

Nevada Plan for Equitable Distribution of Teachers – Updated 8-20-08

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Requirements

States must have a plan in place to ensure that poor or minority children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other children [ESEA 1111(b)(8)(C)].

In addition, the United States Department of Education requires states to demonstrate that they are making good-faith efforts to correct staffing inequities and are on track to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher goal.

NCLB requires State plans to describe:

*the **specific steps** the State Education Agency (SEA) will take... to ensure that poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers, and the **measures** the SEA will use to evaluate and publicly report the progress of the SEA with respect to such steps. (States will be required to demonstrate progress towards the equitable distribution of teachers.)*

The following information comes from the Council of Chief State School Officers powerpoint – “Presenting Evidence for the Probable Success of Your Strategies” (May 8-9, 2006):

The SEA’s role in solving the teacher quality gap is to:

1. Regulate – e.g., set licensing, monitor for compliance
2. Build systems – e.g., state job banks
3. Build capacity – e.g., teacher/leadership training; technical assistance
4. Allocate resources – e.g., state compensation – loan forgiveness etc.
5. Inform LEAs and schools about what works and what is needed

2 Goals:

1. Increase the relative attractiveness of hard-to-staff schools so they can compete for their fair share of good teachers.
2. Make these schools personally and professionally rewarding places to work.

Ways to ensure an equitable distribution of teachers:

Increase supply -

1. Create a new pool of teachers
2. Redistribute existing teachers

Reduce demand -

3. Strengthen the skills of teachers already working in high-need schools (PD; mentoring)
4. Keep qualified, experienced teachers from leaving (PD; improve leadership; incentives; alternative ways to compensate

Strategies that are most likely to work are those that:

1. Reward teachers for taking on more challenging assignments
2. Provide the specialized preparation and training teachers need to be successful in challenging classrooms
3. Improve working conditions that contribute to high teacher turnover
4. Revise state policies or improve internal processes that may inadvertently contribute to local staffing inequities

Different ways to target schools in need:

- Make it exclusive
Ex. Teach in Virginia – recruit for top high need subject areas & 100 high need schools; merit pay for teachers who raise student performance
- Give priority to certain schools or teachers
Ex. State sponsored professional development; Florida- 1st priority discretionary funds for schools with D & F
- Make it increasingly lucrative
Ex. California – loan assumption program for hard to fill subjects/hard to staff schools (could be more money or faster assumption)

Strategies that are NOT likely to close the teacher quality gap:

1. Involuntary transfers
2. Simply producing more teachers
3. Raising all teachers' pay (with conditions not changed)
4. Purely compensatory measure to make up for bad working conditions, lack of resources, and poor leadership

Characteristics of a well-designed state teacher equity plan:

1. Comprehensive – address 8 elements
Take inventory of current policies and programs; Identify new strategies
Nevada will adopt – What is missing?
2. Targeted – focused on schools that have the greatest needs
3. Aligned – to what already is being done
4. Strategic – the way support is built
5. Specific – set measurable outcomes & timelines; list steps to implementation
6. Balanced – short and long term strategies –
what SEAs are doing as well as what local educational agencies (LEAs/districts) are doing.

NEVADA EQUITY PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Nevada Policy Agenda for Teacher Quality

A broad range of national research demonstrates the importance of prepared, experienced and well-supported teachers and administrators to promote long-term school improvement and to close the achievement gap, both goals of NCLB and Nevada Senate Bill 1 of the 19th Special Session of the 2003 Nevada Legislature. Nevada Revised Statute 391.100 mirrors the requirements of NCLB regarding all core teachers meeting the highly qualified teacher requirements by June 30, 2006. Nevada made a significant increase in regard to teachers meeting the NCLB highly qualified teachers requirement - from 68.1% as of the October 1, 2005 district “Contracted Educators Report” to 80.38% as of May 1, 2006, 86.62% as of May 24, 2007 and 89.2% as of May 2008. All districts have had a plan to get their teachers to meet the HQT requirements since 2003 which have been updated annually as needed as part of the Title II-A consolidated application supplement for funds.

