

# Education & Lifelong Learning

Education provides the skills to be ready for life, self-sufficient, and a productive citizen. It also equips us with the ability to learn, think, and access information in order to make effective decisions, enhancing our enjoyment and understanding of our diverse world.

## 11. Educational infrastructure to meet community needs

School capacity vs. enrollment, (including technology for learning and other specialized needs) plus adequate educational infrastructure, whether school buildings or technology for learning and other specialized needs, signify access to educational opportunities.

### School capacity

By law, the Washoe County School District (WCSD) must accept all students, regardless of the capacity of the schools. The school district has used year-round school schedules and rezoning to accommodate growth. Total enrollment has averaged around 3% for the last several years. While 24 new schools have opened since 1990, overcrowding is a problem, especially at the middle school level. The 2005 WCSD enrollment projections study identified growth projections slowing somewhat, but estimated total enrollment in 2011 at 74,077 students.<sup>1</sup>

Washoe County School District School Capacity	1997-98	2000-01	2003-04	2006-07	9/06 Enrollment
<b>Elementary School</b>					
Sites	58	60	62	64	
Base Capacity	25,905	27,781	29,761	31,286	33,840
<b>Middle Schools</b>					
Sites	11	11	11	13	
Base Capacity	8,300	8,300	8,300	10,279	10,504
<b>High Schools</b>					
Sites	11	11	13	14	
Base Capacity	11,656	11,656	15,236	16,244	18,702
<b>Total Base Capacity</b>	<b>45,861</b>	<b>47,737</b>	<b>53,297</b>	<b>57,809</b>	
Enrollment	51,205	55,651	60,373	63,044	

Source: WCSD, Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, Fiscal Year Ending, June 30, 2007.  
<http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/departments/business/pdfs/07stat.pdf>; 9/06 enrollment from WCSD fast facts.  
<http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/assessmentsandreports/fastfacts.html>

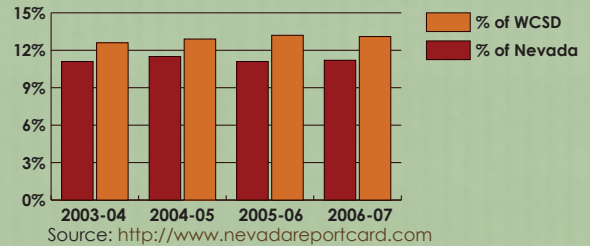
### Special needs education opportunities

The WCSD is required by law to provide education for special needs students. Student Support Services' mission is to provide the support needed to ensure the educational, intellectual, social/emotional, and vocational development of students with disabilities to enable them to participate in, and be productive members of, society.<sup>2</sup>

#### Students receiving special education services



Source: <http://www.nevadareportcard.com>

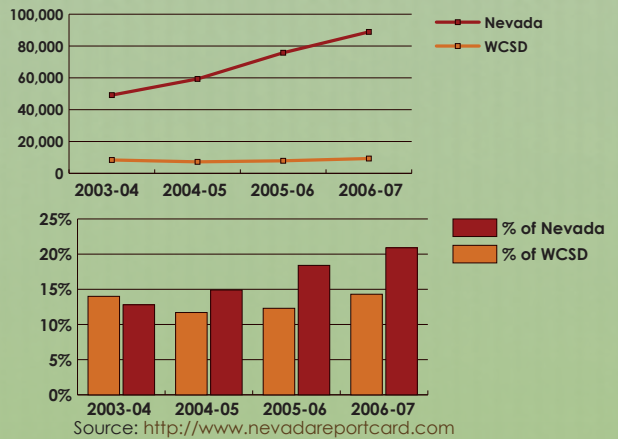


Source: <http://www.nevadareportcard.com>

### Use of technology for learning

Computers and high-speed Internet access are a necessary part of educational infrastructure in addition to textbooks, quality teachers, and other instructional support.

