



Nevada State Superintendent Search: Analysis of Stakeholder Survey Responses on Qualifications and Qualities

Data Source: Analysis of Survey Responses (n=183) on Desired Qualifications and Qualities

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This report summarizes the key themes identified from the 183 responses to the public survey conducted by the Nevada Department of Education on behalf of the Nevada State Board of Education. The survey sought stakeholder input regarding the qualifications and qualities of importance for the next Nevada State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The following themes emerged from the analysis of responses to each of the four survey questions.

Question 1: What is one type of experience you believe the next State Superintendent must have and why?

Overarching Message: Respondents clearly indicated that the next Superintendent should have a strong, practical understanding of Nevada's education system. This understanding, they believe, stems from: significant and recent classroom teaching experience within the state; administrative and leadership experience at various levels; a deep awareness of Nevada's diverse educational environments; the capacity to manage complex organizations; and a genuine, lived connection to the educational community.

- ***Significant and Recent Classroom Teaching Experience:*** A substantial amount of time as a classroom teacher, ideally with recent experience, is deemed crucial for understanding the current realities of education.
 - *"The next Superintendent should have experience as a classroom teacher for no fewer than 10 years, with administrative leadership experience at the school and/or district level. Deep classroom experience is non-negotiable; it ensures they truly understand the day-to-day realities educators face."*

- ***Administrative and Leadership Experience within Nevada's Education System:*** Leadership roles beyond the classroom, specifically within Nevada's educational landscape at school and district levels, are considered vital.
 - *"Experience as both a principal and a central office leader in Nevada is crucial. Nevada needs a leader that understands the perspectives of those they will lead."*
- ***Understanding Nevada's Diverse Educational Context:*** Familiarity with the specific challenges and nuances of Nevada's diverse school districts (urban, rural, socioeconomic) is seen as essential.
 - *"The next State Superintendent must have knowledge of education at both the state and local level, preferably in Nevada, in order to understand the unique challenges we face as a state."*
- ***Ability to Manage and Lead Complex Organizations:*** Strong leadership and management skills are needed to effectively oversee the state's education system, including budget and stakeholder relations.
 - *"Managing operations of a large institution, and fiscal oversight and budget management. We are a large organization; we need someone who has strong organizational leadership foundations."*
- ***Lived Experience and Connection to the Educational Community:*** A genuine understanding of and connection to the daily realities faced by educators, students, and families is highly valued.
 - *"The next State Superintendent must be able to connect with Nevada's educators, students, and families at a personal, authentic level, not just through policy but through lived experience."*

Question 2: What is another set of skills you believe is important for the next State Superintendent to be effective, and why?

Overarching Message: Respondents underscored the necessity for the next Superintendent to possess strong communication and interpersonal skills, a clear vision and strategic leadership, and a deep understanding of educational policy and law. Furthermore, a strong commitment to equity and student success, alongside integrity, transparency, and ethical leadership, were identified as paramount.

- ***Strong Communication and Interpersonal Skills:*** Effective communication, relationship-building, collaboration, and listening skills are critical for the Superintendent.

- *"The next State Superintendent must be an effective listener, coalition-builder, and storyteller. Nevada's education landscape is vast and diverse, and we need a leader who can bring people together."*
- **Clear Vision and Strategic Leadership:** A well-defined vision for improvement and the ability to strategically plan and guide the state are essential.
 - *"This future leader needs to be able to set a very clear picture of their North Star. I want to know what they represent and have a clear plan for how to get there."*
- **Deep Understanding of Educational Policy and Law:** A strong grasp of state and federal education laws, policies, and funding is necessary for effective advocacy and navigation.
 - *"I believe to be an effective superintendent the person must have a solid understanding and almost a love of policy. Understand how policies impact the people carrying out the work but also the impacts on our students and families."*
- **Commitment to Equity and Student Success:** Prioritizing the needs of all students and fostering equitable learning environments are highly desired.
 - *"A firm belief that all students are capable of excelling academically."*
- **Integrity, Transparency, and Ethical Leadership:** Trustworthiness, transparency, and ethical conduct are paramount for the Superintendent.
 - *"The next State Superintendent must be transparent. They should always be willing to let us know what changes are being made."*

Question 3: What is one final quality or experience you think is essential in the next State Superintendent and why?

