

2015 Legislative Session: Summary of Approved Education Bills

(Please note: This list does not include all of the 230 bills tracked by WCSD Government Affairs Staff. If you have questions about a particular piece of legislation, please contact Lindsay Anderson at leanderson@washoeschools.net or Scott Baez at sbaez@washoeschools.net.)

Academics

AB166: State Seal of Biliteracy – This bill establishes a seal to be affixed to the diplomas and noted on the diplomas of biliterate students. – **Scott Bailey & Bryn Lapenta**

SB75: Assessment timing – This bill replaces the requirement that districts administer state assessments during a period prescribed by the State Board within the spring semester with a requirement that state assessments be administered after a minimum number of instructional days. – **Scott Bailey**

SB391: Read by 3 – The bill funds intensive literacy instruction for reading-deficient students in grades K-3 and provides for mandatory retention of students who cannot read at grade level by the end of grade 3. The bill also provides good cause exemptions from the retention mandate. Retention provisions are not effective until 2019 so that all students affected will have benefitted from new education programs like all day Kindergarten. – **Cross functional team to include Scott Bailey, Byron Green, Kristen McNeill, Paul LaMarca, Pete Etchart, Ben Hayes, Dawn Huckaby, ALT**

Accountability

AB30: Student achievement improvement plans – This bill removes the requirement that plans to improve student achievement be submitted to the state Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Governor and the State Board. Instead, the plans need only be submitted to NDE, the Legislative Committee on Education and the Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation. – **Ben Hayes**

AB107: Accountability reports – This bill requires that annual reports of accountability include a comparison, reported separately by race and ethnicity, of the achievement and proficiency of students who are eligible for free and reduced priced meals. – **Ben Hayes**

SB460: Alternative school performance framework – This bill provides for the establishment of an alternative NSPF for schools in which 75% of enrolled students are considered at-risk due to reasons like habitual disciplinary problems, delinquency, academic disadvantages or disability. – **Ben Hayes, Byron Green**

AB448: Achievement School District – This bill establishes the Achievement School District under NDE to convert underperforming public schools into charter schools. The bill limits the ASD to identifying 6 schools for conversion. Additionally, districts are not required to give priority to capital projects at an Achievement Charter School. – **Ben Hayes, Paul LaMarca (monitor)**.

Operations

AB172: Prevailing wage – This bill makes changes to the calculation of prevailing wage. In addition, a last minute amendment restored the requirement to pay prevailing wage on school construction projects. The requirement, which will only apply to school

construction projects over \$250,000, had been eliminated under SB119. – **Tom Ciesynski, Pete Etchart**

AB332: Purchasing – This bill prohibits a public body from entering into a contract which provides that any construction materials to be used on a public work be purchased or supplied by the public body. Goods that are purchased pursuant to government purchasing rules, needed on a regular basis and used to protect the safety of the public, or specialized project-specific components are exempt from the prohibition. – **Tom Ciesynski, Pete Etchart**

SB119: Rollover bond/Prevailing wage – This bill authorizes school districts to issue general obligation bonds for a period of ten years. In addition, the bill removed the requirement to pay prevailing wage on K-12 school construction projects. After SB119's approval, the requirement to pay prevailing wage was largely restored under AB172. – **Pete Etchart**

SB411: School construction ballot question – This bill authorizes the Board of Trustees of a school district other than CCSD to form a community committee to study school overcrowding and repair needs, and to present a binding ballot question at the 2016 General Election to fund school construction. The bill awaits the Governor's signature. – **Pete Etchart, Irene Payne, Lindsay Anderson, Chris Reich, Tom Ciesynski**

SB503: Breakfast After the Bell – This bill provides start up grants to establish "Breakfast After the Bell" services at schools with high proportions of FRL eligible students. Schools that do not receive a startup grant under the program are exempt from the requirement to serve breakfast after the bell. – **Pete Etchart, Kristen McNeill, Paul LaMarca.**

Finance

AB19: Tentative budget hearings – This bill eliminates the requirement that school districts hold a public hearing on tentative budgets on the third Wednesday in May and instead requires that such a hearing be held between the third Monday in May and the last day in May. – **Tom Ciesynski.**

AB278: Class size reduction – This bill requires NDE to develop policies to monitor CSR plans and quarterly reports submitted by districts, and review any variance submitted by districts. The bill additionally requires the Legislative Auditor to conduct an audit of CSR funds used during the 2013-2015 biennium. – **Paul LaMarca, Dawn Huckaby, Ben Hayes, Tom Ciesynski, Pete Etchart**

AB421: K-12 SAGE Commission – This bill establishes the Spending and Government Efficiency Commission for K-12 public education. The Commission will be comprised of eleven members with expertise in business and one retired licensed teacher. The Commission will make periodic recommendations to the Governor in ways in which the cost of public education may be reduced, efficiencies may be found and public schools may be improved. – **Tom Ciesynski.**

SB508: Nevada Plan – This bill revises the Nevada Plan for school finance. The bill expresses the Legislature's intent to provide additional resources through the Nevada Plan by applying a multiplier of the basic support guarantee to meet the needs of certain categories of students, such as students with disabilities, English Language Learners, at risk students, and gifted and talented students. The bill provides for the application of a multiplier for students with disabilities beginning of fiscal year 2017, replacing the current unit funding method. Additionally, the bill requires NDE to develop a comprehensive plan for weighted funding for all students. The bill includes maintenance of effort language to

ensure that districts are held harmless by funding formula changes. – **Bryn Lapenta, Tom Ciesynski, Ben Hayes.**

SB515: K-12 Budget Bill – This is the major funding bill for K-12 public education. The bill sets per-pupil state funding for each county, allocates special education units and provides money for the weighted special education funding formula that will be implemented in FY16-17, and funds universal full day kindergarten. – **Full day K: Irene Payne, Paul LaMarca, Kristen McNeill, Tom Ciesynski, Scott Bailey.**

Health

AB206: Parental notice of community resources – Existing law requires that principals provide written notice to parents if a child is involved in a bullying incident, or if the child is believed to have scoliosis, a visual or auditory impairment, or other physical problems. This bill expands the notice requirement so that parents are provided with a list of community resources that could assist the child. – **Byron Green.**

AB285: Self-administration of diabetes mediation - This bill expands existing law regarding self-administration of medications for students to cover treatments for diabetes. The bill also authorizes districts to establish procedures regarding blood borne pathogens and provides immunity from liability to the district and its personnel for problems arising from self-administration of medications. - **Byron Green.**

Human Resources

AB27: Non-citizen teacher licensure – This bill expands the teacher pipeline by authorizing teacher licensure of qualified applicants who are not citizens of the United States should any teacher shortage exist. Currently, licensure of such applicants is only permissible if there exists a shortage in the applicant’s area of expertise. – **Dawn Huckaby.**

AB234: Multicultural education – This bill requires that state social studies standards incorporate multicultural education, and that newly licensed teachers submit proof of completion of a course in multicultural education. – **Dawn Huckaby**

AB447: Nevada Educator Performance Framework – This bill makes the following changes to the NEPF:

- Allows districts to apply to the state department to use a different but equivalent evaluation system and tools;
- Excludes the use of student achievement data in the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF), for School Year (SY) 2015–2016;
- For SY 2016–2017, reduces from 50 percent to 20 percent the weighting of student achievement data within the NEPF, and divides the weighting among statewide and local assessments, as designated by the State Board of Education;
- Allows a school district to choose one or more of the local assessments designated by the State Board, or apply to use a different assessment;
- For SY 2017–2018, increases the weighting of student achievement data within the NEPF from 20 percent to 40 percent;
- Makes supervisors of principals also subject to the NEPF;
- Authorizes the State Board to determine which other licensed personnel are evaluated and the manner in which to measure their performance;

- Requires those first-year probationary personnel, or those who are post-probationary and deemed minimally effective or ineffective, receive three scheduled observations and one summative evaluation each school year. All other personnel subject to the NEPF must receive at least one scheduled observation and one summative evaluation each year;
- Provides for less frequent observations of probationary teachers evaluated as effective or highly effective. – **Existing Cross Functional Team (Dawn Huckaby & Ben Hayes)**

AB483: Incentive pay – This bill requires school districts to set aside enough money to fund 10% base salary bonuses for the top performing 5% of teachers and administrators. An unfunded mandate, AB483 is expected to cause a \$1.2m impact on WCSD’s budget. – **Dawn Huckaby, Paul LaMarca, Ben Hayes, Tom Ciesynski.**

SB92: Turnaround Schools/Personnel – Under this bill, the Board of Trustees of a school district may reassign and replace the principal of an underperforming school with NDE approval. The principal may then review each employee of the school and determine whether the employee should be retained. The Board of Trustees must also create a package of incentives to recruit and retain teachers and paraprofessionals to the underperforming school. The bill also provides that in a reduction in force, the decision to lay off a teacher or administrator must be based on that employee’s performance under the statewide performance evaluation system unless the teacher instructs in a subject area in which there is a shortage of teachers. – **Dawn Huckaby, Ben Hayes, Paul LaMarca, Chris Reich.**

