

2017 Legislative Session Report



CCEA
Clark County Education Association
the **union**
of teaching
professionals

2017 Legislative Session Report

After 120 days, the 2017 Legislative Session has concluded. CCEA's preparation, persistence, and efforts paid off. Our priorities centered around these key areas: 1) Equity funding for CCSD students in need; 2) A fair evaluation system that eliminated state testing; 3) Collaborative school climate; 4) A dedicated funding stream for educators' salaries; 5) Peer Assistance and Review for first year educators in at-risk buildings; 6) Passage of AB469 to reorganize the school district into a site-based decentralized model and to put an end to the CCSD Trustees' efforts to block this change; 7) Modifying the Achievement School District law to provide more safeguards, rights, protections for parents and educators.

Five of CCEA's seven legislative priorities made it through the rigorous legislative process to Governor Sandoval's desk. All five bills have already been signed into law.



Won & Signed | SB178: Weighted Funding Formula Bill

Won & Signed | AB320: Evaluations Bill

Won & Signed | SB369: School Climate Bill

Won & Signed | SB300: Peer Assistance & Review Bill

Won & Signed | AB469: CCSD Reorganization Bill

Didn't Pass | SB547: Salary Incentive for Professional Growth

Didn't Pass | AB430: Achievement School District

We Attribute Our Success to These Key Factors:

- CCEA is issue based and works in a bipartisan approach with leadership from both sides of the aisle to secure sound public policy that would garner the Governor's signature. We developed and implemented a strategic plan based on this position;
- The collective efforts of the CCEA Lobby Team being active every day in Carson City and the field engagement carried out by member leaders in over 350 schools across CCSD;
- Ongoing engagement of and regular meetings with legislative leadership, the Governor's office and other key public education stakeholders such as the Department of Education; and
- Robust testimony from members who drew on their expertise to support legislation. This distinguished list includes National Board Certified Teachers, Consulting Teachers for the Peer Assistance & Review Program, the President of the Clark County School Librarians Association, and the President of the Nevada Association of School Psychologists to name a few.





Prior to the kickoff of the session educators had a very specific agenda that predated the 2016 election cycle and was the basis for our candidate endorsement process. We worked to get Jason Frierson elected and for him to assume the Assembly Speaker position. Once our election efforts paid off at the state level, the CCEA Executive Board and leadership team met with newly elected legislative leadership to finalize and lay the groundwork for our legislative agenda, determine bill sponsors, and develop suggested bill language. The CCEA leadership team went beyond presenting conceptual ideas. Documents were developed for legislative leadership that specifically outlined which part of the Nevada Revised Statute needed to be amended and most importantly why the changes were necessary. We continued to work with legislators and with their direction, the Legislative Council Bureau to craft the bill language for our priorities.

During the time leading up to the session, the CCEA Lobby Team reviewed and began tracking hundreds of Bill Draft Requests to determine their relevancy. We then analyzed the BDRs as bill language was available. If the bill was an education issue related to our priorities or an issue that impacted membership or public education funding, the bill was tracked throughout the 120 day period. We also met with legislators again, many newly elected, about CCEA's agenda just prior to the session. The CCEA Lobby Team testified on over 50 bills.

Once our bills were introduced, we moved to secure a legislative hearing. Securing the support of the legislative members of the Senate and Assembly Education Committees & Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means Committees was critical. We had to double-down to confirm bipartisan support so the bills could move to and pass each chamber floor vote. Without it, our bills would have died. During the hearings for our bills, CCEA was alongside the bill sponsor and served as the primary presenter. Keep in mind that unlike the 2015 Legislative Session, education wasn't the primary issue. There were hundreds of bills competing for legislators' time and attention each jockeying to move through the legislative process and to reach the coveted goal of being sent to the Governor's desk for his signature. The regular meetings CCEA leadership had with Senate and Assembly leadership throughout the session were critical. We knew that in order to be successful, there was no waiting to catch a break. Nor would we idly stand by to rattle our sabers at issues we opposed. To keep our forward momentum, it would take more than the behind the scenes discussions. Educators would have to contact legislators by droves and ask for their request by name.

