies are required to cover applied behavior analysis therapies for children with ASD while they are of school age.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

- Support parents' and families' knowledge of child development.
- Develop professionals' understanding of available services.
- Provide incentives to recruit people to the field, specifically for RBTs, BCBAs, special education teachers, and diagnosticians such as clinical psychologists and developmental pediatricians.
- Increase Medicaid rates to be comparable across the country in order to provide more access to treatment and shorter wait times for families.
- Utilize telehealth options for those in rural communities.
- Provide funding for the Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders (currently unfunded) to increase ability to provide guidance across the state.
- Continue to work with pediatricians to conduct autism screeners at 18 and 24 month appointments with referrals made to early intervention services if the screener indicates a need. Discontinue the wait and see approach.

### IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING STATUS QUO

- Long wait times for initial diagnosis and treatment will continue.
- Not building workforce capacity across all service providers wastes time that could be spent on early intervention, risk of decreased long term outcomes, and increased long-term costs associated with autism.
- Risk losing people who are currently working in the field.



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# Retaining Nevada's Teachers

Teacher attrition and retention present an immediate, undesirable challenge for education in Nevada. While an increase in enrollment in the student population necessitates an increase in teachers, teacher retention rates across the state of Nevada range from 14 percent in Pershing County to 30 percent in Clark County and 75 percent in Mineral County from 2012-2015. In addition to the disadvantages to students when teachers leave the profession, there is also a substantial cost to districts. Research in urban settings suggests that replacing a new teacher in a district can range from \$12,000 to more than \$26,000. Factors that help retain teachers include strong professional collegial environments, supportive leadership, professional development aligned with present teaching contexts, induction programs that provide new teachers with mentoring and coaching from experienced teacher leaders, reduced teaching loads, positive personal support from administrators, and collaborative experiences with colleagues. In addition, teacher pay has always been a factor in retaining quality teachers. Teaching is a demanding profession, but low pay can leave teachers feeling undervalued and contribute to their attrition.

### NEVADA FACTS & STATISTICS

- From 2017-18, there were nearly three million students enrolled in Nevada schools and approximately 1,000 teacher vacancies.
- Less than 60 percent of the statewide demand for teachers was met in 2017.
- Between 2012 and 2017 nearly 20 percent of the Nevada teaching force left the profession.
- While Nevada school districts have a large number of substitute teachers, many classrooms still go without a qualified teacher

- In CCSD alone, nearly 900 jobs a day go unfilled.

### U.S. FACTS & STATISTICS

- Teachers in the U.S. comprise the largest organizational group in the nation.
- Approximately 42 percent of new teachers are estimated to leave the profession in five years.
- The national average of teachers leaving the profession is 14.2 percent and the number of candidates entering the teaching field has dropped since 2004.

### RECENT ACTIONS IN NEVADA

- Numerous teacher education programs have been approved in Nevada in an attempt to address the teacher shortage.
- Some districts offer monetary incentives for teachers who commit to work in lower-performing schools.
- The Great Teaching and Leading Fund has provided professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

- Fund professional learning for principals in developing a school culture that supports teacher retention.
- Fund coaching, mentoring, and networking opportunities for administrators and teachers.
- Institute programs for timely and meaningful professional development for all teachers.
- Increase teacher pay.
- Establish a framework for paying teachers serving in residency or internship programs as they work alongside an experienced teacher or teachers over an entire school year.

### IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING STATUS QUO

- The population of Nevada is projected to increase to 3.5 million by 2020, stressing the existing educational system already struggling to recruit and retain the teaching force necessary to serve a growing and diverse student population.
- The educational vitality of Nevada's communities will be inhibited by the absence of teachers and programs that support them.
- Education has a direct effect on workforce and whether that workforce has the skill sets sufficient to attract the industries Nevada's economic development leaders want to attract.
- Nevada's status as last in the nation for "student chance of success," cannot be improved without increased focus on improving teacher retention and professional development for Nevada's teachers and administrators.



