

NEVADA COMPACT

Ready for Life Nevada: Our Shared Youth Vision 2011

We call on all Nevada citizens to help **increase our graduation rate** and build a **community ethic that values education.**

Did you Know?

Approximately 20,700 students did not graduate from Nevada's high schools in 2009; the lost lifetime earnings for that class of dropouts alone are more than **\$5.4 billion.**

Visit readyforlifenv.org to learn more about how Nevadans are working together to ensure Nevada's children and youth are "ready for life."



In 2005, the Nevada Public Education Foundation launched **Ready for Life**, a statewide movement to call on all Nevada citizens to help increase our high school graduation rate and build a community ethic that values education.

Five years later, the movement continues. After two successful statewide Ready for Life Summits (in 2008 and 2010) and widespread support from hundreds of Nevada's public and private organizations to make education a priority in the state, we must now implement the goals we have established for ourselves and the children and youth who call Nevada home.

The Nevada Compact reflects our commitment to ensure Nevada's youth have access to a quality PK-12 education, post-secondary education or training, and thus are prepared for sustainable, rewarding careers. It represents an unprecedented declaration and collaboration among Nevada's key youth-serving institutions to ensure our children and youth are "ready for life." As we now know all too well, our economy, quality of life, and the future of our state depend on it.

By signing the Nevada Compact, we pledge to put the interests of students first. We also commit to work together to meet the Nevada Compact goals by employing the joint strategies described in this agreement, measuring our progress regularly, and holding ourselves accountable for our results. By working in close collaboration, we will also be able to leverage resources and opportunities, limit duplication, and maximize our impact.

1. Goal of 10% increase uses as a baseline the graduation rate of 67.4% for the class of 2007, as published by NV Dept. of Education. Graduation rate calculations will be aligned with the National Governors Assn. formula adopted by NV for implementation in 2011.
2. As a member of the Complete College America Alliance of States, in 2010 Nevada established the goal to award 1,064 additional degrees and high-quality certificates annually by 2020.

Nevada Compact Goals and Priority Areas

GOAL 1: All students graduate from high school (including 10% increase by 2013¹).

GOAL 2: All students have access to and are prepared for success in college² or post-secondary training.

GOAL 3: All students have access to pathways to sustainable jobs and careers.

To accomplish these goals, work is underway in **six priority areas** identified at the 2008 Ready for Life Nevada Dropout Prevention Summit:

PRIORITY AREA 1: Strengthening Schools

- Establish early warning systems to support struggling students.
- Ensure that all high school students have equal access to advanced courses and post-secondary learning opportunities.
- Support implementation of state requirement for individualized graduation plans for students entering 9th grade statewide and 6th grade implementation in Clark County.

PRIORITY AREA 2: Supporting Students and Families

- Conduct gap and continuum of care analysis to identify additional services needed.
- Have community support students in meeting rigorous expectations (including providing more adult advocates, tutors, mentors, etc.).
- Conduct targeted outreach to the most disconnected youth and families.
- Increase leadership and life skills opportunities for all youth and families.
- Increase parent engagement.

PRIORITY AREA 3: Building Effective Policies

- Streamline and align the assessment system and high school standards so that the assessments taken in high school are also able to serve as readiness assessments for college and work.
- Identify policies that affect students' opportunities to succeed, including: Consider flexible options for credit; review attendance policies; pursue options for flexible demonstrations of high school proficiency.
- Research options for productive use of last year of high school and possible overlap/transition to college credit.

PRIORITY AREA 4: Employing Data Systems

- Create a statewide central data warehouse for information sharing across systems (school, juvenile justice, social service, public health and non-profit), including longitudinal tracking that follows youth exiting the education system.

PRIORITY AREA 5: Creating Career Connections

- Increase coordination among education and workforce development.
- Encourage businesses to support employee and family education.
- Increase student internships.
- Engage businesses and economic development strategies for coordinated career preparation and training.

PRIORITY AREA 6: Building a Community Ethic that Values Education

- Develop a communications plan and media campaign to *build a community ethic that values education* and promotes the importance of a high school diploma.
- Increase awareness of community resources and services available to families and youth.
- Create collaborative infrastructures (such as Ready for Life committees) as needed at various levels (site, district, regional).
- Ongoing convening/facilitating of statewide and community efforts.

In **Nevada’s Promise**, the Blue Ribbon Task Force for Education Reform called for the following by 2014:

- Increase graduation rate to 85%
- Reduce achievement gap by 50% for African American-white and Hispanic-white on National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- Increase graduates enrolling in post-secondary institutions in- or out-of-state by 50%
- Increase percentage of students proficient or advanced on the NAEP fourth-grade mathematics (from 32% to 50%) and eighth-grade mathematics (from 25% to 50%)
- Increase percentage of students proficient or advanced on the NAEP fourth-grade reading (from 24% to 50%) and eighth-grade reading (from 22% to 50%)

In 2010, the **Nevada Vision Stakeholders Group**, created by the Nevada Legislature, issued recommendations for improving Nevada’s future, including four goals for education that align with the work of the Ready for Life movement and the Blue Ribbon Task Force. Hence, signatories support the following:

- Recognize that Nevada has a drop-out crisis and that it needs to dramatically increase graduation rates.
 - Increase the share of adults with at least a high school diploma.
 - Encourage higher education, associate’s degrees and higher.
- Raise the quality of elementary and secondary education.
 - Increase students’, parents’ and teachers’ active involvement in and commitment to education.
 - Bring Nevada’s measures of educational achievement into the top third of states.
- Increase the value of education at Nevada’s universities and colleges.
 - Increase graduation rates.
 - Give universities more flexibility over the use of tuition and other resources to meet the state’s workforce needs.
 - Raise the level of university research.
- Increase early-childhood education options.
 - Enroll more children in early-education programs.

Data from the following systems will be used track progress and guide ongoing efforts for Ready for Life Nevada: Our Shared Youth Vision:

Education: NAEP Reading and Math Scores | High School Graduation Rates | Level of Post-Secondary Educational Attainment (degrees and certificates)

Workforce Development: Number of high school youth with early work experience | Unemployment rate for high school graduates compared to non-graduates

Child Welfare: Number of children in out-of-home care | Incidence of child maltreatment

Juvenile Justice: Number of juvenile arrests | Truancy rates | Youth success in leaving juvenile justice system (recidivism rates)

Housing and Welfare: Number of homeless youth and youth in transition | Under 18 living in poverty | Number of children living in families that leave TANF and earn a livable wage

Early Childhood: Preschool enrollment, including Early Head Start programs | Enrollment in quality childcare programs

Maternal and Child Health: Teen pregnancy rates | Enrollment in Medicaid/SCHIP/other health coverage | Percentage of pregnant women receiving prenatal care in the first trimester

Behavioral Health: Rates of substance abuse; domestic violence; emotional disorders among families | Percent of youth reporting alcohol use in the past 30 days