#### Classroom instructional computers with Internet access

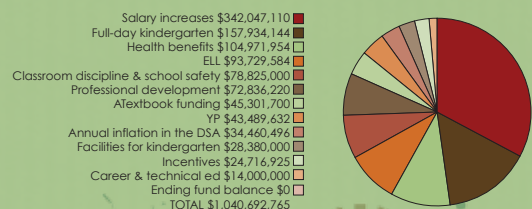


Source: <http://www.nevadareportcard.com>

### Education funding adequacy

According to the iNVEST '07 Report, educators and legislators agree on the importance of preparing a highly educated workforce, but many of Nevada's 426,437 students face obstacles to academic achievement. Nevada continues to hover among the lowest four states in the nation in education funding, as does our student achievement. Critical programs that will help our students improve academically must be funded and implemented if education in Nevada is to improve. iNVEST is based on three tenets, all designed to improve student achievement: 1. Districts must have adequate basic support; 2. Districts must have the capacity to attract and retain a quality work force; and 3. Districts must have the means to increase instructional time and expand educational opportunities.

#### 2008-09 Biennium iNVEST '07 initiative cost



Source: [http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/legislative/pdfs/iNVEST\\_2007.pdf](http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/legislative/pdfs/iNVEST_2007.pdf)

1. Source: <http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/board/agendas/data2005/pdfs/050315DisA.pdf>

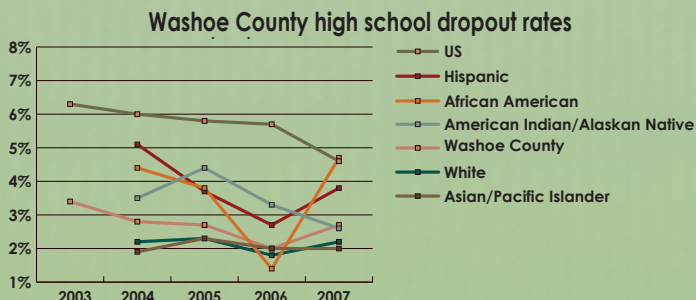
2. Source: [http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/departments/special\\_ed\\_services/](http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/departments/special_ed_services/)

## 12. Educational success

Educational attainment implies skills for employment, social responsibility, and economic self-sufficiency.

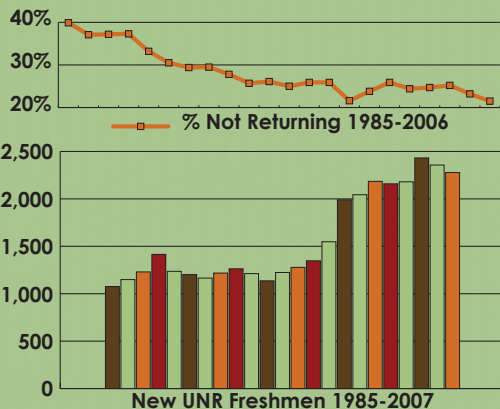
### Graduation and dropout rates

Staying in school is more important as the world becomes more complex. After having come down dramatically for more than a decade, the dropout rate increased slightly in 2006-07. Concerted efforts from many groups of community collaborators have made a real difference. Improvements in the Hispanic and American Indian dropout rates are especially encouraging, although the white, Hispanic, and African American dropout rates increased this past year.



Source: USDOE, National Center for Education Statistics, Dropout Rates in the United States: 1999. US rate calculated for grades 10-12. Data from 2003-04 from Nevada Accountability Reports: <http://www.nevadareportcard.com>

According to a recent study, just over 30% of students graduating from Nevada high schools in 2002 had achieved "readiness" to attend UNR or TMCC.<sup>3</sup> The college-going rate of Nevada high school graduates rose to 45.3% in 2000 as the Millennium Scholarship was introduced. From 1996 to 2005, between 30% and 50% of graduates from Washoe County High Schools needed remedial courses in math, English, or both.<sup>4</sup>



Source: Office of Planning, Budget & Analysis (775) 784-4546, Databook, <http://www.unr.edu/vpaf/pba/ia/databook/databk04/254.html> and <http://www.unr.edu/la/Databook/databk05/254.html>

