

April 5, 2021

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

Re: Public Comment for April 5, 2021: SB126: Revises provisions relating to library services in public schools. (BDR 34-76)

Good afternoon, Committee Chair Denis, and committee members. My name is Hawah Ahmad, and I am graduate of Washoe County School District, representing the Clark County Education Association. The Clark County Education Association (CCEA) is the official bargaining partner for the Clark County School District and represents more than 18,000 licensed professionals, including school librarians. We engage in bipartisan advocacy for advancing public education in Clark County and Nevada.

CCEA is testifying in support on Senate Bill 126. After consultation with our librarians, CCEA proposed to the Sponsor of this bill that Section 7 subsection 2 be amended to allow for flexibility for alternative routes to licensure programs and changes the “and” to an “or” for the requirement that an individual must hold an associate degree or higher in library sciences. Additionally, we proposed taking out the stringent language requiring 7,000 square feet for a library to be a designated classroom or open area that is accessible to students during school hours. The hope is that the bill will stimulate a new era for libraries across every school in Nevada, to shift focus away from size to the quality and access of the library.

As a child, I used my school library to give me access to books that opened doors to adventure, knowledge, and growth; it is CCEA’s intent that this bill, with its amendments, will provide the same opportunities to every student in Nevada. Lastly, in Section 10, subsection 2, sub-subsection (b) we are asking that the “and” be turned into an “or” with the Nevada Department of Education being the entity to prescribe regulations for certification of a professional school library media specialist, pursuant to the Nevada Administrative Code. We would like to thank Senator Dondero Loop for listening to the concerns of our librarians and look forward to expanding how we leverage technology within our schools, utilizing our libraries as key resources.

We would like to thank Senator Dondero Loop for bring this bill forward and are looking forward to doing all we can to ensure that libraries are kept updated and accessible to our students, especially as we move forward in our post pandemic world.

Respectfully,
Hawah Ahmad
Lobbyist
Clark County Education Association