



Legislation Proposal Template and Rubric

Legislation Template

State Legislative Body

[Bill Number (If assigned, leave blank if not)]

Introduced By: Melany Carmenaty-Martinez, The Institute for Youth in Policy
Date Introduced: 6 August, 2025

CUSTOMIZE TO YOUR PROJECT!

This is not assigned, but you'll leave it in!

Until we contact you, write "The Institute for Youth in Policy" for affiliation. This will change later



A BILL

To Improve Education Access for Neurodivergent Students Through Inclusive Policy & Increased Funding

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA

Section 1. Title.

This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "Inclusive Education Act"

Section 2. Findings and Purpose.

- (a) Findings:
 - *WHEREAS, neurodivergent students such as those with autism, ADHD, and dyslexia often face barriers in accessing equitable education due to underfunded special education programs and lack of support for teachers.*
 - *WHEREAS, the National Center for Learning Disabilities found that 1 in 5 students in the U.S. have learning and attention issues, yet many go undiagnosed or unsupported in general education settings.*
 - *WHEREAS, childhood disability rates rose from 3.9% in 2008 to 4.3% in 2019, with disproportionately higher rates among children living in poverty and Indigenous communities.*
 - *WHEREAS, a Pew Research Center study found that 40% of public schools reported being unable to hire sufficient special education staff to meet student needs.*
 - *WHEREAS, only 17 states currently have policies encouraging UDL (Universal Design for Learning), despite its proven effectiveness in improving learning outcomes for both neurodivergent and neurotypical students.*
 - *WHEREAS, the lack of teacher training, funding, and institutional support creates barriers to academic success, graduation, and long-term socioeconomic opportunities for neurodivergent students.*



- *WHEREAS, in Nevada, specifically, approximately 64,000 students receive special education services under IDEA, but the state continues to face shortages of qualified special education teachers, being the leading state in teacher shortages in the 2023-2024 school year.*
- (b) Purpose:
 - The purpose of this legislation is to expand inclusive educational practices for neurodivergent students; by mandating the integration of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, increasing funding for special education programs, and requiring professional development for educators in inclusive instruction.
 - This legislation aims to close opportunity gaps by addressing systemic inequities such as staff shortages, underfunded programs, and outdated styles of teaching. .

Section 3. Definitions.

- For the purposes of this Act, 'neurodivergent' shall refer to individuals whose cognitive functioning or behavioral patterns differ from what is considered typical, including but not limited to autism spectrum disorder (ASD), attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, and other learning or developmental differences.
- For the purposes of this Act, 'Universal Design for Learning (UDL)' shall mean an educational framework that guides the development of flexible learning environments to accommodate individual learning differences, incorporating multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression.
- For the purposes of this Act, 'inclusive education' shall refer to teaching practices, curricula, and school environments that are accessible to and supportive of all students, regardless of ability, disability, or learning style.
- For the purposes of this Act, 'special education staff' shall include all school personnel certified or trained to provide instructional or supportive services to students with disabilities, including special education teachers, aides, interventionists, and related service providers.
- For the purposes of this Act, 'teacher training' shall refer to training that helps and guides teachers to learn how to better support neurodivergent learners, including UDL implementation, differentiated instruction, and classroom accommodations.



Section 4. Provisions.

- (a) All public K–12 schools receiving federal funding shall implement Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in their teaching methods, curriculum, and assessment to better support neurodivergent students; beginning with the 2026-2027 school year.
- (b) Schools must provide annual teacher training focused on inclusive education practices and strategies to support neurodivergent learners.
- (c) Schools shall ensure access to appropriate assistive technologies and individualized accommodations for neurodivergent students as outlined in their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).
- (d) State education agencies shall create guidelines and provide support for implementing inclusive education policies, including monitoring school compliance.
- (e) The U.S. Department of Education shall establish a grant program to fund schools for training, technology, and additional special education staff to reduce shortages and improve services.
- (f) Schools failing to meet these requirements shall develop corrective action plans overseen by their State Education Agency, with continued non-compliance subject to possible reduction or reallocation of federal funding.

Section 5. Enforcement and Implementation.