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*Director of Educator Preparation, Recruitment & Field Placement*



# Teacher Leadership in Nevada

Teacher leadership strategies are increasingly being deployed in multiple jurisdictions across the country, with mixed results. While informal teacher leader roles have existed for decades and are a not new idea, the expectations and responsibilities of these roles vary significantly from district to district or even from school to school. Ultimately, such an inconsistent approach to teacher leadership fails to capitalize on the potential of a comprehensive approach to human capital reform, including a modernized career ladder with advanced teacher leader roles. This would allow excellent teachers to stay in the classroom while also extending their reach by tapping into their expertise to increase the overall systemic capacity for instructional leadership. When designed and implemented purposefully, a teacher leadership approach that identifies the best teachers and provides them with responsibilities that extend beyond typical classroom responsibilities can show positive effects on student learning and may encourage excellent teachers to remain in the profession. A strategic approach to teacher leadership can also be used to strengthen numerous aspects of the career continuum, by improving the quality and effectiveness of induction programs, providing peer review of instruction, or delivering on-site professional development to those who need it most.

### NEVADA CONTEXT

- The majority of teachers in Nevada were prepared out-of-state.
- Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) reported that for the 2016-17 academic year, 58.6 percent of statewide demand for teachers was met by program completers from NSHE institutions.
- Roughly 60 to 73 percent of graduates from NSHE institutions' education programs remain in the profession after five years.

### U.S. CONTEXT

- Persistent teacher shortages have become more acute in recent years, particularly in high-need areas such as special education and secondary STEM fields.
- Teacher attrition continues to be a concern, with the Learning Policy Institute estimating that six of 10 teachers who are hired are replacing teachers who left their district pre-retirement, and the National Center for Education Statistics reporting

more than a 60 percent increase in the teacher attrition rate from 1991 and 2005.

- The average cost of teacher attrition per teacher is estimated at \$9,000 for rural districts and \$21,000 for urban districts.
- In a 2018 national survey, the group Educators for Excellence found: 95 percent of teachers believe teachers should be compensated for taking leadership roles in addition to their classroom responsibilities; 43 percent of teachers express pressure to become an administrator in order to advance their career; and 64 percent to 87 percent of teachers expressed an interest in specific teacher leader roles (i.e., professional development facilitator, instructional coach or mentor teacher).

### RECENT ACTIONS IN NEVADA

- Recent legislative action has focused on recruitment of new teachers, such as the Teach Nevada Scholarship or recruitment programs receiving funding through the Great Teaching and Leading Fund.

- State-level teacher leader initiatives include hiring a "Teacher Leader in Residence" beginning in the 2018-2019 academic year and convening an advisory group to discuss definitions of teacher leadership.
- Following a targeted effort to increase the number of National Board Certified Teachers, over 150 Nevada teachers became newly board certified in 2018, including over 120 newly board certified teachers in Clark County School District.

### CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

- Accelerate the state's timeline and strategic planning for the development of a more robust career ladder that articulates explicit teacher leadership roles. Begin by adopting the Teacher Leader Model Standards as an organizational framework.
- Incentivize districts and local organizations to articulate the expectations of specific teacher leader roles and pilot the use of teacher leaders. Existing resources such as the Great Teaching and Leading Fund or state-level Title II-A funds could specifically focus on this work.

- Build new teacher leader roles into the state's licensure framework and identify appropriate supports for those who are identified for teacher leader positions.
- Include teacher leadership in the state's strategy to address the inequitable distribution of effective educators.

### IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING STATUS QUO

- Initiatives seeking to strengthen the educator pipeline and/or address the inequitable distribution of teachers will continue to be done in piecemeal fashion, meaning they are unlikely to lead to systemic change.
- Without a modernized career ladder including teacher leader roles, teacher attrition is likely to remain high, as will the number of shortages.
- The inequitable distribution of effective teachers, with the least experienced teachers currently working in the highest need schools at a disproportionate rate, is likely to continue without a targeted strategy.



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# School Safety in Nevada

Violence in schools and the question of how to keep schools safe has preoccupied the country, especially since the Columbine tragedy over twenty years ago and after recent events over the last few years. Research has progressed considerably over the twenty year span, leading us to understand notably that “quick fixes” in the form of simple solutions are not effective. This summary illustrates why simple solutions do not work and presents strategies that are supported by research in the hopes that legislators may create policies to support them.

