

BOARD OF REGENTS

BRIEFING PAPER

1. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Handbook Revision, Policy of the Board of Regents: Legislative Engagement

MEETING DATE: October 16, 2026

2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

The Board of Regents is responsible for the governance and oversight of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), including establishing systemwide budget and operational priorities in preparation for each biennial session of the Nevada Legislature.

Pursuant to [Title 1, Article VII, Section 3\(e\)\(4\)](#) of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents, the Chancellor is responsible for “the presentation of all NSHE matters to the Governor’s Office and State Legislature.” Regents also play an important role in legislative engagement by communicating with legislators and advocating for NSHE and its institutions.

Board leadership has identified a gap in existing policy regarding Regent participation in legislative activities. The proposed policy is intended to establish a framework for Regent engagement with the Nevada Legislature that balances the authority and responsibilities of individual Regents with the need for coordinated legislative engagement, while preserving the Chancellor’s role as the principal spokesperson for NSHE.

3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Approve the proposed revision to the *Board of Regents Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 1, Section 8.

4. IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

The 84th Session of the Nevada Legislature will begin on February 1, 2027.

5. CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:

- ☐ Access (Increase access to higher education)
- ☐ Success (Improve student success)
- ☐ Close Institutional Performance Gaps
- ☐ Workforce (Meet workforce needs in Nevada)
- ☐ Research (Increase solutions-focused research)
- ☒ Coordination, Accountability, and Transparency (Ensure system coordination, accountability, and transparency)
- ☐ Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

6. INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

The proposal advances coordinated advocacy and consistent messaging by establishing a formal process for Regent engagement with the Nevada Legislature.

7. BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- Regents have expressed a desire to take a more active role in NSHE’s legislative advocacy, leveraging their existing relationships with Nevada lawmakers to advance system priorities.
- The proposal addresses a gap in current Board policy by establishing a clear framework for Regent engagement with the Legislature.
- Coordinating Regent participation complements the Vice Chancellor of Government Relations’ efforts to coordinate advocacy activities and communications across NSHE institutions, promoting a consistent and collaborative approach to legislative engagement.

8. POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- The approval requirement may create delays that limit Regents’ ability to respond to time-sensitive legislative opportunities or engage with lawmakers when issues arise unexpectedly.

- The policy could add administrative burdens and procedural requirements that complicate legislative engagement without necessarily improving the consistency or effectiveness of NSHE's advocacy.
- The requirement may inadvertently limit opportunities for open communication between Regents and legislators, reducing the Board's ability to remain informed about emerging legislative priorities and concerns.

9. ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

Rather than requiring prior approval from the Chair and Vice Chair, the Board could adopt a policy emphasizing notification, communication, and coordination between Regents and the Chancellor to support effective legislative engagement while preserving Regent flexibility.

10. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:

The Chancellor's Office recommends approval.

11. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- ☐ Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- ☒ Amends Current Board Policy: Title # 4 Chapter # 1 Section # 8
- ☐ Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Fiscal Impact: Yes _____ No ☒ x
- Explain: _____

POLICY PROPOSAL - *HANDBOOK*
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 1, SECTION 8
Policy of the Board of Regents

Additions appear in ***boldface italics***; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 8. Policy of the Board of Regents

1. The Constitution of the State of Nevada provides for the control of the University of Nevada to be in a Board of Regents. This Board is a body corporate and is legally responsible for the final control of the University.
2. This Board of Regents adopts the policy that the function of a Board of Regents is advisory and legislative. Thus, the Board of Regents shall delegate whenever possible duties which are initiatory and executive.
3. It shall be the function of the Board of Regents to approve or reject policies proposed by the administration. The administration shall develop educational programs for consideration and the Board shall furnish the necessary legislation and authority for the administration to carry out these policies effectively.
4. In preparing and codifying Board policy, the secretary of the board is authorized to make the following non-substantive changes to all titles of the *Handbook*:
 - a. Correcting changes to names of organizations, departments, units, committees, and position titles;
 - b. Correcting grammatical errors; and
 - c. Correcting obvious typographical errors.

The secretary of the board shall maintain a record of any non-substantive changes that are completed.

5. Only in the most unusual circumstances should the Board of Regents concern itself with the details of administration. Upon the basis of recommendations and data presented by the administration, the Board of Regents shall determine the general method in which various problems and administrative duties are to be solved or handled, and shall permit the administration to apply the policies decided upon to single individual jobs or problems.
6. Whenever a situation arises where no policy has been established in the past, the Chancellor shall analyze the situation and determine the issue upon which the Board needs to act. Thereupon, the Board of Regents shall settle policy with reference to the particular issue. After the Board of Regents has acted, the Chancellor shall apply the new policy to the particular cases. Where appropriate, the council of presidents shall be involved.
 - a. During legislative sessions, when it becomes necessary to take a position on behalf of the NSHE on proposed legislation to be heard by a legislative committee and (1) the Board has not yet taken a position on the bill and (2) the Board will not meet before the bill is heard by the legislative committee, the Chancellor, as the chief

executive officer of the System, or his/her designee, may take a position on behalf of the System on the bill before the legislative committee. The Chancellor shall notify the members of the Board of the Chancellor's position on the bill before the bill is heard by the legislative committee. The Chancellor shall additionally present to the Board during a legislative session, and at each meeting of the Board immediately following the conclusion of a legislative session, a list of legislative measures with the position taken on behalf of the NSHE noted, for consideration of approval or revision of position by the Board.

- b. In carrying out the provisions of (a) above, the Chancellor shall inform the legislative committee involved that the Board had not yet taken a position on the bill in question.
7. It shall be the policy of the Board of Regents to act as a unit. The Board of Regents controls the NSHE as a body representing the people; the individual members have no authority singly.
8. ***Regents shall notify the Chancellor or designee if they plan to attend a legislative hearing. Regents shall obtain prior approval from the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board, in consultation with the Chancellor or designee, before providing testimony at any legislative hearing or participating in meetings with legislators on behalf of the Board.***
- [8]9. No member of the Board of Regents can bind the Board by word or action, unless the Board has, in its corporate capacity, designated such member as its agent for some specific purpose and for that purpose only.
- [9]10. The use of the terms "Board of Regents of the NSHE" and "The NSHE" may not be used by any person, group or organization for any announcements, invitations and solicitations without the written permission of the Board of Regents of the NSHE or the Board's authorized designee.