

April 26, 2021

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

**Re: Public Comment for Senate Education Hearing AB67: Revises provisions relating to education.
(BDR 34-293)**

Good afternoon Committee Chair Denis,

My name is Dr. Brenda Pearson, and I am here representing the Clark County Education Association (CCEA).

CCEA is in testifying in neutral on AB67. This bill provides much needed clarity to ensure restorative practices are implemented. The addition of definitions for “expulsion,” “permanent expulsion,” and “suspension” will pair very well with the additional requirements prescribed in AB194 and will help to standardize the approach to restorative justice across all seventeen school districts. However, the designation to include pupils with disabilities in student disciplinary procedures may end up negatively impacting students more than intended. This session, the judiciary committees have heard many bills discussing the competency of a minor and whether that competency should be measured similarly to an adult. Much like that quandary, we must ask whether a child with a physical or intellectual disability should be treated similarly to any other child when we are already trying to change our approach to prevent recidivism.

The successful implementation of AB67, AB194 and preceding student discipline bills must be built upon a strong foundation of restorative practices. Today, there is no such foundation in Clark County so a movement from traditional behavior management to restorative practices must encompass robust supports, including ongoing training and coaching. In short, a move to restorative practices requires both a change in the behavior of the educator AND the student.

CCEA appreciates the intent of this bill, but we ask that the sponsors look to the significant publication materials on juvenile justice to ensure that these changes are something that will be standardized, unbiased, and easy for our educators to adopt and students to understand. CCEA also asks that this committee look to increase funding in this area by optimally funding SB543. Without funding, implementation of effective restorative practices will not happen. Funding SB543 optimally will ensure educators have the tools and training needed to reduce recidivism and address the school to prison pipeline. Though we will be able to utilize a percentage of our ESSER funds for implementation of this bill, one-time funds will not support a statewide transition to restorative practices. Fully funding SB543 will impact the academic outcomes of our students, as well as the behavioral outcomes. CCEA understands that it takes both the Democrats and Republicans, under the Governor’s leadership, to be able to introduce and pass new revenue needed to fund SB543 but failing to do so is tells Nevada’s families and

students that we are not vested in their future. We do not have time to wait for another legislative session to find and pass new revenue to put the restorative practices and futures of our students first.

Thank you again to the committee for hearing this bill, and we look forward to continuing the restorative justice conversation as it pertains to education.

Respectfully,

Brenda Pearson, Ph.D.
Clark County Education Association