

The
**NEVADA
BRIEFING
BOOK**

REVISED & UPDATED



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ABOUT THE GUINN CENTER

Learn about the history, vision, and mission of the Guinn Center, our current and past research, and how to support our work.

Our Story

The Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities is a nonprofit, nonpartisan policy research center addressing key challenges faced by policymakers and all Nevadans.

Founded in 2014 by a group of Nevadans who sought to advance new policy choices based on sound research, sensible and pragmatic thinking, and bold ideas, the Guinn Center is named after the late Governor Kenny Guinn. Governor Guinn was a dynamic force for good in Nevada whose legacy of bipartisan problem-solving continues to inspire our mission today.

Our staff researchers, together with academic partners and independent experts across the state, tackle policy issues that range from economy to governance, healthcare to education, and everything in between. We identify and analyze the complex problems we face as a state and inform decision-makers about actionable, data-driven, and effective policy solutions.

This work matters now more than ever. Political polarization has deeply divided both policymakers and people across the Silver State. Our conversations are often rooted in partisan perspectives instead of shared facts.

We exist to put facts and unbiased, balanced analysis – independent and free of political influence – back at the center of Nevada’s policy conversations, whether at the Nevada Legislature, the water cooler, or around your kitchen table.

The Guinn Center is the only policy research center in Nevada that is both nonpartisan and statewide. Though our main office is in Reno, our team members are located across the state – even around the world. We are a proud affiliate of the University of Nevada, Reno, and proud to partner with many Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions to accomplish our mission.

Thank you for supporting the Guinn Center. We cannot work for you without you.





Mission and Vision

Advancing evidence-based policy solutions for Nevada through research, public engagement, and partnerships.

» What We Do

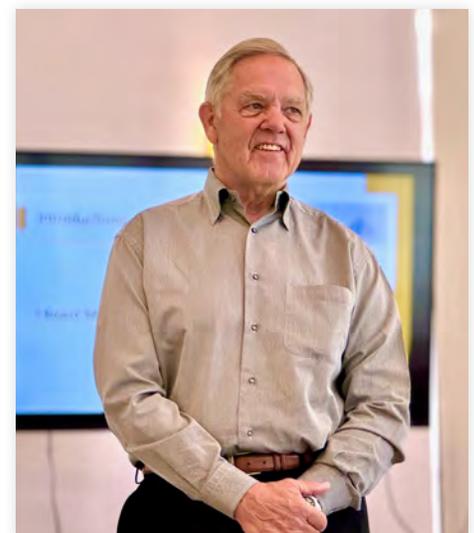
- Conduct data-driven research
- Offer independent policy analysis and actionable policy solutions
- Facilitate statewide collaboration and dialogue
- Build collaborative partnerships to advance informed policy solutions for Nevada

» How We Do It

- Policy briefs and research reports
- Data collection and analysis
- Budget and policy primers
- Policy Landscape Analysis
- Facilitated workshops, roundtables and conferences
- Companion briefs

Our Board of Directors

- | | |
|---|--|
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|---|--|



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

If there was ever a time for independent, nonpartisan policy research to inform Nevadans and help guide our decision-makers, it is now. The Guinn Center team is proud to provide trusted information touted by both sides of the aisle and across the state as a go-to source for reliable data and actionable solutions.

Our Research Focus

Over the interim, our dedicated team of policy directors, academic faculty, graduate students, interns, externs, and subject matter experts tackled pressing questions across key areas:



Education Policy



Economic and Fiscal Policy



Health and Social Policy



Governance and Elections Policy

Questions We Addressed

Here are just a few of the challenges our research seeks to answer:

- How have federal actions, through changes to grant structures and legislation like HR1 (One Big Beautiful Bill), raised new questions for the future of Nevada’s budget?
- How does food insecurity in Nevada drive significant health consequences and economic costs, and what policy opportunities exist to address it?
- How have greater fuel efficiency and more electric vehicles on the road impacted gas tax revenues for road maintenance and repairs?

- What are the causes behind the rise in chronic absenteeism in K-12 schools, and what innovative strategies are school districts using to address it?

A Resource for Nevada’s Future

This briefing book is designed to serve as a reference tool for lawmakers, agencies, community leaders, and stakeholders working to address Nevada’s challenges and opportunities. For complete reports and deeper insights, please visit us online at Guinncenter.org.

Our Commitment

As an independent nonprofit, we rely on the generosity of partners, individuals, and organizations who believe in our mission and fuel this work. We would be honored to have you join this community of supporters as we continue expanding our impact for the good of our state.



With gratitude,

Jill Tolles

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The Guinn Center also works with faculty, students and subject matter experts statewide.



OUR RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

At the Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, our approach to research is guided by a framework designed to deliver insightful, actionable, and inclusive policy analysis. This guidance ensures that our work aligns with our mission to advance evidence-based policy solutions for all Nevadans. Below is an overview of how we structure our research, from inception to dissemination.

From Idea to Partnership: Establishing the Foundation

Our research process begins with topic selection, where our staff analyzes pressing policy issues and emerging trends relevant to Nevada’s communities. In addition, we survey policymakers, members of our Board of Directors, subject matter experts, members of the public, and other stakeholders to identify potential areas of study. Using criteria such as alignment with our mission, potential policy impacts, resource capacity, ethical considerations, and overall interest, we identify the most urgent and actionable topics for study and analysis.

Accepted projects move into a detailed scope of work analysis (through a “Scope of Work Questionnaire”), where we define key research parameters, deliverables, policy impacts, methodologies, and timelines in partnership with stakeholders. Once the scope is finalized, research staff assignments are made, matching expertise to project needs and incorporating mentorship opportunities to foster professional growth. This includes identifying possible research partnerships with Nevada System of Higher Education faculty, graduate students, interns, and UNLV’s Boyd School of Law externs, as well as key subject matter experts.

Finally, to maintain rigor and inclusivity, we establish steering committees composed of diverse experts and stakeholders to inform

our larger research projects and engage in a robust peer review process for our briefs and reports.

Executing Research: The Process in Action

Our methodology emphasizes rigor and adaptability, often employing mixed-methods approaches for our major reports that combine qualitative insights with quantitative analysis. By incorporating tools such as data collection, surveys, literature reviews, and policy landscape analysis, we ensure that our findings are robust, data-driven, and actionable.

A key strength of the Guinn Center’s process is proactive stakeholder identification and outreach. We engage diverse voices, including underrepresented communities, through surveys, focus groups, and advisory panels. This ensures our findings reflect the lived experiences and needs of those most affected by policy decisions. We provide regular updates and transparent reporting to our Board, stakeholders, and funding agencies to ensure timeliness and seamless collaboration in our work.

The culmination of this work is the writing and review of reports, conducted collaboratively and incorporating multiple layers of factual, legal, and technical examinations. Finally, deliverables are designed to be accessible and impactful, with emphasis, when possible, on data visualizations, mapping, and executive summaries that make complex findings comprehensible to diverse audiences and policymakers. When warranted by the research findings, we provide evidence-based policy recommendations, options, and questions for policymakers to consider.

Sharing Insights: Delivering and Engaging

Once a project is completed, the Guinn Center focuses on effective dissemination and engagement. Final reports, briefs, infographics, and other deliverables adhere to a standardized style guide that prioritizes clarity, inclusivity, and accessibility. We offer ADA accessible and translated versions of our reports whenever possible, ensuring that our work is available to all audiences.

To maximize the reach and impact of our findings, we employ a robust promotion strategy:



Reports are prominently displayed on our website.



Social media campaigns highlight key findings using infographics and easy-to-digest shareable content.



Press releases and summary briefs ensure our data-driven, research-based findings reach both media outlets and policymakers.



We host presentations and webinars and distribute printed materials to legislators, government officials, private sector partners, and other interested parties.

Engagement is a cornerstone of our dissemination efforts. We often host community forums and listening sessions to share findings and gather feedback from the public. For policymakers, we arrange briefings, roundtable discussions, and legislative testimonies, ensuring that our research informs decision-making at the highest levels.

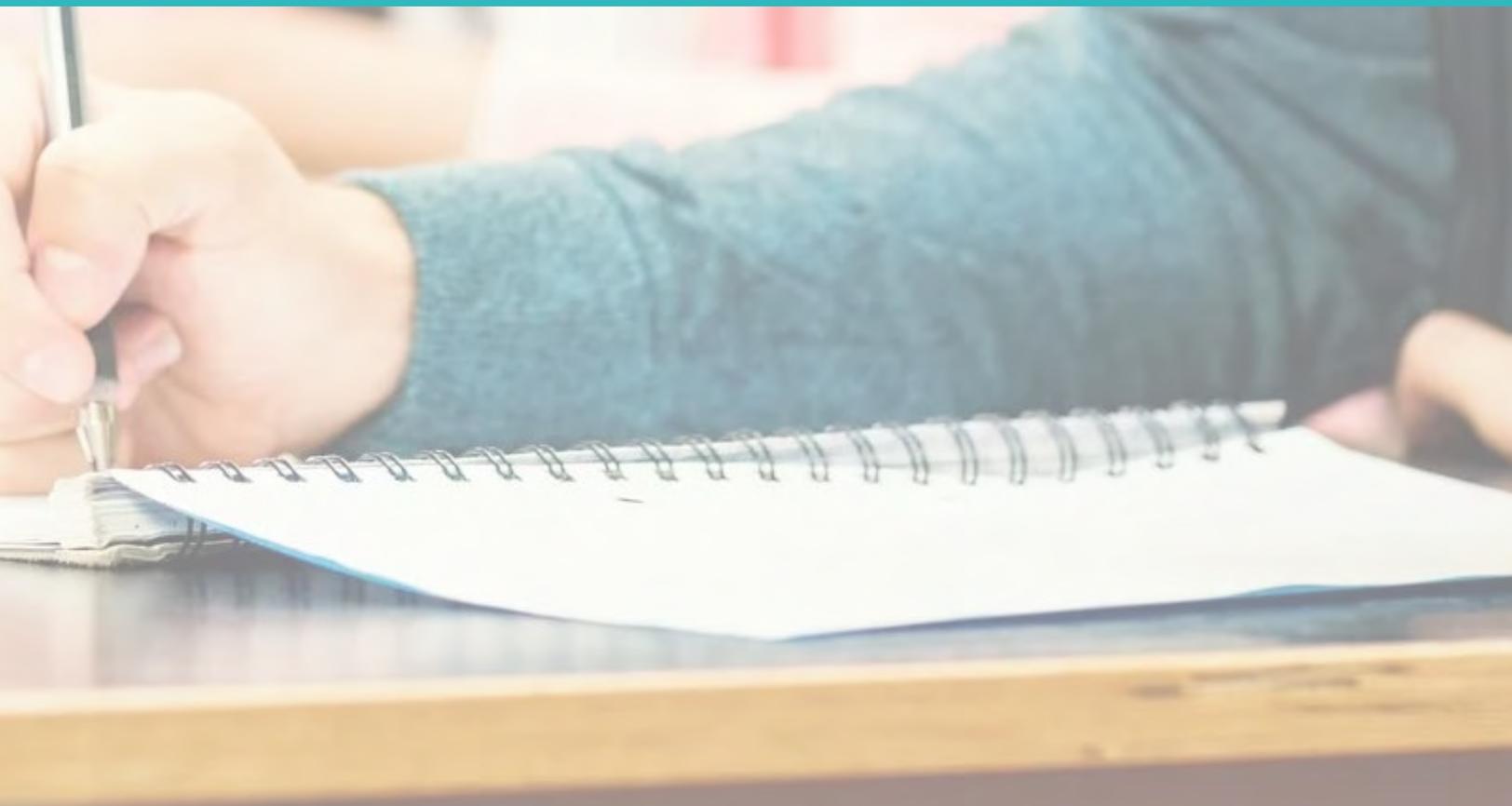
Our Commitment to Excellence

Through this comprehensive approach, the Guinn Center delivers research and analysis that not only addresses Nevada’s most pressing policy challenges, but also sets a standard for excellence in evidence-based analysis that is easily understood by all audiences. Our work is not just about generating knowledge—it is about fostering informed decision-making that leads to meaningful change.





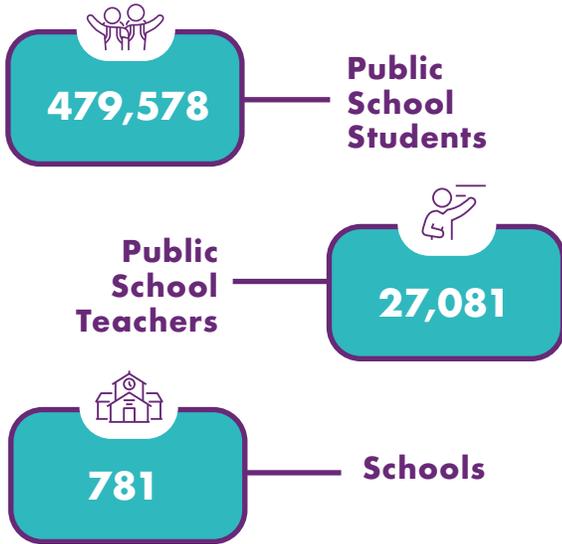
EDUCATION POLICY



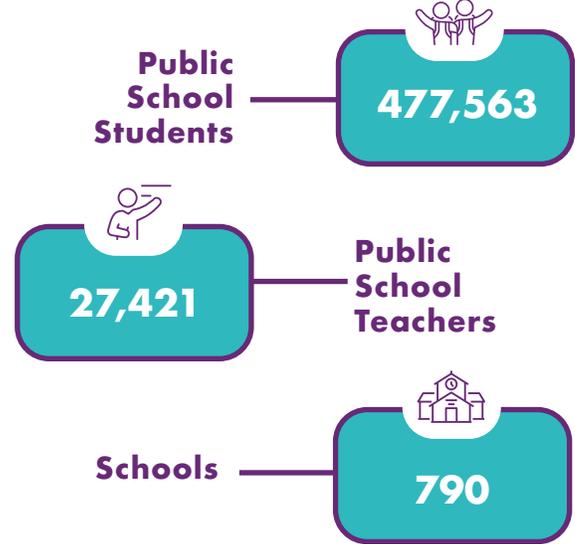
EDUCATION POLICY

FAST FACTS

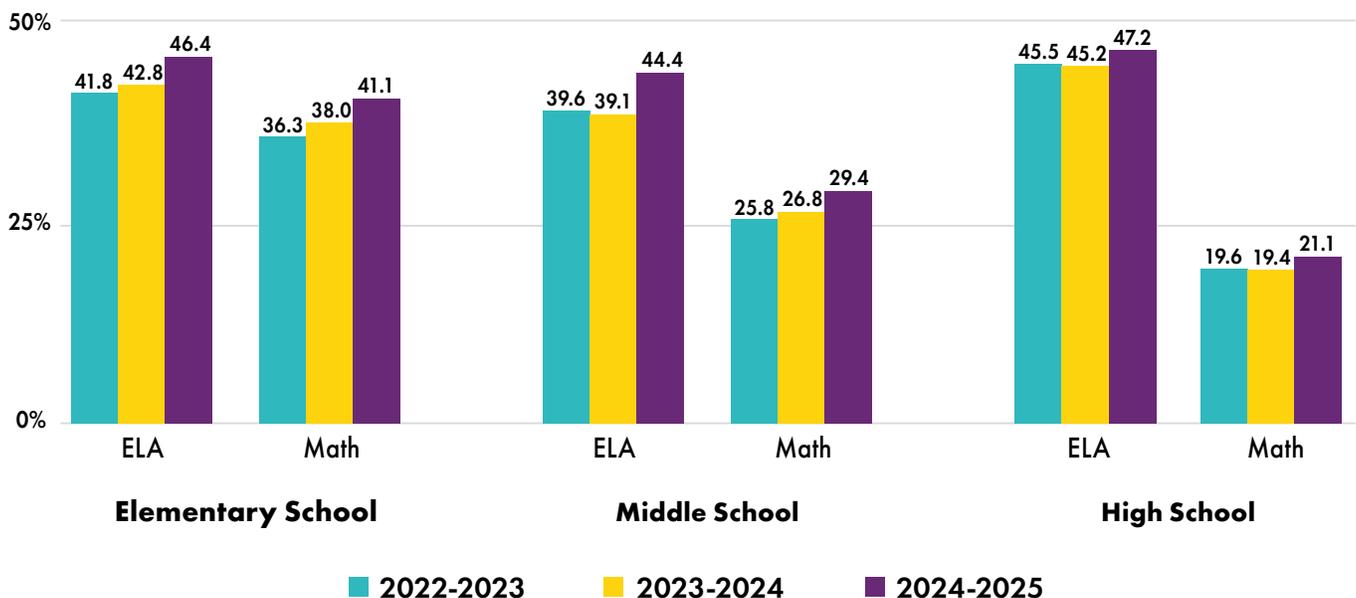
2023 - 2024



2024 - 2025



STUDENTS PROFICIENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) AND MATH BY PERCENT



Sources:

- <https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/DI/nv/2025>
- <https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/DI/nv/2024>
- <https://nevadareportcard.nv.gov/DI/nv/2023>



Chronic Absenteeism



CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM is defined by the United States Department of Education as **"missing 10 percent or more of the school year for any reason, excused or unexcused."**

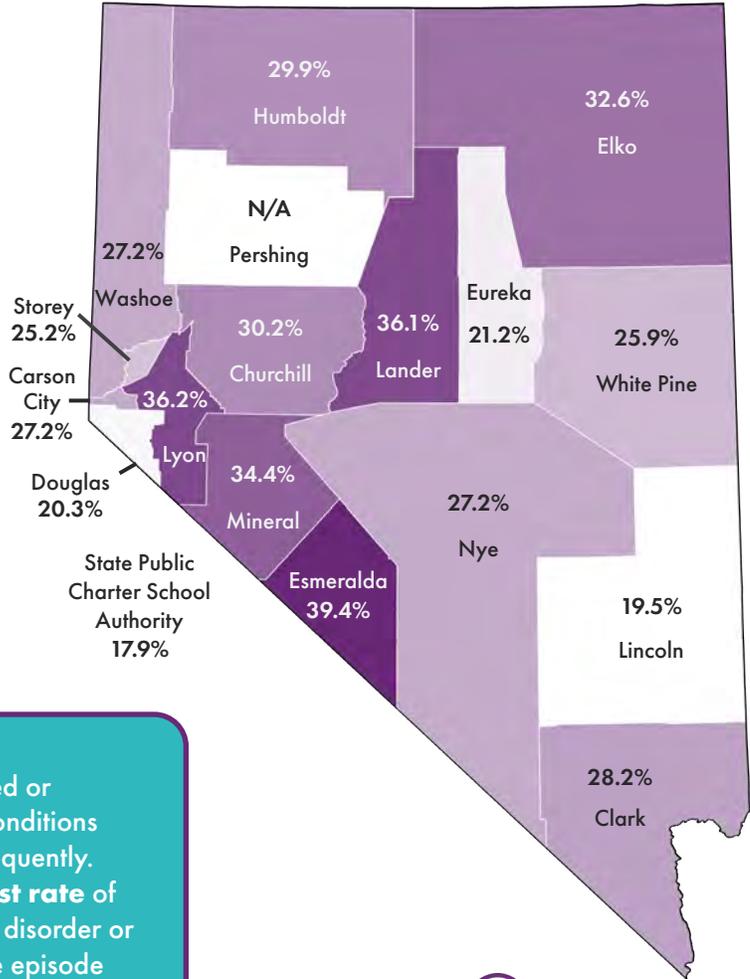


Students who are chronically absent for just **one year** between grades 8 and 12 are **seven times** more likely to **drop out** of high school.



Students struggling with untreated or undertreated **mental health** conditions are more likely to miss school frequently. Nevada has the **second-highest** rate of youth having a substance abuse disorder or experiencing a major depressive episode **without receiving treatment**.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATES BY SCHOOL DISTRICT 2024-2025

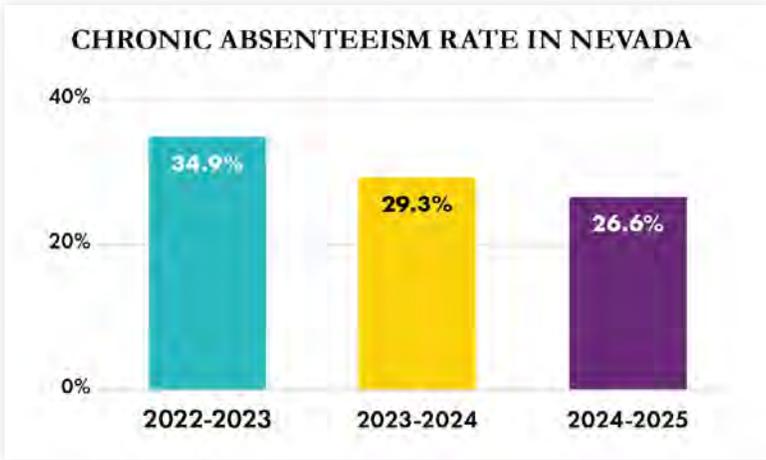


In 2024, Nevada committed to **reducing** chronic absenteeism by **50 percent** in five years.



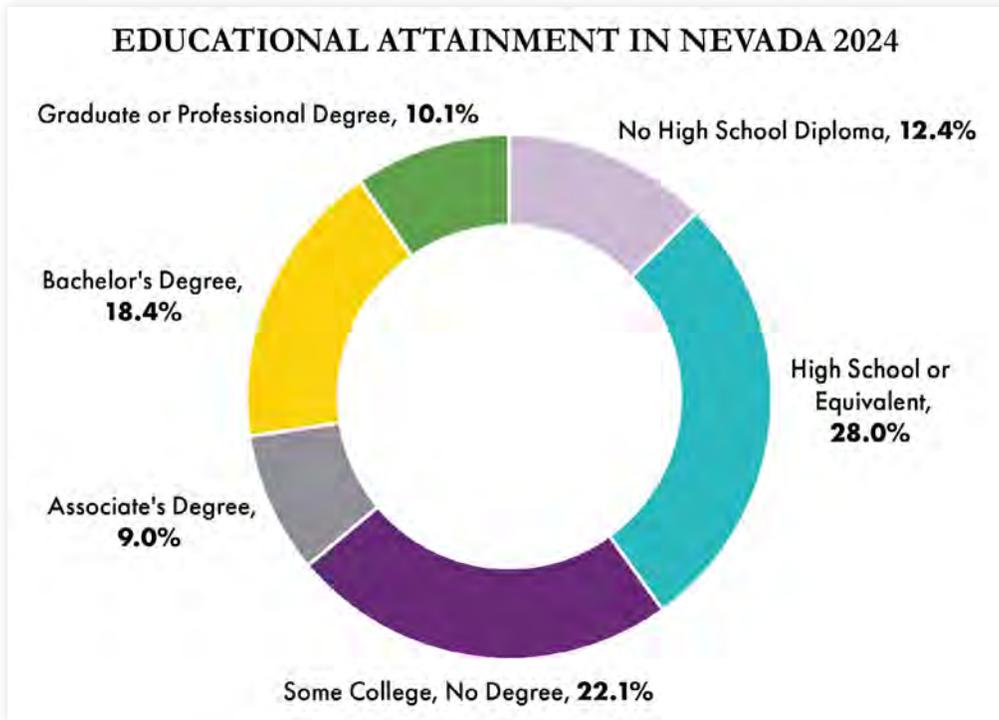
If overall chronic absenteeism rates persist, research shows **Southern Nevada** alone could face a 20-year societal **cost of \$14.4 billion**.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM RATE IN NEVADA



Sources:

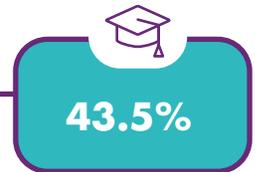
[Data Interaction for Nevada Accountability Portal: Chronic Absenteeism](#)



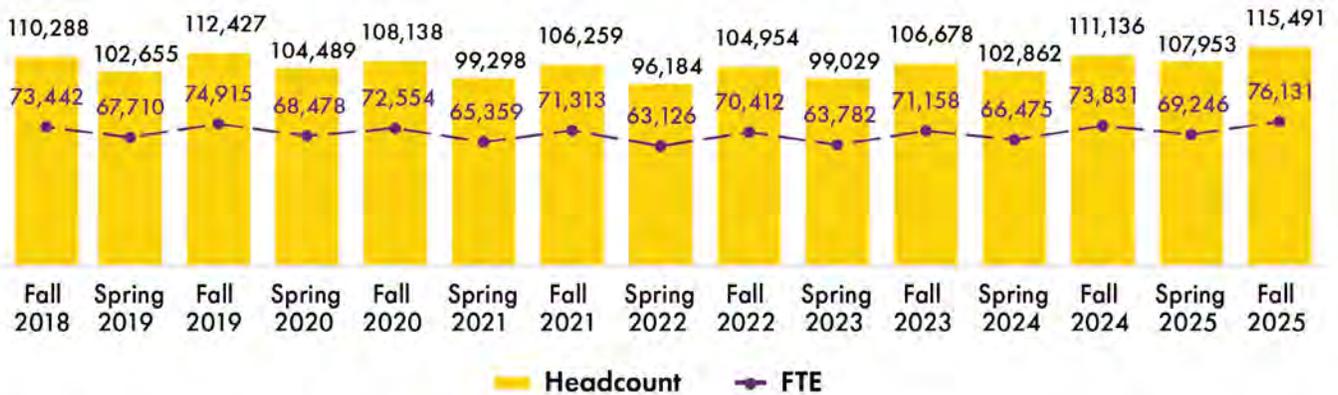
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATE



**NSHE
Graduation
Rates**
(2024-2025
School Year)



LONGITUDINAL STUDENT HEADCOUNT AND FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) ALL NSHE INSTITUTIONS



Sources:

- <https://data.census.gov/profile/Nevada?g=040XX00US32#education>
- https://ir.nevada.edu/ipeds_graduation_rates.php
- https://ir.nevada.edu/nshe_enrollment.php

LITERACY IN NEVADA: ADDRESSING SPANS OF READING LEVELS IN THIRD-GRADE CLASSROOMS THROUGH COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION

Publication will be released in March 2026.

Low academic proficiency rates remain a national concern, particularly among elementary school children. Reading is the linchpin of education because it enables all other learning. Poor literacy can be attributed to many factors, including the lack of high-quality pre-kindergarten education, insufficient language exposure for young children, limited access to experienced teachers and literacy specialists, situational or mental health challenges, and chronic absenteeism.

Nevada has committed to improving student achievement by supporting evidence-based teaching practices and passing legislation to address literacy needs, such as the Read by Grade 3 program. To better understand the instructional challenges faced by Nevada’s primary-grade teachers, the Guinn Center analyzed the literacy proficiency data of ten third-grade classrooms across the state. We found that individual classrooms have a surprisingly wide variety of language ability among the students, making it difficult for the teacher to meet all their needs through a traditional approach to instruction.



We examined data from 10 Nevada third-grade classrooms and found that more than half had students spanning at least five grade levels in their abilities. Put another way, it is as though the teacher had children from kindergarten through fifth or sixth grade in a single classroom. Under these circumstances, it is very difficult to target each child’s ZPD through traditional instruction. Competency-based or self-paced learning can help students and teachers navigate the challenge of different skill levels in a classroom.

KEY FINDINGS

Americans struggle with literacy.