LATs & Member Engagement In January, CCEA began reengaging member leaders to join our Legislative Action Team and to head up our field efforts. We had almost 100 Legislative Action Team Interns (LATs) and activists that represented 100 school buildings. In order to effectively execute the work of mobilizing educators to get involved, LATs attended trainings, stayed in close contact with their staff liaison, and attended monthly meetings for thorough briefings and debriefs. Our primary action was communicating directly with legislators via email, text message, phone call, lobbying and social media. Throughout the legislative session, LATs engaged over 6,000 educators who sent over 85,000 emails to legislators. An educator from every school across CCSD participated in our legislative efforts. LATs and member leaders weighed in with their expertise by testifying on several key bills including AB320: Evaluation Bill, SB300: Peer Assistance and Review, SB143: the Library in Every School Bill, SB369: School Climate, AB409: the Read by 3rd Grade Bill and more.



Legislative Events & Message Catalyst



Legislative Town Hall: CCEA hosted a Legislative Town Hall Meeting in April focused on equitable and adequate funding for at-risk students. Over 400 educators, parents and community advocates attended the event at Desert Pines High School. The focus of the questions and discussion was on SB178, the Weighted Funding legislation. Seven legislators including three of the bill sponsors for SB178 were in attendance.



Carson City Lobby Day: We had 100 educators, parents and students head to Carson City to advocate for our legislative priorities on April 10th. For many of the attendees, this was the first time they had visited the state's capitol to watch the legislative process in action. Educators met with legislators, attended committee hearings, and sat with legislators during the floor sessions. AB320, the Evaluations Bill and SB300, the Peer Assistance & Review Bill were heard in committee that day where several educators provided testimony. The day ended with a special meeting with Governor Sandoval where educators asked him about supporting CCEA's legislative priorities as well as other public education issues.



Opinion Editorials: Two Opinion Editorials authored by CCEA's Executive Director were published in the *Review Journal*. One op-ed published prior to the legislative session pertained to the dynamics and importance of cutting through grid-lock so we could attain accomplishment. The other op-ed pertained to the signing of AB469, legislation that memorialized the regulations crafted for the CCSD ReOrg.



Online: Over 50 videos of testimony for bills provided by the CCEA Lobby Team and member leaders was captured and posted on our website, Facebook & Twitter platforms. We also kept our feeds updated in real time with legislative developments. We soared to new heights using Twitter as a way to promote our advocacy efforts.



Ads: Two online ads were developed and disseminated throughout the session. One ad focused on the minimum wage debate that was happening in the state house asking legislators to start talking about education funding. The other ad provided a powerful visual of how many students with unique needs are left out of the Weighted Funding Formula and asked, "What's wrong with this picture?".



Blogs: CCEA's Executive Director authored eight legislative blog posts that focused on the relevant issues of the Weighted Funding Formula, Education Saving Accounts, and what the internal dynamics between parties meant for public education. These blogs were disseminated via social media, website and email blasts.

Again, a hearty thank you to the thousands of educators who were active and engaged throughout the legislative process. We will continue to keep everyone abreast as specific legislation goes into effect. Attached is a review of our priority bills and some of the bills the CCEA Lobby Team actively analyzed and tracked with a majority of which we testified on.

For a complete review of our over 50 testimony videos, please visit: <http://bit.ly/2017Testimony>

CCEA 2017 Legislative Priorities

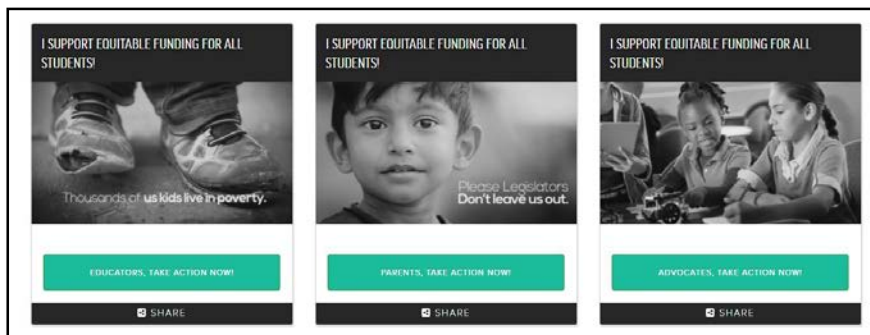
Passed: SB178 Weighted Funding Formula

CCEA Priority & Principle Architect: Signed by Governor

Sponsors: Senators Denis and Woodhouse, Assemblymen Diaz and Thompson

What the Bill Does:

- It is widely recognized in the legislature and with the Governor that CCEA led on developing the conceptual framework for the Weighted Funding Formula legislation.
- Cognizant that the political climate would not allow for a tax increase to fund the full implementation of the Weighted Funding Formula, CCEA introduced the concept of a Universal Weight that targets low proficiency students who are at the bottom 25% of achievement.
- CCEA played an integral role in the working group that included several stakeholders with competing interests on this bill. We led as the only policy voice representing educators.
- SB178 will bring more resources to Clark County to help low proficient students with the greatest need. Specifically, SB178 will provide \$1,200 additional dollars for English Language Learners and Free and Reduced Lunch qualified students who are in the bottom 25% of achievement in one and two star schools.
- In the end, the bill was funded at the \$72 million dollar level.