## NEVADA FACTS & STATISTICS

- There were two shootings on school grounds in 2018 with one non-fatal injury and one death, but only one was in K-12 schools.
- Nevada accounts for 2.2 percent of the total school shootings in the US for 2018.
- There were 11,187 incidents of student violence, 876 incidents of violence towards staff, and 1,040 possessions of weapons reported to date across Nevada districts.
- The rates of carrying a weapon on school property significantly increased from 2015 to 2017.
- The two largest school safety concerns for Nevada during the 2017-2018 school year were bullying incidents that occurred at a rate of 2.6 percent and violence to other students at a rate of 2.3 percent.

## U.S. FACTS & STATISTICS

- The vast majority of school shootings (97.8 percent) occurred in other states outside of Nevada.
- Data show that severe violence in schools, such as school shootings, are actually not as common as milder forms of violence in schools; however, milder forms of violence are also very harmful to student learning.
- The national Youth Risk Behavior Survey showed that 19 percent of students were bullied on school property.
- Nationwide, 2.9 percent of students experienced victimization in 2017.

## RECENT ACTIONS IN NEVADA

- Nevada has coordinated school safety teams in both the northern and southern regions, specifically Washoe County and Clark County.

- Clark County also has in place a 24/7 Tip Line that can be used to report information or threats.
- Clark County School District also requires that all staff watch a safety training video annually, while schools are required to report on monthly training drills and have an Emergency Response Plan in place.
- Washoe County has implemented an initiative to improve school safety.
- The My Brother’s Keeper Alliance of Las Vegas has been working on equity issues in schools related to school safety, discipline, and collaboration with law enforcement.
- The Clark County School Justice Partnership (SJP) initiative has an MOU adopted in August 2018 by the Board of Trustees “to minimize interrupted educational opportunities.” The MOU requires schools to use Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), which is a much-needed support for schools in the fight for safer schools including addressing racial disparities in discipline.
- The state has also been working on school safety by the creation of the Nevada Statewide School Safety Task Force that has outlined helpful recommendations.

- In January 2019, Superintendent Jara introduced CCSD Strategic Plan 2024, with the goal of reducing disproportionality of discipline.
- UNLV’s Implicit Bias Training (IBT) team, comprised of researchers and practitioners in the field of school discipline disproportionality and implicit bias, is conducting trainings (in more than 300 schools) to increase awareness of the gaps in school discipline practices and to increase awareness of the role implicit bias may play in those decisions.
- Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak declared during his State of the State Address that “a portion of the 10 percent marijuana tax will go towards preventing violence in our schools.” According to data made available by the Nevada Department of Taxation, approximately \$69.8 million was taken in as marijuana tax revenue in FY 2018.

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR FUTURE ACTIONS

- Use security measures thoughtfully. Policy should be developed to require the thoughtful use of security measures and that armed guards are well trained.
- Support adequate staffing of SBMH professionals and individual school safety teams.
- Policy should be developed to implement a phased, cessation

- of zero tolerance policies (and automatic suspension and expulsion) beginning with elementary schools. Data on exclusionary discipline (suspensions and expulsions) by race and disability status should be made available to the public.
- Implement culturally responsive, comprehensive prevention programming in schools. Require that schools implement Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) that is culturally responsive to their particular school community.
- Increase professional development for teachers and administrators.
- Fund high-quality research to develop models and strategies that work specifically for Nevada.
- Support community partners doing innovative and critical work.

## IMPLICATIONS OF MAINTAINING STATUS QUO

While Nevada is in the process of making schools safe with innovative community partnerships, the rate of change will be slow, and could potentially fail, without supportive policies that ensure evidence-based practices are implemented in schools well. Schools need more support to create learning environments in which students feel safe, supported and engaged. It is the role of the school district and educational policy makers to make sure that happens.



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# About the College

As part of culturally diverse community and within the fifth largest school districts in the United States, the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas offers its students a unique learning environment with direct preparation in PK-16 and other community settings. The College is composed of four academic departments that offer undergraduate, master's, doctoral, and certificate programs: Counselor Education, School Psychology & Human Services, Early Childhood, Multilingual & Special Education, Educational Psychology & Higher Education, and Teaching & Learning. Collectively, these programs are in early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, special education, English language learning, clinical mental health counseling, school counseling, school psychology, educational policy and leadership, higher education, learning and technology, curriculum and instruction, and teacher education.

