



SESSION SPOTLIGHT

June 4, 2021

It is over! The 81st Nevada Legislative Session adjourned Sine Die at 12 a.m. on Tuesday, June 1, 2021.

The final weeks of the legislative session saw a lot of positive movement for education. Public education saw the single largest increase of funding in education history in the State of Nevada of approximately \$500 million allocated for education. This money helped the state transition from the outdated Nevada Plan to the new Pupil Centered Funding Plan.

SB439, passed by the Legislature, created the Pupil Centered Funding Plan. This new funding formula will allocate money based on additional weights for different student groups such as English Learners, “At-Risk” Students, and Gifted and Talented Students. Funding for students with special needs meanwhile, will be funded outside of the funding plan.

The Nevada State Legislature also passed **SB450** which will extend the ability for school districts to focus on capital improvement and new school construction through 2035. For the Clark County School District (CCSD), this can result in potentially 13 new schools, 33 replacement schools, and countless other renovations and replacements in other schools. Estimates show that this bill will generate over \$3 billion in economic output in Southern Nevada.

In the final hours of the legislative session, **AB495** created a new excise tax on gold and silver. This bill redirects existing mining taxes towards education in the 2023-2025 biennium. The bill also allocates \$215 million from the state’s share of federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars to school districts and charter schools to address student learning loss throughout the state.

Governor Steve Sisolak also signed both Clark County School District sponsored bills that were recently passed by the 2021 Nevada Legislature. This marks the first time in more than 20 years that all District-sponsored bills have passed in a legislative session.

CCSD thanks Governor Sisolak, Speaker Jason Frierson, and Majority Leader Nicole Cannizzaro for their leadership efforts to see this through until the end. See below for highlights of bills passed that met the priorities set by the CCSD Board of Trustees and the latest update on our top 35 education bills.

Bill Draft Requests

- ✓ **SB2** (BDR 429) Educator Efficiency - Removes duplicate reporting or tasks that take away from the classroom.
- ✓ **SB66** (BDR 430) Bridging the Digital Divide - Identifying students statewide who lack a digital device or sufficient internet access.

Priority Education Issues

- ✓ School Funding
 - Preserve the weighted funding formula (**SB439**)
 - Ensuring dollars are appropriated by end of session (**SB439, SB458**)
- ✓ School Safety and Mental Health
 - Ensure restorative practice models help students (**AB67, AB194, SB354**)
 - Find ways to recruit, retain school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, student success advocates, and mental health specialists (**SB151, SB352**)
 - Support programs that emphasize suicide prevention and training for students and employees (**SB249**)
- ✓ Improved Learning Environment
 - Authorization of a rollover bond for school construction (**SB450**)
 - Create competency based learning models (**SB215**)
 - Support efforts to expand dual credit opportunities (**AB319, SB160, SB172**)
 - Support teacher pipeline and retention efforts (**SB352**)
 - Grow the number of Pre-kindergarten seats (**AB494, Sec. 15**)
 - Reduce reporting requirements for educators to focus on student achievement (**SB2**)
 - Protect employee confidentiality through the implementation of whistleblower protections (**AB222**)
 - Support Vegas PBS' efforts for funding educational services and digital technology enhancements and upgrades (**SB458**)

Status of Top 35 Education Bills

AB57 - Student Learning Goals - Signed. Temporarily suspends SLG as an evaluation measure of teachers during the 2021-2022 school year with a hold harmless for the current school year.

AB67 - Restorative Justice Revisions - Enrolled. Revises the categories of discipline that may be used to discipline a student to include suspension, significant suspension, and expulsion. The bill allows a pupil with a disability to be suspended, expelled, or permanently expelled under certain circumstances in compliance with federal law. Schools district can only consider significant suspensions when determining if a pupil should be deemed a habitual disciplinary problem. In extraordinary circumstances, a school may request an exception to the prohibition on permanently expelling a pupil less than 11 years of age.

AB194 - English Language Learners Bill of Rights - Signed. Requires school districts to annually report to the Nevada Department of Education on the number of English Learner students in the district as well as the number of teachers licensed to teach english as a second language. It also requires school districts to provide to English Learner students and their guardians the English Language Learner bill of rights in their primary language as well as post it on their internet websites.

