




C I T Y O F  
**RENO**  
Memorandum

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**DATE:** February 11, 2026  
**TO:** Mayor and City Council  
**THROUGH:** Jackie Bryant, City Manager   
**FROM:** Cynthia Esparza, Director  
**DEPT:** Community Engagement and Services  
**SUBJECT:** Washoe County School District Internship Program

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To advance youth civic engagement and strengthen departmental capacity, the Community Engagement and Services Department launched a pilot high school internship program in fall 2025 in partnership with the Washoe County School District's (WCSD) Career Technical Education (CTE) program. Building on its success, positive feedback, and departmental interest generated, the program continued into spring 2026 semester.

This program provides students with hands-on experience in local government while earning academic credit. While there is no cost to the City, there is an administrative investment related to collaborating with WCSD, supporting the application process, onboarding, training, and intern supervision. Based on interest, students are assigned to host departments and supervised by a designated staff mentor, ensuring structured oversight, accountability, and high-quality learning experience.

**Fall 2025**

During the Fall 2025 launch semester, four students were placed across four City departments, including:

- City Clerk's Office
- Community Engagement and Services
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Safety Dispatch

Interns contributed approximately 240 total internship hours and supported priority departmental functions including administrative support, constituent communications, supporting front desks, research, and event coordination. They also developed practical skills and gained insight into public service, contributing to a more engaged and informed community. Key outcomes included improved turnaround time for routine tasks, increased staff capacity during peak periods, and exposure for students to public-sector careers. Feedback from both student interns and City staff was consistently positive, with student interns citing increased confidence and career clarity, and departments noting the value of added support and fresh perspectives.

### **Spring 2026**

The City welcomed eight students this semester. They are currently serving six departments and divisions and will provide a total of 480 internship hours this semester. Participating departments include:

- Arts and Culture
- City Clerk's Office
- Clean and Safe
- Licensing and Code Enforcement
- Parks and Recreation

At the conclusion of the current academic year, staff will evaluate the program, including available staff capacity, to determine long-term sustainability and possible program continuity.