- It is estimated that over half of American adults read below a sixth-grade level.
- In 2024, only 31 percent of American fourth graders and 35 percent of twelfth graders were proficient in literacy.
- The situation is similar in Nevada.

The education system generally knows how to address the issue.

- High-quality preschool programming can have a significant effect on future literacy.
- Instruction is much more effective when kids are taught at the leading edge of their current abilities, called their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Doing this either requires individualized instruction or that all the students in a classroom be at the same skill level.



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Teachers could be better supported in their work through a comprehensive system of Competency-Based Education (CBE), where every student is taught in a setting with other students who have a similar skill level in the subject being presented.
- While continuing its work under the Nevada State Literacy Plan, there is evidence that the objectives of the Nevada Phased Action Plan, which emphasize CBE, will be essential to making the state's teachers more effective in their literacy work.
- Skill gaps between students in the primary grades can be reduced or eliminated through high-quality, universal preschool.

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

EXAMINING NEVADA’S NATIVE AMERICAN FEE WAIVER: STUDENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCES AND IMPACT

Published: January 21, 2026

In 2021, the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) introduced the Native American fee waiver program to alleviate financial barriers for eligible Native American students attending public colleges and universities. Since its inception, utilization has grown steadily, and student feedback consistently highlights the waiver as a critical support for student access, persistence, and degree completion. This report examines how the program is functioning across NHE institutions, identifies barriers to program optimization, and offers policy options to strengthen its impact and long-term sustainability.

Read the full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

While the fee waiver has had a meaningful and positive effect, some implementation challenges have limited its full potential:

- **Complex processes** – Students and administrators report confusion and delays due to the involvement of multiple on-campus offices, unclear workflows, and manual processing systems.
- **Inconsistent institutional support** – Larger institutions often have dedicated offices or staff to support Native students, while smaller institutions rely on informal internal support.
- **Cultural competency gaps** – Misconceptions were observed about the waiver, as well as a lack of understanding of the historical and cultural context underpinning the program.
- **Uneven outreach and identification** – Awareness of the waiver often comes through tribal offices, family members, or peers rather than the institutions, and outreach methods vary widely by campus.
- **Additional financial burdens remain** – While the waiver covers tuition and mandatory fees, students continue to face significant costs related to housing, food, transportation, books, and technology, often requiring employment or additional aid.

As soon as somebody explained to me that the Native American Fee Waiver can pay for my med school, I was like—you mean this is actually realistic now? This isn't just a dream?

- Native American Fee Waiver Recipient



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Establish dedicated fee waiver offices or roles to provide a clear point of contact and reduce administrative confusion;
- Increase staff training with a focus on waiver procedures and cultural competency, particularly for financial aid, admissions, and advising staff;
- Strengthen tribal relationships through regular consultation, designated system-wide contacts, and consistent communication with tribal governments and organizations;
- Automate identification systems to flag potentially eligible students early in the admissions and enrollment process;
- Increase post-enrollment student engagement through proactive check-ins, academic advising, and access to Native student centers;
- Provide stable state funding to ensure long-term sustainability and reduce institutional budget uncertainty;
- Create clear and consistent policies across the NSHE, particularly for continuing education, certificate, and graduate programs;
- Expand scholarship caps and maintain a first-dollar funding policy so the waiver complements and does not displace other financial aid; and
- Standardize data collection and reporting on enrollment, retention, and completion outcomes to inform future policy decisions.

This policy report was made possible by a generous grant from the Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation (San Manuel Cares Grant), which supported the extensive work of a graduate research assistant from the University of Nevada, Reno.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN K-12 EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES, AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Published: November 17, 2025

Artificial intelligence (AI) is advancing at unprecedented speed and is already being used in teaching, learning, and school operations in Nevada. This report examines how AI is being utilized in K-12 schools, highlights current and future benefits and risks, and provides a framework to guide policymakers and education leaders in developing sound AI policies in K-12 education.

Read the full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

The rapid proliferation of AI in K-12 education offers significant potential, but also known and unknown risks:

- **Rapid adoption and evolving uses** – AI tools are already widely used, with six in ten teachers reporting their use in the 2024-25 school year. There have been notable benefits related to lesson planning and administrative tasks.
- **Enhanced personalization and engagement** – Early research suggests AI can help tailor individualized and dynamic instruction and improve student engagement. However, research on the long-term benefits and risks is not yet available.
- **Risks to privacy and equity** – AI raises major concerns around the protection of sensitive student data, algorithmic bias, and deepening inequities.
- **Evolving public policy** – Federal and state policy is evolving and includes a federal executive order and departmental policy directives. Moreover, practitioners and policymakers are learning as they go.



AI tools are already widely used in the K-12 setting, with six in ten teachers reporting their use in the 2024-2025 school year.



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The report suggests that policymakers take a balanced approach to harnessing AI's potential while safeguarding students and supporting educators. Our report offers 17 policy considerations related to students, teachers, and administrators. Some highlights include:

- Ensuring equitable access and transparency by protecting privacy and promoting clear communication about how AI tools are used and governed in schools.
- Investing in educator development by supporting teacher professional learning on AI use, opportunities, and risks.
- Maintaining human oversight by preserving the essential human roles in student interaction, teaching, and decision making to guard against unintended harms and ensure ethical AI use (adopted, in part - [AB 406](#), 2025).
- Strengthening institutional policies by adopting model AI policies at the district and state levels, including algorithmic impact reviews and robust privacy safeguards.
 - NOTE: In May 2025, NDE released Nevada's STELLAR Pathway to AI Teaching and Learning. This document serves as a statewide model AI policy as called for in the Guinn Center's report. It provides operational principles and a framework that school districts are expected to align with.

State policymakers have already begun implementing several action steps outlined in the Guinn Center's 2024 report. The 2025 Nevada Legislature enacted two recommendations from this report in its comprehensive education bill, [Senate Bill 460](#).

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

NEVADA'S SENATE BILL 460 (2025): AN OVERVIEW OF KEY PROVISIONS

Published: August 7, 2025

[Senate Bill 460](#) of the 2025 Legislative Session is comprehensive legislation that affects a range of topics in Nevada's K-12 education system. Due to the bill's breadth and complexity, the Guinn Center published an at-a-glance overview of its provisions as a navigational tool for educators, policymakers, researchers, and other stakeholders. The brief also includes helpful links to our other work that relates to the contents of SB 460.

This policy brief was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

Read the full report [here](#).



CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN NEVADA: PART I – TRENDS, FACTORS, AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Published: July 16, 2025

This brief is the first in a three-part series. It examines the rising rates of chronic absenteeism in Nevada, defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year, and its far-reaching effects on student outcomes. In the 2023-24 school year, 23 percent of students nationwide were chronically absent; in Nevada, the rate was 25.6 percent.

Contributing factors include poverty, school safety, food insecurity, and post-pandemic shifts in attitudes toward attendance. This brief highlights the long-term academic, health, and economic consequences of missed instructional time, and presents a series of data-informed policy considerations to improve attendance, such as Nevada’s

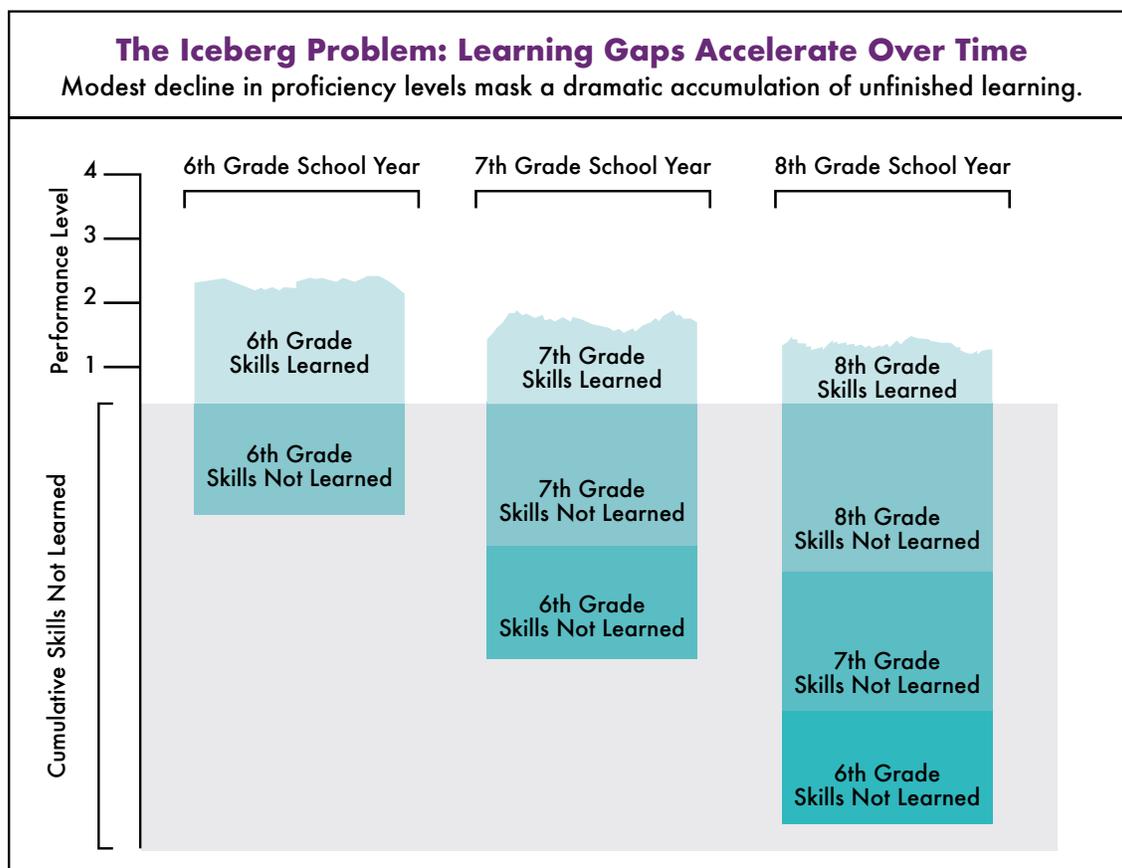
“50 in 5” commitment to reduce chronic absenteeism by half within five years.

Read the full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

- The 2023-24 chronic absenteeism rate among American Indian and Alaskan Native students was 49.4 percent, nearly double the statewide rate.
- If overall rates persist, research shows Southern Nevada alone could face a 20-year societal cost of \$14.4 billion.
- In 2024, Nevada committed to reducing chronic absenteeism by 50 percent in five years in response to a challenge developed by Attendance Works.



Source: Joel Rose. *The Iceberg Problem: Why Grade Level Materials Alone Won't Solve Our Problems* (2022).



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- A quality, monthly reporting system that reports data by grade level is essential.
- Community partnerships with organizations such as Communities in Schools and an open dialogue with students and families are helpful.
- Artificial Intelligence is an emerging tool to identify students at risk of future chronic absenteeism.
- Addressing student needs for transportation, health care, and mental health services can be impactful, as can creating a more engaging school environment with extracurricular opportunities.

This policy brief was made possible through the generous support of donors to the Guinn Center and a collaborative partnership with the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN NEVADA: PART II – INTERSECTIONS WITH MENTAL HEALTH

Published: July 23, 2025

In 2024, Nevada ranked last in the nation for youth mental health and access to care. Roughly 24 percent of Nevada youth reported experiencing at least one major depressive episode, and rates of suicide ideation and attempts among middle and high school students remain alarmingly high. This second brief in the Guinn Center’s three-part series on chronic absenteeism focuses on the connection between mental health and school attendance, emphasizing the importance of school-based mental health resources.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY STRATEGIES

- A vital strategy in addressing the intersection of mental health and chronic absenteeism is utilizing a Comprehensive School Mental Health System (CSMHS) framework, a collaborative collection of supports focused on student behavioral health. Nevada now has such a program.
- Schools can supplement their CSMHS with a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Tier 1 supports are offered to all students, including universal screenings, instructional strategies, and positive school climate initiatives. Tier 2 applies to small groups of students and may include skill-development groups or targeted screenings and assessments. Tier 3 interventions are intensive and intended for specific students, including individual therapy, wrap-around services, parent meetings, and behavioral plans.
- In April 2025, the NDE was awarded more than \$230,000 to enhance MTSS interventions and focus on mental health strategies to address chronic absenteeism.



KEY FINDINGS

- Nevada has the second-highest rate of youth having a substance abuse disorder and youth experiencing a major depressive episode without receiving mental health treatment.
- Students struggling with untreated or undertreated mental health conditions are more likely to miss school frequently. Furthermore, these data may be underreported, as limited school resources and socioeconomic barriers often prevent families from obtaining an official diagnosis.
- Factors contributing to mental health-driven absenteeism include:
 - Bullying – Nearly 26,000 Nevada middle schoolers and 20,000 high schoolers reported being bullied in 2023.
 - Learning Disabilities – Students with disabilities are 36 percent more likely to be chronically absent.
 - Childhood Trauma – Approximately 61 percent of adults report having experienced at least one such adverse childhood experience.
 - Social Media – Teens spending at least three hours per day on social media double their risk of developing anxiety and depression. The data show 51 percent of teens use social media at least four hours daily.
 - COVID-19 – The pandemic had a multiplying effect on student mental health struggles, which have persisted for years beyond the pandemic.

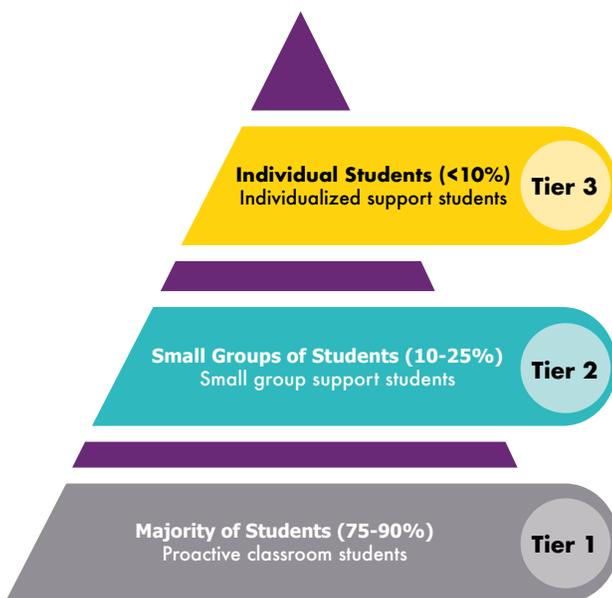
This policy brief was made possible through the generous support of donors to the Guinn Center and a collaborative partnership with the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM IN NEVADA: PART III – SCHOOL DISTRICT INNOVATIONS

Published: July 30, 2025

Part III of the Guinn Center’s chronic absenteeism series highlights innovative strategies for boosting student attendance that are currently working in Nevada. The brief organizes these strategies within the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework, highlighting actions taken at the universal, targeted, and intensive levels to create positive school climates, promote family engagement, and offer individualized support to students facing attendance challenges.

Read the full report [here](#).



KEY STRATEGIES

TIER 1: APPLIED TO ALL STUDENTS

- Promote a positive school climate.
- Establish clear attendance policies and increase awareness.
- Recognize good and improved attendance.
- Develop positive communication with caregivers.
- Collect meaningful data.
- Establish Attendance Teams.
- Promote professional development and family education.
- Engage in early identification and intervention.
- Foster community partnerships.

TIER 2: APPLIED TO SMALL GROUPS OF STUDENTS

- Student support team meetings.
- Check-in/check-out policies.
- Individualized attendance plans and evaluations.
- Targeted communication.
- Transportation.

TIER 3: APPLIED TO INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

- Inter-agency case management.
- Home visits.
- Monitoring periods.

This policy brief was made possible through the generous support of donors to the Guinn Center and a collaborative partnership with the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

VITAL QUESTIONS FOR NEVADA ABOUT UNIVERSAL PRE-K

Published: May 15, 2025

Decades of research show that children who thrive in their K-12 education are more likely to become successful adults. Furthermore, one of the most powerful predictors of school success is kindergarten readiness. This white paper explores policy options to expand access to high-quality preschool programming.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **High-quality Universal Pre-K (UPK) can reduce the kindergarten readiness gap between different groups of students. In math, it can reduce it by 45 percent for African American children and 78 percent for Hispanic children. It can effectively eliminate the reading gap for both groups.**
- **Many consider UPK to be better than targeted preschool because it is more likely to reach all children in need. It also has the ancillary benefit of helping parents who struggle to pay for childcare.**





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- If a state needs to ramp up toward funding UPK, it is best to begin serving children with multiple risk factors, despite the administrative work involved in identifying them.
- Best practices suggest supplementing pre-K schooling with other supports such as physical and mental health care, child welfare, nutrition, early intervention for children with developmental delays, and economic and other supports for struggling families.

This policy brief was made possible through the generous support of donors to the Guinn Center.

AI POLICY SERIES: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Published: March 28, 2025

The reach and influence of artificial intelligence (AI) continues to unfold rapidly. We examined the evolving role of AI in higher education, exploring its potential benefits and associated risks. While AI tools can enhance student learning, streamline administrative processes, and support faculty research, concerns remain. This brief outlines existing and proposed policies to regulate AI in higher education and emphasizes the importance of transparency, ethical considerations, and stakeholder engagement in shaping AI governance.

Read the full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

Current uses of AI in higher education include:

- **Chatbots and AI assistants** – Following this common use of publicly available AI, some universities and colleges now offer similar in-house tools for various targeted purposes, such as academic planning and responding to student questions.
- **Student support** – AI is being used for the early identification of students at risk of failing, and to facilitate ongoing communication with students to enhance academic performance.
- **Administration** – AI can be leveraged to streamline transcript data input and to evaluate and compare syllabi for students transferring credits between institutions.
- **Curriculum** – A University of Nevada, Reno, professor taught an online course that included ChatGPT, a generative AI chatbot, as a participating student. Students competed against ChatGPT on weekly assignments, providing a chance to critically assess ChatGPT's work and reflect on ethical considerations related to the use of AI in academic settings.

Risks related to AI in higher education include:

- **Academic integrity** – AI can and should enhance research in higher education, but it is vital for students and professionals to disclose the nature and extent of AI use.
- **Algorithmic bias** – Whether the origins are systemic, statistical, or human, bias can become entrenched within AI systems. This is especially of concern in functions such as admissions, financial aid allocation, and student placement.
- **Data privacy and use** – Concerns include: (1) data persistence: continued data storage within AI systems that can lead to privacy risks and unintended use; (2) repurposing: continued use of data regardless of their relevance to new contexts; and (3) spillover: data usage that extends beyond their original purpose.



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Establishing working groups, task forces, or advisory councils to study and advance state AI policy;
- Appropriating funds for grants to support AI adoption;
- Requiring research reports, inventories, or the adoption of policies related to AI use in higher education; and
- Establishing AI institutes or hubs to promote responsible research and development and advance ethical uses of AI in the public interest.

This policy brief was made possible through the generous support of donors to the Guinn Center.

EXAMINING SCHOOL FUNDING IN NEVADA: EQUITY IN EDUCATION AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Published: October 30, 2024

[Senate Bill 543](#) of the 2019 Nevada Legislative Session overhauled Nevada's K-12 education funding system, replacing the long-standing Nevada Plan with the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP). The PCFP legislation aimed to modernize funding to ensure greater equity, flexibility, and transparency across the state's school districts, while also enabling funding to "follow the student." Under the PCFP, each public and charter school student in Nevada receives base funding, with additional funding allocated for students who qualify under specific "weighted" categories, such as English Learners, Special Education, At-Risk, or Gifted and Talented. If a student qualifies for more than one weighted category or receives Special Education services, they will receive funding for the highest-weighted category only.

This report analyzes the PCFP and its funding sources—state allocations, federal grants, and community contributions—and examines how they support elementary school students in various regions and school settings. The report also includes a comprehensive section comparing funding weights across counties. Additionally, it highlights common themes from

discussions with school principals about the PCFP's impact on students and schools.

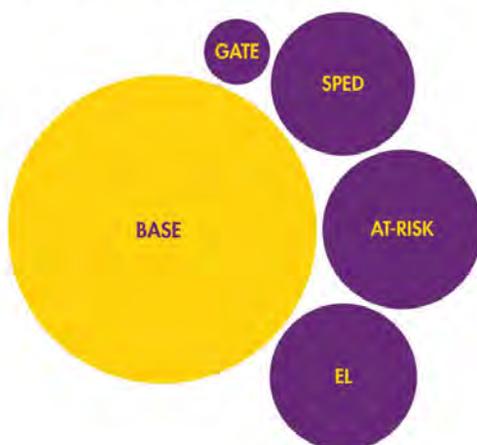
To supplement the report, the Guinn Center created an interactive mapping tool, "[Mapping Equity in Education](#)," to visualize trends in student populations, funding allocations, measures of academic performance, and various demographic variables statewide.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **PCFP made huge strides in education funding in Nevada, but continual evaluation and refinement is critical.**
- **Recruiting and retaining instructional staff remains a priority and difficulty.**
- **Differing levels of financial autonomy across Nevada's schools creates complexities in determining consistency in how funds are spent, but can allow for targeting funds to unique needs.**
- **There are increased student and family needs post-pandemic and funds are insufficient to provide assistance.**
- **Funding data consistency and accessibility remains an area for improvement statewide.**

NEVADA STUDENTS BY FUNDING CATEGORY



Base Funding: \$8,966

Weighted Funding:

- **English Learners (EL):**
Additional \$1,648 (\$4,035 now)
- **Gifted and Talented Education (GATE):**
Additional \$851 (\$1,075 now)
- **At-Risk:**
Additional \$244 (\$3,137 now)

About half of students in Clark County, and a third of students in Washoe County, qualify for weighted funding. The percentage of students who receive standard funding is relatively higher in the rural counties.



POLICY/PROGRAM CONSIDERATIONS

- The report offers multiple specific policy considerations within each of the following categories. Some may require legislative changes, while others may be accomplished through operational or regulatory changes by Nevada’s Department of Education or at the district/school level. State policymakers have already begun implementing several action steps outlined in the Guinn Center’s 2024 report. The 2025 Nevada Legislature enacted two recommendations from this report in its comprehensive education bill, [Senate Bill 460](#).

Standardized reporting

1. Develop standardized guidelines (adopted - [SB 460](#), 2025).
2. Develop a centralized data system for consistent financial reporting across school districts, supported by comprehensive training for district staff (adopted - [SB 460](#), 2025).

Clarity in funding distribution

1. Clarify funding allocation guidelines within weighted categories to enhance transparency and equity.
2. Couple these guidelines with targeted training for school principals on budget management under the PCFP.

Long-term evaluation of PCFP effectiveness

1. Conduct longitudinal studies to evaluate the PCFP’s effects over multiple years.
2. Analyze the effects of PCFP and other overlapping policies.
3. Develop a set of comprehensive qualitative performance metrics. (Note: Performance and funding may be linked in the future, but it could be misleading to create connections between them this early into the PCFP’s implementation.)
4. Gather feedback from students and other stakeholders to inform policy adjustments regularly.

Support for increased needs

1. Ensure adequate funding to support heightened developmental, mental health, and social and emotional learning (SEL) needs post-pandemic.
2. Foster community partnerships to connect students and families with needed support.
3. Provide professional development for teachers and staff on how to address the SEL needs of students.

Ensuring equity in fund allocation

1. Conduct regular equity audits to assess whether funding is being allocated appropriately, and make adjustments based on findings.
2. Promote transparency in how funds are allocated at all levels.
3. Develop targeted incentive programs designed to attract and retain teachers in hard-to-staff areas.
4. Expand “grow your own” programs to build a pipeline of local educators who are more likely to remain in their communities.
5. Implement robust mentorship and support programs for new teachers.
6. Increase funding for equity.

FROM CROWDED TO COORDINATED: EXAMINING THE GOVERNANCE OF NEVADA’S EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEM

Published: October 16, 2024

Nevada’s Early Childhood Systems (ECS) are complex, making them difficult to navigate for both state leaders, administrators, and parents.

Research suggests that this fragmented network of services creates inefficiencies, complicates resource allocation, and limits access for those in need.

Strong ECS are essential for Nevada’s children and families. Our research shows that early investments in children yield long-term benefits, such as reduced societal costs and greater economic contributions, as well-served children grow into productive adults. Robust ECS also play a vital role in supporting working parents.

This report presents governance, community engagement, financing, data management,

and workforce development models from other states that Nevada could adopt. It also includes an inventory of key ECS entities in Nevada, detailing their budgetary and regulatory roles.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

Nevada’s Early Childhood Systems (ECS) currently include:

- 18 programs exclusively focused on early childhood;
- 45 entities serving early childhood and other populations;
- Operations governed under 26 different NRS chapters; and
- Financing through 40 separate state budget accounts.

ECS Nationally

From 2019-May 2024, state legislatures nationwide considered **6,290** early childhood measures, leading to the enactment of **964** bills and resolutions, including the:



Creation of Universal Pre-K programs;



Strengthening of workforce development in ECS sectors;



Expansion of childcare subsidies and tax credits;



Improvement to early intervention services; and



Reorganization of state early childhood governance structures.

This research is supported with funding from the Administration for Children and Families Child Care and Development Fund, America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) administered by the Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services Child Care and Development Program and subawarded to The Children’s Cabinet (Federal Grant #2021,G990232).



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Streamline ECS governance by empowering a single, independent entity to coordinate services across federal, state, local, and private stakeholders. The report offers over 30 strategies for improving ECS, arranged over a three-phase implementation plan. See the [report](#) for full details and the list of strategies. The Guinn Center’s comprehensive ECS report includes many detailed insights and policy considerations, three of which were adopted in Senate Bill 460 of the 2025 Legislative Session (Recommendations A.2.b, A.3.c, and A.4.d).

PHASE I: Governance Structure Planning & Implementation

Interim ECS Office

- Create an independent office to plan and organize the future of Nevada’s ECS by gathering stakeholders and using reports to guide decisions.

Governance Tools

- Use planning reports, databases, and national recommendations to support governance planning.

Restructuring

- Revamp the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, explore changes in early intervention and special education governance, and engage stakeholders through strategic communication.

PHASE II: Governance Practices

Funding Reform

- Reevaluate ECS funding pathways and consider cost-based funding models (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).

Integrated Data System

- Build an integrated cross-sector data system to support data-driven decisions, improve data quality, and phase in the new system (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).

Access Improvements

- Develop a single point of entry, implement a No Wrong Door policy, and create a universal application system.

Workforce Development

- Enhance ECS workforce through better compensation, training, and professionalization.

Family Engagement

- Expand and improve family engagement using existing resources and best practices professionalization (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).

PHASE III: Systems Improvement & Enhancement

Ongoing Improvement

- Continually refine ECS using best practices, funding reviews, strategic planning, and supportive policies.

WORKFORCE READY: ALIGNING ACADEMIC STANDARDS WITH WORKFORCE NEEDS

Published: June 21, 2024

Employers across all industries prioritize “soft skills” (sometimes referred to as “durable skills”) when hiring, including communication, adaptability, resilience, problem-solving, critical thinking, time management, emotional intelligence, organizational skills, and interpersonal skills. Nevada’s Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs already assess technical knowledge and employability skills, but there are many additional measures that could strengthen the state’s evolving workforce.

This policy brief examines the intersection between durable skills and employability, as well as Nevada's approach to corresponding curriculum standards.

