



The Nevada Policy Research Institute

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Nevada's new state superintendent gets it: Dollars not the fount of educational achievement

LAS VEGAS — In response to the news that Gov. Brian Sandoval has appointed James W. Guthrie, an education policy scholar from the George W. Bush Institute, as the next Nevada superintendent of public instruction, Steven Miller, vice president for policy at the Nevada Policy Research Institute, released the following comments.

James Guthrie's writings and research reveal him to be an excellent choice for Nevada's next superintendent of public instruction. A leading education scholar, he has already directly confronted and dispelled many myths that burden public education. Such courage is desperately needed in a state where vested interests insist that superior educational results won't come without ever-higher funding. As [Guthrie has explicitly noted](#), education spending has increased dramatically around the country [with no commensurate increase in student achievement](#).

Nevada is a prime example — nearly tripling inflation-adjusted, per-pupil spending during the last 50 years while education achievement stagnated. If Nevadans really desire real improvements in student achievement, a state superintendent who's willing to candidly point out impolitic realities is absolutely required.

[Guthrie, to his credit, has noted](#) that “cutting ineffective teachers is a civil rights victory for students.” And it is certainly true that, as teacher unions such as the [Clark County Education Association](#) gear up to fight the removal of ineffective teachers, Nevada's students need a statewide champion: someone who'll keep the focus on students and their futures — not on preserving adult privileges that waste public resources.

I'm optimistic that Mr. Guthrie will be able to inaugurate a new day for Nevada public education.

Miller also praised and shared excerpts from two articles written by Guthrie: “[We can reduce school budgets and improve student achievement at the same time: 9 myths about education funding](#)” and “[The Phony Funding Crisis](#).”

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