AB195 - Suspension and Expulsions Appeals Process - Signed. Requires school districts to adopt policies around the procedures for appealing suspensions and expulsions of students that includes providing written notice to a student and their guardian about their right to appeal, and as well as not allow the suspension or expulsion to be increased after the hearing. AB194 also requires school districts to hold the appeal process in an expedited timeline that is to be determined in regulations by the Nevada Department of Education.

AB205 - Opioid Antagonist - Signed. Allows school districts to opt in to acquire, maintain proper/secure storage, to provide training to licensed and unlicensed employees to recognize the signs and symptoms of opioid overdose, and then to accurately administer an opioid antagonist while monitoring the student's response.

AB224 - Feminine Hygiene Products - Enrolled. Enacts a pilot program to stock menstrual products in twenty-five percent of secondary schools which are determined by the highest population of Free and Reduced Lunch students over the preceding three years.

AB235 - FAFSA Completion - Signed. Requires school districts to inform students and families of the importance of the FAFSA and host two events a year allowing families to complete the FAFSA.

AB255 - Hybrid Appointed School Boards - Failed. Changes the composition of the school board of trustees in Washoe and Clark to four elected trustees and three appointed trustees. The trustees would be appointed by the county as well as the two largest municipalities in the district.

AB257 - HVAC Testing/Repairs - Signed. Invites school districts to use federal funds to test and repair HVAC units in schools.

AB261 - Diversity in Textbooks - Signed. Requires a school district to ensure that instruction is provided to pupils enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 on the history and contributions to science, the arts and humanities of diverse populations to ensure inclusivity in instruction.

AB266 - Class Sizes/Teacher Evaluation - Enrolled. AB266 does not allow administrators or other certain licensed personnel to be included in the non-binding recommended pupil to licensed teacher ratios. AB266 also requires school districts, to the extent money is available, to determine the amount of vacancies based on the amount of teachers needed to fulfill the recommended pupil to teacher ratios. AB266 also requires school districts to post on their websites the amount of full-time substitutes and as well as teachers working to obtain their license through alternative routes to licensure currently working in the district. Finally, AB266 requires a person who evaluates a licensed teacher with a class size that exceeds the recommended ratio to award an additional weight on certain specified criteria.

AB319 - Pilot Program for Dual Enrollment - Enrolled. Establishes a pilot program between CCSD and CSN for a CTE Concurrent Enrollment Pilot Program.

AB355 - "We the People" Appropriation - Enrolled. Appropriates \$350,000 for "We the People" for the 2021-2023 biennium.

AB371 - Bullying process for racial incidents - Enrolled. Extends provisions related to bullying and cyber-bullying to additionally prohibit and address discrimination based on race. Requires a school district to categorize an incident of discrimination based on race as a racially motivated or hate incident. AB371 also requires an evaluation of a school employee to indicate any disciplinary actions taken against the employee if he or she knowingly and willfully violated certain statutory provisions concerning bullying, cyber-bullying, and discrimination based on race.

AB495 - Mining Tax for Education - Signed. Generates revenue for Nevada schools through a mining tax and allocates \$215 million from the state's share of federal American Rescue Plan

Act dollars to school districts and charter schools to address student learning loss throughout the state. This bill also requires the Legislative Committee on Education to conduct an interim study concerning the composition of the board of trustees of school districts;

SB2 - Educator Efficiency - Signed. Removes duplicative reporting or tasks that take away from the classroom.

SB27 - NDE Educator Licensure - Failed. Clarifies that the State Superintendent may investigate only licensed employees and the status of their license with the state. Revises the Teach Nevada Scholarship Program, with intent to streamline the licensure process, by removing the requirement for a university, college or other provider offering an approved program to be located in Nevada and transfers responsibility to approve such programs from the State Board of Education to the Commission on Professional Standards in Education among other changes.

SB66 - Bridging the Digital Divide - Signed. Identifies students statewide who lack a digital device or sufficient internet access.