The brief also looks at challenges with assessing and certifying skill attainment and provides recommendations for successfully integrating durable skills into students' educational experiences beyond CTE programs.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- Employers value interpersonal soft skills as much as traditional academic credentials.
- Soft skills are underrepresented in general academic curricula compared to technical training.
- There are effective models for teaching essential, durable workforce skills.



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Require greater transparency in CTE certification assessments.
- Standardize (or require disclosure of current metrics used for) formatting and evaluation criteria for skill assessments.
- Integrate “emotional intelligence” into the CTE Employability Skills Standards.
- Use the *Portrait of a Nevada Learner* to further integrate durable skills competencies in all academic standards, not just CTE (adopted, in part - [SB 45](#), 2025).



This policy brief was funded by The Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation, through the inaugural Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research Data System (NPWR) Research Grants Program.

SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW: AN OVERVIEW OF COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION PRACTICES & KEY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Published: April 26, 2024

As technological advancements drive continued changes to the workplace, the expectations of K-12 education systems are shifting to meet these needs. Many states and school districts are considering how to best prepare students for the lives and careers they will experience outside of their educational pursuits.

Competency-Based Education (CBE) is a collaborative approach to education that shifts the focus away from the traditional classroom model to one where students take a more active role in their education. It generally includes customized instruction tailored to the learner, varied pacing, and mastery or advancement based on a demonstrated grasp of knowledge and concepts.

In Nevada, CBE’s prevalence is growing—both through legislative pursuits and district buy-in. Nevada has not only enacted legislation in support of personalized learning in the past six years, but has also developed a Network within the community to generate ideas for implementing new educational approaches. The Portrait of a Nevada Learner project further showcases a statewide effort to re-think required competencies for high school graduates.

This policy brief defines CBE, identifies implementation challenges, examines how other states are enacting CBE and its

corresponding performance measures, and highlights potential models or best practices for Nevada.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- Technological changes are driving K-12 systems to adopt CBE, linking student advancement to mastery rather than time in class.
- Nevada has introduced CBE-supportive legislation and collaboration networks but faces challenges in defining and implementing CBE practices statewide.



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Allow for greater flexibility in assessment options and diverse pathways to graduation for schools that wish to experiment with and successfully implement competency-based education models.

This policy brief was funded through the generous giving of Guinn Center donors and supporters.

NATIONAL EDUCATION RANKINGS: WHAT NEVADA CAN LEARN AND A PROPOSAL FOR MOVING FORWARD

Published: November 1, 2023

While national K-12 education rankings tend to generate headlines and attract public attention, they don't always serve as the most reliable assessment of school and system quality. Each existing ranking system is unique but often lacks nuance and vital, relevant context.

This report, the final installment in a three-part series on education rankings, explores the value and shortcomings of existing state education rankings and finds that Nevada would benefit from a more thoughtful and relevant process for comparing its education system to other states. It outlines critical concepts for measuring state education performance, proposes essential considerations for establishing a fair and robust system for state-to-state comparisons, and concludes with a suggested approach for creating a Nevada-specific scorecard to measure the performance of the state's K-12 education system.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Among the shortcomings of existing ranking systems are the lack of nuance and vital, relevant context.**
- **Critical concepts and distinctions in measuring performance include:**
 - **A balance between growth and achievement;**
 - **Using internal versus external metrics; and**
 - **Measuring data on an absolute or relative basis.**
- **The next steps in the process of developing a relevant ranking system require much research and analysis but objective interstate comparisons are achievable.**



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider creating a robust Nevada-specific scorecard that measures the internal performance of its school system, as well as its performance when compared to states with similar demographics and ranking criteria.
- Become familiar with credible national or multistate datasets and performance metrics collected by the Nevada Commission on School Funding, as required by [Assembly Bill 400](#) and [Senate Bill 98](#) from the 2023 legislative session.
- Remember that many states differ from Nevada in size, population distribution, and demographics, and seek to focus on comparisons with states that have relevant similarities.
- Be aware of statistical anomalies common to larger universes of states and data sets.
- Seek to understand critical performance concepts including the differences between absolute and relative measurement, the importance of comparing like data to like data, sample types and subgroups, potential drawbacks of weighting, and best uses of ratios and raw numbers.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH IN SOUTHERN NEVADA: A FOCUS GROUP ANALYSIS ON CHALLENGES FACED BY OUT-OF-SCHOOL YOUTH AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Published: May 1, 2023

This report analyzes key findings from focus groups held with out-of-school youth and service providers in southern Nevada to better understand the reasons young people leave school as well as what types of resources best help them.



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding supports workforce development initiatives for various groups. Our research suggests that certain WIOA restrictions prevent organizations from offering services to certain populations, such as those subject to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- Youth are struggling with multiple concurrent challenges—mental health, substance abuse, instability at home, lack of support at school, et cetera.
- High-achieving youth may be facing additional challenges.
- Service providers play a key role but are limited by Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) restrictions.



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Fill in gaps left by WIOA restrictions with state funding.
- Provide for a study, focused on processes and outcomes in Nevada, regarding operationalizing WIOA changes. This will help further contextualize Nevada outcomes with national findings.
- Encourage providers to update service provisions, policies, practices, and procedures to meet the needs of specific populations. Encourage them to train staff on important topics such as responding to mental health issues.

This report was funded by The United Way of Southern Nevada and Workforce Connections.



ECONOMIC & FISCAL POLICY

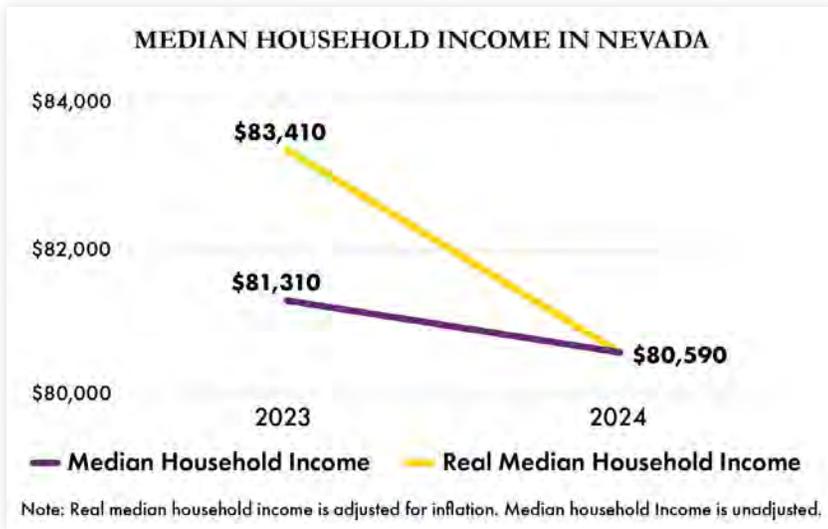


ECONOMIC & FISCAL POLICY

FAST FACTS

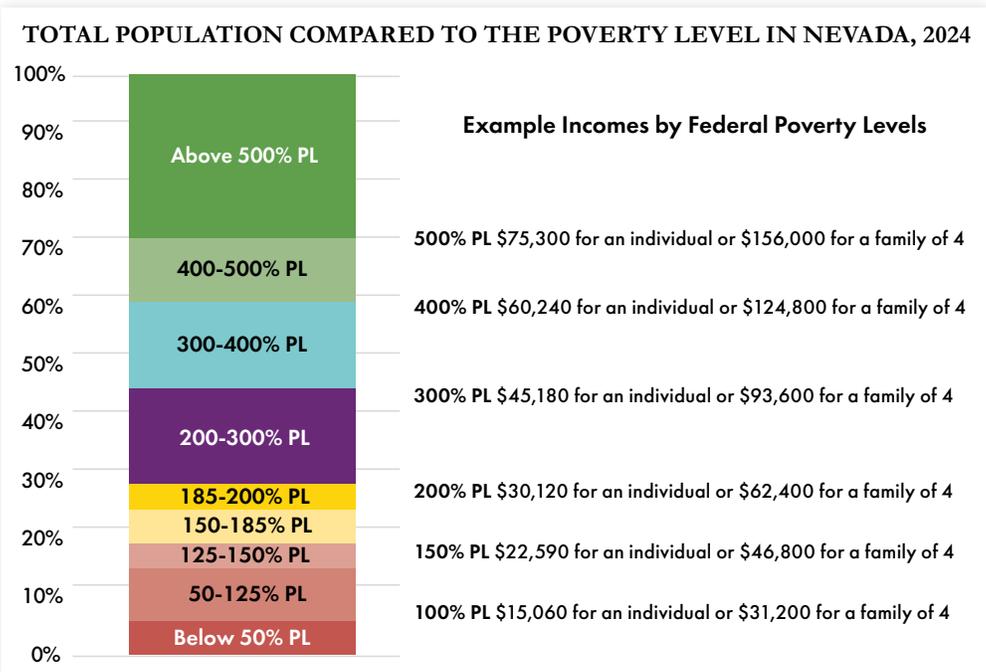

\$56,692,677,271

**Legislatively Approved Budget
for the 2023-2025 Biennium**




0.89%

**Median household income
decrease from 2023-2024**



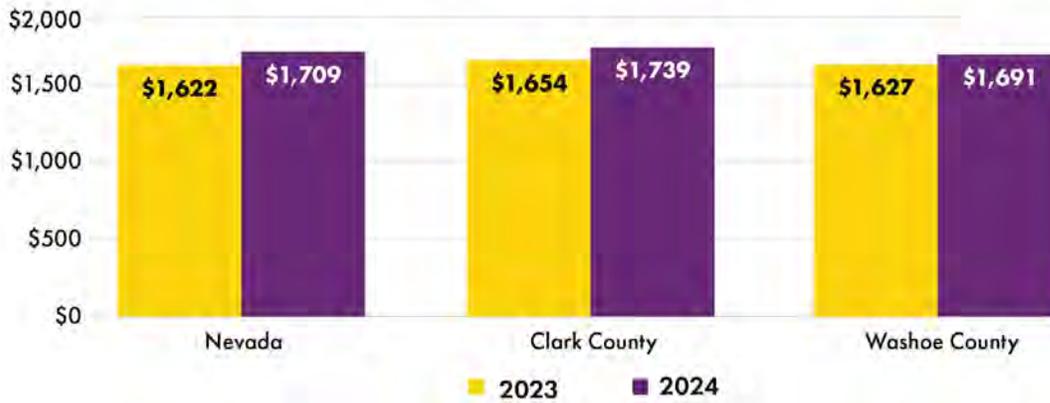

11.6%

**Nevadans below
100% of the federal
poverty level in 2024**

Sources:

- <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MEHOINUSNVA672N>
- <https://data.census.gov/profile/Nevada?g=040XX00US32#income-and-poverty>
- <https://data.census.gov/table?q=s1701+nevada>
- <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MEHOINUSNVA646N>

MEDIAN MONTHLY GROSS RENT: NEVADA, CLARK COUNTY, AND WASHOE COUNTY



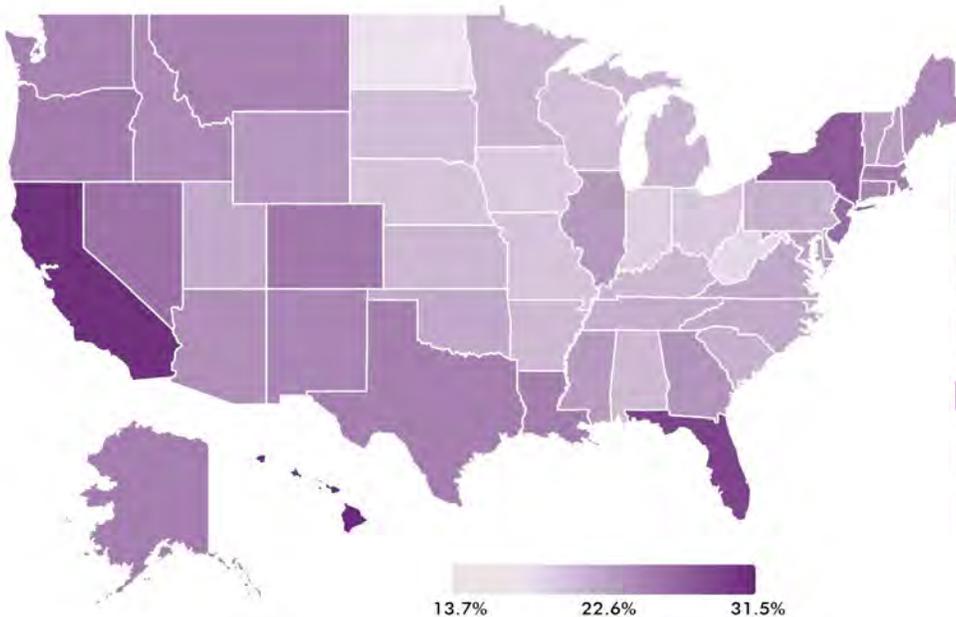
5.4%

Increase in median monthly gross rent in Nevada from 2023-2024

Home median listing price in Nevada in December 2025

\$480,998

EXCESSIVELY COST BURDENED HOME OWNERS BY STATE

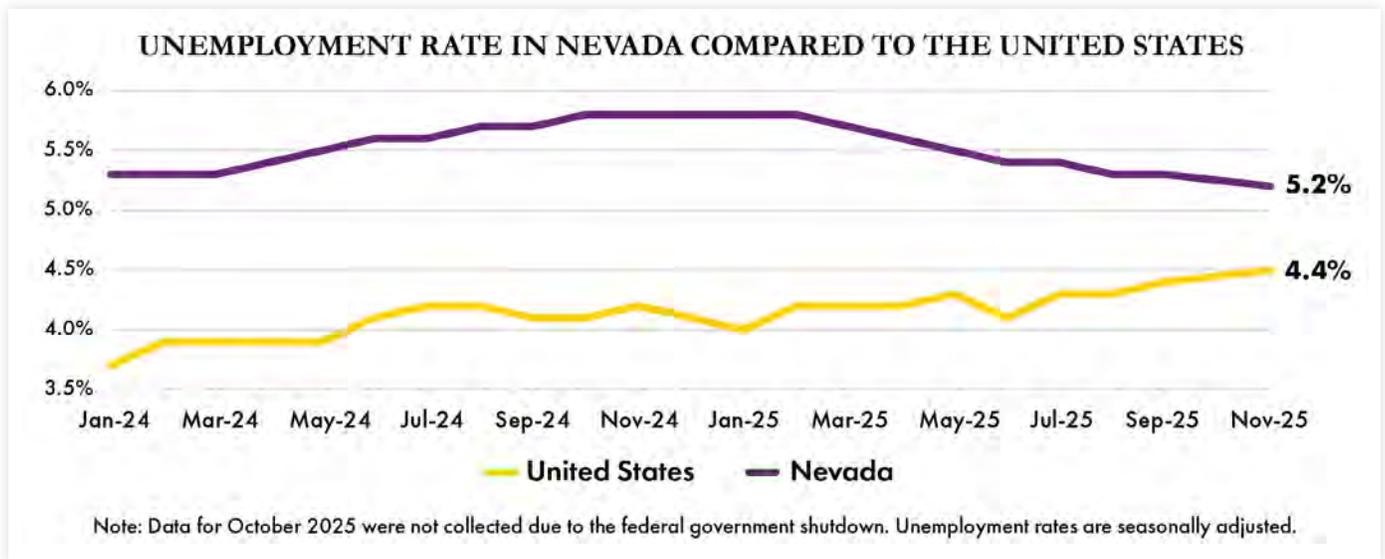


Rank	State	% Excessively Cost-Burdened Owners
1	Hawaii	31.5%
2	California	30.5%
3	Florida	28.7%
4	New York	26.5%
5	New Jersey	24.7%
6	Nevada	24.4%
7	Colorado	23.7%
8	Rhode Island	23.6%
T-9	Massachusetts	23.3%
T-9	Oregon	23.3%

Sources:

https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDT1Y2024.B25064?q=b25064&q=040XX00US32_050XX00US32003,32031
<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MEDLISPRINV>

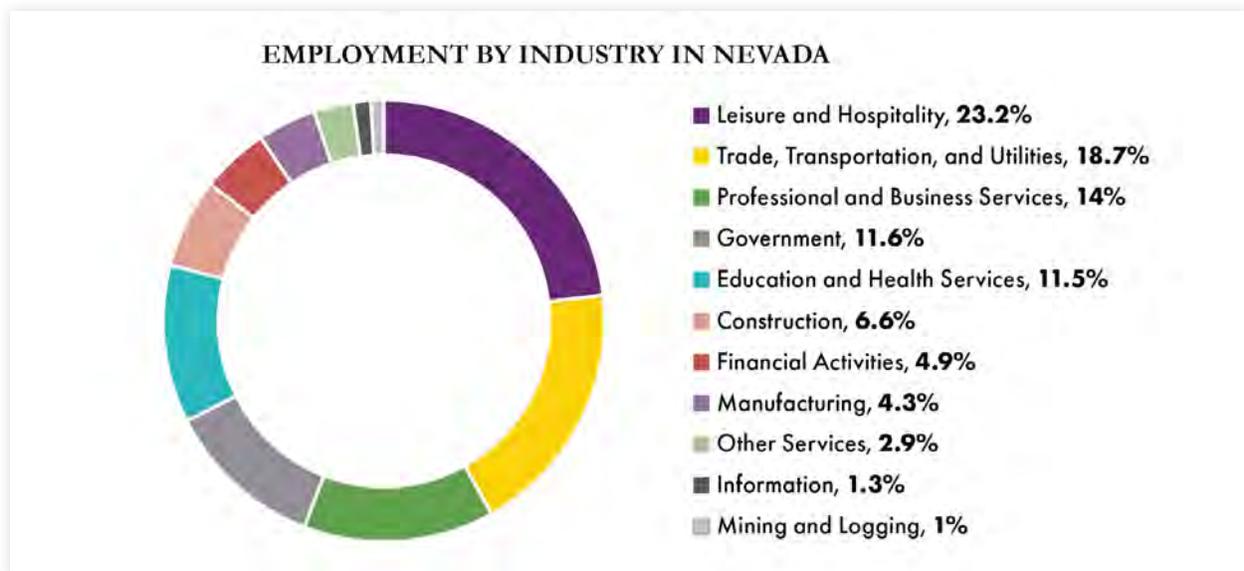
Employment and Unemployment



Nevada's seasonally adjusted labor force participation rate in September 2025



62.7%



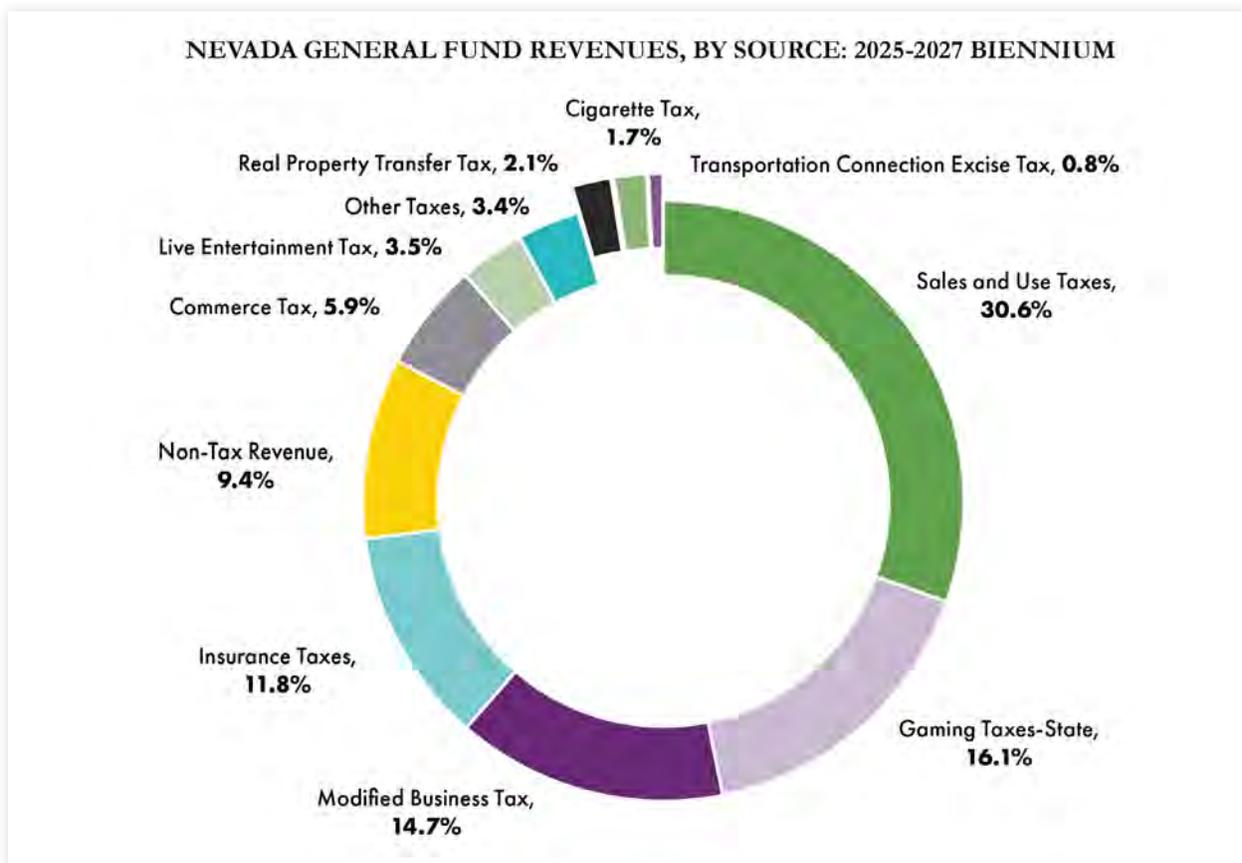
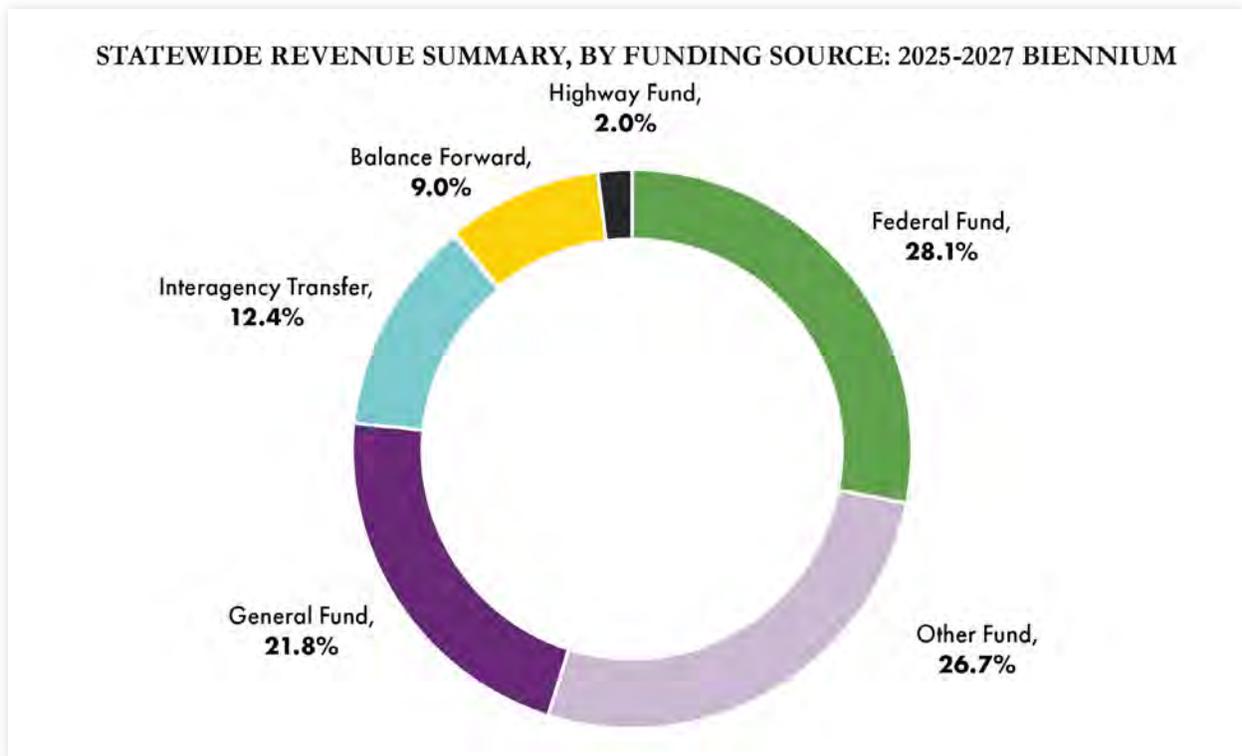
1,589,000

Nevada's total nonfarm payroll employment in November 2025

Sources:

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/LBSSA32>
<https://www.bls.gov/charts/state-employment-and-unemployment/industry-employment-by-state.htm>
<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NVNA>

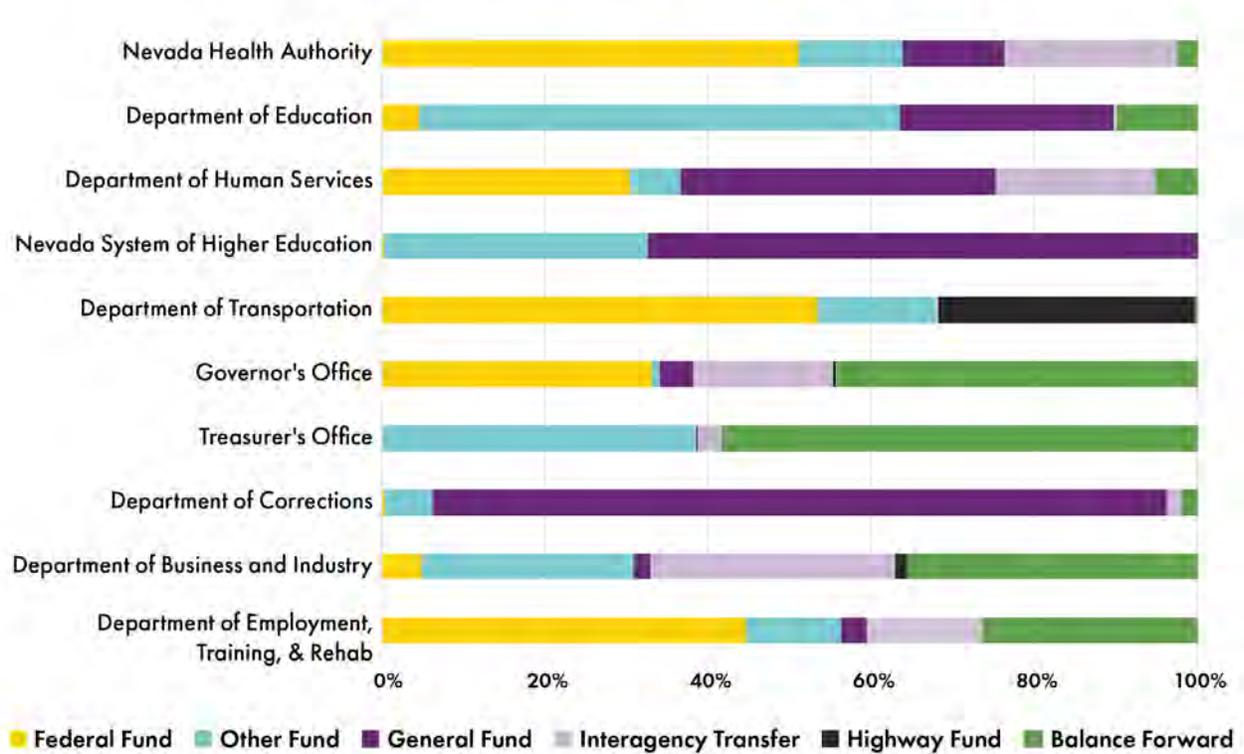
Legislatively Approved Budget



Sources:

-State of Nevada, <https://openbudget.nv.gov/OpenGov/ViewBudgetSummary.aep?amountView=Total&budgetVersionId=25&version=Leg&type=Rev&view=ObjectType>

NEVADA'S 10 LARGEST DEPARTMENTS, BY FUNDING SOURCE: 2025-2027 BIENNIUM



THE LEGISLATIVELY APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE STATE OF NEVADA: 2025-2027 BIENNIUM

Published: October 29, 2025

Nevada’s legislatively approved budget provides funding for the operation of state government, including critical functions such as health care, K-12 education, and public safety. Since 2017, the Guinn Center has reported on the biennial budget recommendations of the Governor and/or final approval of the budget by the Nevada Legislature. This report provides a review of the 2025-2027 legislatively approved budget and includes a section on the impact of [H.R. 1](#) (One Big Beautiful Act), passed by Congress in July of 2025.