### Educational attainment

The US Census Bureau's American Community Survey tracks the education level of those 25 years and older because of the relationship between income and workforce skills.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Population 25 Years & Over	230,903	240,937	248,294	251,662	262,272
<9th Grade	13,432	11,400	14,151	15,499	12,088
9th-12th Grade, no diploma	18,897	21,781	25,020	20,079	25,838
High School Graduates (includes equivalency)	61,811	65,217	65,072	69,777	69,449
Some College, no degree	66,201	68,046	58,239	59,745	67,700
Associate's degree	12,617	12,217	18,874	18,402	17,260
Bachelor's degree	40,563	42,297	43,391	45,542	43,914
Graduate or professional degree	17,382	19,979	25,547	22,618	26,023
% high school graduates or higher	86.0%	86.2%	84.2%	85.9%	85.5%
% bachelor's or higher	25.1%	25.8%	27.0%	27.1%	26.7%
% Dropouts among 16 - 19 year old Not enrolled & hadn't graduated	14%	7%	8%	14%	14%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2002-2006 American Community Surveys, Selected Social Characteristics and Narrative Profiles

### Alternative educational opportunities

In 2005-06, there were 65,013 students enrolled in the Washoe County School District. Of that number, 2,942 students were in alternative settings within the school district.<sup>5</sup>

- Regional Technical Institute – 60
- TMCC Magnet H.S. – 157
- Alternative Schools (Piccolo, Washoe Middle/High School) – 758
- Charter high schools – 1,967

The above tally does not include students who are being home-schooled or at private schools. The number of home-schooled students fluctuates from month to month.

2004-05	995
2005-06	842
2006-07	752
2007-08	807

Source: WCSD Supplemental Credit Office, 3/05-2003

GEDs are not included in WCSD data since they are not "diplomas." In August 2005, the Washoe County Library, Community Resource Center, in collaboration with Northern Nevada Literary Council, began offering assessments and enrollments in the online GED study program. Statistics on the number passing the GED



Courtesy Yann Ling

3. Source: Greene, J.P., & Winters, M.A. (2005, February). Public High School Graduation and College. Readiness criteria are based on meeting minimum admission standards at least selective four-year colleges: 1) regular high school diploma; 2) passing 4 years of English, 3 years of math, and 2 years each of natural sciences, social sciences, foreign language; and 3) passing basic level on the NAEP reading assessment (HSTS). Note that foreign language is

not required for a Washoe County high school diploma.

4. Source: <http://www.unr.edu/ia/research/HIntEd2006-1web.pdf>

5. Source: <http://www.nevadareportcard.com>

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exam are not available, however 65 assessments were completed fiscal year 2006-07. Enrollment in the program has more than tripled with just 11 in 2005, 35 in 2006, and 46 as of December 2007.<sup>6</sup>

### 13. Community-wide involvement in education

Parental involvement in their children's education, volunteering in schools, supporting the local education system, and business collaboration with education all enhance education.

#### Parental involvement

Parental involvement is one of the best predictors of success in school. The school district reports on the percentage of parents attending student-teacher conference at the beginning of the year to indicate levels of parental involvement. Volunteering at their children's schools, community hours donated to adopted schools, and even help with homework at home also indicate parental involvement. Following a TMT Parental Involvement Quality of Life Compact between the WCSD and the Washoe Education Association, the WCSD initiated a Parental Involvement Council and strategic plan. Following the collection of baseline data, full implementation of parental involvement efforts is expected during this school year.

WCSD parent/teacher conference attendance below 90%				
Elementary Schools	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006
Allen		86.7%		
Cannan		88.9%		
Desert Heights	88.6%		89.0%	
Drake			89.3%	
Hunter Lake			89.2%	
Lemon Valley				88.5%
Mitchell		86.6%	87.9%	
Kate Smith				86.4%
Warner		85.6%	83.7%	

Source: Nevada Accountability Report: <http://www.nevadareportcard.com>

According to TMT's December 2007 community survey of Washoe County residents, of those respondents with children in school, 45.8% reported involvement with tutoring/homework, followed by 11.2% reading, 9.3% after school/programs, 8.4% field trips, 3.7% money/donations, 2.8% chaperone/transportation, and 17.8% reporting a general variety of activities.