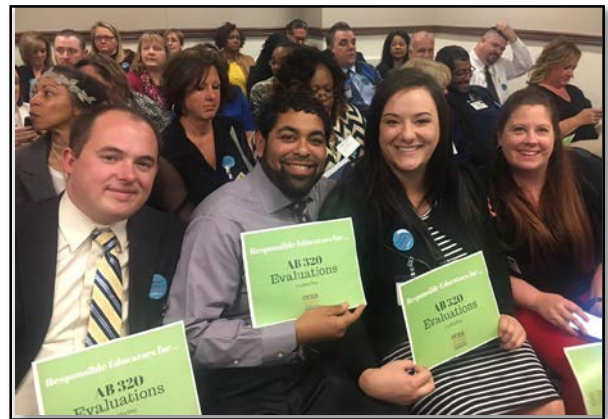
Passed: AB320: Evaluations

CCEA Priority & Principle Architect: Signed by the Governor

Sponsors: Speaker Frierson & Assemblyman Fumo

What the Bill Does:

- Building on our work from the 2015 Legislative Session, CCEA secured bill sponsorship from Speaker Frierson and was the principal architect on the issue of evaluations.
- As part of our efforts to build consensus and change the current law on evaluations, we worked with the Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC). The TLC is a group made up of teachers and community members, including CCEA's Vice President Theo Small, appointed by the Governor to advise the Department of Education Board.
- We knew this would be a difficult piece of legislation to secure support for from the Department of Education. By working with the Teachers and Leaders Council & Department of Education, *we successfully passed legislation that removes any use of state test scores from teacher evaluations.*
- This legislation also caps any use of formative, student learning goals, school, teacher or district assessment at 20% for the first year and 40% for the second year. Most importantly, we secured the Governor's signature on the bill.
- This bill ensures that educators would only be responsible for the students they directly work with and have a say in where they want to support their own professional practice.
- A vetoed bill would have left all educators stuck with state test scores and 40% as the percentage used for student outcomes for the upcoming year.



Passed: SB369: School Climate

CCEA Priority & Principle Architect: Signed by the Governor

Sponsors: Senators Ford, Woodhouse, Spearman, Denis, Segerblom, Atkinson, Cancela, Cannizzaro, Manendo, Parks and Ratti

What the Bill Does:

- CCEA recognizes how critical good school climate is for the Site-based Organizational Team members to have in every school. That's why we played the primary role in developing bill language that addresses the issue of school climate.
- This bill requires that School Districts ensure that there is a collaborative school climate among educators and the principal.
- This bill requires an investigation when 50% of the Site-Based Organizational Team or staff petition or when 5% of parents petition with concerns about school climate.
- The bill also requires teachers and administrators to get training in working collaboratively.



Passed: SB300: Peer Assistance & Review

CCEA Priority & Principle Architect: Signed by the Governor

Sponsor: Committee on Education

What the Bill Does:

- CCEA leadership developed bill language that would continue the work done in the 2015 session to fund a Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program. Similar to the previous session, CCEA leadership had to closely monitor this bill to ensure it moved through the legislative process and was funded.
- The PAR Program provides ongoing, yearlong support by dedicated mentors to new teachers working in the Turn Around Zone. New educators receive formal, systematic support during their first year.
- SB300 allocates \$1 million annually to support the PAR Program in Clark County, despite CCSD not assisting. We requested \$2 million annually.
- CCEA's efforts led to the passage of the bill and paved the way for Washoe County School District and rural counties to also receive funding.

Passed: AB469: CCSD ReOrg

CCEA: Support: Signed by Governor

Sponsor: Assemblymen Frierson and Paul Anderson; Senators Ford and Roberson

What the Bill Does:

- In the 2015 Legislative Session, CCEA worked with Legislative Leadership and the Governor to steer the passage of AB394, the CCSD ReOrg bill.
- CCEA's Executive Director and President were appointed to serve as part of the AB394 Technical Advisory Committee during the interim and CCEA led the efforts in crafting the final regulations.
- As a result, bipartisan legislation, Assembly Bill 469, was introduced and signed by the Governor to formalize the CCSD Reorganization regulations.
- This legislation puts an end to CCSD Board of Trustees' attempts to stop the reorganization through the courts.
- CCEA thanks the legislative leadership – Majority Leader Aaron Ford, Speaker Jason Frierson, Minority Leader Michael Roberson and Minority Floor Leader Paul Anderson - for working together to ensure that over 320,000 students will benefit from shifting autonomy and control from CCSD's control office to the schools.