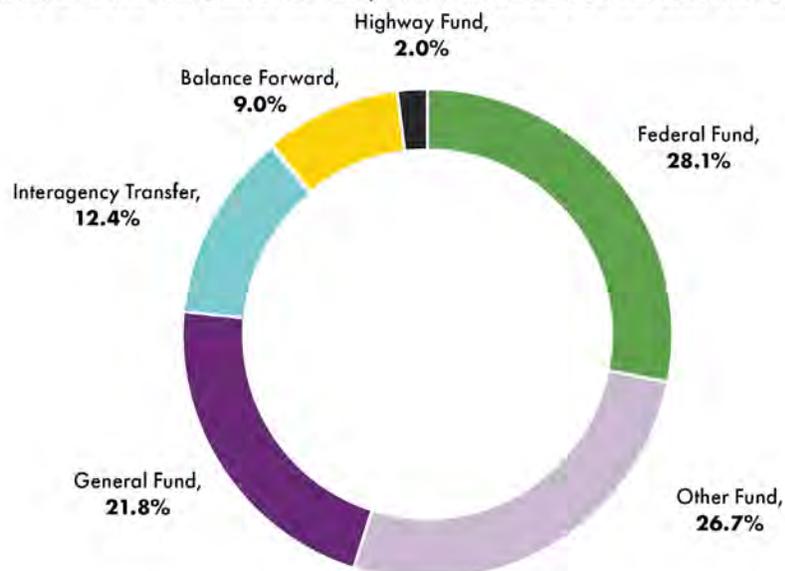
Read full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

- The legislatively approved budget for the 2025-2027 biennium increased by \$3.3 billion (6.1 percent) to a total of \$56.7 billion.
- Federal dollars constitute the highest share of budgeted revenues at \$15.9 billion or 28.1 percent, an increase of \$1.2 billion (7.9 percent) over the previous biennium. *NOTE: A more in-depth analysis of the allocation of federal dollars can be found in the Guinn Center report titled “Federal Footprint: A Snapshot of Federal Funds Use in Nevada’s State Budget.”*
- General Fund revenues are forecasted to increase by \$634.3 million (5.5 percent) in the 2025-2027 biennium.
- Sales and Use taxes generate the largest share of General Fund revenues, representing 30.6 percent.
- The health and human services function represents the largest share of statewide expenditures, totaling 46.6 percent, with education representing the second largest at 31.1 percent.

STATEWIDE REVENUE SUMMARY, BY FUNDING SOURCE: 2025-2027 BIENNIUM



THE BUDGET PROCESS AND H.R. 1 CONSIDERATIONS

- After receiving proposed budgets from state agencies in the middle of even-numbered years, the governor waits for the initial estimate of future state General Fund revenues to finalize his or her official recommended budget.
- The revenue estimate comes from the independent, statutorily-created Economic Forum in early December of even-numbered years. In the following month, the governor releases the recommended budget for consideration by the legislature, which meets for 120 days beginning in February of odd-numbered years.
- The legislature reviews gubernatorial spending priorities and has the authority to add, change, or remove items from the budget, subject to certain state or federal laws.
- The Economic Forum meets again in May, the final month of the legislative session, to provide an updated revenue forecast that the legislature uses in its final approved budget for the state.

In 2025, the U.S. Congress enacted [H.R. 1](#), a significant law with implications for Nevada’s state budget. The Guinn Center suggests the following questions that policymakers may wish to consider in responding to H.R. 1:

- What are the minimum requirements, including fiscal impact, necessary to implement the provisions of H.R. 1 at the state level?
- What are the long-term positive and negative fiscal impacts on Nevada in future biennia?
- What are the short-term timelines to prepare for the bill’s requirements, before implementation? This may include Information Technology system programming and revisions to regulations, including those relating to the Medicaid State Plan.
- What is the state’s ability to absorb additional program expenses, considering state General Fund revenue trends and projected shortfalls in major program expenses?

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

BRIDGING THE GAP: REVENUE OPTIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE ELECTRIC VEHICLE TRANSITION

Published: August 20, 2025

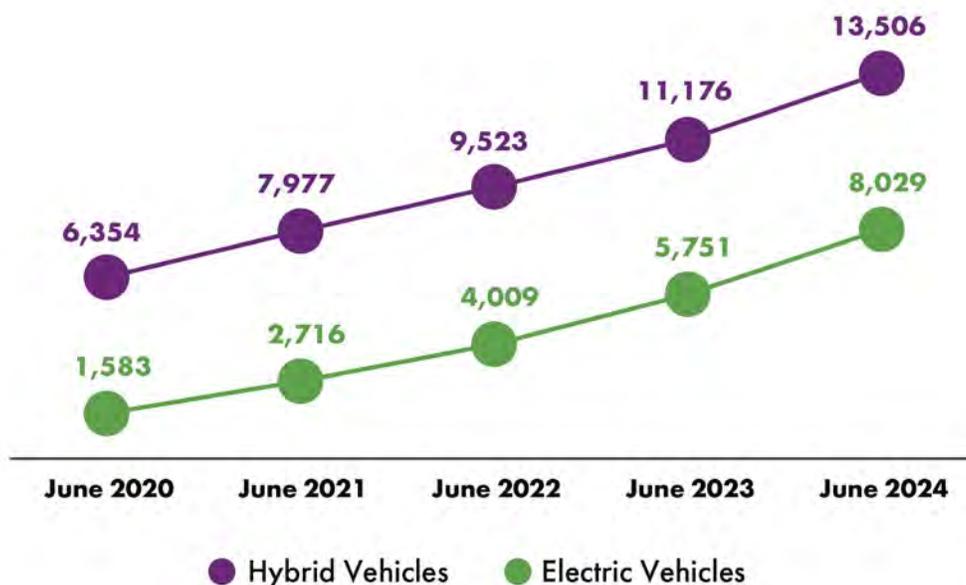
Washoe County has seen an increase in the number of residents driving electric vehicles (EVs), as well as Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs). This represents a positive step in meeting clean air standards, but it has also reduced fuel consumption and, consequently, gasoline tax collections for road construction and maintenance. This study examines policy interventions other states have implemented to address the growth of EVs and HEVs and their effect on fuel tax collections.

Read full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- From June 2020 to June 2024, EV registrations in Washoe County increased by 407.2 percent, and HEV registrations grew by 112.6 percent.
- As of June 2024, EVs and HEVs represent 2.0 percent and 3.3 percent of total Washoe County registrations, respectively. These percentages are expected to increase.
- Washoe County indexes motor vehicle fuel taxes, which allows collections to increase with inflation in road construction costs. It does not address the issue of EVs and HEVs not contributing their share of taxes.

EV and HEV Registrations in Washoe County



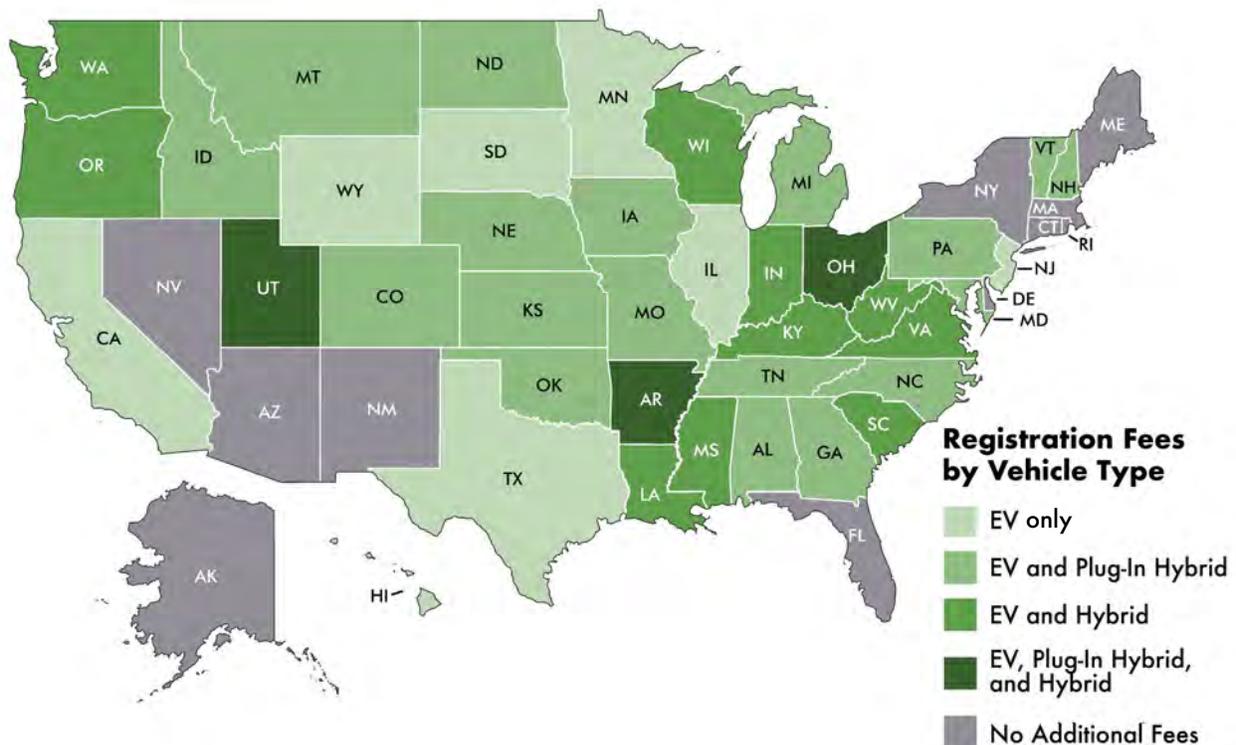


POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Other states have implemented measures such as additional vehicle registration fees for EVs and HEVs, vehicle-miles-traveled taxes, and electric charging station taxes. Nevada is one of 11 states that have not implemented any additional fees.
- Imposing additional registration fees on EVs and HEVs may be the best option for Washoe County due to its ease of implementation, cost-effectiveness, and revenue-generating potential.
- Two provisions in the Nevada Revised Statutes could be utilized to address funding gaps: (1) imposing a supplemental governmental services tax; and (2) increasing the county-optional sales tax by one-eighth of one percent for road construction and maintenance.

Funding for this study was provided by the Regional Transportation Commission of Washoe County through a contract with the Guinn Center.

Registration Fees for Electric Vehicles and Hybrids by Vehicle Type



CANNABIS TAXES IN NEVADA: AN EXPLAINER

Published: June 17, 2025

More than eight years after the decriminalization of possession of up to one ounce of marijuana for those in Nevada aged 21 and over, misconceptions regarding the budgetary implications of cannabis taxation persist. This explainer aims to clarify the status of cannabis law, tax policy, and related revenue in Nevada by examining the state’s current cannabis use and tax policies, as well as the inconsistency between its projected and actual tax revenue in recent fiscal years.

Read full report [here](#).

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. Additionally, funds from the Barbara Smith Campbell Distinguished Professor of Nevada Tax Policy at the College of Business program generously supported the work of the project’s graduate research assistant.

💡 KEY FINDINGS

- Cannabis is currently legal in 39 states— 24 on a recreational basis, like Nevada.
- In Nevada, cannabis is taxed 15 percent at the wholesale level and 10 percent at the retail level (medical cannabis is exempt from the retail tax). Most of this tax revenue is designated to support K-12 education.
- Since 2018, the two taxes exclusive to cannabis have provided nearly \$716 million in K-12 funding, plus additional school funding through other sales taxes.
- Among the nine western states collecting cannabis taxes, Nevada ranks fourth in per-capita taxes collected.
- After four initial years of growth in cannabis tax revenues, they dropped in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 and FY 2023, which is a pattern seen in other states.



THE DYNAMICS OF LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN POST-PANDEMIC NEVADA: A STATEWIDE ANALYSIS

Published: May 27, 2025

The labor force participation rate (LFPR) measures the percentage of people aged 16 and older who are either working or actively looking for work. The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a recession that uniquely affected Nevada, worsening the state’s labor force imbalances. This report, a collaboration between UNLV’s Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) and the Guinn Center, builds on a previous study to explore whether Nevada’s LFPR remains affected by the pandemic.

Read full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- Labor force participation rates in Nevada declined from 2019 to 2022 among all age groups, except those 55 and older.
- Married males experienced the largest decrease in LFPR.
- Considering the labor force participation rate in 2019, we estimate that Nevada had approximately 10,900 fewer workers in the labor force in 2022, and that approximately 10,800 of these lost workers came from the leisure and hospitality sector.
- A lack of economic diversification may continue to explain why Nevada’s labor participation rate in 2022 was lower than in 2019. At the industry level, the labor force in the leisure and hospitality sector plummeted by 11.8 percent from 2019 to 2022, while most other sectors experienced gains during the same period.
- Nationally, the leisure and hospitality sector had the highest unemployment rate at 6.6 percent in 2022, followed by the retail sector at 5.2 percent. These two industries represented over 30 percent of Nevada’s labor force in 2022, compared to about 20 percent for the U.S.





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

There is a range of policy strategies that Nevada might consider, and all have proven successful in other states and nations.

- When a local economy can strengthen the alignment between its system of education and the career pathways available, new workforce entrants are better prepared and have more fulfilling and lucrative career options. The Swiss model of high school Vocational Education and Training is highlighted in the report.
- People with disabilities are an underappreciated labor force segment; bringing them into the fold can yield additional individual and societal benefits.
- Successful strategies from other jurisdictions have included broad-based apprenticeship programs, skills-based recruitment, incentivizing entrants into the healthcare workforce, and expanding data-informed planning and decision-making.
- Reforming the State's occupational licensing could open the door for underemployed individuals to fully contribute to the economy and for workforce shortages to be filled.

This study was funded by the Nevada Office of Workforce Innovation (OWINN) as part of a U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) financial assistance award.

OVERVIEW OF STATEWIDE FEDERAL FUNDING IN NEVADA: 2023-2025 BIENNIUM

Published: April 7, 2025

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2022, 36.4 percent of all states' revenue came from the federal government, ranging from 22.2 percent in North Dakota to 50.5 percent in Louisiana. This policy brief provides a comprehensive overview of the role of federal funding in Nevada, outlines the types of federal funding Nevada receives, and describes how these funds are distributed across state agencies.

Read full report [here](#).

A follow-up Guinn Center brief highlighting the impacts and use of federal funding passed through the State of Nevada to nonprofit organizations will be published in Spring 2026.

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. Our upcoming follow-up brief is funded by grant from the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

KEY FINDINGS

- Within the legislatively approved budget for the 2023-2025 biennium, federal funds make up 27.7 percent or about \$14.8 billion out of the total \$53.4 billion state budget. This is the largest source of funds in the budget.
- The state departments receiving the most federal money include the Department of Health and Human Services (now split as the Nevada Department of Human Services and the Nevada Health Authority (\$5.58 billion), the Department of Transportation (\$468 million), the Department of Education (\$344 million), the Department of Agriculture (\$251 million), and the Department Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (\$128 million).
- Changes to federal policy or funding can have substantial effects on state operations and the communities they serve. The state's response may vary, depending on the affected program's budget, the urgency of services provided, and the legal obligations that exist under state or federal law.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY IN NEVADA: AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Published: February 18, 2025

Since 2010, Nevada has gained an average of 24,000 new residents annually. However, the housing supply has struggled to keep pace. The state faces a severe housing affordability crisis, driven by a persistent imbalance between supply and demand. Rising construction costs, outdated zoning regulations, and slow permitting processes have worsened the problem. Additionally, federal land ownership limits available development space, while an influx of wealthier out-of-state buyers and low wages in the hospitality sector further strain affordability. This report examines the factors that have contributed to Nevada’s housing affordability issues and explores policy considerations to address these challenges.

Read full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Nearly half of Nevada’s renters spend an excessive portion of their income on housing.**
- **Extremely low-income households have fewer affordable housing options in Nevada than in any other state.**
- **Housing costs have far outpaced income growth. Since 2018, every Nevada county with double-digit income growth has seen home prices rise at least 2.5 times faster.**
- **Nevada lost a significant number of construction workers during the pandemic and now has the nation’s second-lowest number of apprentices per 1,000 construction workers.**
- **Clark County lags in multi-family housing construction. In 2023, Reno and Sparks issued 15 percent more multi-family building permits than Las Vegas, Henderson, and North Las Vegas combined.**
- **Nevada lacks “missing-middle” housing. These are duplexes to five-unit properties or Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), which are small secondary units on single-family lots.**



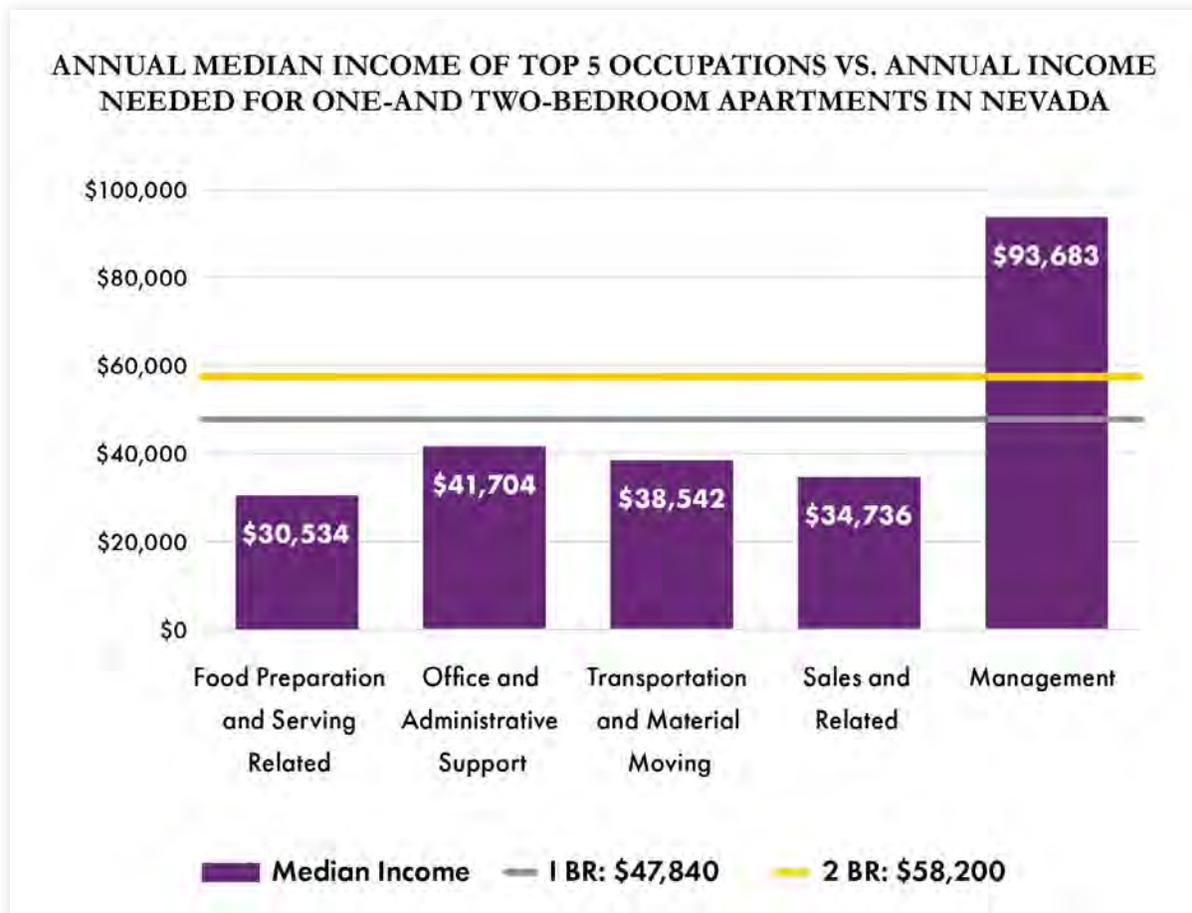


POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

This report concludes with a range of policy options, addressing both supply-side and demand-side solutions.

- On the supply side, strategies include expanding access to developable land, reforming zoning regulations, streamlining permitting processes, and encouraging the construction of diverse housing types, such as “missing-middle” housing and ADUs (see [AB 540](#) [2025], which addressed some of these recommendations).
- On the demand side, proposed initiatives focus on strengthening housing voucher programs and increasing landlord participation to support vulnerable populations.
- Additionally, there is a need for strong state-level leadership to collaborate with federal and local stakeholders in developing effective, data-driven policies tailored to Nevada’s unique housing challenges.

This study was funded through a transfer of \$150,000 from the Loss Revenue Reserve category to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Projects category to the Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, as approved by the Nevada Legislature’s Interim Finance Committee on March 13, 2024 (Work Program #24FR132715).



AN ANALYSIS OF NEVADA’S PRE-AND POST-PANDEMIC LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE

Published: April 16, 2024

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Nevada’s Labor Force Participation Rate (LFPR) experienced the third-largest drop in the nation following the COVID-19 pandemic. This trends analysis aims to identify why the pandemic’s impact on Nevada’s workforce was so severe and provides insights into demographic and economic influences on the LFPR, like age distribution, gender, and educational attainment.

A decline in LFPR can significantly impact local, state, and national economies by reducing real Gross Domestic Product (GDP), especially if there are no productivity gains. In Nevada, the pandemic resulted in an estimated \$19 billion loss in real GDP (2023). Ongoing labor shortages would lead to further reductions in both short- and long-term GDP, decreasing the state’s potential real GDP from pre-pandemic levels. This decline could ripple through the economy, resulting in lost productivity, fewer jobs, and reduced consumer spending.

Read full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- Post-pandemic reductions in labor force participation in Nevada and Clark County seem influenced by both economic conditions and educational factors.
- Even after the pandemic, more than 20 percent of jobs in Nevada and 25 percent in Clark County remain concentrated in the leisure and hospitality sector, which has experienced the greatest decline in labor force participation.
- Labor force engagement has also fallen among individuals with less than a bachelor’s degree. For Nevadans aged 21 to 64, participation dropped from 75.4 percent in 2019 to 74.3 percent in 2021.
- Nevada ranks among the bottom ten states in attracting college-educated workers, contributing to the state’s overall lower LFPR; and
- Nevada also reports among the nation’s lowest LFPRs for people aged 55 to 64, further affecting workforce engagement.

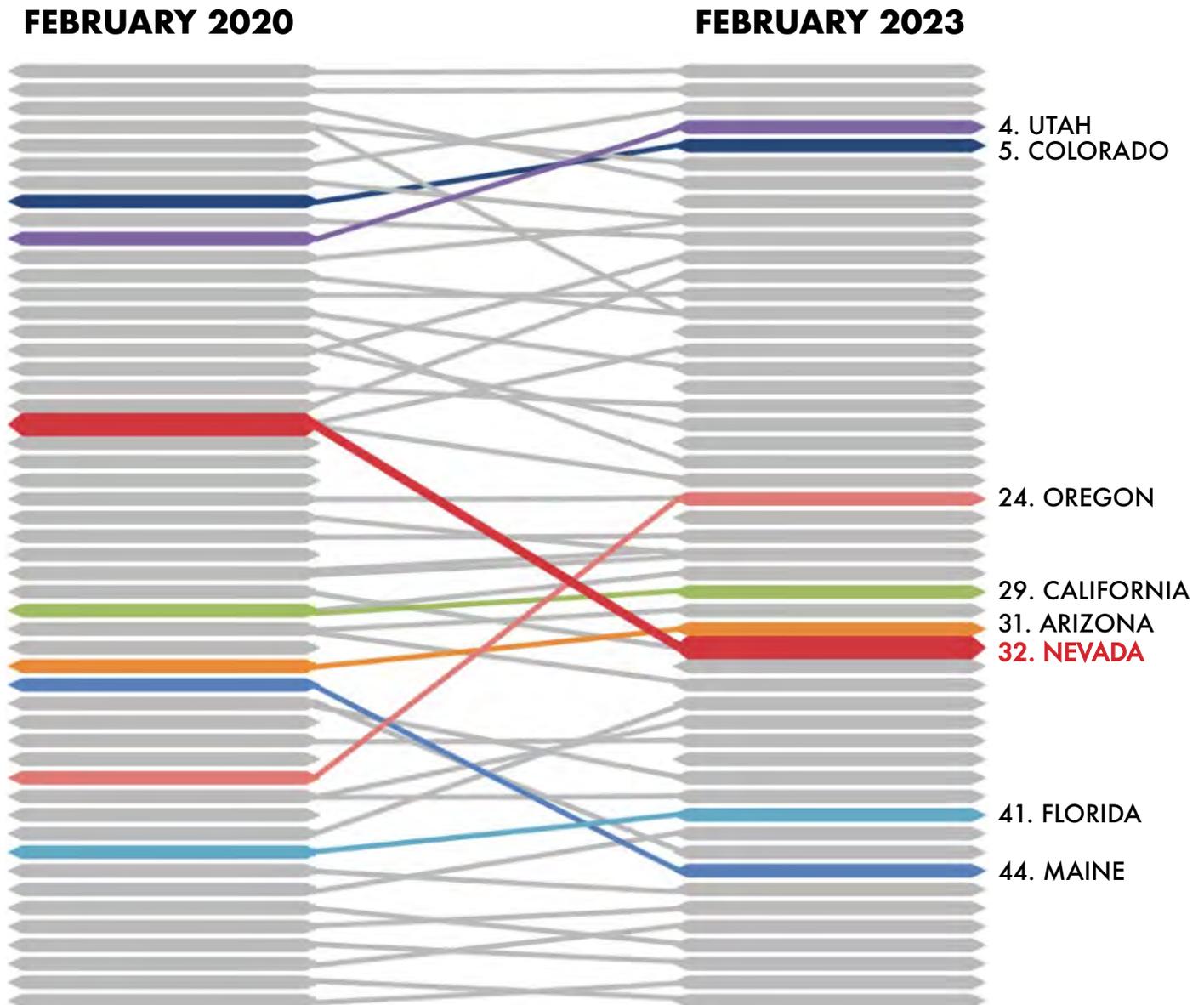


POLICY CONSIDERATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

This report offers options for future research that may help Nevada to understand better the underlying dynamics of labor force participation, including:

- Conducting landscape analyses that inventory Nevada’s workforce development policies and programs compared with those from other states, local governments, and nonprofits;
- Examining existing statutory, regulatory, and administrative authorities concerning workforce development policies for Nevada;
- Assessing state and federal funding dedicated to workforce development in Nevada; and
- Commissioning surveys of individual groups referenced in this report to better identify barriers to labor market entry.

**Change in Labor Force Participation Rates Nationwide:
February 2020 - February 2023**



This graph shows the overall Labor Force Participation Rate rankings for Nevada and selected states from February 2020 to February 2023. The data is from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Graph contributed by the UNLV Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER).

THE LEGISLATIVELY APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE STATE OF NEVADA: 2023-2025 BIENNIUM

Published: August 18, 2023

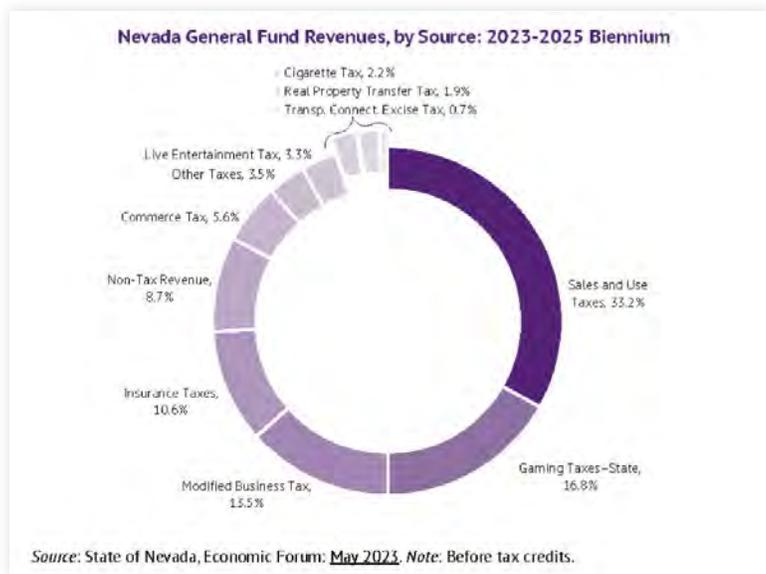
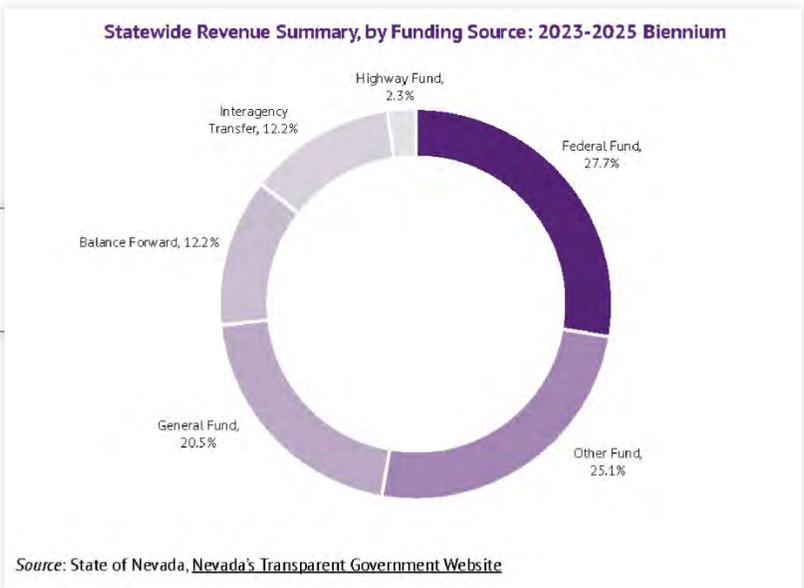
The Legislature reviews agencies' budget requests and the governor's spending priorities. Differences between proposed expenditures and legislative decisions regarding spending are reconciled during the course of the legislative session and culminate in five budget implementation bills: The Appropriations Act, the Authorizations Act, the K-12 Education Funding Act, the State Employee Compensation Act, and the Capital Improvement Plan Act. The K-12 Education Funding Act is required to be passed before the others.

In 2023, a special session was convened to pass the Capital Improvement Plan Act.

This data snapshot reviews the Budget that was approved by the Legislature for the 2023-2025 Biennium. The Budget amounts to approximately \$53.4 billion, an increase of roughly 19 percent over the Budget of \$44.9 billion for the 2021-2023 Biennium.

Read full report [here](#).

The funds displayed here are the six funding sources in the budget



This figure shows the contribution of the various revenue sources to the State General Fund for the 2023-2025 Biennium, as reported by the Economic Forum at its meeting on May 1, 2023. Sales and Use Taxes account for about a third of the revenue.



HEALTH & SOCIAL POLICY



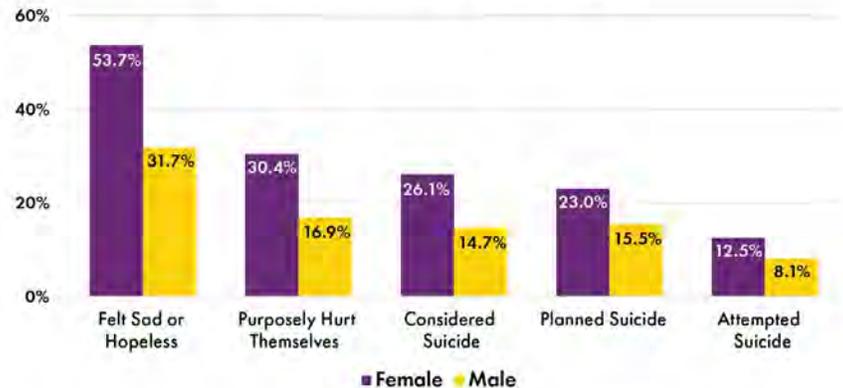
HEALTH & SOCIAL POLICY

FAST FACTS

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE TO STUDENT RATIOS 2022

Metric	Recommended	Nevada
School Psychologists to Students	1:500	1:1,866
School Social Workers to Students	1:250	1:8,730
School Counselors to Students	1:250	1:544

MENTAL HEALTH BEHAVIORS BY SEX, NEVADA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, 2023



Percent of Nevada youth reported suffering from at least one major depressive disorder episode in the past year



23.51%



14.09%

Percent of Nevada youth reported having a substance use disorder in the past year



Number of Nevada youth experiencing serious thoughts of suicide

34,000



73%

Percent of youth in Nevada who need treatment for depression but did not access care

Sources:

Hopeful Futures Campaign Nevada. (n.d.). Hopeful Futures Campaign. <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2022-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>
 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH), 2022). <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/release/2022-national-survey-drug-use-and-health-nsduh-releases>
 The School Health Assessment and Performance Evaluation (SHAPE) system, Mental Health Staff-to-Student Ratios, <https://theshapesystem.com/>
<https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/7240229f28375f54435c5b83a3764cd1/detailed-guidelines-2024.pdf>
<https://hopefulfutures.us/action-nevada/>



Food Insecurity



FOOD INSECURITY IN NEVADA:

15.1% – In 2023, 15.1 percent of Nevadans, or about 481,460 residents, were **food-insecure**.

38% – Of those Nevadans living in food insecurity, 38 percent are living **above the threshold for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits**.

22-24% – Across all seven Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions, about a quarter of **college students** experienced food insecurity in at least four consecutive survey waves from 2016 to 2022.



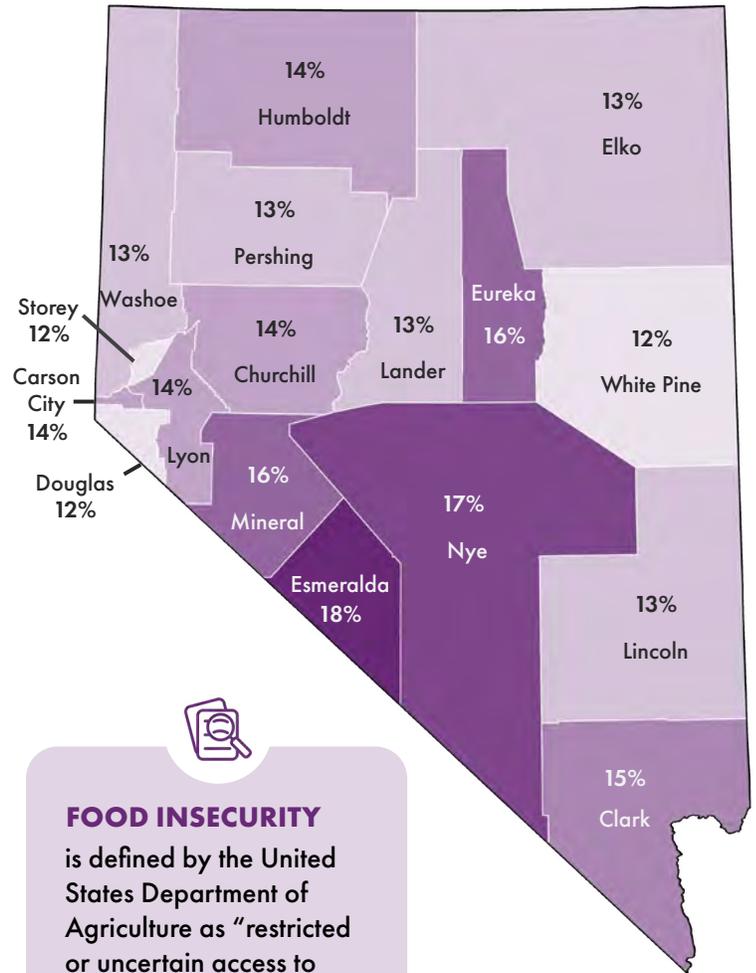
ACCESS:

15.5% – In 2024, 15.5 percent of Nevadans received **SNAP benefits** monthly. Nevada's SNAP participation ranks **8th highest nationally**.

41% – In 2023, less than half of Nevadans **eligible for Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) coverage accessed services**.

34.2% – About one-third of Nevadans lived in a **single-vehicle household**, and **7.1 percent lacked a household vehicle**, creating barriers to food security.

PERCENT OF FOOD-INSECURE NEVADANS BY COUNTY (2023)



FOOD INSECURITY

is defined by the United States Department of Agriculture as "restricted or uncertain access to sufficient food for an active, healthy lifestyle."



IMPACTS ON HEALTH:

41% – In 2023, 41 percent of food-insecure high school students reported a prevalence of **moderate-to-severe depressive symptoms**, compared to 20 percent among food-secure peers.

2.4 times – Mothers experiencing food insecurity are more than twice as likely to report **postpartum depressive symptoms** compared to their food-secure counterparts.

Sources:

Feeding America (2024), <https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2023/overall/nevada>
Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, 2023
U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-year (2019-2023)
Nevada Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023



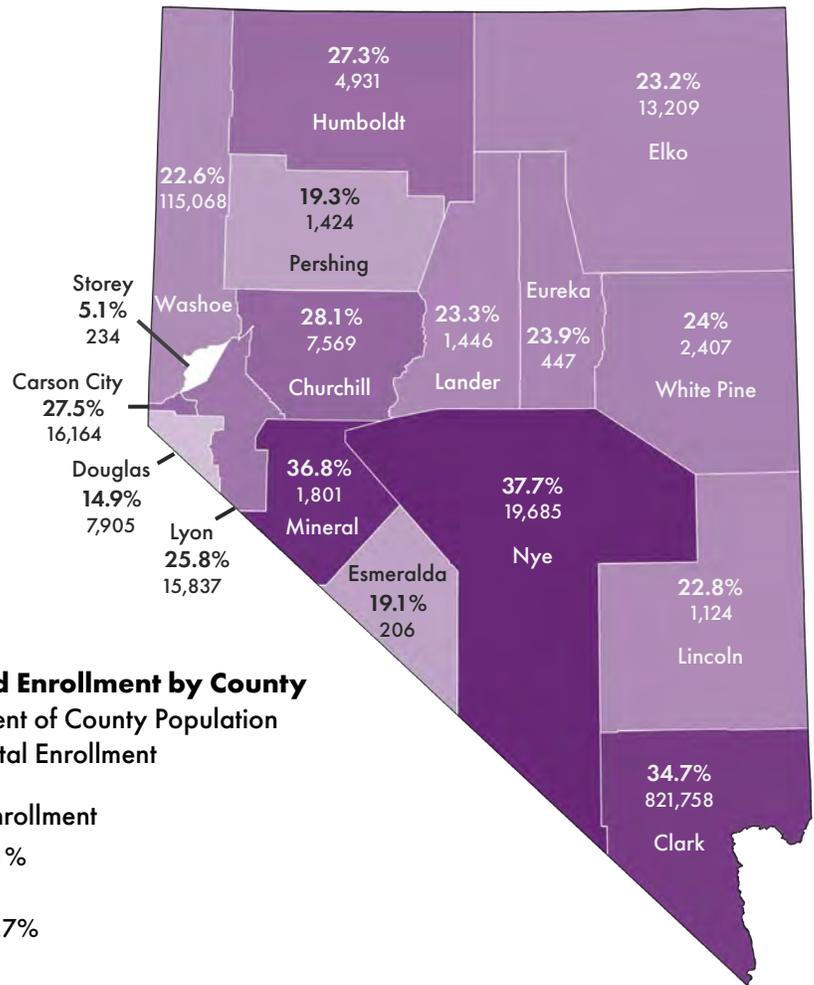
Medicaid

Medicaid is the health insurer for approximately 1 in 4 Nevadans, nearly half of whom are children.

Medicaid accounts for nearly one-quarter (24.9 percent) of Nevada's 2023-2025 total biennial budget.

Medicaid covers 60 percent of nursing home residents, 39 percent of children, and 42 percent of births in Nevada.

MEDICAID ENROLLMENT BY PERCENT ENROLLED AND TOTAL ENROLLMENT (2023)



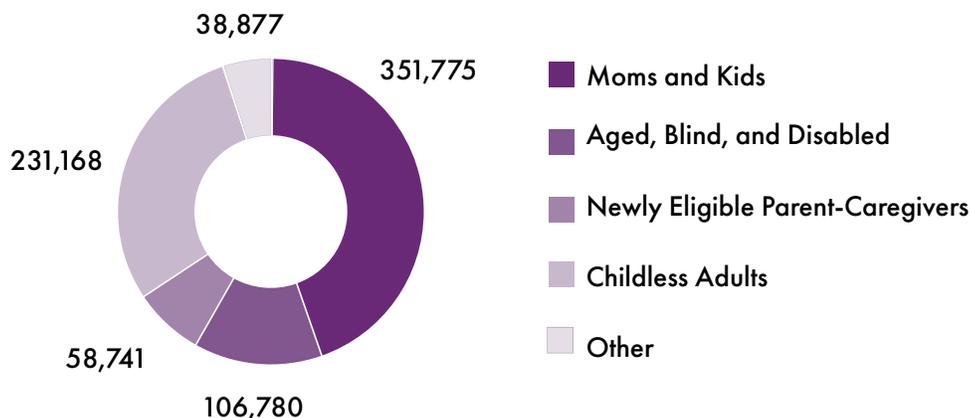
Medicaid Enrollment by County

As a Percent of County Population and by Total Enrollment

Percent Enrollment



MEDICAID BY CATEGORY - STATE FISCAL YEAR 2025



Sources:

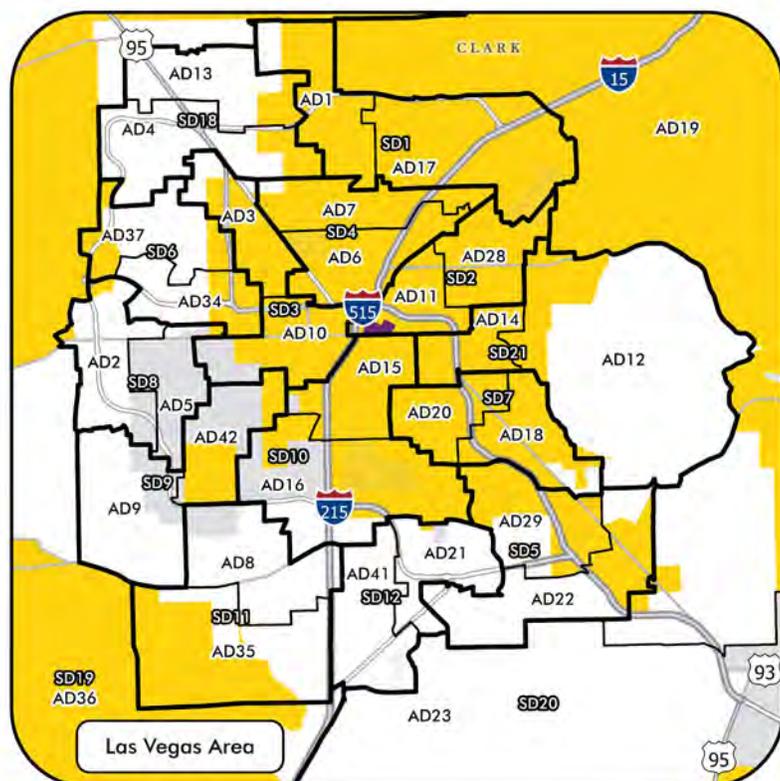
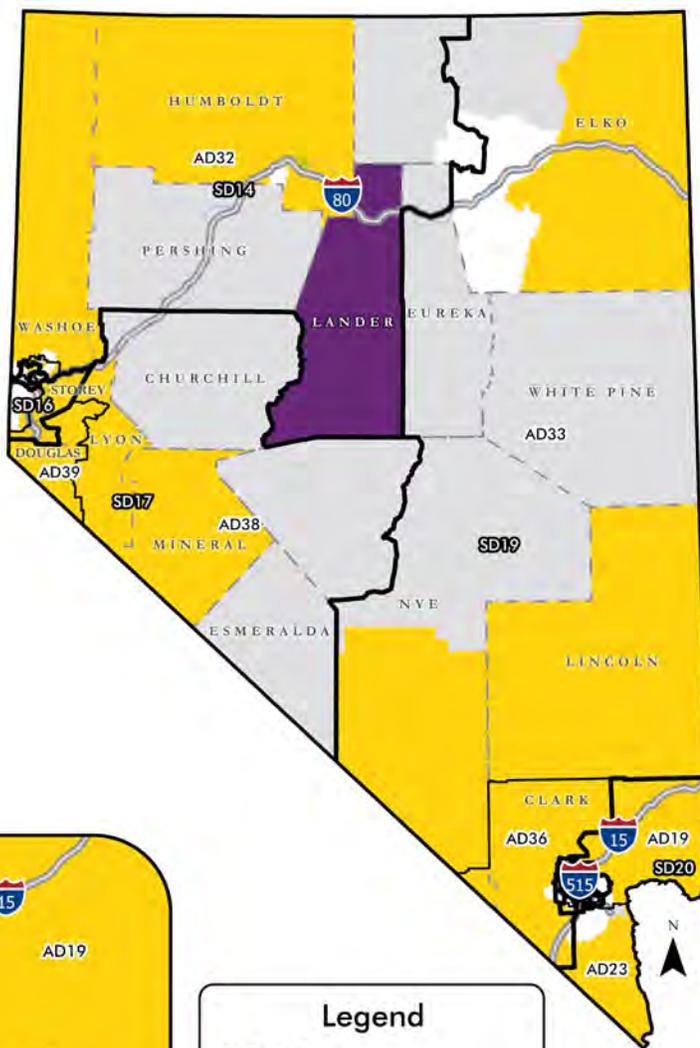
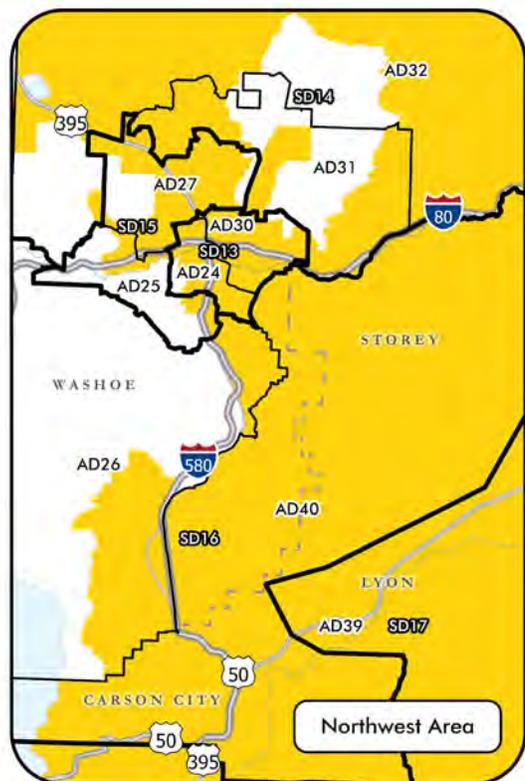
Nevada Office of Analytics – Data Dashboard, “Health Care Coverage and Costs”

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiaUTJhZjRlNzIiNjI4YS00ZDg0LWVxYzEtNWRhMDIjM2E0YzJkIiwidCI6ImU0YTM0MGMGU2lWI4OWUuNGU2OC04ZWFlTE1NDRkMjcwMzk4MCI9>

PRIMARY CARE HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS (HPSA) SCORES FOR NEVADA

January 1, 2025



Legend

HPSA Score

- Non-Shortage Area
- 1-13
- 14-17
- 18 and Above

Boundaries

- Nevada Senate District
- Nevada Assembly District
- County Boundary

Note: HPSA Scores are used by state and federal agencies to determine provider and facility eligibility for a wide-range of state and federal programs. Primary care scores range from 1-25. Higher scores indicate greater priority areas.

Source: Office of Statewide Initiatives (January 1, 2025). HPSA scores are continuously updated. These point-in-time scores are intended to better understand the magnitude and scope of health workforce shortages in Nevada.

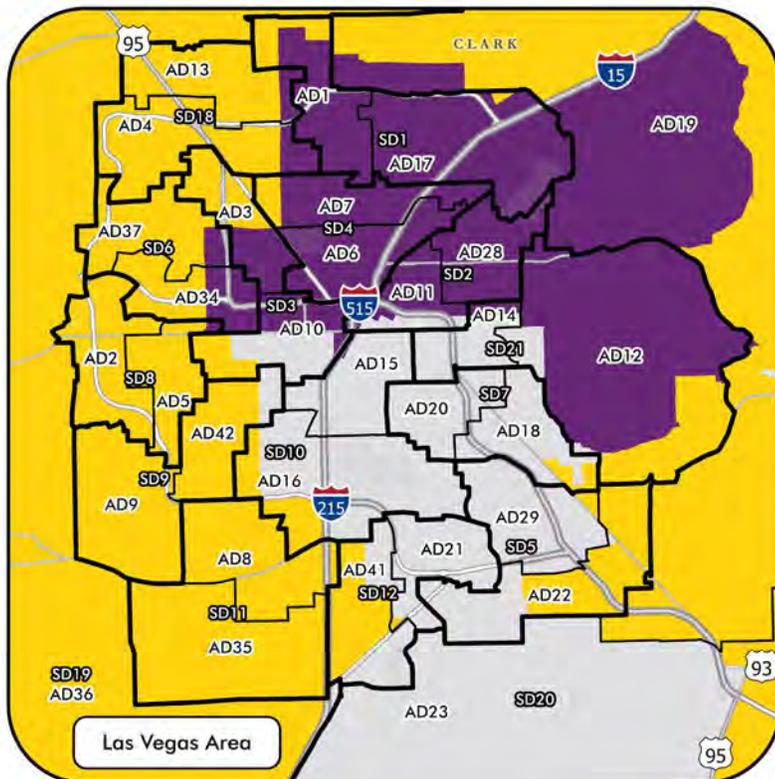
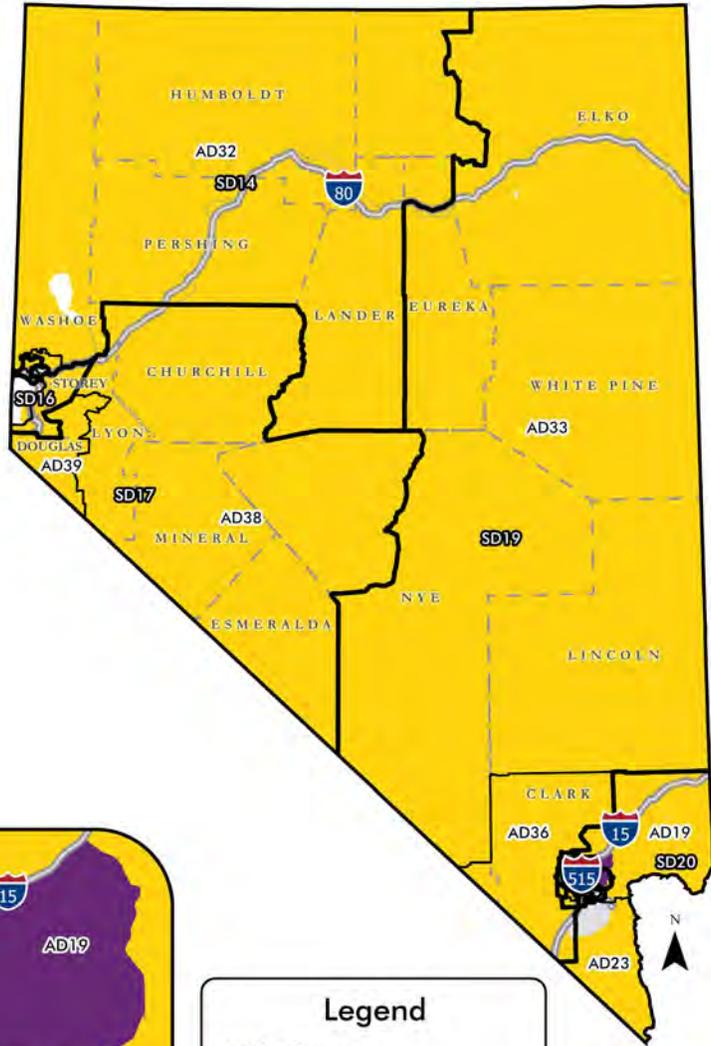
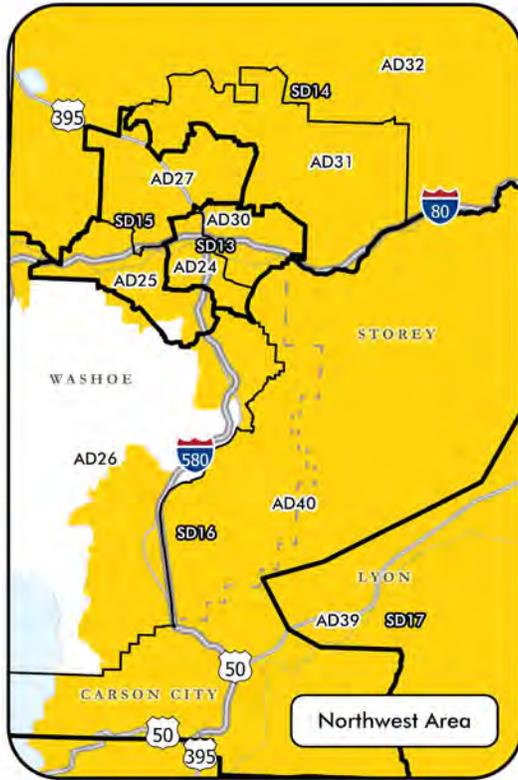
Sources:

- Nevada Rural and Frontier Health Data Book, 12th Edition. (2025, February). Office of Statewide Initiatives, University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine.
- Reinert, M., Fritze, D., & Nguyen, T. (2024). The State of Mental Health in America 2024.

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS (HPSA) SCORES FOR NEVADA

January 1, 2025



Legend

HPSA Score

- Non-Shortage Area
- 1-13
- 14-17
- 18 and Above

Boundaries

- Nevada Senate District
- Nevada Assembly District
- County Boundary

Note: HPSA Scores are used by state and federal agencies to determine provider and facility eligibility for a wide-range of state and federal programs. Mental health scores range from 1-25. Higher scores indicate greater priority areas.

Source: Office of Statewide Initiatives (January 1, 2025). HPSA scores are continuously updated. These point-in-time scores are intended to better understand the magnitude and scope of health workforce shortages in Nevada.

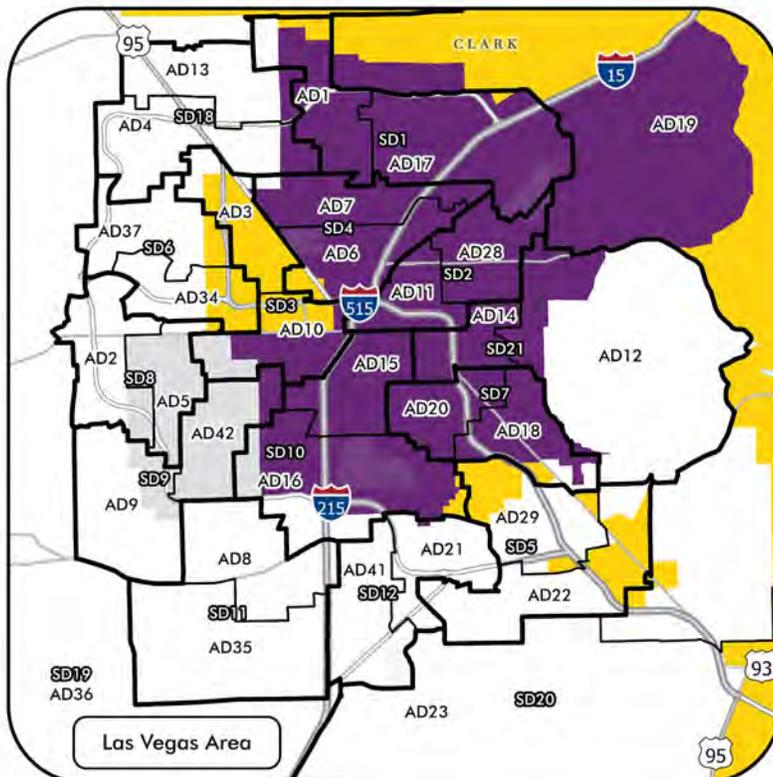
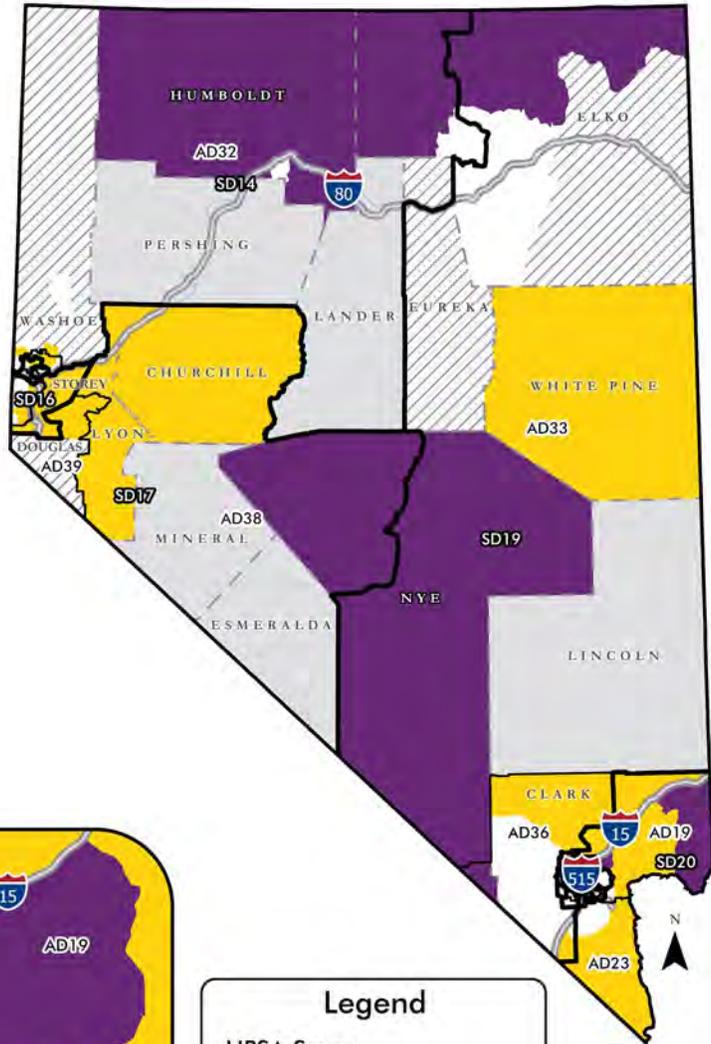
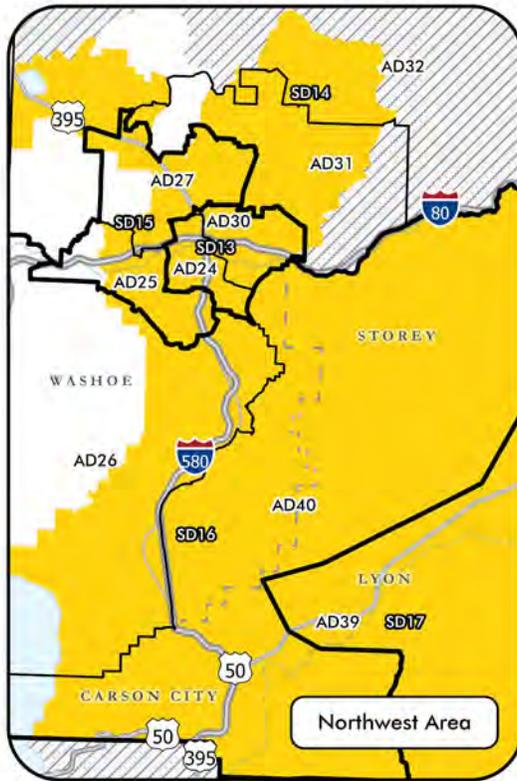
Sources:

-Nevada Rural and Frontier Health Data Book, 12th Edition. (2025, February). Office of Statewide Initiatives, University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine.
 -Reinert, M., Fritze, D., & Nguyen, T. (2024). The State of Mental Health in America 2024.

DENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS

HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS (HPSA) SCORES FOR NEVADA

January 1, 2025



Legend

HPSA Score

- Non-Shortage Area
- 1-13
- 14-17
- 18 and Above
- Pending HPSA Designation

Boundaries

- Nevada Senate District
- Nevada Assembly District
- County Boundary

Note: HPSA Scores are used by state and federal agencies to determine provider and facility eligibility for a wide-range of state and federal programs. Dental health scores range from 1-26. Higher scores indicate greater priority areas.

Source: Office of Statewide Initiatives (January 1, 2025). HPSA scores are continuously updated. These point-in-time scores are intended to better understand the magnitude and scope of health workforce shortages in Nevada.

Sources:

- Nevada Rural and Frontier Health Data Book, 12th Edition. (2025, February). Office of Statewide Initiatives, University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine.
- Reinert, M., Fritze, D., & Nguyen, T. (2024). The State of Mental Health in America 2024. <https://mhanational.org/sites/default/files/2024-State-of-Mental-Health-in-America-Report.pdf>

UNPACKING FOOD INSECURITY THROUGH THE POLICY LENS: AN OVERVIEW OF NEVADA'S POLICY LANDSCAPE AND THE OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THROUGH POLICY

Published: September 24, 2025

Food security is considered a social determinant of health, which can significantly impact health outcomes and costs. Surprisingly, food insecurity is not just a problem faced by poor Americans. Nearly 40 percent of U.S. households facing food insecurity live above the federal poverty line, meaning they cannot afford the cost of groceries but do not qualify for government assistance. This policy brief assesses Nevada's current food-security policy landscape, encompassing federal, state, and local initiatives, analyzes how such policies may mitigate the adverse health outcomes associated with food insecurity, and identifies opportunities to build solutions through policy.

Read full brief [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

- Food insecurity is a significant issue in Nevada, affecting 15.1 percent of the state's population, or approximately 481,600 Nevadans, in contrast to the national average of 14.3 percent.
- Nevada's rates of food insecurity are estimated to have resulted in over \$518 million in associated health care costs in 2022.
- Nearly one in four children in Nevada experiences food insecurity.
- Food insecurity influences unique yet interrelated health outcomes. For example, a 2023 survey found that 41 percent of food-insecure high school students exhibited moderate-to-severe depressive symptoms, compared to 20 percent among their food-secure peers.
- The Nevada Office of Food Security has a strategic plan for the years 2023 to 2027, which outlines a unified, interdisciplinary approach to combating food insecurity across the state.





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Policy options for Nevada include:

- Creating a statewide authority on food insecurity;
- Modernizing and incentivizing benefit delivery through e-WIC and online electronic transfer technology;
- Integrating nutrition support into Medicaid-funded preventive care programming;
- Piloting a statewide Produce Rx program, which combines medical assessments with prescriptions for fruits and vegetables to support specific health needs; and
- Launching a unified data dashboard to enable state leaders to maximize federal flexibility and innovation.

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

PRIVACY AND COMPLIANCE IN SCHOOL-BASED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES: NAVIGATING FERPA, HIPAA, AND NEVADA LAW

Published: September 3, 2025

When conducting a previous study on School-Based Behavioral Health (SBBH) services, the Guinn Center found that the confidentiality requirements in two key federal laws are causing significant concern and confusion among school staff, parents, and community health providers. This brief explores the nexus between the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in the context of SBBH services and records.

Read full brief [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** contained in student records maintained by an educational institution or a person acting on its behalf is deemed confidential and subject to FERPA disclosure laws.
- **Protected Health Information (PHI)** transmitted by a covered health provider is protected and subject to HIPAA disclosure laws.
- **The determination of whether HIPAA or FERPA prevails over SBBH records, where both educational records and health records coexist, is situation-dependent. Important considerations in making this determination include:**
 - **Where did the records originate?**
 - **Who maintains the records?**
 - **Who is seeking to obtain the records, and under what circumstances?**
- **When records are confidential under FERPA or HIPAA, disclosure is allowed when proper consent is given.**





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Given the various compliance considerations and complicating factors, there are three general strategies a district or school may consider to maximize the value of its SBBH services while ensuring compliance with FERPA, HIPAA, and state privacy laws:

- **Option 1 – Keep SBBH services and school activities as administratively separate functions that do not share records.**
- **Option 2 – Deliver all SBBH services under the auspices and control of the school.**
- **Option 3 – Adopt a hybrid approach with the school and outside SBBH providers working in coordination.**

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

UNDERSTANDING MEDICAID IN NEVADA: AN OVERVIEW OF THE STATE'S PROGRAM AND FINANCING, AND THE IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL

Published: August 27, 2025

Medicaid spending accounts for 25 percent of Nevada's total biennial budget, and Medicaid provides health insurance coverage for a quarter of Nevadans. This policy brief provides a high-level overview of the complex Medicaid program from national and state governance and funding perspectives. It also examines recent federal changes and their potential effect on state-level policies.

Read full brief [here](#).

💡 KEY FINDINGS

- Medicaid is the health insurer for approximately 1 in 4 Nevadans, nearly half of whom are children.
- Medicaid covers 60 percent of nursing home residents, 39 percent of children, and 42 percent of births in Nevada.
- About 309,000 Nevadans are enrolled through the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Medicaid expansion, adopted by Nevada in 2014.
- The federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act ([H.R. 1](#)), passed in July 2025, will affect Nevada's Medicaid program, including provider fees, state-directed payments, and eligibility determinations.





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

H.R. 1 introduces substantial changes to both the financing and administration of Medicaid in Nevada. Although many policy provisions took effect immediately, more than three-quarters of the federal Medicaid spending reductions will occur between 2030 and 2034. Nevada policymakers may wish to assess the path ahead to address the long-term implications for the state’s Medicaid program. Their policy considerations may include:

- How will Nevada navigate the projected reduction of federal spending of between \$6 billion and \$11 billion over the next ten years?
- How can Nevada reduce the impact on providers, especially rural hospitals, public hospitals, and those serving high numbers of Medicaid patients?
- How will Nevada Medicaid shoulder the administrative burdens imposed by changes in H.R. 1?
- How will Nevada prepare to implement the new work requirements for ACA expansion populations?
- How will Nevada address the needs of a larger uninsured population?

This research was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center. To view all our research, a complete list of our donors, or to support nonpartisan policy research in Nevada, please visit GuinnCenter.org.

MOVING THE NEEDLE: CHALLENGES IN MEETING NEVADA’S HEALTH WORKFORCE NEEDS

Published: April 16, 2025

Nearly 65 percent of Nevadans reside in a federally designated primary medical care health professional shortage area (HPSA), including almost 90 percent of Nevada’s rural residents. Nevada policymakers at the federal, state, and local levels have identified this challenge as a key priority. This policy brief provides a snapshot of current and projected health workforce supply and demand data in Nevada, and examines the need for public policy remedies to address the supply, diversity, and geographic maldistribution challenges of the state’s health workforce.

Read full brief [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

- To simply meet the average population-to-provider rates among U.S. states for 2025, Nevada would need an estimated additional:

 **2,097** physicians;

 **717** advanced practice registered nurses;

 **347** dentists;

 **5,372** nursing assistants; and

 **21,795** personal care and home health aides.

To fully staff the four major industries within Nevada’s health care and social assistance sector, the state would need an estimated additional:

 **13,800** jobs in the ambulatory care industry;

 **20,100** jobs in the hospital industry;

 **16,100** jobs in the nursing and residential industry; and

 **17,600** jobs in the social assistance industry.

- Shortages are driven by: (1) general population growth (Nevada has been among the fastest growing states for 70 years); (2) population aging (which leads to the retirement of health professionals and increases demand for some specialties); and (3) growth in health insurance coverage (which has improved over the past decade and resulted in greater demand for health services).



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Nevada has experienced success in expanding its workforce over the past decade; however, demand continues to outpace supply, and there is no single “silver bullet” policy to close that gap. Historically, workforce development initiatives have fallen into one of three solution types:

- **Grow our own workforce** – These are measures that expand existing workforce pipelines within the Nevada System of Higher Education’s medical, nursing, and allied health care education programs (adopted, in part - [SB 262](#) and [SB 266](#) [2025]).
- **Stretch the existing health care workforce** – These solutions include the utilization of telehealth technologies, non-physician clinicians, and support staff, as well as efforts to maximize the use of health professionals practicing at the top of their scope of practice and licensure.
- **Recruit and retain health care workers from other jurisdictions** – These measures can include interstate licensure compacts, reciprocity agreements, and J-1 visa programs to attract foreign practitioners (adopted, in part - [AB 163](#), [AB 230](#), [AB 248](#), [AB 319](#), and [SB 124](#) [2025]).

This policy brief was made possible through the generous philanthropic support of the Guinn Center and in collaboration with Dr. John Packham, Associate Dean, Office of Statewide Initiatives, and Associate Professor, University of Nevada (UNR), Reno School of Medicine, and UNR’s Nevada Health Workforce Research Center.

SCHOOL-BASED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES: AN ANALYSIS OF POLICIES, PRACTICES, AND FUNDING STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE IMPLEMENTATION IN NEVADA

Published: April 3, 2025

In 2021, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Children’s Hospital Association released a joint statement declaring a national emergency in child and adolescent mental health. In this difficult national context, Nevada ranks 51st in the nation for youth mental health and has ranked among the bottom five states since at least 2014. This study examines the current youth behavioral health crisis, Nevada-specific factors contributing to access challenges in behavioral health care, national and state best practice models for delivering services to children, youth, and families in schools, and opportunities to scale a Comprehensive School Mental Health System (CSMHS) across Nevada.

Read full report [here](#).

Nevada does not provide its children with behavioral health disabilities with adequate community-based services. Instead, Nevada relies on segregated, institutional settings, like hospitals and residential treatment facilities, to serve children with behavioral health disabilities... Nonetheless, the State does not: ensure that key community-based behavioral health services are available; maintain an adequate provider network for those services; connect children with services that could prevent institutional placements; or connect children who enter an institutional setting with community-based services so they can return to the community and remain there successfully.

KEY FINDINGS

- Nevada’s consistently low rankings reflect high rates of mental health conditions in Nevada’s youth, combined with poor access to timely and comprehensive community-based care.
- Youth needs are intensified by environmental factors such as poverty, lack of health insurance, exposure to trauma and adverse childhood experiences, unstable family income, and housing insecurity.
- Behavioral health workforce shortages, underinvestment in critical service infrastructure, and insurance company non-compliance with behavioral health parity laws contribute to poor access.
- Unmet child behavioral health needs have been linked to chronic absenteeism, poor school performance, worsening behavioral health into young adulthood, and death by suicide.
- Experience shows that schools can provide a range of evidence-based behavioral health supports and services with demonstrated success.
- Nevada’s school funding formula falls short of funding nationally recommended ratios for the personnel needed to address behavioral health programming and services.
- Nevada’s efforts have been largely dependent on time-limited federal funding, which is projected to expire by the end of 2026. This places existing school-based behavioral health programming at significant risk.

Quote source:

United States Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Investigation of Nevada’s Use of Institutions to Serve Children with Behavioral Health Disabilities* (October 2022): https://www.justice.gov/d9/press-releases/attachments/2022/10/04/2022.10.04_report_of_nevada_investigation_0.pdf



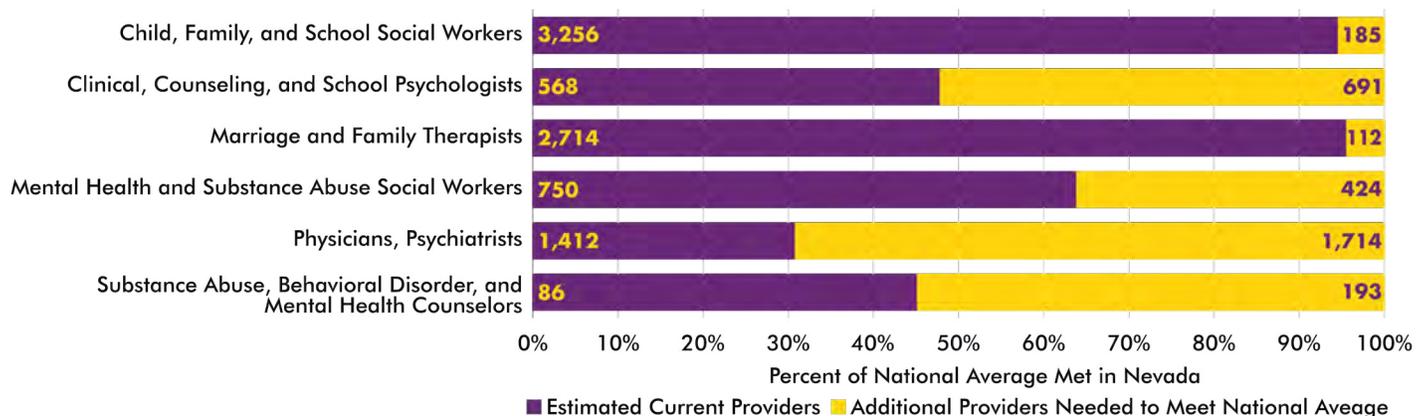
POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Nevada has an opportunity to make publicly funded schools critical access points for behavioral health services. The following four general recommendations would support Nevada’s pursuit of this opportunity:

- Secure adequate funding to sustain behavioral health services in all Nevada school districts and charter schools, using the Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework and other best practices.
- Establish state policies prioritizing publicly funded schools as key access points for behavioral health services, including prevention, screening, early intervention, crisis care, and treatment.
- Support school districts and charter schools in establishing and sustaining a CSMHS.
- Expand Nevada’s behavioral health workforce pipeline with a comprehensive plan that addresses critical shortages.

This project was generously funded through the Nevada Department of Education with federal grant funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) through Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education), award number 5H79SM083645.

What it Takes to be Average – Behavioral Health Professions



UNDERSTANDING THE PROPOSED RESTRUCTURING OF NEVADA’S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES: BASED ON THE 2025-2027 EXECUTIVE BUDGET PROPOSED BY GOVERNOR JOE LOMBARDO

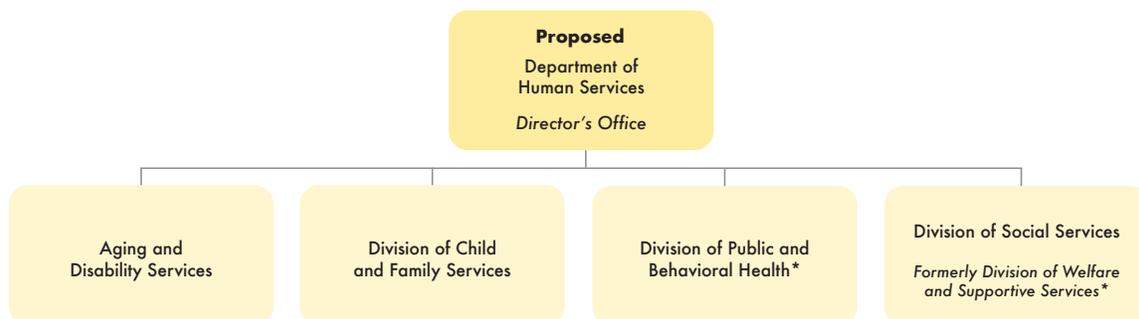
Published: March 28, 2025

This brief provides an overview of the proposed restructuring of the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), as detailed in the Governor’s Recommended 2025-2027 Executive Budget. The proposal would split DHHS into two separate state agencies: the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Nevada Health Authority (NHA) (see [SB 494](#), 2025).



Read full report [here](#).

PROPOSED STRUCTURE



**Portions of these Divisions will be moved to Nevada Health Authority in the proposed restructuring as detailed below.*





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

In analyzing the governor’s proposal, this brief presents key questions for policymakers to consider regarding fiscal health and compliance in Nevada Medicaid, data sharing and security, organizational structure, administrative capacity, and the impact on citizens.

The proposed restructuring was passed into law following the publication of this brief, and went into effect July 1, 2025.

This policy brief was made possible through the generous philanthropic support for the Guinn Center.

ALL-PAYER CLAIMS DATABASE BRIEF

Published: March 6, 2025

In response to spiraling health care costs, states have implemented large data repositories called All-Payers Claims Databases (APCDs) and use this data to inform data-driven, evidence-based policy decisions. APCDs collect medical, pharmacy, and dental claims data from public and private insurers to enhance health care transparency, evaluate pricing, and inform policy decisions. Nevada’s APCD, established through Senate Bill 40 in 2021, mandates data reporting to the state’s Patient Protection Commission, the Department of Health and Human Services (now the Nevada Health Authority), and the Attorney General’s Office.

This policy brief examines drivers for successful implementation, including effective governance, secure data stewardship, and sustainable funding.

Read full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Twenty states, including Nevada, with APCDs have passed legislation to mandate that eligible payers submit data in a standard format to the database. Nationally, it is estimated that approximately 60 percent of insured individuals are covered by health plans that are excluded from submitting data to an APCD.**
- **Mere implementation of an APCD is not sufficient to fully actualize the data’s potential. States must also possess the necessary authority, governance, analytics, policy capabilities, and financial sustainability to utilize the data effectively.**
- **State Health Data Organizations (HDOs) are vital nonpartisan entities that govern an APCD and provide policymakers, regulators, and the public with comprehensive health system information.**
- **In many states, HDOs have optimized multiple datasets, including health information exchanges, public health data, and workforce data to gain deeper insights into the health system. They also serve as data brokers, making data available to both internal and external users.**





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Policymakers in Nevada may wish to review the following policy considerations as APCD implementation takes shape:

- Secure stable and continued funding for the APCD to ensure the needed human and analytical resources are available.
- Leverage the expertise of the Nevada System of Higher Education for data analytics and policy development.
- Establish governance structures that encourage input from diverse stakeholders through active engagement with health systems, health occupation associations, industry leaders, and the public.
- Ensure the administration and authority of the state Health Data Organization is nonpartisan to protect the integrity of the reporting and to allow for open and transparent policy recommendations based on evidence and data.
- To reduce misuse and misrepresentation of APCD findings, acknowledge and clearly delineate the limitations of its data, including an estimation of the number of Nevadans covered by health plans not reporting to the APCD.
- Make the APCD data publicly available and develop use cases based on statutory reporting requirements and informed by the library of state use cases available through the national [APCD Council](#).

This policy brief was funded, in part, by contributions from Guinn Center donors Phil and Jennifer Satre and Mick Hitchcock.

THE HOUSING AND COMMUNITY-LIVING LANDSCAPE FOR PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES IN NEVADA

Published: June 28, 2024

Since the Great Recession, securing affordable housing has become increasingly difficult for Americans – and Nevadans – posing a significant challenge for policymakers.

Extensive research has informed decision-making on various housing issues, including affordability, supply and demand, wealth building through property ownership, and the needs of specific populations. However, the housing and community-living needs of people with developmental disabilities (DD) remain relatively underexamined and not well-understood.

This study evaluates the community living needs and resources for people with DD in Nevada, gives an overview of the current housing and support landscape, and suggests several policy considerations and areas for future research.

Common challenges include system complexity; mismatch of preferences and housing outcomes; affordability issues; aging family caregivers; and shortages in the direct support professionals workforce.

Read the full report [here](#).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Affordability can be a major barrier to preferred housing for people with DD.**
- **Many people find the support services system complex and difficult to navigate.**
- **Most Nevadans with IDD live in their family homes, but that may not be the preference of each person.**
- **There is concern about what will happen to individuals with IDD as they and their family member caregivers age.**
- **Shortages in the direct support professional workforce mean some people go without care.**



POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Explore best practices in other locations to expand the availability of affordable, accessible housing.
- Make the “No Wrong Door” effort put forth by the Aging and Disability Services Division of the Department of Health and Human Services a reality.
- Identify effective strategies for maximizing available federal Medicaid resources, ensuring people with disabilities are given priority in public housing programs, and coordinating compliance with “least restrictive environment” requirements.
- Conduct a program evaluation and needs assessment to determine if structural or administrative changes to the system are needed (beyond the qualitative information gathered for this report).

Project commissioned & funded by the Nevada Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities.

