The Constitution of the State of Nevada (Article XI, Section I) instructed the first state Legislature to provide for a state Superintendent of Public Instruction and provide for a uniform system of common schools (Section II). This constitutional mandate was addressed by the 1864-1865 Legislature which provided for the election of a state superintendent of public instruction at each general election.

In 1895 the Legislature created the State Board of Education, naming the Governor as president, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction as secretary, and the State Surveyor-General as a member. In 1931 the membership of the Board was increased to seven: the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and five elective members, with the Superintendent serving as Secretary of the Board. An act of 1956 increased the membership to eight, all elective, with the Superintendent continuing to be the board's secretary. The biennial reports that the State Superintendent of Public Instruction submitted to the Governor previous to 1956 show that the report originated from the "State Department of Public Instruction," indicating how both the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education regarded their agency.

The statutory creation of the State Department of Education, however, took place on March 2, 1956, when the Legislature did create and specify the title of the Department. The Department consisted of the State Board of Education, State Board for Vocational Education, and State Textbook Commission; other agencies and officers were later added.

The Nevada Revised Statutes state that the purpose of the State Department of Education is "to exercise all administrative functions of the State relating to the supervision, management and control of schools..."

Although the school laws of 1864-1865 provided for the election of county school superintendents, with duties to visit the schools in the county, appoint school trustees, provide for teacher examinations, apportion district school moneys, and report yearly to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, there were no specific academic qualifications that would enable these officials to function effectively. To improve this situation the Legislature provided in 1907 for the appointment of five deputy superintendents to supervise their respective districts. Their offices could be regarded as branches of the State Department of Public Instruction.

**NOTE:** The Nevada State Archives does not have student records. For records of students in K-12 public schools contact the local school districts. For University of Nevada students contact the respective universities and community colleges. For records of defunct vocational and trade schools contact: