

Steve Sisolak
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA

Rebecca Feiden
Executive Director



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

1749 North Stewart Street Suite 40
Carson City, Nevada 89706-2543
(775) 687-9174 • Fax (775) 687-9113

2080 East Flamingo Road Suite 230
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-5164
(702) 486-8895 • Fax (702) 486-5543

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director
SUBJECT: The Nevada Department of Education's Proposed COVID-19 State Plan
Addendum to Nevada's ESEA Consolidated State Plan for the 2020-2021
School Year
DATE: January 22, 2021

Background

In March of 2020, the US Department of Education (USED) invited Nevada's Department of Education, and other State Educational Agencies (SEAs) to request a waiver of certain federal assessment, accountability, and reporting requirements mandated by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). These federal requirements are incorporated into Nevada's consolidated state plan. USED's invitation was the result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and pursuant to NDE's request USED waived certain requirements related to federally required assessments, certain accountability provisions, and requirements related to the Nevada Report Card. This waiver related only to the 2019-2020 school year.

The waiving of these requirements, combined with the continued COVID-19 pandemic, impact how the NDE will implement its consolidated state plan in the 2020-21 school year. Accordingly, in October of 2020 the USED invited SEAs to submit an addendum to its ESEA consolidated state plan for the 2020-2021 school year. As a result, on December 15, 2020, NDE released its Draft Addendum to Nevada's consolidated state plan along with a presentation describing the proposed changes. Public comment was solicited through January 8, 2021 and NDE plans to submit the final version of the Addendum to USED in early February.

This memorandum summarizes the proposed changes contained in NDE's Draft ESEA Addendum.

2020-2021 School Year NSPF Star Ratings:

NDE proposes that the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) be “suspended” for the 2020-2021 school year, meaning that no new star ratings will be issued for the 2020-2021 school year. Instead, NDE has stated that star ratings will be “carried over” from the 2018-2019 school year (the last school year that new star ratings were issued).

“Informational” NSPF Index Scores

The NSPF star rating system is based on multiple Indicators and Measures, which are each assigned a set of points that when combined result in an index score measured out of one hundred points. In the addendum, the NDE proposes to not publish star ratings or reports for the 2020-21 school year but instead provide NSPF index scores so that “districts and schools may use this information for continual evaluation and improvement efforts.”

Proposed Technical Changes:

“Gap Year” Calculations for the NSPF Growth and Opportunity Gaps

Calculating the NSPF Growth and Opportunity Gaps Indicators currently requires two consecutive years of Smarter Balanced assessment data, and since these assessments were not administered during the 2019-2020 school year, the NDE is proposing to utilize Smarter assessment data from the 2018-2019 school year along with Smarter assessment data from the 2020-2021 school year to calculate these measures (i.e., utilizing non-consecutive school year data).

Shift in Long-Term and Interim Goals

Nevada’s consolidated state plan sets academic achievement goals through 2023. The proposed changes contained in NDE’s addendum would shift the annual goals forward one year, so that the 2019-2020 school year goals would be used for the 2020-2021 school year. All subsequent years’ goals would likewise shift forward one year.

Chronic Absenteeism

The NDE is proposing to not calculate chronic absenteeism rates for the 2020-21 school year, as in the addendum the NDE states “it is not possible to equitably calculate Chronic Absenteeism rates across schools due to various methods of recording student attendance for the 2020-2021 school year.” Therefore, the NDE proposes to not provide NSPF points for the Chronic Absenteeism Measure, nor will any “incentive” year over year improvement points be available. This means each school will received an “adjusted” index score that excludes the Chronic Absenteeism Measure. However, NDE proposes to publish student attendance data for the 2020-2021 school year in line with NDE Guidance Memos 20-05 and 20-07.

Student Engagement Indicator

While Chronic Absenteeism will not be reported under this Indicator (see above), the Academic Learning Plans Measurement and the 8th Grade Credit Requirement Measurement will be published.

English Language Proficiency Indicator

The English Language Proficiency Indicator would remain unchanged and will be reported under the proposed changes contained in NDE's Addendum. Because the WIDA assessment (measuring the EL Proficiency Indicator) was given during the 2019-2020 school year and will (at this time) be given during the 2020-2021 school year these results can be reported.

High School-Specific Indicators and Measurements

High school graduation rates, 9th Grade Credit Sufficiency Measurements, and the College and Career Readiness Indicator will continue to be reported. Note that this means that for high schools all Indicators and Measurements will be reported save for the Chronic Absenteeism measurement.

Comprehensive Support and Improvement / Targeted Support and Improvement Schools

NDE's proposed changes contained in the Addendum make various changes related to schools designated as Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) schools, Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) schools, and Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) schools. Essentially, the NDE proposes to not identify new CSI / TSI / ATSI schools for the 2020-2021 school year and the 2019-20 school year will not count toward the number of years a school must meet the criteria to exit from CSI or ATSI.

Assessments:

Currently, USED is not allowing states to submit ESEA waiver requests regarding federally mandated assessments. As a result, at this time schools are expected to administer all summative assessments (SBAC, WIDA, ACT, etc).