



Clark County Education Association



March 31, 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 1, 2021 Senate Education Hearing SB230: Establishes provisions related to mental health. (BDR 34-82)**

Hello and thank you Committee Chair Denis, and committee members. My name is Brenda Pearson, and I am here representing the Clark County Education Association.

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 support on Senate Bill 230. The pandemic continues to highlight the structural neglect and the lack of prioritization of the mental health resources we provide our students in Nevada. Senate Bill 230 creates opportunities for educators to develop or strengthen their ability to identify potential mental health or substance use disorders. Knowledge is power and we know that educators are keenly aware of minute changes in the affect and disposition of students in their care. Additionally, the requirement for all those who provide training to participate in a mental health first aid course ensures the accuracy and consistency of information shared with school staff.

Often overseen is the plight of the educator in terms of mental health and resources. One astute educator serving in an at-risk middle school in CCSD described the experience of distance learning during the pandemic as "compassion fatigue." A constant focus on the wellness of students requires a level of compassion and empathy in all actions. Although Senate Bill 230 calls for the submission of a report on the effects of distance education on educators, CCEA believes that this will only reveal the much needed supports our educators need as well.

CCEA thanks the sponsors of this bill for bringing it forth. We caution the sponsors to consider the definition of distance education at this time and how it may evolve post-pandemic and in the future. We must ensure that these supports are long-term and that we continue to build awareness and understanding of mental health and substance use disorders in our schools.

Respectfully,  
Brenda Pearson, Ph.D.  
Clark County Education Association