

# University of Nevada, Reno, professor publishes study on public education finance systems

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Although education is the largest share of state and local government budgets, very little comprehensive information has been available on all 50 states related to state financing policies and programs for public elementary and secondary education. A new study provides comprehensive information on public K-12 education finance systems in each state, presented in themes such as funding for special student populations, accountability and equity issues.

Deborah Verstegen, University of Nevada, Reno professor of education finance, policy and leadership in the College of Education, conducted a study of public education finance systems across the United States, surveying all 50 states. She has now authored an article, "[Public Education](#) Finance Systems in the United States and Funding Policies for Populations with Special Educational Needs," presenting results and analysis of her research, recently published in the 2011 edition of *Education Policy Analysis Archives*.

"The apparent neglect of education finance policy research over the past several decades has created a large need for further research and development in this area," Verstegen said. "The search for the best model to use in funding education is a perennial concern and interest."

Earlier this year, Pearson, Inc. published a book by Verstegen and co-authors Vern Brimley Jr. and Rulon R. Garfield that included the survey

data, Financing Education in a Climate of Change. Verstegen discussed the survey's results at the National Education Finance Conference this year, where she was one of only 10 scholars in the country to receive a Distinguished Fellow Award in recognition for her work and research in K-12 education finance.

Verstegen is a recognized expert in equal education opportunity, as well as state and federal education finance policy, and has published extensively on these issues. She developed an education equity statistic, later used and named by scholars, the "Verstegen Index." She has consulted for local, state and federal governmental agencies throughout the country, and has repeatedly served as an expert witness in state school finance litigation. She is also the policy editor of the Journal of Education Finance.

"Dr. Verstegen's work is particularly timely and appropriate for policy makers to consider during these troubled economic times," said Chris Cheney, College of Education dean at the University of Nevada, Reno. "Her expertise provides the 'long view' we need when considering how the laws we enact now can affect our educational systems and outcomes in the future."

**More information:** [epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/769/923](http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/view/769/923)

Provided by University of Nevada, Reno

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