

Opinion: Education key to Nevada's diversification

By Buck Wargo, Las Vegas Sun

The people who champion low state taxes as a way to recruit businesses to Nevada are undermining the state's future by not advocating what businesses really need for success: better schools.

That is the conclusion reached by 40 community leaders who examined the role of education in diversifying Nevada's economy.

If low tax rates were the key to attracting businesses, Silicon Valley-style economic clusters would be sprouting in Nevada rather than in Northern California, Seattle, Boston or North Carolina's Research Triangle, the group said.

"Touting ourselves as a low tax state as the only reason people want to come here has proved to be a failure," said John Restrepo, principal of Restrepo Consulting Group and a member of the study group. "If low taxes were all we needed, and we have been touting that, we wouldn't have a 15 percent unemployment rate."

The group's report, "Nevada: 50th in the Nation for Education," emanated from a round-table discussion among representatives of banking, architecture, law enforcement, education, real estate and government.

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