SOUTHERN NEVADA SEX TRAFFICKING GAP ANALYSIS

Published: January 1, 2023

This policy brief serves as a companion piece to the Southern Nevada Sex Trafficking Gap Analysis 2023, an extensive study recently released by researchers at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). It identifies key issues in addressing sex trafficking in the region, including lack of education, funding, adequate services, housing, and accountability. It suggests enhancing public awareness, increasing funding through fines on traffickers, and providing wrap-around services and secure housing for victims. It also emphasizes the need for stricter measures against buyers and traffickers. The recommendations aim to improve the overall response and support for victims.

In 2025, the Legislature approved [Senate Concurrent Resolution 3](#), directing the Joint Interim Standing Committee on the Judiciary

to study Nevada’s human trafficking laws, systems, and services and report its findings and recommendations to the 2027 Nevada Legislature.

Read full brief [here](#)

KEY FINDINGS

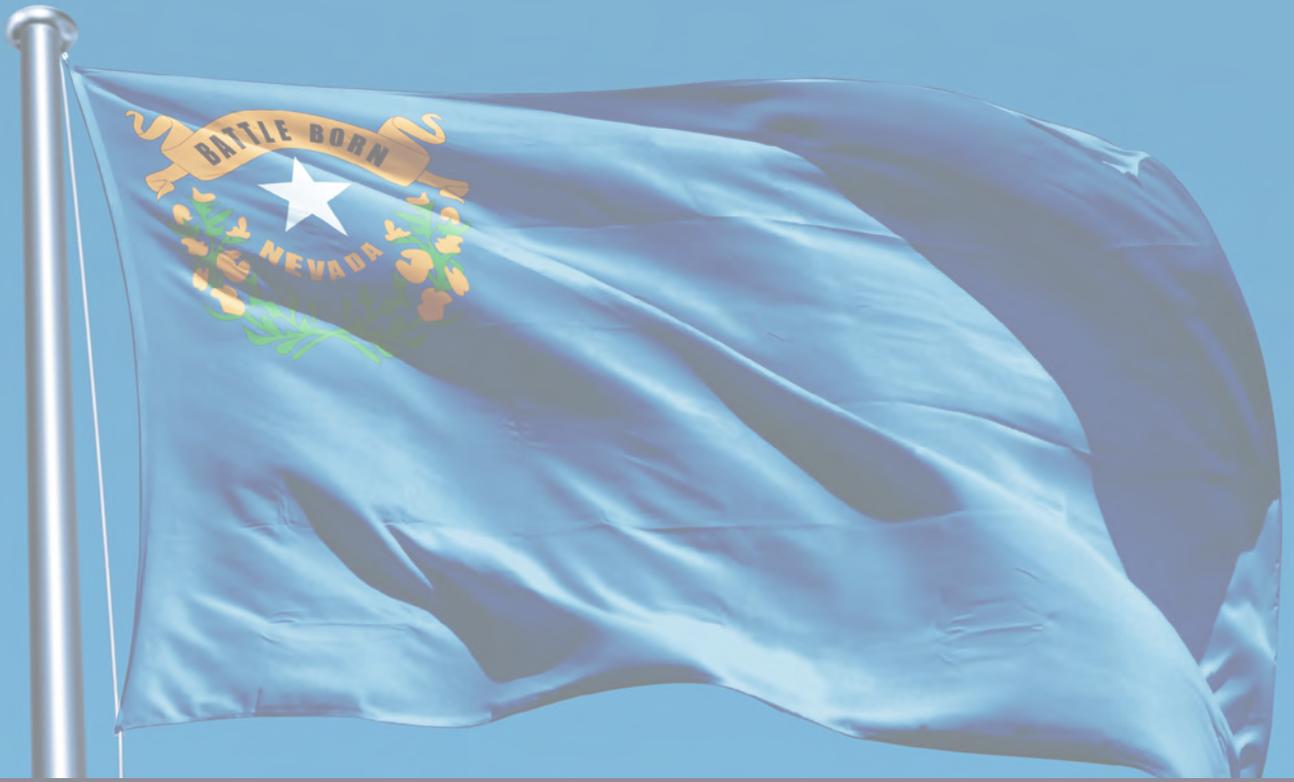
- Education on how to spot and prevent sex trafficking needs to increase.
- Community resources that support victims of sex trafficking lack funding.
- Service provision is inadequate to meet the needs of victims/survivors.
- Safe, affordable housing is the most in-demand service for victims/survivors.
- Accountability and other demand-side issues are not currently well addressed.





POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- **Lack of education, awareness, and prevention**
 - » Increase public awareness, prevention, and education in schools and at businesses, tourist destinations, and transportation hubs.
 - » Educate visitors on the illegality of prostitution in Clark County, especially as it pertains to the trafficking of minors.
- **Lack of funding**
 - » Increase funding to better prevent sex trafficking and support trafficking victims and survivors.
 - » Use fines from buyers and traffickers to pay for victim services and to establish a statewide human trafficking database.
- **Lack of adequate services available to victims and survivors**
 - » Design services and interventions for victims of sex trafficking in a “wrap around” fashion (comprehensive and seamless).
- » Provide services and interventions for immediate needs, such as physical and mental care, legal assistance, and housing.
- » Assist with reintegration into society after survivors have exited “the life” through job development and vocational training services.
- **Lack of housing/shelter options for victims and survivors**
 - » Increase access to specialized housing/shelter for victims of sex trafficking.
 - » Provide stable and secure transitional housing for youth survivors of sex trafficking.
- **Lack of accountability for traffickers and buyers**
 - » Address demand through policy, advocacy, and prevention work.
 - » Punish individuals who buy sex illegally.
 - » Hold businesses criminally responsible for the facilitation of sex trafficking.



GOVERNANCE & CIVIC POLICY

GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC POLICY

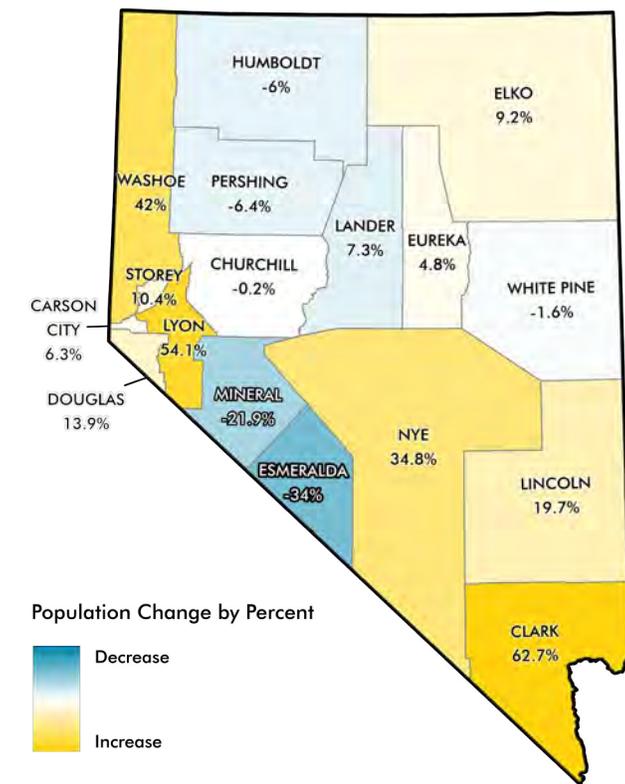
FAST FACTS

Nevada Population Facts

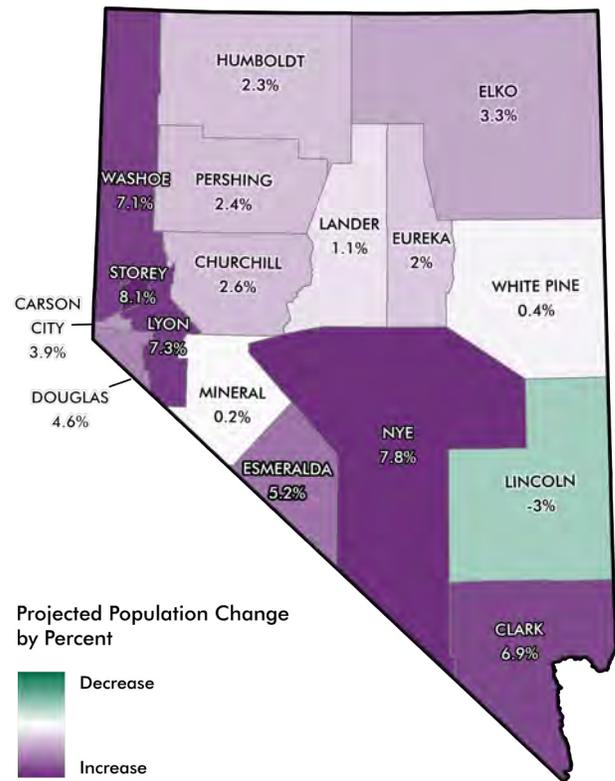


Nevada's population as of the 2020 Census

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE IN NEVADA
County Level: 2000-2020



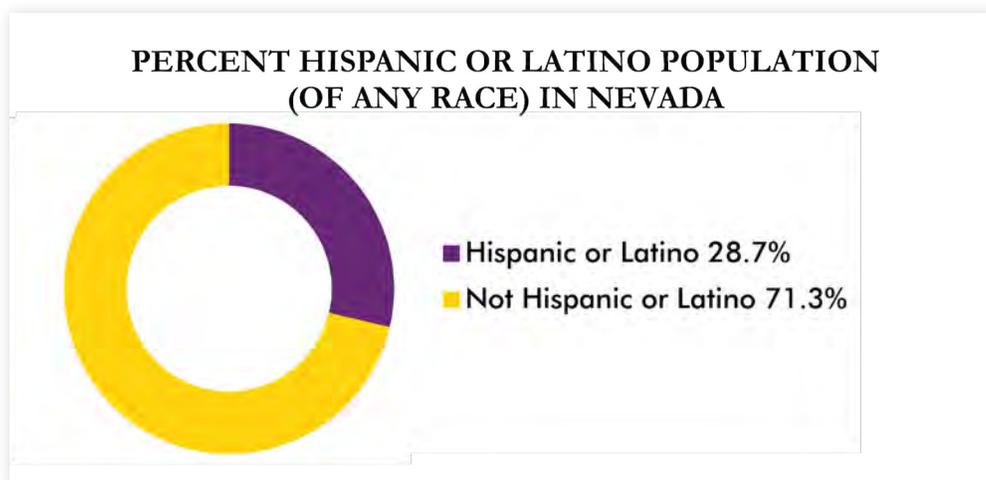
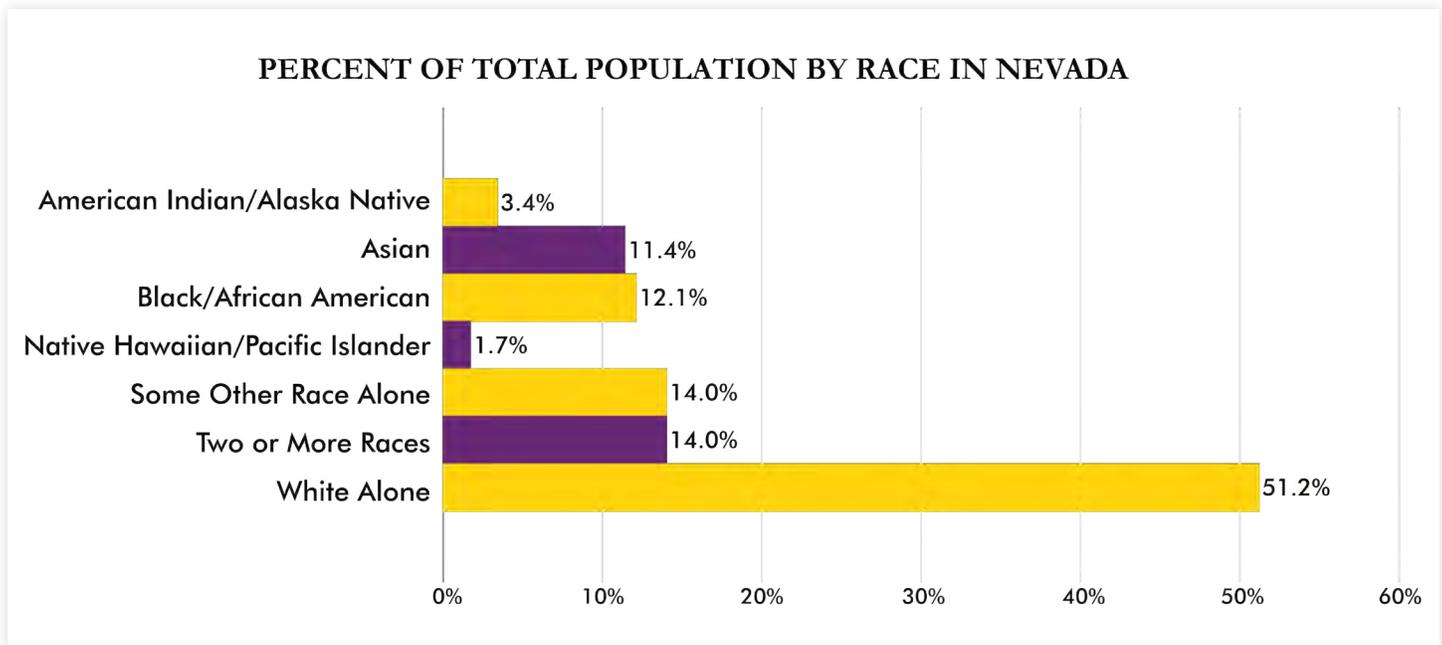
PROJECTED POPULATION CHANGE IN NEVADA
County Level Estimates: 5-Year (2023-2028)



Sources:

-Average Growth in Nevada's Counties 2000-2020. Source, Legislative Counsel Bureau (<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/a7162079243d4f1dab82cc908cf8cf29>)
 -5-Year Predicted Changes in Population. Source: Department of Taxation (<https://tax.nv.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/FINAL-March-2024-Five-Year-Projections.pdf>)

Nevada Population Facts, continued

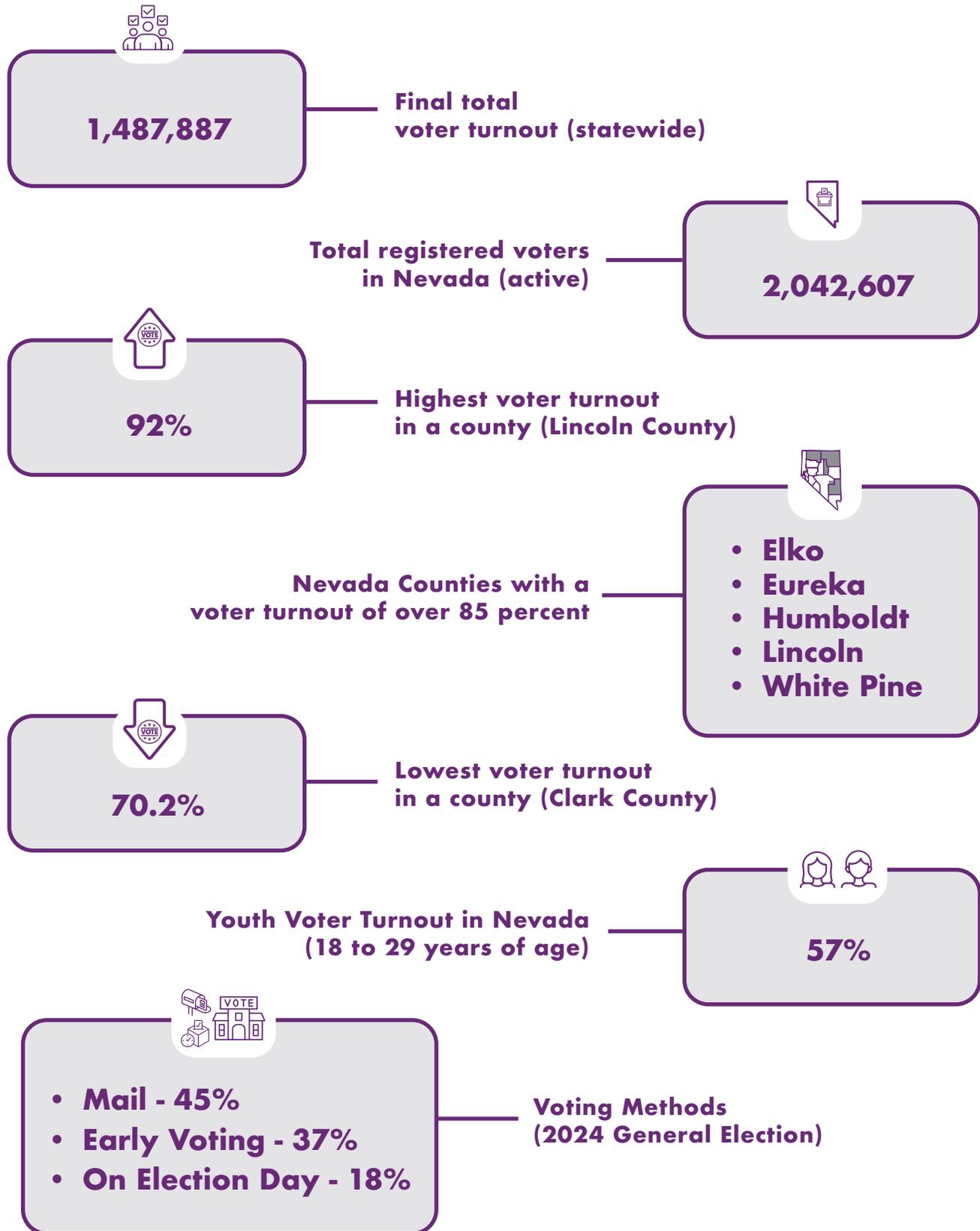


NOTE: Hispanic or Latino is reported by the Census Bureau as a language group, separately.

Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau (2020 Decennial Census) and the Nevada Legislative Counsel Bureau, <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Documents/2020PopulationandRacialDataReport-NevadaCounties.pdf>

2024 General Election Facts



Sources:

Remarks by Francisco V. Aguilar, Nevada Secretary of State, 2024 Nevada Supreme Court Canvass of the 2024 General Election Results, Old Assembly Chambers, Nevada State Capitol, November 26, 2024 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oNYLBC_fQ4)

2024 ELECTION BRIEFS

In the Fall of 2024, the Guinn Center produced a series of election information policy briefs funded, in part, by the Democracy Defense Project. While the briefs are for informational purposes and do not contain specific recommendations, the material included may spur policy questions that lawmakers may wish to pursue.

AFTER THE POLLS CLOSE – ELECTION RETURNS AND CANVASSING THE VOTE

Published: November 5, 2024

This policy brief outlines Nevada's procedures for handling ballots after Election Day, ballot counting, and canvassing the vote. After the polls close, Nevada law mandates that poll workers, referred to as the bipartisan "election board" secure all voting machines, vote records, "paper trail" documents, and storage devices, and count and report the number of ballots submitted by a polling location. Two election board members are then responsible for delivering ballots in sealed containers to the county's central counting location. Special measures are in place for handling mail ballots, which can be processed and counted starting 15 days before Election Day, though results are only reported once polls close.

Nevada uses technology such as the TotalVote system and other ballot-sorting and vote-counting tools to help maintain voter integrity by tracking mail ballots to prevent double voting. Nevada also allows voters to use BallotTrax to track, view, and receive messages about the status of their ballots.

This brief further reviews how results of votes cast by various methods—mail, during early voting, and in-person on Election Day—are combined, posted, and reported. Finally, the brief highlights the final canvassing process, conducted by county boards or the Nevada Supreme Court, for statewide results which are responsible for certifying the election outcomes.

Read full report [here](#).



CLARIFYING QUESTION 3: A LOOK AT HISPANIC/LATINO SURVEY DATA

Published: October 28, 2024

This policy brief specifically explores Hispanic/Latino attitudes and knowledge regarding Question 3, electoral reforms on the ballot in 2024. This report uses Hispanic/Latino data sourced from the Guinn Center’s 2023 survey related to Question 3 and found that support for Question 3 was relatively high among Hispanic/Latino respondents but marked by uncertainty. Eighteen percent of respondents expressed opposition to Question 3, with others either supporting the measure (45 percent) or reporting they were undecided (37 percent). Younger voters and Democrats were more likely to support ranked-choice voting.

KEY FINDINGS

- Many respondents struggled to correctly identify current primary election rules.
- Additional information helped increase understanding of proposed reforms.
- Respondents preferred to receive educational information through online articles and videos.
- Respondents wanted to know more about the impacts of proposed reforms, particularly on voter participation and candidate behavior.
- Younger voters and Democrats were more likely to support ranked-choice voting.

Read full report [here](#).



This brief was produced in collaboration with the Latino Research Center (Centro de Investigación Latino) at the University of Nevada, Reno.

MAIL BALLOTS IN NEVADA: PROCEDURES, REQUIREMENTS, AND PROCESSING—AN FAQ

Published: October 28, 2024

Since 2021, Nevada has permanently adopted a mail voting system where all active registered voters automatically receive a mail ballot unless they opt out. The state’s approach allows voters to either mail in their ballot or cast their vote in person, while measures are in place to prevent double voting.

This policy brief provides an overview of the procedures, requirements, and processing steps in Nevada’s mail ballot system. The brief also defines the roles of county election officials and describes safeguards to ensure ballot integrity.

Read full report [here](#).



NEVADA’S VREMS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION MANAGEMENT—FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

Published: October 18, 2024

The Voter Registration and Election Management Solution (VREMS) is a new centralized system that streamlines voter registration management across the state. This policy brief focuses on the purpose and uses of VREMS. This brief also explains the introduction of the "PollPad" system for electronic voter check-ins at polling locations and how VREMS interacts with the mail ballot processing system to ensure the secure processing of returned ballots.

The VREMS replaces an older, decentralized system, and aims to improve real-time data updates, security, and list maintenance. The system integrates various databases to detect ineligible voters and help keep accurate records. The VREMS system also supports enhanced security through data encryption and automated processes to remove deceased voters and verify address changes. It is not used for ballot tabulation.

Read full brief [here](#).

VOTER REGISTRATION PROCEDURE, SECURITY, AND LIST MAINTENANCE

Published: October 18, 2024

This policy brief offers a comprehensive overview of Nevada’s voter registration process. The brief addresses voter eligibility requirements, including citizenship, residency, age, and other considerations, and outlines several methods for registering to vote, including online, by mail, in-person, and through automatic voter registration (AVR) at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). It also explains voter identification requirements and circumstances in which voters may be asked to provide ID, particularly when there is a mismatch in information or if registration data is incomplete.

This brief covers how Nevada maintains accurate voter registration lists, including the state’s participation in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) to cross-check voter data with other states, DMV records, and Social Security information, and explains Nevada’s efforts to remove deceased voters from the rolls and update addresses using the National Change of Address (NCOA) system.

Read full brief [here](#).



CLARIFYING QUESTION 3: ADDRESSING KNOWLEDGE GAPS AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT ELECTORAL REFORM IN NEVADA

Published: March 21, 2024

A VERSION IN SPANISH IS AVAILABLE [HERE](#).

In November 2022, nearly 53 percent of Nevadans voted in favor of Ballot Question 3, a measure that would establish open primaries and ranked-choice voting in statewide elections. This initiative was back on the ballot for a second statewide vote in 2024, but ultimately failed to pass, with 53 percent of Nevadans voting in opposition to the proposal.

Supporters of the proposal noted that this system may further engage Nevada’s growing population of nonpartisan voters, as well as help address issues of hyperpolarization and negative campaigning. Those who opposed the measure expressed concern with potential limits on party participation, as well as voter confusion, which they said could lead to uncounted ballots and increased disenfranchisement.

Our report shares key findings from a survey that the Guinn Center conducted in the summer of 2023 (nearly one year after the 2022 election) to gauge Nevadans’ awareness and understanding of the ballot measure. Even after reading the sample ballot explanation of Question 3, when asked their opinion on the reform, 37 percent of respondents answered, “I don’t know.” The report addresses these identified knowledge gaps with a comprehensive Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section regarding Question 3.

This report was not designed to formulate a position on how Nevadans should vote on Question 3, but was rather meant to equip voters with the necessary information to make an informed decision on the ballot question, as well as identify areas for future research based on the results of the survey.

Read full report [here](#).

This report was funded, in part, by a grant from the NV Energy Foundation.

KEY FINDINGS

Our survey revealed:

- Nevada respondents exhibited limited awareness about current primary and general election systems, with age a potentially influential factor.
- Nevada respondents displayed limited awareness of proposed electoral reforms, with differences tied to level of political interest.
- A written explanation of proposed reforms enhances understanding, yet knowledge gaps still exist.
- Top areas of interest for respondents included voter participation, examples from other jurisdictions, potential partisan effects, and candidate behavior.
- Respondents expressed a preference for learning more about proposed reforms through articles, video explanations, and infographics.
- A plurality of respondents supported Question 3, with a notable portion undecided.

Considerations

- If Question 3 had passed, the Legislature, Secretary of State, and local election officials would have needed to provide educational materials to help ease the transition to an open primary and ranked-choice system.
- If Question 3 had passed, implementing legislation would have needed to be adopted by July 1, 2025.
- Since Question 3 did not pass, legislators may still consider implementing similar electoral reforms.

NOTE: In October 2024, the Guinn Center published a companion brief summarizing the larger report released in early 2024. This brief is available [HERE](#).

AI POLICY SERIES

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ELECTIONS

Published: June 27, 2024

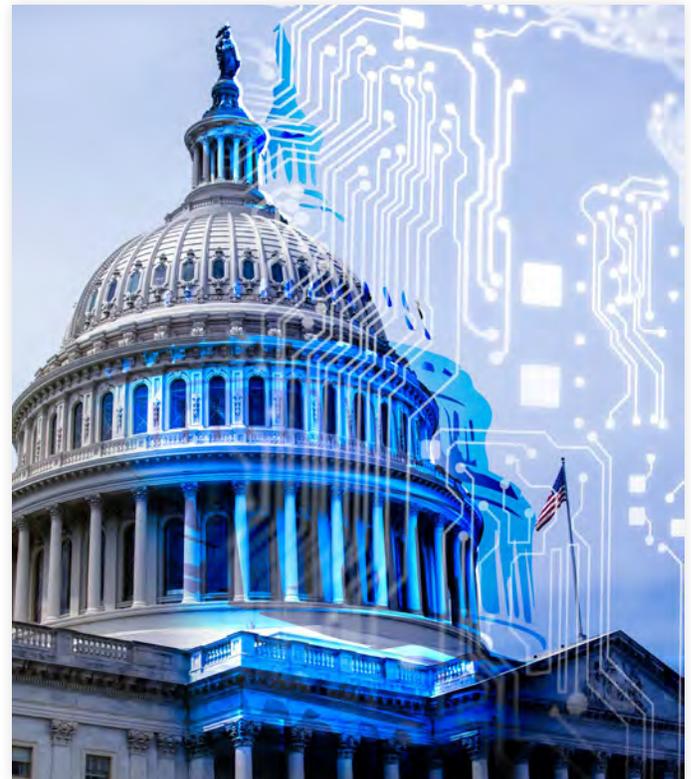
As evidenced during the 2024 election cycle, Artificial Intelligence (AI) in campaign practices, election administration, and voter information is on the rise.

Policymakers, election administrators, and political candidates aim to maximize the positive uses of AI while establishing safeguards to prevent its misuse. AI is being applied at various stages of the election process, such as through chatbots providing voter information, software for verifying mail-in ballot signatures, and its use in political advertisements and public opinion polling.