The College boasts seven research centers and clinics dedicated to scholarship and best practices in educator preparation, literacy, autism spectrum disorders, mental health, assessment and evaluation, as well as STEM, and early childhood education. In addition, the College's Education Student Services Center provides advising and career services to ensure retention, progression, and completion of undergraduate students in the College, along with those working towards initial teacher licensure in Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) programs.

The College is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment that values and promotes diversity. Integral to this vision is a dedication to being a premier college of education that serves our dynamic and expanding community, the state, the region, and the nation.


**For more information, visit [unlv.edu/education](http://unlv.edu/education).**

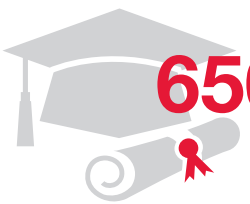
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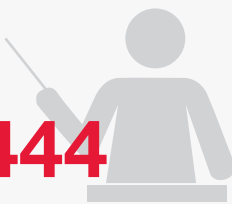
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- and Mr. Dean J. Gould,


*Chief of Staff and Special Counsel to the Board*


Fall 2018 Enrollment **2,705** 


 **650** 2017-18 Degrees Conferred

Teachers Candidates Prepared in 2017-18 **444** 

 **#1** most diverse campus in the nation\* COE's ethnic minority students: 60% undergraduate 45% graduate  
\*According to US News & World Report

FY 2019 to date\* External Grant Funding **\$4.6 MILLION**   
\*July 1, 2018 to February 15, 2019

 **37** Innovative Degree Programs Offered

UNLV is One of Only 130 "Very High Research" Institutions\*   
\*As Classified by Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education, Dec. 2018



## Nevada Institute on Teaching and Educator Preparation: Building the Best & Brightest

**S**purring a program designed specifically to train high-potential candidates to become future teachers, the Nevada Department of Education awarded the UNLV College of Education a \$1 million grant to initiate the Nevada Institute on Teaching and Educator Preparation (NITEP/Institute) at its August 2018 Board Meeting. NITEP, originally created during the 2017 Legislative Session via Senate Bill 548 with bipartisan support of former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval and state lawmakers, seeks to:

1. Establish a highly selective program within the UNLV College of Education for the education and training of teachers;
2. Conduct innovative and extensive research to identify promising methods used to train educators and teach pupils; and
3. Continually evaluate, develop and disseminate the best identified approaches to teaching that address the varied settings in which students in Nevada are educated.

Selecting its first cohort of Fellows to begin their work during the 2018-19 academic year, NITEP has continued building capacity for the groundbreaking work to come. The Institute will support fellowships for 25 incoming, high-performing, high-potential future educators each year. Fellows will have opportunity to step into leadership roles in ways that are unique to undergraduate preparation programs, focusing specifically on broadening scholarship and knowledge in the areas of teacher preparation and clinical practice. Upon completion of their undergraduate programs, NITEP Fellows will enter the teaching force as an elite group of educators who will extend their reach beyond their classrooms, forming a network of highly capable and effective practitioners who pioneer progress in their schools, districts and across the profession more broadly.

In efforts to tackle some of the most pressing issues in the field of education, NITEP's research agenda will support innovative ideas and projects that aim to improve and

modernize educator preparation in the state. NITEP will serve as the impetus for exploration of and experimentation with new methods for conducting and disseminating research to the field, ultimately leading to stronger and more meaningful relationships between Nevada schools, the state's educator preparation programs, and the field of education. The College of Education will build upon its numerous existing partnerships, both inside and outside of Nevada, to explore new methods of engaging with educators and other colleagues in teacher preparation, ensuring the work of NITEP will have ongoing and far reaching impact in schools.

The College of Education intends for NITEP to be a model program to challenge the status quo and build leaders poised to make an impact for generations to come—not only for the participating Fellows, but through developing transferable and scalable practice to benefit all educators and students.

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*For more information on NITEP, visit: [unlv.edu/education/centers/nitep](http://unlv.edu/education/centers/nitep)*

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