SB133: Teacher reimbursement – This bill authorizes the reimbursement of teachers for up to \$250 of out-of-pocket expenses related to classroom instruction. The bill provides \$2.5 million annually for the program. Classroom teachers in traditional public schools and charter school will be eligible for the funds. – **Tom Ciesynski, Dawn Huckaby, Kristen McNeill**

SB158: Collective bargaining – This bill requires that a local government publicly post a copy of a proposed collective bargaining agreement for three days prior to adopting the agreement at a public hearing. – **Chris Reich, Dawn Huckaby.**

SB168: Collective bargaining – This bill authorizes local government employers to reopen collective bargaining agreements during a period of fiscal emergency. Such a condition exists if revenue declines by 5% year over year, or if the budgeted ending fund balance is 4% or less. – **Chris Reich, Dawn Huckaby.**

SB241: Collective bargaining – This bill makes changes to local government collective bargaining rules. First, the bill prohibits “evergreen” provisions that provide employees with any compensation increases after the expiration of a bargaining agreement. Next, it authorizes “release time” employees only if any costs associated with the employee are offset through other concessions or paid by the employee organization. Finally, the bill substantially alters school administrator bargaining rights. The bill makes principals at-will employees for the first three years of their employment and provides avenues for termination of a principal under some circumstances, school administrators earning a base salary over \$120,000 are restricted from membership in a bargaining unit, and all other school administrators are required to re-apply for their positions every five years. – **Chris Reich, Dawn Huckaby.**

SB474: Great Teaching and Leading Fund/RPDP – This bill creates the Great Teaching and Leading Fund to administer grants to organizations that provide Professional Development services. The bill includes “maintenance of effort” language to ensure that funding levels for RPDPs remain consistent. – **Scott Bailey, Dawn Huckaby.**

SB511: Teach Nevada Scholarship/New teacher incentives – This bill establishes the Teach Nevada scholarship program, and funds salary incentives for newly hired teachers at Title 1 and 1 and 2 star schools. The bill makes up to \$24,000 available for college students enrolled in a teacher licensure program. 25% of the scholarship funds are held in trust until the recipient earns a teaching license and teaches for 5 years at a Nevada public school. Additionally, the bill provides for \$5,000 salary bonuses for newly hired teachers at at-risk schools for the first two years of their employment. – **Dawn Huckaby, Kristen McNeill, Tom Ciesynski**

Legal

AB120: Religious expression – This bill clarifies that a public school student may express his or her religious beliefs in a manner consistent with the First Amendment provided that the expression is not disruptive, is not endorsed by the school, and is not used to bully or intimidate other students. – **Chris Reich, Paul LaMarca.**

SB70: Open Meeting Law – This bill makes various changes to the Open Meeting Law, including:

- Clarifies that a working day is defined as a weekday other than a holiday;
- Compiles a list of proceedings not subject to the Open Meeting Law;
- Requires that minutes from a public meeting must be approved within 45 days of the meeting or at the next meeting, whichever is later;
- Requires that the name of a person who may be subject to any type of administrative action including, for example, appointment to a position, must be included on the agenda;
- Authorizes the filing of a complaint alleging a violation of the Open Meeting Law to the Attorney General. – **Chris Reich**

School Choice

AB165: Opportunity Scholarships – This bill establishes the Opportunity Scholarship Program. Under the program, non-profit organizations may be established to provide scholarships to students whose household income is less than 300% or less than the federal poverty rate. Businesses may donate to such scholarship organizations in lieu of paying the Modified Business Tax. The total amount of the tax credits authorized statewide under the program is \$5m in the first year. The amount authorized in each succeeding year is 110% of the amount authorized in the preceding year. – **Lindsay Anderson, Bryn Lapenta.**

SB302: Education Savings Accounts – This bill provides for an Education Savings Account program, providing parents of new private school enrollees with 90% of the state average DSA allocation (about \$5,000) for the purchase of educational services. Districts are provided the remaining 10% of the child’s per-pupil DSA allocation. Students are eligible for the program if they are enrolled in a public school for 100 consecutive days before applying for the funds. – **Lindsay Anderson, Bryn Lapenta.**

