

## Insights from the Nevada Future of Learning Network

# Professional Development on Learner-centered Approaches

The [Nevada Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education](#) recognizes the fundamental role of educators and leaders in building and sustaining a learner-centered, future-ready education system. The Commission’s vision includes “deeply preparing and sustaining teachers and leaders to create the conditions Nevada’s young people need to embody the Portrait of a Nevada Learner” ([NCIEE 2025](#), p 6). The Nevada Future of Learning Network facilitated 60 hours of professional development for educators and leaders across the state at the 2025 Virtual Winter Institute: *A Portrait of a Learner* hosted by the Nevada Association of School Administrators. The Winter Institute (Institute) consisted of 25 sessions over 17 days, grouped by the attributes of the Portrait of a Nevada Learner: **empower**, **connect**, **impact**, and **thrive**. The vision for the Winter Institute was designed using three guiding questions:

1. What could the future of learning in Nevada look like if every student were empowered, engaged, and ready for what’s next?
2. What will it take for educators and leaders across Nevada to grow and sustain a learner-centered movement together?
3. What changes in thinking, teaching, and leading are needed to bring the Portrait of a Nevada Learner to life in every classroom and community across the state?

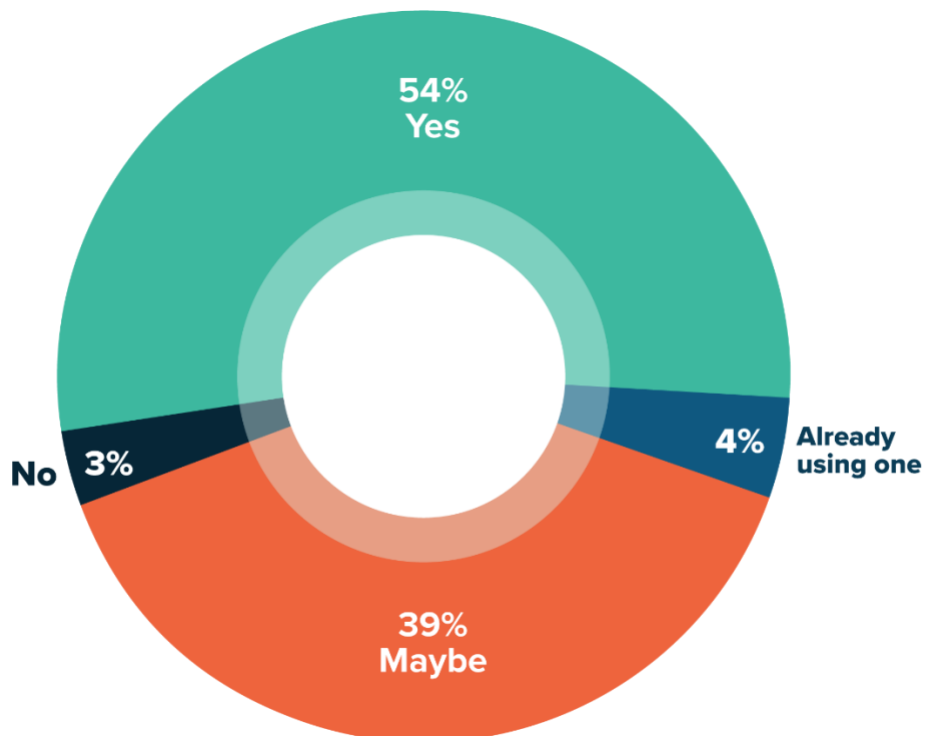
The [Nevada Future of Learning Network](#) is a coalition of districts, leaders, educators, students, and community partners building a learner-centered, future-ready education system. It launched in 2023 as part of the Nevada Department of Education’s (NDE) effort to create the statewide [Portrait of a Nevada Learner](#) and advance [personalized, competency-based learning](#).

This brief highlights the results of a survey administered at the end of each day of the Institute to provide feedback to session presenters and understand perceptions of its impact on teaching and learning. It is part of a collection of briefs providing insights from activities facilitated by the Nevada Future of Learning Network. The survey data in this memo covers the first 15 days of the Institute where 276 educators and leaders attended at least one session and responded to the survey, with the number of session participants ranging from 143 to 212. On average, educators and leaders attended 10 of the 15 days, with 52% attending 12 or more days.

## Future of Learning in Nevada

Participants considered the need to transform their education system toward a learner-centered, future-ready model, and then identified opportunities for innovation, leadership, and impact. Participants were asked about their perceptions of the need to shift toward a learner-centered, future-ready education system after the 4th day, which was the end of the **empower** section, and after their 15th day, which was the end of the **impact** section. On both days, over 96% of the participants strongly agreed or agreed that education in Nevada needs to be learner-centered and future-ready, and 94% strongly agreed or agreed that they understood how the Portrait of a Nevada Learner or a locally-developed portrait could be used to advance student learning. Approximately 58% of participants indicated that their district should use or were already using a local portrait or the Portrait of a Nevada Learner.