- The U.S. Department of Education is responsible for enforcing and overseeing this Act.
- State Education Agencies (SEAs) will monitor public schools to ensure compliance with the requirements, including the use of Universal Design for Learning, teacher training, and assistive technologies.
- Schools that do not comply must submit a corrective action plan within six months of notification, which will be evaluated based on clear criteria set by SEAs.
- If non-compliance continues for more than two years, federal education funding may be reduced, suspended, or redirected.



- The U.S. Department of Education will publish annual reports detailing progress on implementation and compliance at both state and national levels.

Section 6. Appropriations (ONLY if applicable).

- To help support implementation, the federal government shall allocate \$500 million over a course of five years to support this Act. Funds will be granted to State Education agencies, with priority given to schools serving high-need and low-income students.

Funds will be used for:

- Teacher training on inclusive education and UDL.
- Acquisition and maintenance of assistive technologies for neurodivergent students.
- Hiring and retaining qualified special education staff.
- Development and distribution of inclusive teaching materials and resources.

Section 7. Severability.

- If any part of this Act or its application to any person or situation is found to be invalid or unconstitutional, that invalidity will not affect the other parts or their application. The remaining provisions of this Act will continue to be in full effect.

Section 8. Effective Date.

This Act shall take effect on July 1st, 2026.



Other Notes:

- **Font:** 12-point Times New Roman.
- **Spacing:** 1.5 or double line spacing with 1-inch margins.
- **Exceptions:** If there are specific requirements for your chosen legislative body, contact us at fellowship@yipinstitute.org

Rubric for Evaluating Legislation

NOTE: The Institute for Youth in Policy Fellowship Program upholds the Institute's core value of *principled nonpartisanship*. Our evaluation of your proposed legislation is an unbiased, nonpartisan review of your Ability

Criterion	Approved	Rejected
Clarity & Concision <i>Weight: 20%</i>	Language is clear, precise, and unambiguous. Avoids jargon and unnecessary complexity. Logical flow and organization.	Language is a mix of unclear, imprecise, and/or ambiguous. Includes irrelevant jargon without context and/or unnecessary complexity. Absence of logical flow or organization.
Problem Identification & Justification <i>Weight: 25%</i>	Clearly identifies a relevant problem or issue. Provides strong evidence and data to support the findings. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the issue.	The relevant problem or issue is unclear or unspecific. Provides a distinct lack of strong evidence and data to support the findings. Demonstrates a less than working understanding of the issue.
Proposed Solution & Provisions <i>Weight: 25%</i>	Presents a clear and feasible solution. Provisions are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). Demonstrates a clear understanding of the intended outcome.	Presents an unclear or impossible solution. Provisions aren't specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, or time-bound. Demonstrates an unclear understanding of the intended outcome.
Implementation & Enforcement <i>Weight: 15%</i>	Clearly outlines the implementation and enforcement procedures. Specifies the responsible agency or entity.	Fails to outline the implementation and enforcement procedures clearly. Does not specify the responsible agency or entity.



	Addresses funding if needed.	Does not address necessary funding.
Formatting & Professionalism <i>Weight: 15%</i>	Adheres to the provided template. Uses proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Presents a professional and polished document.	Uses own formatting. Uses improper grammar, spelling, and/or punctuation. Presents an unprofessional and/or unrefined document.

Grading Scale:

- Approved: 80-100%
- Rejected: Below 80%

Important Considerations for Fellow Candidates:

- **Research:** You have already written a brief on this topic! You should be well-informed, but more research *does not hurt!*
- **Specificity:** The killer of effective legislation is ambiguity. Ensure even the layperson can comprehend the proposal without help.
- **Realism:** The bill should be feasible and possible to be passed. If your topic is *assisted euthanasia*, it is not acceptable to write proposals that require the support of other countries' medical systems to perform. The topic should focus on the ethics and options within the USA.
- **Legislative Process:** DOUBLE CHECK the legislative process for the legislative body you will be submitting your proposal to!
- **Feedback:** Encourage students to seek feedback from peers, professors, and community members before submitting their legislation.
- **Contacting Legislators:** Provide students with resources and guidance on how to contact their legislators and submit their legislation.