In 1999 the Nevada State Legislature created a statewide network of Regional Professional Development Programs. The RPDP created Nevada Professional Development Standards. Several task forces have been created to work on the issue of teacher quality including the Nevada National Governors Association Task Force on the Recruitment and Retention of Teachers and the Teacher Quality Task Force to align teacher preparation, licensing and relicensing.

The 2007 State Improvement Plan supports teacher quality with the following goals:

- To improve the performance of all students through the implementation of proven practices that enhance instruction in core academic subjects and reduce achievement gaps.
- To implement effective statewide professional development activities and educator preservice preparation focused on data-driven needs and proven practices that will increase student achievement as identified in school, district, and state improvement plans.

Equitable Teacher Distribution: Nevada’s Good Faith Effort

Nevada has completed Phase I of the Equity Plan as outlined on p. 29 and is in Phase II as outlined on pp. 29, 30. The purpose of Phase II is to ensure the Nevada Equity Plan is successful in correcting staffing inequities by working with the Southwest Comprehensive Center as a Nevada Committee on Equitable Distribution of Teachers, to include State Department of Education staff and representatives from Clark County School District and Washoe County School District, as outlined in the goal and objectives listed.

Nevada's Growth Rate Challenges

Nevada is the fastest growing state in the nation. We have an influx each year of more than 13,000 students. Nevada is unique with 70% of the teachers positioned in Clark County School District (Las Vegas) – 16,427 teachers out of the 07-08 school year State total of 23,421. Clark County as the fifth largest school district in the United States has significant teacher recruitment and retention challenges with the need to recruit a majority of its teachers each year from outside Nevada. In Clark County 80% of the teachers come from outside of Nevada, 35% of these teachers leave within 3 years, and 50% leave within 5 years. For the 06-07 school year CCSD hired 2,400 new teachers. The diversity-minority students make up 50% of the school age population, yet minority teachers make up only 16% of teaching staff. Because Clark County School District accounts for 70% of the Nevada teachers and because of the district's challenges, their strategies are highlighted throughout this plan and their EDT Plan is included in **APPENDIX A**. Washoe County School District is the second largest school district in Nevada with 3,641 teachers. Their EDT PLAN is included in **APPENDIX B**.

2008 Nevada's Analysis of Data

Nevada "High-Need Schools"

As of March 2008 there were 97 "high need schools" identified and 38 of those made AYP. March 2007 there were 132 "high-need schools" identified. * There were 85 "high-need schools" identified in 2005-2006 (all schools that didn't make Adequate Yearly Progress were included but this was before final designations came out in August; 37 schools that were listed as high need for 05-06 were not listed for 06-07). In 2008 there are 94 high-need schools identified in Clark County School District (32 of these made AYP); 1 high-need school each in Carson City School District and Humboldt County School District that made AYP and 1 high need school in Nye County School District. In 2007 there were 120 high-need schools identified in Clark County School District (32 of these schools made AYP in 2007), 9 high-need schools identified in Washoe County School District (2 schools made AYP), 1 school each in Carson City School District and Nye County School District that made AYP, and 1 school in Humboldt County School District.

Inequities in teacher assignment (LEA percent difference between high/low poverty and high/low minority for HQT and experience data) is summarized in the following table for 2007 as compared to 2006.