Parental Involvement - Volunteered in your child's classroom in the last year					
	No Children In School	Don't Volunteer	1-4 Times	5-10 Times	>11 Times
1995	51%	27%	10%	6%	5%
1996	56%	22%	8%	8%	6%
1998	66%	13%	8%	5%	8%
2007	65%	14%	5%	3%	7%

Source: MarkeTec survey for TMT, July 1995 & 1996, September 1998, December 2007

### 14. Literate community

According to the February 2004, Nevada White Paper on Literacy, it is a broad issue that is central to the success of communities. As such, literacy is defined as "a person's ability to understand and employ information and compute and solve problems in daily activities, at home, at work, and in the community to achieve one's goals, and to develop one's knowledge and potential." Community literacy involves a collaboration of programs, whether basic education, childhood development, or other learning programs. According to the October 2006, Washoe K-16 Data Profile prepared by the Education Collaborative of Washoe County, 30% of 2005 WCSD graduates enrolled at UNR in fall 2005 enrolled in a remedial class; while 67% enrolled at TMCC enrolled in a remedial class. Of the 2005 WCSD graduates, 52% were eligible for a Millennium Scholarship, with a GPA of 3.1. TMT will track additional literacy-related measures as available at [www.truckeemeadowstomorrow.org](http://www.truckeemeadowstomorrow.org).



Photo by John Doherty, courtesy Desert Research Institute

6. Source: Andrea Tavener, Washoe County Library, [ATavener@washoecounty.us](mailto:ATavener@washoecounty.us)

Functional literacy and quality libraries are some of the keys to educational success, along with the ability to complete GED programs.

Washoe County Library System Resources				
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Patron Visits	1,254,492	1,452,524	1,658,733	1,685,741
Per capita	3.3	3.7	4.2	4.2
Services				
Internet branch hits	403,479	527,124	611,924	673,116
Subscription database online usage	N/A	83,333	84,276	92,704
# Public computer uses	194,300	297,944	366,544	403,198
# Youth programs	2,175	2,246	2,426	2,547
# Children attending	65,221	73,212	74,550	76,410
# Adult programs	357	436	588	617
# Adults attending	4,990	8,644	8,840	9,245
Collection				
Checkouts	1,982,306	2,186,229	2,231,694	2,298,645
# Collection items per capita	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.5
\$ Per capita to purchase materials	N/A	\$3.31	\$3.10	\$3.20
Registered borrowers	148,455	150,194	153,169	159,797
Checkouts per registered borrower	13.4	14.6	14.5	14.4
% Population owning a library card	38.5	38.4	39.5	40.3

Source: Washoe County 2007-08 Budget, Library Systems Objectives (note: 2007-08 projected)

Washoe County After School Literacy Tutoring Program				
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	
# Schools	9	10	19	
# Students	435	534	497	
% Students reading at grade level after tutoring program	45%	70%	68%	
% Students reading above grade level after tutoring program	10%	14%	14%	
% 3rd graders passing CRT after program	N/A	27%	43%	
% 5th graders passing CRT after program	N/A	15%	39%	
Funding	\$77,505	\$164,040	\$156,045	

Source: [http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/foundations/pdfs/ASLTP\\_3\\_YR\\_Results\\_FOR\\_WEBSITE.pdf](http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/foundations/pdfs/ASLTP_3_YR_Results_FOR_WEBSITE.pdf)

According to the Washoe County Education Collaborative, the cost of illiteracy to all taxpayers and businesses is estimated at \$20 billion a year, and Nevada is no exception to this problem. In the Washoe County School District, more than 39% of our third graders read below grade level (April 2007 Nevada Criterion Referenced Exam). The Education Foundation has embraced WCSD's number one goal that all students are reading and writing at or above grade level by the end of third grade. The Education Foundation's Focus on Literacy Initiative is a comprehensive literacy project that provides grade level books, after school literacy tutoring, professional development in literacy for teachers, and technology upgrades to schools that fall short of qualifying for federal funding and lack the community resources to enhance academic success.<sup>8</sup>

### Newspaper circulation

The America's Most Literate Cities surveys, conducted by Central Connecticut State University, from 2003-2006 indicate that there is a widespread decline in per capita newspaper circulation—even happening in cities where overall literacy is high or in cities where it is low; although the data does not indicate a switch from reading newspapers to reading online news.<sup>7</sup> Trends are similar for Northern Nevada. TMT will track the Nevada Press Association circulation reported on its Web site.



Courtesy J. Kyle Dalpe, TMCC

7. Source: <http://www.ccsu.edu/amlc06/Newspapers/top10.htm>

8. Source: <http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/district/foundation/>