

March 17, 2021

Nevada Senate Committee on Education
C/O Chair Senator Moises Denis
401 S Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Re: Public Comment for March 17, 2021: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR S-1003)

Hello and thank you Committee Chair Denis, and committee members. My name is Hawah Ahmad, and I am here representing the Clark County Education Association, reading public comment for our President, Marie Neisess.

The Clark County Education Association (CCEA) represents more than 18,000 licensed professionals in the Clark County School District. We are the largest independent teacher's union in the country and in the State of Nevada. We engage in bipartisan advocacy for advancing public education in Nevada.

CCEA is testifying in neutral on Senator Bill 173. There is no question that academic opportunities to address learning loss are a necessary component of the K-12 education system following this post-pandemic world. We support the formation of a program with summer school opportunities for our students who have suffered academically from the pandemic. We would like to commend the sponsors of this bill for their passion for ensuring that every student in Nevada is given an opportunity to reduce learning loss attributed to the disparities of access and equity and appreciate the sponsors' efforts to move this bill and reach out to us.

CCEA is testifying in neutral because we need additional clarification on the role of NDE in approving academic plans submitted by a school district. Additionally, CCEA needs to understand the role of NDE as the fiscal mediator between federal dollars and school districts. Currently, the fiscal parameters of the summer learning plan have not been detailed. For example, is there a limited amount of funds or a cap that a District can access? All summer learning plans are in large part contingent upon the fiscal impact. CCEA is concerned that there will be a fiscal cap on the federal dollars given to our state for education that will inhibit flexibility to provide our educators with incentives to return to the classroom over the summer.

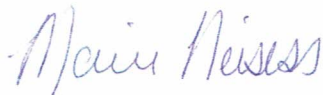
As it stands, it will be a very difficult push to get our educators to return to the classroom over the summer. Many of our educators have put long hours into distance learning and are already overwhelmed with the transition to in-person learning. To get our educators back in the classroom for summer, we need flexibility to provide incentives and create collective bargaining agreements with CCSD to ensure that our teachers are supported as the heroes every Nevadan called them when this pandemic began. Further, CCEA needs flexibility to ensure that special education and specialized instructional support personnel can be on-campus to help address our students' special education, mental health, and behavioral health needs. To ensure that students receive the support they need and deserve, CCEA needs flexibility regarding the compensation levels for educators and support personnel. The current draft and amendment of the bill says the rate of compensation for an educator is their regular contract rate or whatever may be in a collective bargaining agreement however, we know from experience that amount will not be enough

to get the number of educators needed to support summer learning. More flexible language will help us get there.

Depending on the fiscal availability, we do not know if SB173 is feasible. Given the presence of other summer learning opportunities, such as ESY and 21st Century, we want to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and instead provide an impactful opportunity for students to get back on track.

We must reiterate that we appreciate the intent of this bill but want to ensure that our educators are supported so that the education provided to students is impactful. We look forward to working with this bill's sponsors, and our bargaining partner, CCSD, to continue conversations about summer learning opportunities. We are committed to making this happen and are actively working towards ensuring that the K-12 education delivery system is optimally funded. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,



Marie Neisses, President
Clark County Education Association



Hawah Ahmad, Lobbyist
Clark County Education Association