Opposed: AB516: CCSD ReOrg Trailer

CCEA Opposed & Killed: No hearing provided

Sponsors: Assemblyman Frierson; Senator Ford

- With only a week in the session remaining, and despite the passage of AB469 the CCSD ReOrg Bill, legislation was introduced to delay the CCSD reorganization by a year, and reduced the funds that would go to the schools from the current 80% the district is required to do to 70%.
- CCEA led efforts to prevent this bill from getting any traction. Our Executive Director, John Vellardita was quoted in the NV Indy, "...the union was prepared to go toe-to-toe in opposition to the bill, and [he] characterized it as the latest attempt by district trustees to disrupt or delay the reorganization process."
- Our efforts paid off. The bill was met with staunch opposition and never received a committee hearing.
- AB516 died. Hopefully CCSD Trustees finally get the message and will stop obstructing the reorganization of the school district.

SB430: Supported: Achievement School District

CCEA Support: No Hearing in Ways & Means/ Died

Sponsor: Committee on Education

- CCEA advocated against AB448, the creation of the ASDs, in the 2015 Legislative Session. We were successful in limiting the number of schools that could be included from over 100 to six.
- Knowing that a straight repeal of AB448 would be vetoed by the Governor, CCEA worked to create a new option for ASDs that would protect parents, students and educators.
- The A+ Option creating autonomous schools was a compromise that would have provided more safeguards to educators, staff, and parents that the original bill and current law does not address.
- This bill would have allowed schools to remain autonomous where the principal, staff and parents have 100% control of the school in lieu of going into an ASD.
- This option was in lieu of a school being moved into an ASD controlled by a Charter Management Organization.
- The union contract would have been left intact.
- Unfortunately, this bill did not pass and now we are left with the current ASD bill which provides no options for parents, no rights for educators and staff who are left in the building, and a takeover by a charter management organization.



SB547: Salary Incentive for Professional Growth

CCEA Priority & Principle Architect: Died in the Assembly Ways & Means Committee

Sponsor: Senate Majority Leader Aaron Ford

What the Bill Does:

- CCEA never gave up on efforts to have legislation introduced that would create a groundbreaking dedicated funding stream for salary advancement. Our efforts were unprecedented. Nowhere in the country has a teacher organization come as close as we did to secure legislation guaranteeing to pay educators as professionals.
- After Senate Majority Leader Ford agreed to sponsor the emergency bill, with only days remaining in the session, SB547 was introduced. Specifically, this legislation would have required CCSD to reserve money to pay for column movements once educators have completed their PGP. CCEA had comprehensive discussions with the Legislative Council Bureau on the bill language. The bill required extensive legal vetting before the language was accepted.
- Despite sailing through the Senate with a 20-1 bipartisan vote, mounting pressure, and thousands of emails sent by educators, this bill did not receive a hearing in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee. This was a decision made by Democrats. CCEA is in discussion with them over their inaction.

Other Key Bills CCEA Worked On & the Majority Testified On:

Support: Victory Schools: AB447

Sponsor: Committee on Education

Description: Victory Schools, modeled after Zoom School, are designed to target at-risk students living in poverty. This bill continues the funding for Victory Schools for \$30 million over the biennium.

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: Zoom Schools: SB390

Sponsors: Senators Denis and Woodhouse; Assemblymen Diaz and Thompson

Description: Zoom School Program designed to provide additional services for English Language Learners is yielding positive results. This bill continues the Zoom School Program funding for the 2017-2019 biennium.

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: Code of Ethics: AB124

Sponsor: Diaz and Tolles

Description: This bill requires the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to establish the Nevada Model Code of Educator Ethics governing interpersonal interactions and certain communications by teachers, administrators and other employees with pupils. CCEA's Vice President, Theo Small, worked closely on crafting the amended bill language with the bill sponsor. AB124 sets up a commission to take action on creating a state-wide educator ethics. The language of the bill is based upon a National Model Code of Educator Ethics. Vice President Small served on the National Committee that impacts teachers, administrators & support professionals. This would not take the place of Other Licensed Professional Ethical Codes, such as School Counselors etc, but would be a tool for all educators to use as a guide for current and future educators to face the complexities of P-12 education. Please reach out to CCEA if you are interested in sitting on this new state commission.

