

perspectives

An official publication of the Nevada State Education Association



My School, My Voice

**OPPORTUNITY & ACTION FOR
EVERY STUDENT**
myschoolmyvoice.nea.org

Do students and educators at your school have everything they need? If not, this is your opportunity to speak up!

Click the link below and take a look at the lists. If your school needs to improve in a certain area, place a checkmark next to your concern. We'll follow up with relevant resources to help you take the steps needed to turn your school's needs into its newest asset.

[ESSA Opportunity Checklist](#)



Fix 543: Education Funding in Nevada is Broken

The Nevada Commission on School Funding is charged with helping implement and making recommendations on Nevada's new school funding plan. They have held several meetings thus far, and NSEA has been present and vocal at each one. We need to make sure the Commission



continues to hear concerns. SB543, amending Nevada's education funding formula, was introduced late in the legislative session, only had one public hearing, and was passed into law over the objections of Nevada educators and numerous other education stakeholders.

From the very beginning, NSEA was clear that Nevada's school funding formula needed to be updated to reflect the changing needs of Nevada students. NSEA opposed 543 during the 80th Session due to serious policy concerns: no new/additional revenue; the freeze & squeeze of most school district budgets; watering down of Zoom/Victory Schools; a multi-million-dollar charter school giveaway, anti-union end fund balance provisions, exclusion of a current educator on the Commission, and a fundamentally flawed process. **SB543 will only create new winners and losers, rather than improving education for every student.**

While NSEA opposed 543 because of the above policy concerns, each meeting we attend is an opportunity to advocate for the fixes that are needed for this law to have any chance of success for our kids, our educators, and our state. Recently, NSEA has partnered with Mi Familia Vota in an effort to grandfather current Zoom and Victory Schools, as 543 threatens to dismantle Nevada's two most important equity programs.

By shifting funds away from this successful schools-centered model, Zoom and Victory Schools will lose significant momentum on school climate and culture. This jeopardizes gains made in our most impacted schools. The irony is that this funding formula bill, said to deliver greater education equity, would compromise Nevada's most-proven equity programs. As such, 543 would be a step backward on education equity for Nevada's students.

How can you help? Please write to the Commission members and urge them to address the above issues pertaining to Zoom and Victory Schools and make the proper recommendations to protect our educators, our kids, and our schools.

Our Schools Don't Lack Accountability, They Lack Proper Funding

By NSEA President Brian Rippet



Recently, the Las Vegas Review-Journal ran a commentary by Robert Fellner from the right-wing Nevada Policy Research Institute. Fellner claimed Nevada's education woes are a result of a lack of accountability,

not insufficient funding. Those of us in Nevada's classrooms know that couldn't be further from the truth. Educators want accountability when it is based on fair, timely, rigorous and valid measures.

We are accountable every day to our students, their parents, our colleagues and our supervisors. Additionally, we are also accountable to our own high standards.

Meeting the demands of the teaching profession requires tremendous skill, ability, creativity, organization and preparation. It also requires continuous learning, feedback and support. All of these expectations are included in the current teacher evaluation system, the Nevada Educator Performance Framework.

So no, Nevada's woes do not reflect a lack of accountability. Instead, the woes are a product of chronic underfunding, overcrowding and diversion tactics. The Nevada State Education Association (NSEA) has consistently advocated for more education funding along with greater education equity, ensuring all school districts have the resources necessary to provide a high-quality education for every Nevada student. The "market-based solutions" some groups advocate for, such as charter schools and vouchers, offer nothing more than a "choice for the chosen" and siphon public money from the neighborhood public schools where more than 90% of our children attend.

Despite historic appropriations of education funding this past legislative session, our school districts continue to struggle with budget cuts. An analysis released in late September from Educate Nevada Now shows that when correcting for inflation, most districts across the state have even less base funding from the state than last year. Additional funding would create more one-on-one instruction time with students; additional tutoring for struggling kids; more counseling and mental health services; and greater education equity, all of which are proven to increase student learning. Ensuring all school districts have the resources necessary to provide a high-quality education for every Nevada student will continue to be a primary focus of NSEA.

In the last days of this year's legislative session, Senate Democrats introduced the long-awaited overhaul of the Nevada Plan seeking to modernize the funding formula in Nevada. Unfortunately, the new funding bill included no new revenue for our schools and set no benchmarks for achieving funding adequacy.

The new funding model will fail without new and additional revenue. Crafted behind closed doors, the bill creates a sort of "Hunger Games" of funding. The bill pits districts against each other for the same limited resources. While unaccountable charter schools reel in over \$20 million in additional funding, most school districts' budgets are frozen and left hoping not to be squeezed out of existence.

Educator accountability is plentiful; education funding is not. Every Nevada student deserves a high-quality public education. We are a long way from full adequacy in education funding, and bold leadership is needed to achieve the education excellence our kids, our educators and our state deserve.

2020 NEVADA CAUCUS

COMMIT TO CAUCUS

Nevada will hold the “first in the west” Presidential Caucus in the 2020 Democratic nomination for President. The Nevada Caucus is the best opportunity for Nevadas to make their voices heard, both in nominating candidates for President, as well as adding important issues to the party platform. NSEA is encouraging all of our members to caucus in #RedForEd, while advocating for new revenue for Nevada public schools. Educators are going to have a huge impact in selecting the next president, and NSEA will be there along the way to help you get involved! [Click Here & Commit to Caucus!](#)

EXCITING NEWS

The NSEA Southern Nevada office (3511 E. Harmon Ave Las Vegas, NV 89121) will be one of the Early Vote Caucus locations on February 15, 2020, to February 18, 2020. Nevada educators will have an enormous impact on selecting the next president, and we are pleased to partner with the NVDems to have our Southern Nevada office serve as an early vote site for our members as well as the community.

GET INVOLVED

COMPARE AND CONTRAST: If you have been unable to attend our round table discussions, there are numerous ways to learn about the candidates. There are several candidates running and NSEA has a compare / contrast candidates tool which you can find [here](#).

ATTEND AN EVENT: We have a great tool through Mobilize America that will connect you to various events around the state! Click [here](#) to find a presidential campaign event near you!

BECOME A DELEGATE: Interested in becoming a delegate to the conventions? [Click here for more information](#)

YOUR VOTE, THEIR FUTURE



As the 2020 Presidential continues, candidates are frequently visiting Nevada. As candidates visit, they have been contacting NSEA to sit down with educators across the state to hear what issues concern us the most. While no formal endorsement has been made, NSEA is always willing to sit with candidates and ask them questions about public education. NSEA recently met with Mayor Pete Buttigieg and Tom Steyer.

#REDFORED Means Being The Missing Piece Nevada Needs

One of the most effective ways to promote and protect public education is to run for office! Educators know the true impact of the consistent underfunding in our schools.

It is time to use our school yard voices and make our presence known! If you are interested in taking part in the See Educators Run program and running for public office, contact NSEA today by [clicking here to submit your information!](#)



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NEVADA CENSUS 2020

In early 2020, NEA/NSEA will be launching a comprehensive, multi-faceted campaign to inspire educators to get involved in the Nevada Census 2020. The importance of the U.S. Census to the well-being of children and the strength of their public schools cannot be overstated. Using census data, the federal government allocates tens of billions of dollars in education funds to states and localities annually using formulas that factor in population and poverty levels.

An accurate census count is the critical first step to helping educators address the needs of every child who walks through their doors. The census count happens only once every 10 years; when we undercount young children, the consequences can last most of their childhood.

People can also access the NEA Census site by [clicking here](#). The website will be updated in the coming weeks.