Safety

- AB112: Safe and Respectful Learning Environments** – This bill expands the Legislature’s goal to provide a safe and respectful learning environment by ensuring the quality of instruction is not negatively impacted by poor attitudes or interactions among school district personnel. - **Chris Reich, Dawn Huckaby, Byron Green, Paul LaMarca, Irene Payne**
- AB121: Pop Tart Guns** – This bill prohibits a school from disciplining a student enrolled in grades K-8 from simulating a firearm while playing, possessing a toy gun less than two inches in length, or wearing clothing depicting weapons. The bill specifies that discipline may be warranted if the student is disruptive or threatening. Further, the bill does not prohibit a school from establishing a school uniform policy. – **Chris Reich, Dawn Huckaby, Byron Green.**
- AB178: Habitual disciplinary problems** – This bill provides that a principal is not required to deem a student a habitual disciplinary problem if the student has entered into and participated in a plan of behavior. Additionally, the bill replaces the current requirement that students exhibiting habitual behavioral problems be expelled or suspended for at least one semester. Instead, the student must be suspended for a period not to exceed one semester or expelled under extraordinary circumstances as determined by the principal. – **Byron Green.**
- AB321: Charter school police** – This bill requires that the board of trustees of a school district enter into a contract to provide police services to a charter school if the charter school so requests. The bill clarifies that school districts may pass on the costs of providing police services to the charter school and limits the liability of the school district. – **Jason Trevino, Byron Green.**
- SB205: Emergency management plans** – Senate Bill 205 requires the Department of Education to develop a model plan for the management of a crisis or an emergency involving a public or private school. The measure removes the requirement that district and school plans be submitted to the State Board of Education, and instead requires that notices of plan review completion be filed with the Department. It also requires that any approved deviations to school emergency plans be distributed to all relevant entities as soon as practicable. - **Kristen McNeill.**
- SB212: School discipline** – Pushed by juvenile justice advocates, this bill expands the authority of the superintendent of schools of a school district to also modify the suspension or expulsion requirement for good cause shown if a pupil commits a battery which results in bodily injury of a school employee, sells or distributes a controlled substance or is deemed a habitual disciplinary problem. – **Byron Green.**
- SB504: Bullying** – Introduced and lobbied by the Governor and his staff, this is the comprehensive Safe & Respectful Learning Environment bill that modifies the definition of bullying, requires parental notification on the same day of an alleged bullying incident, 2 day investigations and mandatory discipline for any willful violation of the reporting and intervention requirements of bullying law. – **Byron Green, Chris Reich, Irene Payne, Dawn Huckaby, Paul LaMarca, Jason Trevino**

School Performance

SB405: Zoom school expansion – This bill extends and expands the current Zoom school program. New allowable uses of Zoom funds include professional development, family engagement and educator incentives at these schools, which now has to include a middle or high school in Washoe County. Additionally, NDE will perform an outside evaluation of the program. The Governor’s budget included doubling the funding available for these schools in Clark and Washoe County. – **Paul LaMarca, ALT**

SB432: Victory schools – This bill creates Victory schools which are modeled after the Zoom school program, but targeted to schools with high levels of poverty that aren’t being served by Zoom. The schools were identified based on census data and will receive additional money to be spent on extended learning time, professional development, educator incentives, early childhood classes as well as social services needed to ensure students in poverty are academically successful. – **Paul LaMarca, ALT**

Special Education

AB328: IDEA hearing officers – This bill modifies the current process by which hearing officers are chosen in a due process hearing pursuant to IDEA. This will require NDE to maintain a list of hearing officers and allow the parents to from a list of three provided by NDE with priority given to those living in the same location as the student. – **Byron Green, Chris Reich.**

AB341: Dyslexia – This bill is aimed at bringing additional awareness and attention in schools to dyslexia by requiring an early literacy screening assessment to be used to identify and intervene in students with dyslexia. – **Byron Green, Scott Bailey**

SB13: Disability definition – This NDE bill revises the definition of a “pupil with a disability” to align with the definition of “child with a disability” in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and removes references to an adjusted diploma. – **Byron Green.**

Technology

AB221: Student data privacy – This bill is aimed to protecting student data privacy increasing transparency of student data collected at the state and district level. It also requires stronger contract language with vendors to prevent any personal information from being shared inappropriately and requires districts to adopt policies governing the use of educational software products. – **Ben Hayes, Ed Grassia, Chris Reich, Bryn Lapenta**

SB463: Student data privacy – This is a second bill aimed at preventing third party service providers from sharing information they have access to through schools including the use of educational programming in classrooms and requiring disciplinary action on teachers if there are any willful violations of testing. – **Scott Bailey, Ed Grassia, Dawn Huckaby, Paul LaMarca.**