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: DSA Funding: SB544

Sponsor: Committee on Finance

Description: This bill is the backbone of K-12 funding and is required to be the first line item funding in the state budget. SB544 ensures that there is sufficient funding for K-12 public education for the 2017-2019 biennium.

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: Library & Librarian in Every School Bill: SB143

Description: This bill would have required that each public school establish and maintain a school library that is staffed by a licensed librarian and have the State Board adopt regulations for the minimum requirements for a school library. With a very well-attended committee hearing, over 20 librarians from across CCSD testified sharing the incredible resources and instruction librarians contribute.

Unfortunately, due to the fiscal note, the bill never made it out of the Senate Committee on Finance.

Sponsor: Senator Harris

Status: Died

Support: Read by 3rd Grade: AB409

Description: CCEA member and President of the Nevada Association of School Psychologists, Dr. Katie Dockweiler, presented with the bill sponsor and proposed taking the Read by 3rd Grade program a step further to expand upon the intervention components to enhance the overall literacy skills of Nevada's elementary students. She testified that Assembly Bill 409 would positively impact student achievement, increase social-emotional well-being of students, decrease the drop-out rate, increase the graduation rate, increase autonomy of school sites, and align accountability to produce the ultimate yield for the intent. Unfortunately, the bill did not move forward.

Sponsor: Assembly Education Committee

Status: Died

Support: High-Stakes Testing Audit: SB303

Description: Requires an audit of certain performance assessments conducted in public schools.

Sponsors: Senators Woodhouse, Ford, Manendo, Denis, Parks, Cancela, Harris, Ratti, Segerblom and Spearman; Assemblymen Carlton and Fumo

Status: Signed by the Governor

Education Saving Accounts: SB506

Description: Prior the beginning of the session, CCEA went on the record stating the ESAs would be *the* key issue to any compromise between the Democrats and the Republicans. In the end, we were right. And though the Democrats reached no agreement with Republicans on ESAs, in part because the Republicans overreached on their demands making a deal on ESAs impossible, in the end a compromise was reached. Funding the Opportunity Scholarships was the compromise. A voucher is a voucher. However, in recognition of the imperative need to keep moving the needle forward, we weren't willing to let political grandstanding be our fall back position. Given what's happening nationally with public education and the Trump administration, it is clear that in Nevada politics the fight for funding ESAs isn't going away.

Sponsor: Committee on Education

Status: Died

Support: Criminal Records for Educator at Charters & More: AB77

Description: This is an extensive bill that includes reporting and monitoring of criminal records for educator at charter schools, the expansion of the Commission for Professional Standards in Education committee to include a member representing Early Childhood, adding a pre-evaluation fee for new teachers and language for reciprocity for licensure.

Sponsor: Committee on Education

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: Progressive Student Discipline: SB386

Description: Student behavioral issues are something that impact all educators and licensed personnel. The bill requires the principal to establish a Review Committee and expands coverage to include other school facilities beyond the classroom setting. SB386 expands upon a good law that addresses a need.

Sponsor: Woodhouse, Denis, Segerblom, Ford, Spearman, Atkinson and Cancela

Status: Signed by Governor Sandoval

Support: AB64: Diploma for Special Education Pupils

Description: Revises requirements for receipt of a high school diploma for special education pupils allowing students who want to work or pursue other endeavors to not be held back by this prerequisite. The bill will also allow for diplomas to retroactively be granted to those up to the age 22 who have already completed the requirements.

Sponsor: Committee on Education

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: SB241: STEM/ STEAM Seal

Description: Provides for the establishment of the State Seal of STEM Program and the State Seal of STEAM Program for students who complete the curriculum.

Sponsor: Senators Woodhouse, Ratti, Cannizzaro, Cancela, Parks, Atkinson, Denis, Farley, Ford, Manendo, Segerblom and Spearman; Assemblymen Carrillo, Monroe-Moreno, Diaz, Neal and Fumo

Status: Signed by the Governor

Support: SB20: Repeals Requirement to Pass NV Law, Constitution

Description: CCSD's bill on repealing the requirement to pass NV Law, Constitution.

Sponsor: Committee on Education

Status: Signed by the Governor



2017 CCEA Lobby Day, Carson City, Nevada