Overarching Message: Respondents highlighted the critical need for the Superintendent to possess effective communication and stakeholder engagement skills, alongside a comprehensive understanding of and ability to navigate Nevada's political and educational landscape. The capacity for strong advocacy for public education and adequate funding, the ability to build relationships and consensus, and a consistent focus on students and a commitment to equity were also deemed essential for success in this role.

- **Effective Communication and Stakeholder Engagement:** Exceptional communication skills to build trust and engage diverse stakeholders are crucial.
 - *"The next State Superintendent must be an effective listener, coalition-builder, and storyteller...bring people together across regions, roles, and perspectives..."*
- **Understanding and Navigating Nevada's Political and Educational Landscape:** A deep understanding of Nevada's unique political dynamics and diverse educational needs is essential.

- *"The candidate needs a very clear understanding of fiscal needs in Nevada...leverage funds in a way that all needs of students and staff are met in an equitable manner."*
- **Advocacy for Public Education and Adequate Funding:** A strong advocate for Nevada's public schools who can effectively communicate funding needs to policymakers.
 - *"Advocate for appropriate funding for our school districts and ensure that STUDENTS are the focus of all of our work, not politics."*
- **Ability to Build Relationships and Consensus:** The capacity to foster positive relationships, build consensus, and work collaboratively is important.
 - *"The ability to connect multiple stakeholders...to coalesce around a common goal of increasing student learning outcomes."*
- **Focus on Students and a Commitment to Equity:** Prioritizing student interests and demonstrating a strong commitment to equity are vital.
 - *"The next State Superintendent must be future-focused and grounded in equity. They must believe that every learner in Nevada... deserves access to meaningful, relevant learning experiences..."*

Question 4: What final thoughts would you like the Nevada State Board of Education to keep in mind when choosing the next State Superintendent?

Overarching Message: Respondents emphasized the importance of a student-centered leader with a clear vision who will champion the Portrait of a Nevada Learner and embrace innovation in teaching and assessment. A deep understanding of Nevada's unique educational needs and challenges remains critical, as does a commitment to integrity, accountability, and ethical leadership in moving forward with new practices.

- **Student-Centered Leadership and Vision:** The Superintendent should prioritize students and possess a clear vision aligned with Nevada's potential.
 - *"Choose a leader who believes in Nevada's potential, especially the potential of our young people."*
- **Effective Leadership and Management:** Strong leadership and management skills are needed to guide the implementation of new practices effectively.
 - *"I hope you choose a leader that actually leads. Communication is essential, an understanding of how the various initiatives in Nevada are impacting schools and students is imperative."*

- ***Commitment to Building on the Portrait of a Nevada Learner and Innovation:*** The Superintendent should continue to build upon the Portrait of a Learner and embrace innovative teaching and assessment methods.
 - *"Nevada is already doing powerful work to reimagine learning through the Portrait of a Nevada Learner, and we need someone who will honor that foundation and help us carry it forward with courage and clarity."*
- ***Understanding Nevada's Unique Educational Needs and Challenges:*** A deep understanding of the state's diverse educational landscape is crucial for implementing effective new practices.
 - *"It's important to learn from national best practices and consider what modifications will be needed to get results in Nevada. We need a collaborative, consistent, and effective system leader."*
- ***Integrity, Accountability, and Ethical Leadership:*** The Superintendent must demonstrate integrity and hold the system accountable as new assessment and accountability measures are implemented.
 - *"The Nevada State Board of Education must choose a State Superintendent who understands that students, not politics, must always come first."*

Across all four questions, respondents consistently emphasized a blend of key attributes. These include practical experience within Nevada's unique educational landscape, strong leadership and interpersonal skills, a deep understanding of policy and equity, and a commitment to building upon the state's existing initiatives. This consistent feedback provides a valuable framework for the State Board of Education. The perspectives shared underscore the desire for a leader who is not only qualified but also deeply connected to and invested in the success of Nevada's students, educators, and communities. The Board is encouraged to consider these overarching themes as they move forward in their search for an individual who can effectively lead Nevada's education system towards a brighter future.