

Nevada continues to make strides towards its ambitious goal of becoming the fastest improving public education system in the nation. Student success is, and should be, the core focus of every aspect of public education. That success is influenced by several factors, including, without limitation, the effectiveness of teachers and administrators, family and community engagement, modern curriculum with supporting materials and wraparound student support instruction.

The good news is, our state's investment in public education is working – student achievement is improving. Graduation rates hit a record high in 2017; eighth grade math and reading proficiency, and fourth grade math and reading proficiency all have shown double-digit increases over the last several years. Targeted programs such as Zoom and Victory Schools, and English Language Learner supplements are starting to show positive returns for our children. But more work remains to be done.

iNVEST is a collaboration of The Nevada Association of School Superintendents and the Nevada Association of School Boards directed at the fundamental question: what is needed to improve student achievement in Nevada? We respectfully submit that the following are essential to answering that fundamental question.

We are grateful for the leadership that the Legislature and Governor Sandoval have shown for education in recent Legislative Sessions. Although ambitious, we believe these proposed changes will enhance those efforts and continue to build positive momentum for public education in Nevada. These meaningful, long-term policies would fortify Nevada's commitment to our students, families, communities, teachers and administrators, and act as a catalyst for even more progress as we work to ensure that every Nevada child has the opportunity to reach their full potential, in and out of the classroom.

1

RESET PER-PUPIL SPENDING TO CURRENT MARKET COSTS AND ELIMINATE STRUCTURAL FUNDING DEFICITS

- Restore state general fund support for K-12 education
- Index inflation in budgets for salaries, healthcare, utility and other fixed costs to real market conditions

2

STABILIZE FUNDING TO ENABLE LONG-TERM PLANNING AND THE ABILITY TO WEATHER ECONOMIC DOWNTURNS

- Ensure that supplemental revenue intended for education is truly supplemental and is not directed to other budgets or used to supplant general fund reductions
- Address the structural property tax deficit that has cost education more than \$2.7 billion in revenue since the property tax caps were established
- Create and fund a rainy-day fund for education at the state level

3

INCREASE EFFICIENCY AND RESPONSIVENESS BY ENHANCING LOCAL CONTROL

- Give schools more flexibility within and between categorical funds to ensure that these resources are targeted toward the most at-risk student populations
- Reduce the number of competitive grant applications, align programs and deadlines with practical implementation timelines, and streamline administrative and reporting procedures

4

PROTECT ENDING FUND BALANCES TO ENSURE FINANCIAL STABILITY

- Provide legislative clarity that ending balance may not be considered as part of collective bargaining negotiations

5

CREATE LEGISLATIVE BUDGETS IN CLOSE COLLABORATION EARLIER IN THE PROCESS

- Share complete budget assumptions (e.g., staffing ratios) early in the budget process and maintain close coordination with financial officers throughout the legislative budget process
- Work with financial officers to incorporate known future costs (e.g., collective bargaining agreements, health insurance and retirement benefits) when building budgets