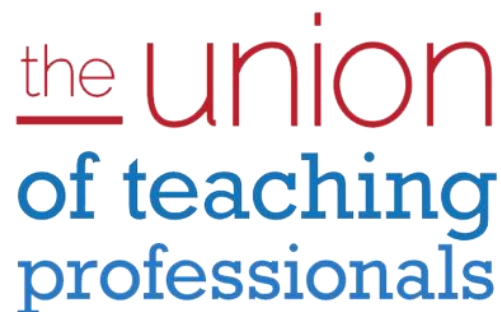




Clark County Education Association



April 7, 2021

Nevada Senate Committee on Education

C/O Chair Senator Moises Denis

401 S Carson Street

Carson City, NV 89701

Re: Public Comment for Senate Education Hearing SB120: Revises provisions relating to school administrators. (BDR 34-183)

Hello and thank you, Chairman Denis, and committee members. My name is Marie Neisess, and I am the president of the Clark County Education Association.

CCEA is in support of SB120. As an educator, I was blessed with working for administrators who cultivated a collaborative environment resulting in educators and staff feeling valued and supported. Not every educator in the Clark County School District is that lucky. In 2019 legislation was passed that removed key accountability provisions regarding school administrators.

The support of an administrator plays a vital role in the success of educators, staff, students, and the community in general. Administrators are the instructional leaders of a school. An administrator can have the most substantial impact on a school by positively influencing staff, and supporting healthy working conditions. Educators and staff should be able to look to administrators for guidance, mentorship, and opportunities to collaborate to put our students' academic achievement first.

However, since a change in the law in 2019, we have seen that this is not the case across the district. Instead of holding our administrators to the highest professional standards, they have a one-year probationary period due to the law change. That is in contrast to teachers who have three years' probation, and then if they go two years in a row with unsatisfactory evaluation, they are placed back on probation.

Schools with a bad school climate leave educators in situations that cause them to leave, and as a result, student achievement suffers because of high staff turnover. Most importantly, the community is negatively impacted. The 2019-2020 school year saw over 17 schools where the school climate was so bad because of an ineffective administrator that most educators transferred out of the building. Half of these schools ended up in the press because parents objected to these ineffective administrators' tactics. Due to the rollback in administrative accountability in the 2019 legislative session, there were no incentives to address school climate issues, which negatively impacted student achievement.

CCEA

Clark County Education Association

the union
of teaching
professionals

Retaining educators has always been an enormous issue for CCSD, and ineffective administrators can cause educator turnover. SB120 aims to provide higher standards for administrators than they currently have. Instead of a one-time, one-year probationary period, administrators will be placed back on their original 3- year probationary period. If 50% of a teaching staff transfers, and a school climate survey reveals that school climate is the reason for transfer, administrators will be given professional development opportunities. If another 40% of teachers leave in year two, then the principal will be subject to immediate dismissal but can still be retained elsewhere in the district.

Administrators who engage in effective leadership have nothing to worry about. Just like educators are held accountable, administrators should also have accountability. SB120 aims to address the lack of professional development that administrators are given and provide an incentive to take every opportunity for administrators to become the best leaders they can be. CCEA agrees that administrators should be provided professional development geared towards improving their leadership skills to ensure they can be successful and effective in leading their school. However, we also believe that administrators should be held to the same standards as educators across the state, with similar probationary periods and requirements to ensure that their teachers are not leaving in large majorities over school climate issues because the students of Nevada cannot afford to lose more educators.

The measures in SB120 will hold all administrators accountable for creating a positive, collaborative, and safe environment where educators will look forward to going to work every day. I urge you to vote yes on SB120. It is time for us to clean up statute and devise a process that gives everyone notice as to what is expected to ensure that we put the students of Nevada first.

Respectfully,



Marie Neisess, President
Clark County Education Association