Given the potential benefits and risks, state governments across the United States have either recently enacted or are actively considering AI legislation related to elections. This policy brief presents an overview of dozens of approved or pending bills extracted from a summary by the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL). The majority of the legislation in the brief addresses the use of AI in campaign practices, including political advertising, forgery in campaigns, the use of deceptive or artificial media, and AI use disclosures.

Some states have considered legislation to establish committees to review the use of AI in elections or even to prohibit the use of AI in elections.

Read full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

- Many states have proposed or adopted legislation relating to the following topics:
 - Voter registration management;
 - Signature verification;
 - Political advertising;
 - Forgery and other uses of AI to deceive (deepfakes, et cetera);
 - AI use disclosures; and
 - The use of chatbots in election activities.

AI POLICY SERIES

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND GOVERNMENT

Published: May 29, 2024

Using technology to streamline and enhance communication and administrative functions is nothing new. When society leaps forward through industrial innovation, lawmakers and governments worldwide look for ways to keep pace. Each time a new technology is introduced—like personal computing, the internet, or cellular networks—it has transformed how governments approach service delivery, operations, and policy. The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) is no different. Many governments have already integrated AI technologies into their operations with chatbots, facial recognition software, AI-driven emergency management systems, or other iterations.

Artificial Intelligence technology offers an array of benefits when integrated into some state and local governmental operations. AI is already being used to assist in customer support tools, administrative processing, transportation and infrastructure, crime detection, and emergency services.

Conversely, some have noted that AI presents several risks in government settings. Concerns include: (1) the potential for biased decision-making when AI algorithms are trained on historical data that reflect societal prejudices, thereby perpetuating existing inequalities and unfair treatment of certain populations; (2) questions of accuracy, liability, and transparency; (3) the unauthorized access or misuse of this sensitive person information; and (4) job displacement and other economic disruptions through automation.

This policy brief examines how state and local agencies across the United States respond to artificial intelligence, the uses, benefits, and risks of AI applications in government, and current legislative trends in AI use and regulation.

Read full report [here](#).



KEY FINDINGS

- Our research team examined pending or approved bills regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence across the U.S. and found the following proposed legislative trends emerged:
 - Requiring inventories or studies relating to AI in government settings;
 - Creating governance bodies to monitor and respond to AI matters in government;
 - Establishing state or school safety guidelines, criminal penalties, or definitions; and
 - Requiring disclosures by state agencies.

A GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY, CONCEPTS, AND APPLICATIONS OF AI

Published: April 5, 2024

What comes to mind when you think about artificial intelligence? Perhaps your impressions are positive given the advancements AI has enabled in healthcare, in the form of precision diagnostic tools, or innovations in transportation, such as autonomous vehicles. Your views may also trend toward wariness and caution, fueled by concerns around data privacy, algorithmic bias, or fears that the worst-case scenarios offered by science fiction—HAL 9000 or Skynet—could eventually resemble fact.

This policy brief provides an overview of the roots of AI, tracing it from theoretical concepts to practical applications, and informs discussion around possible policies and regulations in a rapidly evolving AI landscape.

The brief also highlights a 2023 Pew Research poll that showed that 52 percent of Americans surveyed “are more concerned than excited about AI in daily life,” 10 percent said they were “more excited than concerned,” and 36 percent of those surveyed “feel a mix of excitement and concern.”

While public opinion still takes shape and AI capabilities rapidly advance, policymakers and the broader public need to understand the definitions, origins, and historical development of artificial intelligence.

Read full report [here](#).



This brief was supported by sponsors of the Guinn Center’s 2024 Gallagher Dialogues series.

SUMMARY OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

EDUCATION POLICY

Literacy In Nevada: Spans of Reading Levels in Third-Grade Classrooms May be Addressed through Competency-Based Education

1. Teachers could be better supported in their work through a comprehensive system of Competency-Based Education (CBE), where every student is taught in a setting with other students who have a similar skill level in the subject being presented.
2. While continuing its work under the Nevada State Literacy Plan, there is evidence that the objectives of the Nevada Phased Action Plan, which emphasize CBE, will be essential to making the state’s teachers more effective in their literacy work.
3. Skill gaps between students in the primary grades can be reduced or eliminated through high-quality, universal preschool.

Examining Nevada’s Native American Fee Waiver: Student and Administrative Experiences and Impact

1. Establish dedicated fee waiver offices or roles to provide a clear point of contact and reduce administrative confusion;
2. Increase staff training with a focus on waiver procedures and cultural competency, particularly for financial aid, admissions, and advising staff;
3. Strengthen tribal relationships through regular consultation, designated system-wide contacts, and consistent communication with tribal governments and organizations;
4. Automate identification systems to flag potentially eligible students early in the admissions and enrollment process;
5. Increase post-enrollment student engagement through proactive check-ins, academic advising, and access to Native student centers;
6. Provide stable legislative funding to ensure long-term sustainability and reduce institutional budget uncertainty;
7. Create clear and consistent policies across NSHE, particularly for continuing education, certificate, and graduate programs;
8. Expand scholarship caps and maintain a first-dollar funding policy so the waiver complements and does not displace other financial aid; and
9. Standardize data collection and reporting on enrollment, retention, and completion outcomes to inform future policy decisions.

Artificial Intelligence in K-12 Education: Opportunities, Challenges, and Policy Implications

Student Concerns (equity, rights, safety)

1. Codify student AI rights. In state or school policy, as well as in AI procurement contracts, the integration of students' rights provisions will help ensure systems are safe and effective; students are protected from algorithmic discrimination; their data is protected; students and parents receive appropriate notices and explanations; and human intervention is available when needed or is standard with consequential actions and decisions (adopted, in part, [AB 406 \[2025\]](#)).
2. Mandate transparency and family agency. This can be accomplished by publishing an online inventory of AI and analytics tools that students use or that affect them. The descriptions should include plain-language data use summaries and offer an opt-out when feasible.
3. Limit surveillance and require an equity review. Any student activity monitoring tools should demonstrate educational necessity. Before deployment, such tools should be evaluated independently and include safeguards for students with disabilities.
4. Pair AI adoption with equity investments and AI literacy. Districts and schools would benefit from coupling AI rollouts with investments in Internet access, new devices, and age-appropriate AI literacy and digital citizenship instruction. By making these investments first in lower-performing and under-resourced schools, pursuing AI objectives can also lead to equity gains. It is vital that students have access to vetted K-12 education tools instead of random consumer applications.
5. Move cautiously with high-risk AI uses. Tools like emotion recognition, facial analysis, and predictive discipline promise to make education much more effective, but they currently come with many unknowns and potential unintended consequences. Such tools will be more safely deployed if they have a robust research base before going live in a school setting. Additionally, bias reviews and safeguards, as well as human involvement, should be considered for any analytics tool affecting placement, opportunity, or discipline.

Educator Empowerment (support and guardrails)

1. Fund sustained and continuously evolving AI professional development. Teachers and administrators need broad-based AI training in many topics, such as practical classroom uses, assessment integrity, bias awareness, and how to explain AI to families. States and districts can close resource and performance gaps by prioritizing training rollout to lower-performing and under-resourced schools.
2. Keep humans in the loop for pedagogy and grading. Artificial intelligence deployment benefits from clearly defined boundaries between people and technology. For example, a policy could state that AI may assist with planning and creating classroom materials, but teachers must retain judgment and authority related to instruction decisions, student interventions, and high-stakes assessment.
3. Improve assessment design in the AI era. Research shows that U.S. students are overtested. AI offers an opportunity to address this problem while improving the teacher's ongoing knowledge of student ability. AI can be used to continuously measure student understanding, to deliver performance-based tasks, and to process oral test responses. Such strategies can also reduce plagiarism and strengthen higher-order learning.
4. Provide privacy-preserving AI tools. Sensitive data can be protected by offering AI tools that do not train on student or teacher input, prohibit vendors from reusing user prompts, and prohibit uploading personally identifiable information.
5. Equip educators with a broad array of district-approved AI tools from which they can choose. Because the task of vetting AI tools is complex, school districts would benefit from forming or joining a consortium with the expertise to review and test available tools, and perhaps to negotiate more favorable contract terms.

Administrative Considerations (governance, procurement, risk management)

1. Adopt a statewide model AI policy and require district alignment. A policy could include considerations such as governance of AI use and access, procurement procedures, acceptable use, prohibited practices, training requirements and timelines, and staying current with emerging tools and approaches. NOTE: In May 2025, NDE released Nevada’s STELLAR Pathway to AI Teaching and Learning. This document serves as a statewide model AI policy as called for in the Guinn Center’s report. It provides operational principles and a framework that school districts are expected to align with.
2. Institute cross-functional AI governance. Gather diverse stakeholders with expertise in instruction, information technology, legal and compliance matters, data ethics and security, special education, and members to represent parents and local industry. This group could vet use cases and authorized AI tools, monitor implementation, and oversee system audits.
3. Include strong privacy and security clauses in vendor contracts. Clauses might include a limitation or prohibition on AI model training on student and teacher inputs; full disclosure of sub-processor tools and organizations; data retention and deletion schedules; breach notification; and FERPA-compliant “school official” control.
4. Institute AI risk management procedures aligned with NIST’s generative AI use case profiles. These procedures guide system principals in governing, mapping, measuring, and managing risks for activities or business processes across a district or state K-12 system. Specific strategies might include pre-deployment testing for data leaks and bias, or undertaking dry runs for AI model updates. State funding may be tied to demonstrating that desired controls are in place.
5. Mandate algorithm assessments for high-impact tools. Early-warning and predictive systems can be high-risk and high-impact. Thus, they often warrant specialized examination before deployment. This may include subgroup fairness testing, human-in-the-loop testing, red-teaming, analysis of qualitative or social impacts, and publication of assessment findings as a transparency measure.
6. Pilot, evaluate, then scale. Before deployment, use time-limited pilots with an independent evaluation of elements such as learning impact, workload effects, and equitable treatment of all users before statewide rollouts. Such evaluation might be conducted at the state level, by an independent organization, or by a consortium of multiple states.
7. Create a transparency portal. School, district, and state education websites should publicly list all AI tools in use and provide plain-language summaries of their purpose, data use, general algorithmic processes, effectiveness, known risks, and accountability measures.

Chronic Absenteeism in Nevada: Part III - School District Innovations

TIER 1: APPLIED TO ALL STUDENTS

1. Promote a positive school climate.
2. Establish clear attendance policies and increase awareness.
3. Recognize good and improved attendance.
4. Develop positive communication with caregivers.
5. Collect meaningful data – It is essential to ensure attendance data is properly tracked, coded, and regularly reported to all stakeholders.
6. Establish Attendance Teams – Having a team can raise the profile of attendance as a goal and ensure coordination of all related efforts.
7. Promote professional development and family education – This may include training staff in practical strategies to improve attendance, intervening with families when needed, or educating families about the effects of and penalties for truancy.
8. Engage in early identification and intervention – Leveraging technology and relationships can help identify and address problems before they become serious.
9. Foster community partnerships – All of the above strategies may be enhanced or made easier by working with government, for-profit, or nonprofit partners in the local community.

TIER 2: APPLIED TO SMALL GROUPS OF STUDENTS

1. Student support team meetings.
2. Check-in/check-out policies – Well-conceived and enforced policies can help identify, minimize, and intervene in emerging absenteeism situations.
3. Individualized attendance plans and evaluations – Use the School Refusal Assessment Scale – Revised tool to identify the root cause of absenteeism.
4. Targeted communication – Set an absence threshold for notifying parents, request parent meetings and reinforce the importance of consistent attendance.
5. Transportation – Some schools pick up chronically absent students and those facing short-term circumstances affecting attendance. Others connect families to help one another with transportation needs.

TIER 3: APPLIED TO INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

1. Inter-agency case management – Options include forming a case review team to identify needs, gaps, and redundancies, and ensure that the student and their family receive proper support.
2. Home visits – Attendance officers and reengagement specialists can visit homes to build student and family relationships, understand the root cause of absenteeism, and provide resources.
3. Monitoring periods – Use attendance monitoring periods with intensive student attention to support improved attendance.

Vital Questions for Nevada About Universal Pre-K

1. If a state needs to ramp up toward funding UPK, it is best to begin serving children with multiple risk factors, despite the administrative work involved in identifying them.
2. Best practices suggest supplementing pre-K schooling with other supports such as physical and mental health care, child welfare, nutrition, early intervention for children with developmental delays, and economic and other supports for struggling families.

AI Policy Series: Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

1. Establishing working groups, task forces, or advisory councils to study and advance state AI policy;
2. Appropriating funds for grants to support AI adoption;
3. Requiring research reports, inventories, or the adoption of policies related to AI use in higher education; and
4. Establishing AI institutes or hubs to promote responsible research and development and advance ethical uses of AI in the public interest.

Examining School Funding in Nevada: Equity in Education and Policy Considerations

Standardized reporting

1. Develop standardized guidelines (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).
2. Develop a centralized data system for consistent financial reporting across school districts, supported by comprehensive training for district staff (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).

Clarity in funding distribution

1. Clarify funding allocation guidelines within weighted categories to enhance transparency and equity.
2. Couple these guidelines with targeted training for school principals on budget management under the PCFP.

Long-term evaluation of PCFP effectiveness

1. Conduct longitudinal studies to evaluate the PCFP's effects over multiple years.
2. Analyze the effects of PCFP and other overlapping policies.
3. Develop a set of comprehensive qualitative performance metrics.
4. Gather feedback from students and other stakeholders to inform policy adjustments regularly.

Support for increased needs

1. Ensure adequate funding to support heightened developmental, mental health, and social and emotional learning (SEL) needs post-pandemic.
2. Foster community partnerships to connect students and families with needed support.
3. Provide professional development for teachers and staff on how to address the SEL needs of students.

Ensuring equity in fund allocation

1. Conduct regular equity audits to assess whether funding is being allocated appropriately, and make adjustments based on findings.
2. Promote transparency in how funds are allocated at all levels.
3. Develop targeted incentive programs designed to attract and retain teachers in hard-to-staff areas.
4. Expand "grow your own" programs to build a pipeline of local educators who are more likely to remain in their communities.
5. Implement robust mentorship and support programs for new teachers.
6. Increase funding for equity.

From Crowded to Coordinated: Examining the Governance of Nevada’s Early Childhood System

PHASE I: Governance Structure Planning & Implementation

1. Create an independent office to plan and organize the future of Nevada’s ECS by gathering stakeholders and using reports to guide decisions.
2. Use planning reports, databases, and national recommendations to support governance planning.
3. Revamp the Nevada Early Childhood Advisory Council, explore changes in early intervention and special education governance, and engage stakeholders through strategic communication.

PHASE II: Governance Practices

1. Reevaluate ECS funding pathways and consider cost-based funding models (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).
2. Build an integrated cross-sector data system to support data-driven decisions, improve data quality, and phase in the new system (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).
3. Develop a single point of entry, implement a No Wrong Door policy, and create a universal application system.
4. Enhance ECS workforce through better compensation, training, and professionalization (adopted, in part - [SB 460](#), 2025).
5. Expand and improve family engagement using existing resources and best practices.

PHASE III: Systems Improvement & Enhancement

1. Continually refine ECS using best practices, funding reviews, strategic planning, and supportive policies.

Workforce Ready: Aligning Academic Standards with Workforce Needs

1. Require greater transparency in CTE certification assessments.
2. Standardize (or require disclosure of current metrics used for) formatting and evaluation criteria for skill assessments.
3. Integrate “emotional intelligence” into the CTE Employability Skills Standards.
4. Use the Portrait of a Nevada Learner to further integrate durable skills competencies in all academic standards, not just CTE (adopted, in part - [SB 45](#), 2025).

Show What You Know: An Overview of Competency-Based Education Practices Competency-Based Education Practices & Key Policy Implications

1. Allow for greater flexibility in assessment options and diverse pathways to graduation for schools that wish to experiment with and successfully implement competency-based education models.

National Education Rankings: What Nevada Can Learn and a Proposal For Moving Forward

1. Consider creating a robust Nevada-specific scorecard that measures the internal performance of its school system, as well as its performance when compared to states with similar demographics and ranking criteria.
2. Become familiar with credible national or multistate datasets and performance metrics collected by the Nevada Commission on School Funding, as required by Assembly Bill 400 and Senate Bill 98 from the 2023 legislative session.
3. Remember that many states differ from Nevada in size, population distribution, and demographics, and seek to focus on comparisons with states that have relevant similarities.
4. Be aware of statistical anomalies common to larger universes of states and data sets.
5. Seek to understand critical performance concepts including the differences between absolute and relative measurement, the importance of comparing like data to like data, sample types and subgroups, potential drawbacks of weighting, and best uses of ratios and raw numbers.

Out-of-School Youth in Southern Nevada: A Focus Group Analysis On Challenges Faced by Out-of-School Youth and Service Providers

1. Fill in gaps left by WIOA restrictions with state funding.
2. Provide for a study, focused on processes and outcomes in Nevada, regarding operationalizing WIOA changes. This will help further contextualize Nevada outcomes with national findings.
3. Encourage providers to update service provisions, policies, practices, and procedures to meet the needs of specific populations. Encourage them to train staff on important topics such as responding to mental health issues.

SUMMARY OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL POLICY

Bridging the Gap: Revenue Options for Transportation Infrastructure in the Electric Vehicle Transition

1. Other states have implemented measures such as additional vehicle registration fees for EVs and HEVs, vehicle-miles-traveled taxes, and electric charging station taxes. Nevada is one of 11 states that have not implemented any additional fees.
2. Imposing additional registration fees on EVs and HEVs may be the best option for Washoe County due to its ease of implementation, cost-effectiveness, and revenue-generating potential.
3. Two provisions in the Nevada Revised Statutes could be utilized to address funding gaps: (1) imposing a supplemental governmental services tax; and (2) increasing the county-optional sales tax by one-eighth of one percent for road construction and maintenance.

An Analysis of Nevada’s Pre-And Post-Pandemic Labor Force Participation Rate

1. Conduct landscape analyses that inventory Nevada’s workforce development policies and programs compared with those from other states, local governments, and nonprofits.
2. Examine existing statutory, regulatory, and administrative authorities concerning workforce development policies for Nevada.
3. Assess state and federal funding dedicated to workforce development in Nevada.
4. Commission surveys of individual groups referenced in this report to better identify barriers to labor market entry.

The Dynamics of Labor Force Participation in Post-Pandemic Nevada: A Statewide Analysis

1. Build a statewide, large-scale apprenticeship/Career and Technical Education program as an integral part of secondary schooling. This will help better prepare new workforce entrants and offer them more fulfilling and lucrative career options. The Swiss model of high school Vocational Education and Training is highlighted in the report.
2. Leverage the availability of workers with disabilities—who have a very low LFPR—and free support services from Vocational Rehabilitation to mobilize this population.
3. Replicate public policy recently pursued by other states, such as making early connections between youth and the workforce, offering healthcare workforce incentives, and normalizing skills-based recruitment.
4. Recognize that economic diversification can be a core workforce development strategy.
5. Reform the State’s occupational licensing, opening the door for underemployed individuals to fully contribute to the economy and for workforce shortages to be filled.

Housing Affordability in Nevada: An Economic Analysis and Policy Considerations

Potential Supply-side Policy Interventions

Land and Infrastructure

1. Collaborate with Nevada’s congressional delegation to advance legislation for the disposition of federal lands.
2. Fund a statewide land inventory, perhaps with the concurrent creation of a state Geographic Information System (GIS) office.
3. Redevelop abandoned and other vacant properties.

Zoning

1. Incentivize zoning reform.
2. Allow missing-middle, multi-family construction through upzoning.
3. Reduce or eliminate parking requirements for housing projects.
4. Reduce minimum lot sizes.
5. Encourage the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADUs).

Permitting

1. Streamline and expedite permitting processes (adopted, in part - [AB 540](#), 2025).

Resource Adequacy

1. Establish a Rural Workforce Housing Initiative.
2. Institute a Middle-Income Housing Tax Credit (MIHTC).
3. Expand the provisions of the Affordable Housing Trust Fund (adopted, in part - [AB 540](#), 2025).
4. Authorize an increase in the amount of money that may be used for transferable tax credits for affordable housing.
5. Provide developer incentives through an additional reduction of impact fees.

Construction Costs

1. Bolster Nevada’s construction workforce to reduce construction costs (adopted, in part - [AB 540](#), 2025).

Potential Demand-side Policy Interventions

1. Create a statewide Intentional Landlord Engagement Program.
2. Work with the federal government to increase Nevada’s share of housing vouchers.

Other Policy Interventions:

1. Consider revising the provisions of [NRS 278.237](#), which requires certain governing bodies in Nevada to submit housing-related reports to Nevada’s Housing Division, to ensure greater uniformity in addressing housing needs throughout the state. Revising the statute to encourage a consistent reporting methodology will provide higher-quality data on the state’s housing needs.
2. The state could also consider vesting some amount of housing data reporting with the State Demographer, as projecting future housing needs directly overlaps with future population projections.

SUMMARY OF POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

HEALTH AND SOCIAL POLICY

Unpacking Food Insecurity Through the Policy Lens: An Overview of Nevada’s Policy Landscape and Opportunities to Improve Through Policy

1. Creating a statewide authority on food insecurity;
2. Modernizing and incentivizing benefit delivery through e-WIC and online electronic transfer technology;
3. Integrating nutrition support into Medicaid-funded preventive care programming;
4. Piloting a statewide Produce Rx program, which combines medical assessments with prescriptions for fruits and vegetables to support specific health needs; and
5. Launching a unified data dashboard to enable state leaders to maximize federal flexibility and innovation.

Privacy and Compliance in School-Based Behavioral Health Services: Navigating FERPA, HIPAA, and Nevada Law

1. Option 1 – Keep SBBH services and school activities as administratively separate functions that do not share records.
 - Under this arrangement, the SBBH providers would all be independent and not under the school’s direction or control. Neither the school nor the providers would share any student information with the other. By not communicating with one another about individual students, health professionals and school staff will not fully realize the benefits of coordinating their efforts to help specific students.
2. Option 2 – Deliver all SBBH services under the auspices and control of the school.
 - This arrangement would require all behavioral health providers to be employed by, under contract with, or otherwise acting on behalf of the school. This may not be practical if service costs are paid by a student’s health insurance plan, which would require providers to bill insurance. The administrative benefit of this structure is that all SBBH records would be student records under FERPA, and information sharing would be relatively seamless.
3. Option 3 – Adopt a hybrid approach with the school and outside SBBH providers working in coordination.

Understanding Medicaid in Nevada: An Overview of the State’s Program and Financing, and the Implications of Changes at the Federal Level

(Key Questions for Policymakers)

1. How will Nevada navigate the projected reduction of federal spending of between \$6 billion and \$11 billion over the next ten years?
2. How can Nevada reduce the impact on providers, especially rural hospitals, public hospitals, and those serving high numbers of Medicaid patients?
3. How will Nevada Medicaid shoulder the administrative burdens imposed by changes in [H.R. 1](#)?
4. How will Nevada prepare to implement the new work requirements for ACA expansion populations?
5. How will Nevada absorb the impact of a larger uninsured population?

Moving the Needle: Challenges in Meeting Nevada’s Health Workforce Needs

1. Grow our own workforce – These are measures that expand existing workforce pipelines within the Nevada System of Higher Education’s medical, nursing, and allied health care education programs (adopted, in part - [SB 262](#) and [SB 266](#) [2025]). .
2. Stretch the existing health care workforce – These solutions include the utilization of telehealth technologies, non-physician clinicians, and support staff, as well as efforts to maximize the use of health professionals practicing at the top of their scope of practice and licensure.
3. Recruit and retain health care workers from other jurisdictions – These measures can include interstate licensure compacts, reciprocity agreements, and J-1 visa programs to attract foreign practitioners (adopted, in part - [AB 163](#), [AB 230](#), [AB 248](#), [AB 319](#), and [SB 124](#) [2025]).

School-Based Behavioral Health Services: An Analysis of Policies, Practices, and Funding Strategies to Enhance Implementation in Nevada

1. Secure adequate funding to sustain behavioral health services in all Nevada school districts and charter schools, using the Multi-Tiered System of Supports framework and other best practices.
2. Establish state policies prioritizing publicly funded schools as key access points for behavioral health services, including prevention, screening, early intervention, crisis care, and treatment.
3. Support school districts and charter schools in establishing and sustaining a CSMHS.
4. Expand Nevada’s behavioral health workforce pipeline with a comprehensive plan that addresses critical shortages.

Nevada's All-Payers Claims Database

1. Secure stable and continued funding for the APCD to ensure the needed human and analytical resources are available.
2. Leverage the expertise of the Nevada System of Higher Education for data analytics and policy development.
3. Establish governance structures that encourage input from diverse stakeholders through active engagement with health systems, health occupation associations, industry leaders, and the public.
4. Ensure the administration and authority of the state Health Data Organization is nonpartisan to protect the integrity of the reporting and to allow for open and transparent policy recommendations based on evidence and data.
5. To reduce misuse and misrepresentation of APCD findings, acknowledge and clearly delineate the limitations of its data, including an estimation of the number of Nevadans covered by health plans not reporting to the APCD.
6. Make the APCD data publicly available and develop use cases based on statutory reporting requirements and informed by the library of state use cases available through the national APCD Council.

The Housing and Community-Living Landscape for People with Developmental Disabilities In Nevada

1. Explore best practices in other locations to expand the availability of affordable, accessible housing.
2. Make the "No Wrong Door" effort put forth by the Aging and Disability Services Division of the Department of Health and Human Services a reality.
3. Identify effective strategies for maximizing available federal Medicaid resources, ensuring people with disabilities are given priority in public housing programs, and coordinating compliance with "least restrictive environment" requirements.
4. Conduct a program evaluation and needs assessment to determine if structural or administrative changes to the system are needed (beyond the qualitative information gathered for this report).

Southern Nevada Sex Trafficking Gap Analysis

Lack of education, awareness, and prevention

1. Increase public awareness, prevention, and education in schools and at businesses, tourist destinations, and transportation hubs.
2. Educate visitors on the illegality of prostitution in Clark County, especially as it pertains to the trafficking of minors.

Lack of funding

1. Increase funding to better prevent sex trafficking and support trafficking victims and survivors.
2. Use fines from buyers and traffickers to pay for victim services and to establish a statewide human trafficking database.

Lack of adequate services available to victims and survivors

1. Design services and interventions for victims of sex trafficking in a “wrap around” fashion (comprehensive and seamless). Provide services and interventions for immediate needs, such as physical and mental care, legal assistance, and housing.
2. Assist with reintegration into society after survivors have exited “the life” through job development and vocational training services.

Lack of housing/shelter options for victims and survivors

1. Increase access to specialized housing/shelter for victims of sex trafficking.
2. Provide stable and secure transitional housing for youth survivors of sex trafficking.

Lack of accountability for traffickers and buyers

1. Address demand through policy, advocacy, and prevention work.
2. Punish individuals who buy sex.
3. Hold businesses criminally responsible for the facilitation of sex trafficking.

NOTE: In 2025, the Legislature approved Senate Concurrent Resolution 3, directing the Joint Interim Standing Committee on the Judiciary to study Nevada’s human trafficking laws, systems, and services and report its findings and recommendations to the 2027 Nevada Legislature.

DONOR INFORMATION

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- Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck
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- Nevada Mining Association
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