| | HQT by Classes % difference between high poverty/ low poverty | Experience % difference between high poverty/ low poverty | HQT by Classes % difference between high minority/ low minority | Experience % difference between high minority/ low minority |
|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Carson City | | | | -11.00% |
| Clark | - 12.60% | - 12.20% | - 7.40% | - 9.10% |
| Clark [2006] | - 6.42% | - 14.98% | - 6.62% | - 11.48% |
| Elko (rural) | - 19.60% | | - 7.80% | - 12.00% |
| Elko [2006] | - 2.75% | - 19.91% | - 5.57% | - 12.54% |
| Esmeralda (rural) | | - 33.30 % | | |
| Humboldt (rural) | | | -23.30% | - 9.60% |
| Humboldt [2006] | | - 26.35% | - 9.33% | - 18.56% |
| Lyon | - 8.10 % | -29.90% | | |
| Nye (rural) | | - 11.00% | | |
| Washoe | - 0.50% | - 2.69% | | - 5.60% |
| Washoe [2006] | | - 2.69% | | - 4.86% |
| STATEWIDE | -10.60% | -11.60% | - 8.00% | - 9.90% |
| STATEWIDE 06 | | | - 1.08 | - 2.71% |

Clark County School District: The greatest inequity in teacher distribution is in Clark County School District, the largest school district in Nevada. This district has a large number of high-poverty/high-minority schools that have teachers that have not met the NCLB highly qualified requirements and have less than 3 years of teaching experience. Comparing 2007 to 2006 data there was a 6.18% percent difference increase between high/low poverty and .78% difference increase between high/low minority schools for HQT and a 2.78% difference decrease between high/low poverty and 2.38% decrease between high/low minority schools for experience.

Washoe County School District: The percent difference between high/low minority for experience data is relatively low in Washoe County School District, which is the second largest school district in Nevada. There is not inequity in teacher distribution in this district between high/low poverty for HQT.

Carson City School District and Nye County School District each have 1 “high need school” that met AYP, and Humboldt has 1 “high need school”. Elko County School District and Esmeralda County School District are small rural districts that have some remote schools where it is difficult to attract and retain highly qualified teachers with

experience. However, no “high-need schools” were identified in these rural districts. No Lyon County School District schools met the criteria of a “high need school”.

Nevada’s Key Goals

1. Continuously monitor, through data collection on teacher distribution and analyses of identified patterns, that Nevada poor and minority students are not being taught at higher rates than other children by inexperienced, unqualified and out-of-field teachers so they have equitable access to effective teachers who are able to teach students to needed levels of achievement.
 - *Measure:* Percentage of highly qualified teachers and/or experienced teachers in high need schools (high poverty/high minority schools in need of improvement) versus schools with low poverty/low minority and not in need of improvement.
 - *Publicly Report Progress:* Teacher Quality Report
2. Increase the percentage of Nevada’s teachers meeting the NCLB highly qualified requirements to 100%.
 - *Measure:* Percentage of highly qualified teachers in Nevada’s districts/schools.
 - *Publicly Report Progress:* State Accountability Report

Nevada’s Strategies and Sub-Strategies Listed by Supportive Elements

1. Increase the relative attractiveness of hard-to-staff schools so they can compete for their fair share of good teachers.
2. Make these schools personally and professionally rewarding places to work to retain high quality teachers.

Element 1: Data and Reporting Systems

- 1.1 Collect and publicly report data on the distribution of teacher quality. (pp. 3, 4)
- 1.2 Program data for data reports on equitable distribution of teachers. (p. 25)

Element 2: Teacher Preparation

- 2.1 Explore the expansion of college and university teacher preparation initiatives to prepare, place, and support new teachers in schools with high percentages of at risk students. (p. 42)

Element 3: Out-of-Field Teaching

- 3.1 No longer approve out-of-field teacher assignments in core subjects. (p. 43)

Element 4: Recruitment and Retention of Experienced Teachers

4.1 AB1: The 2007 legislature created a grant fund for incentives for:

- teachers and administrators who have been employed in that category of position for at least 5 years and who are employed in schools which are at-risk
- and teachers who hold an endorsement in the field of mathematics, science, special education, English as a second language or other area of need within the district, as determined by the Superintendent of Public Instruction [this incentive targets high need areas, but not at-risk schools.]