SB76 - Removes NDE Commissions - Failed. Removes multiple committees and commissions that the Nevada Department of Education administers such as the State Financial Literacy Advisory Council, the Commission on Educational Technology, the Competency Based Education Network, the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools and the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Training Programs as well as reduce multiple reporting requirements to NDE.

SB102 - Kindergarten Starting Age - Signed. Requires pupils to be the age of 5 before the first day of kindergarten

SB111 - Hybrid Appointed School Boards - Failed. Similar to AB255 but the split was 4 appointed trustees and 3 trustees elected at large.

SB120 - Administrators re-applying for their jobs every five years - Failed. Required post probationary administrators to apply for their position every five years. Also allowed for a post probationary principal to become an at-will employee if for two consecutive years their schools experience a certain amount of staff turnover and the star rating for the school fell.

SB126 - School Librarians - Failed. Requires schools to reserve space for school libraries as well as employ a certified teacher librarian in each library.

SB141 - Construction Manager At Risk - Enrolled. Removes the sunset provision so that CMAR projects can continue to be built by local governments.

SB142 - Repealing School District's Ending Funding Balance - Failed. Repeals school districts protected ending fund balance so they would have been subject to collective bargaining.

SB172 - NSHE Dual Enrollment - Enrolled. Removes the enrollment application process and prerequisite requirements for a student to participate in a dual credit course in order to provide a uniform process throughout the state. Additionally requires the board of trustees of a school district to report certain information relating to dual credit programs to the Legislature in odd-numbered years.

SB215 - Distance Education - Enrolled. Provides school districts with the flexibility needed so instruction is not restricted to a set time on the calendar in order to meet the needs of all students.

SB249 - Enrolled. Allows students to take mental health days and allows students identification cards to have information for suicide prevention hotlines.

SB287 - State Land Grant Institutions - Enrolled. Provides UNLV the ability to apply for federal grants and ensures that UNR continues to operate its cooperative extension and provide current programming to CCSD students so there is no loss in service.

SB352 - Teacher Pipeline -Enrolled. Allows for the Nevada Department of Education to prescribe regulations to assist paraprofessionals in becoming teachers by completing student teaching in the classrooms in which they currently work (and not have to take time off).

SB353 - Assessment and Examinations Review - Enrolled. Requires the Nevada Department of Education to review examinations and assessments administered statewide as well as adopt regulations limiting the actual instructional time taken to conduct the assessment and the total number of assessments administered in a school year. For school districts, they are provided the opportunity to submit a waiver if the district would like to conduct additional testing.

SB354 - Restorative Justice for Homeless and Foster Youth - Enrolled. Requires: a plan of action based on restorative justice to be provided before the suspension or removal of a student may occur; a school to offer certain services to a pupil who is temporarily removed from school; and a school to recognize students who are homeless, in foster care, or unaccompanied when considering disciplinary action. Also requires that a pupil may not be expelled or suspended from school unless it has been determined that the behavior of the pupil was not caused by homelessness or being in foster care with the presumption that the pupil's behavior was caused by their living situation.

SB439 - Pupil Centered Funding Plan - Signed. Implements the Pupil Centered Funding Plan for the 2021-2023 Biennium.

SB450 - Bond Rollover Extension - Enrolled. Provides school districts with the ability to continue bonding for school construction, renovation, and modernization projects through 2035 (originally set to expire in 2025).

SB458 - K-12 Budget - Enrolled. The major funding bill for K-12 programs, with a list of per-pupil allocations by county.

That's All, Folks!

We hoped you enjoyed reading Session Spotlight throughout the 81st Legislative Session and were able to find it useful and informative. The CCSD Government Relations team will make a final report to the Board of Trustees on June 24, 2021, and the full report on all education-related legislation tracked throughout the session will be available on our site, <http://ccsd.net/spotlight>, by the end of June.

Thank you to many of our great partners who supported us this past session. Finally a big thank you not only to our full CCSD Government Relations team, but also to our fellow education advocates who represented all of Nevada's school districts, school boards, and superintendents. You can see a picture of our team and other education advocates below. We appreciate their hard work on behalf of all the students in the great state of Nevada. Thank you!



CCSD Government Relations