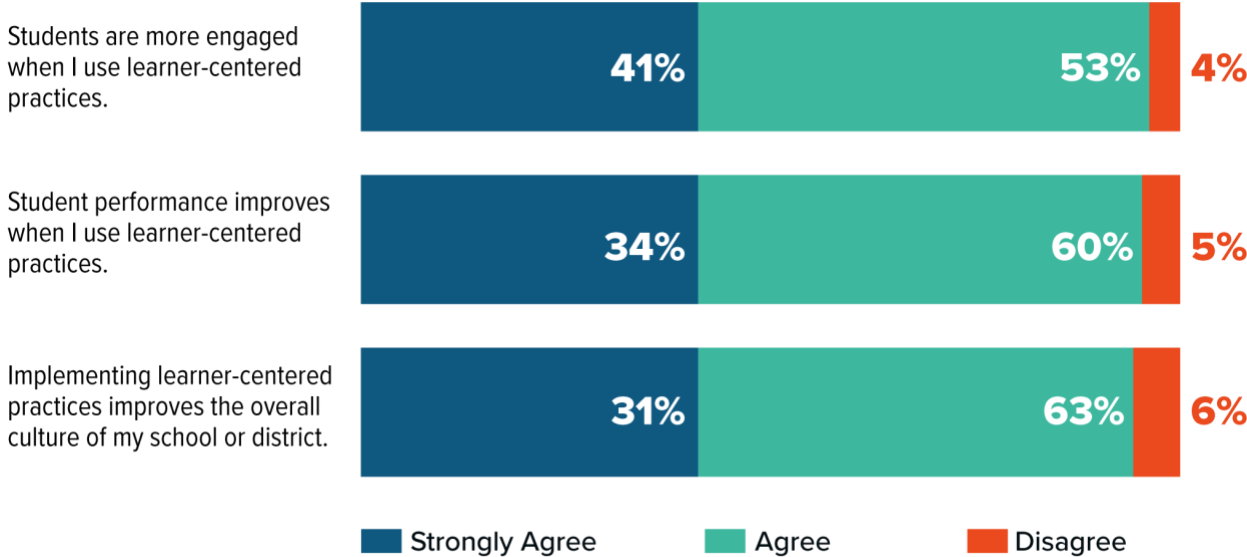
### Do you think your district should use the Portrait of a Nevada Learner or a local portrait that emphasizes durable skills?



# Growing a Learner-Centered Approach to Education

Participants heard from other districts in Nevada about how they are implementing learner-centered practices and had opportunities to consider how they might incorporate similar practices into their own schools and classrooms. Of the 192 participants who responded to the survey, 114 (59%) implemented learner-centered practices this school year. These participants reported that implementing learner-centered practices positively influenced their school and their students. Approximately 94% strongly agreed or agreed that implementing learner-centered practices improved the culture of their school. Approximately 96% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that their students were more engaged when learner-centered practices were used, and 95% strongly agreed or agreed that their students' performance improved.

## Perceived impact of implementing learner-centered practices



Of the 78 participants that did not implement learner-centered practices, 76 (97%) strongly agreed or agreed that a shift toward learner-centered practices would increase student engagement and student achievement. As one educator shared in an open-ended response

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“Understanding learner-centered practices helps me create environments where students are more engaged and take greater ownership of their learning. The concept of outbound change showed me how even small instructional shifts can accumulate into meaningful improvements for students.”

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## Changes in Thinking, Teaching, and Leading

Participants learned about strategies, tools, and mindsets they could use, test, or adapt in their own context. These included the NCIEE Roadmap, artifacts and case studies of schools and districts, an agency continuum, and the KnowledgeWorks Navigation Tool among others. At the end of each day participants were asked if they felt capable of incorporating the strategies, tools, or mindsets from the session(s) in their setting, and their likelihood of doing so. On average across the 15 days, 93% of respondents felt capable of incorporating the strategies, tools, or mindsets from the session(s) into their setting, and 92% were very likely or likely to do so. Approximately 96% of participants strongly agreed or agreed that the strategies, tools, or mindsets would increase student engagement and student achievement. Participants seemed to walk away from the Institute seeing both the need and the benefits of a shift toward a learner-centered, future-ready approach to education and had strategies, tools, and motivation to begin to engage in that effort.

## Getting Started

Educators and district leaders considering a shift toward more learner-centered, future-ready education practices could consider the following questions:

- What professional development is available to enhance learner-centered practices in my school or district?
- How can we implement more learner-centered practices and measure their influence on teaching and learning?
- How can the Portrait of a Nevada Learner be applied in my context to guide learner-centered practices and structures?

## Resources

- [Nevada Future of Learning Network](#)
- [KnowledgeWorks Portrait of a Leader](#)
- [Nevada Innovation Guide](#)
- [Nevada Future of Learning Network Case Studies](#)

The information shared in this brief is based on the 2025 Virtual Winter Institute survey. There was a total of 276 respondents. The Virtual Winter Institute was hosted by the Nevada Association of School Administrators. This brief was made possible with the generous support of KnowledgeWorks and the Nevada Department of Education. For more information about KnowledgeWorks, please visit <https://knowledgeworks.org>.

Zweig, J., & Kennedy, K. (2026). Insights from the Nevada Future of Learning Network: Professional Development on Learner-centered Approaches. Retrieved from <https://www.nvfutureoflearning.org/jobs/evidence-based-one-page-briefs>.