The financial incentive available for individual employees who participate in the program is limited to no more than \$3,500 per year. The district had to notify before August 1, 2007 each employee who is currently receiving the 1/5th retirement service credit that he may elect to participate in the program of incentive pay for licensed educational personnel in lieu of the purchase of retirement service if they continue to be eligible for the program (so the 1/5th retirement service credit is being phased out). (p. 35)

4.2 AB3: The 2007 legislature provided funding for pilot programs of performance pay and enhanced compensation for the recruitment and retention of licensed teachers, giving appropriate consideration to implementation in at-risk schools. The amount of compensation that an individual teacher may receive from the grant received by a school district must not exceed \$3,000 per year. (p. 36)

4.3 Allow retired staff in hard to fill positions to be rehired (p. 37)
[In CCSD “at high-need schools” - p. 50].

4.5 List state and federal incentives on the SEA website to ensure better communication of this information to teachers and encourage districts to do the same on their website. (p. 56)

4.6 Develop a strategic state plan for retaining highly qualified teachers. (pp. 49, 50)

4.7 CCSD - Allow high need school first pick of teachers. (p. 52)

4.8 CCSD – Continue pay for performance pilot. (p. 52)

4.9 CCSD – Continue principal salary schedule based on a point factor system. (p. 53)

Element 5: Professional Development

5.1 Continue professional development provided by the Regional Professional Development Programs to improve the quality of teaching at schools designated as “in need of improvement”. (pp. 57-63)

5.2 Continue the professional development provided by the Nevada Association of School Administrators. (p. 63)

5.3 Continue to partner with the International Center for Leadership in Education to study what model schools do to get student achievement results. (p. 65)

5.4 Continue LEA grants to adopt a program of performance pay and enhanced compensation for recruitment, retention and mentoring of licensed personnel at at-risk schools. (p. 65)

5.5 Continue state initiatives – Professional Learning Communities; Assessment for Learning; Response to Intervention; Curriculum Self-Analysis for Districts and Schools Identified for Corrective Action. (pp. 65-67)

5.6 CCSD – Continue Urban Academy at 22 low performing schools. (p. 67)

5.7 CCSD – Continue new teacher induction program. (p. 68)

5.8 CCSD – Continue coaches assigned to low-performing schools in the Northeast Region of the district. (p. 68)

Element 6: Specialized Knowledge and Skills

6.2 Review research that has been done on ensuring teachers have the specialized knowledge and skills they need to be effective with students at risk and closing the achievement gap to enhance professional development impact on diverse learners. (p. 70)

Element 7: Working Conditions

7.1 Continue the Working Conditions Survey in Clark County and Washoe County School Districts and increase teacher retention by improving working conditions. (p. 72)

7.2 Continue State class size reduction funding. (p. 73)

7.3 Strengthen school leadership by continuing to provide professional development through the Regional Professional Development Program as outlined in the Administrative Strand, through the Nevada Association of School Administrators, and through the Professional Learning Community Online Forum for administrators. (p. 73)

Element 8: Policy Coherence

8.1 AB1: The 2007 legislature created a grant fund for incentives for teachers who hold an endorsement in the field of mathematics, science, special education, English as a second language or other area of need within the district. This incentive targets high need areas, but not at-risk schools. This may be a policy coherence problem. Since critical shortage area teachers can receive a financial incentive working at any school regardless of designation, this could deter them from wanting to go/stay at an at risk school. On the other hand, if an at-risk school needed a math teacher, for example, and the teacher didn't have 5 years of experience, as is a requirement for receiving a financial incentive at an at risk school otherwise, the teacher could be provided the incentive immediately even with 1 year of experience which would help the school fill their teacher needs. (p. 35)

8.2 CCSD has doubled support staff and added an administrator to speed up the processing time of applications. CCSD is going to monitor application status weekly to help shorten the application process. The CCSD Human Resources Division will report the results of this strategy to decrease the amount of time needed to process applications.