



WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT (WCSD) BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Legislative Platform for the 2015 Session

In order to serve the students, families, and community of Washoe County, the WCSD Board of Trustees is in favor of legislation that supports WCSD's strategic plan, Envision WCSD 2020. We also support the removal of any current or potential mandates that may restrict implementation of this plan. Further, as the elected education body for our community, we will not support any new unfunded mandates.

As our economy continues to grow, we believe investments in K-12 education will yield the best return on investment for our state's future economic vitality. We appreciate the Governor's willingness to increase funding and invest in critical programs such as expansion of pre-kindergarten programs, full-day kindergarten for all students, early literacy, and additional support for students facing language and poverty barriers. Increases in operational costs must continue to be addressed.

School Construction Funding

Funding for capital projects is a critical need for Washoe County School District. Without the School Capital Needs Initiative (AB 46, 2013) and the expiration of the 2002 rollover bond, WCSD does not have any substantive sustainable source for capital construction needs while our buildings continue to age and schools face overcrowding. The Board of Trustees endorses efforts to establish a stable source of capital projects funding to maintain safe and secure schools and to increase capacity to deal with enrollment growth. The extension of the current rollover bond property tax rate is a critical component to ensuring the stability of our current building needs as well as a new funding source to maintain existing schools and build new ones.

approved concept of a weighted funding formula. The funding formula must be revised to meet the needs of children in poverty, English language learners and students with learning challenges, but this cannot be done at the expense of the basic educational needs of all students. Implementation of this plan should not be fully implemented until adequate funds ensure that no district receives decreased funding and a plan for a "hold-harmless" phase in is developed.

- Ensuring all revenue dedicated to K-12 education is used for the original intent through the creation of a Rainy Day fund for education.
- Continued emphasis on early literacy and language acquisition for all students, with an emphasis on English Language Learners through expansion of the Zoom School program and the proposed Victory Schools.
- Additional investment for our Gifted & Talented students.

Operating Funds

The Board of Trustees supports K-12 funding that is whole and stable. It is clear that in order for Nevada to provide a comprehensive education system and continue to compete for economic development opportunities, K-12 per pupil funding must keep pace with the rest of the nation. The WCSD Board of Trustees endorses:

- DSA-basic per public support at or above current funding to keep pace with increasing costs. Any increases in programmatic spending will require revenue above the projected budget.
- A modification to the Nevada Plan including the

Human Capital

The Board of Trustees believes that education reform and increased student achievement begin and end with high quality human capital investments. With a great teacher in every classroom and a great principal in every school, students will succeed and graduate ready for college and/or highly-skilled careers. The WCSD Board of Trustees endorses:

- Ensuring that educator performance evaluations are fair, valid, defensible and properly tailored to employees' responsibilities and district values and needs.



- Legislative changes that modify current law to allow district flexibility in effectively identifying, recruiting, hiring, evaluating and retaining the very best personnel.
- Comprehensive professional development for teachers and administrators around evaluations, Nevada Academic Content Standards, and other relevant education best practices.

Local Control and Direct Democracy

The Board of Trustees proposes Senate Bill 19, authorizing the Board of Trustees of a school district to present advisory ballot questions to the voters in general elections. County and city governments currently may pose advisory ballot questions to the voters in general elections, while local school boards may not. Because the will of the voters is a primary concern for all policy makers and education issues are highly important to our community's residents, local school boards should be permitted to ask the voters to weigh in on critical issues facing their schools.

College and Career Readiness

Washoe County School District is committed to ensuring student academic growth through an aligned system of curriculum, instruction and assessment founded on rigorous and relevant instruction that to meet the needs of every child in our diverse student population. The Board of Trustees endorses:

- Compliance with and continued use of the state adopted Academic Content Standards.
- Fair and timely administration of the computerized Smarter Balanced assessment program including the infrastructure and hardware necessary to administer the assessments.
- Collaborative initiatives among all state education entities to ensure options for students through higher education including universities, community colleges, certification programs and technical training.
- Expanded use of technology to prepare our students for today's workplace.
- Expansion of state funded full day Kindergarten for all students.
- Expansion of PreK programs through federal funding and matched from the state.

School Safety

Washoe County School District believes that a working and learning environment that is safe and respectful is essential for all staff and students to achieve success. The Board of Trustees endorses policies and practices that

- Promote social and emotional wellbeing of students and staff to prevent bullying and school violence, which are responsibly and appropriately tailored to a K-12 educational setting.
- Protect students' and staff privacy

School Choice

Washoe County School District is committed to programs that provide academic choices that best prepare students for college and careers. For this reason, WCSD is committed student option programs which offer specific programs, topics, and distinguishing themes that focus on specialized, engaged student learning including:

- District sponsored charter schools,
- Industry aligned employment specialties,
- Adult education options and
- School Within a School (SWAS) programs.

Any effort to expand school choice to private educational institutions must not divert resources from traditional public instruction or preclude any student from his/her constitutional right of a free and equal education.

