

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-ninth Session
February 7, 2017**

The Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Moises Denis at 3:31 p.m. on Tuesday, February 7, 2017, in Room 2149 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412E of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Moises Denis, Chair
Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Vice Chair
Senator Tick Segerblom
Senator Pat Spearman
Senator Don Gustavson
Senator Scott Hammond
Senator Becky Harris

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Todd Butterworth, Policy Analyst
Asher Killian, Counsel
Shelley Kyle, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Nicole Rourke, Associate Superintendent, Community & Government Relations,
Clark County School District
Andre Yates, Director, Human Capital Management Services, Clark County
School District
Jodie Carter
Stephanie Laramie
Anna Slighting, HOPE, Honoring Our Public Education
Lindsay Anderson, Director, Government Affairs, Washoe County School District
Jessica Ferrato, Nevada Association of School Boards
Mary Pierczynski, Nevada Association of School Superintendents

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Jared Busker, Children's Advocacy Alliance
Patrick Gavin, Executive Director, State Public Charter School Authority
Justin Harrison, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce
John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association
David Gomez, Nevada Peace Alliance
Stephen Augspurger, Executive Director, Clark County Association of School
Administrators and Professional-Technical Employees
Dena Durish, Deputy Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and Family
Engagement, Department of Education
David W. Carter, State Board of Education, District 2
Bonnie McDaniel
Patricia Jesinoski
Juanita Clark, Charleston Neighborhood Preservation

CHAIR DENIS:

We will begin the meeting and review the Senate Committee on Education Rules
for the 2017 Session ([Exhibit C](#)).

SENATOR SEGERBLOM MOVED TO ADOPT THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON EDUCATION RULES FOR THE 2017 SESSION.

SENATOR HARRIS SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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TODD BUTTERWORTH (Policy Analyst):

The Committee has received a copy of the Committee Brief ([Exhibit D](#)).
Chair Denis requested an overview of education legislation from the past decade
to be included in the Committee Brief. The history begins just before the
Great Recession and concludes in 2013.

I will give presentations covering previous sessions in upcoming meetings.
Today, I will talk about the 2015 Session.

During the 2015 Session, the Senate Committee on Education considered a
total of 87 bills: 57 Senate Bills and 30 Assembly Bills. Seventy-one of those
bills passed out of the Committee.

The Legislature approved 57 of those measures and none were vetoed by the Governor. Of the original 87 measures that came through this Committee, two-thirds were signed into law.

At the end of each session, I compile notes of the significant legislation passed through the Senate Committee on Education. This information is included in the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) *Summary of Legislation*. This is a great publication to refer to, if you want a brief overview of any bill from a past session. The electronic link to the publication is shown on page eight.

On a large scale, the 2015 Session considered three general policy areas during the Session.

The first was modernizing the State's funding formula for K-12 education for more monies allocated for students with greater needs: students in lower incomes; English Language Learners (ELL); Gifted and Talented Education and students with disabilities.

The second broad policy area was improving literacy instruction in the early grades—a basis for improving student achievement in the later years. This effort was primarily centered on the Zoom and Victory Schools and the Read by Grade Three program.

The third group of policy measures sought to strengthen the State's teaching corps and to attract new teachers into the profession.

In addition to these three macro efforts for the 2015 Session, the Legislature rolled out Statewide full-day kindergarten for the first time in the State's history. It also called for the reorganization of the Clark County School District (CCSD); passed a law protecting student data privacy; and created a Spending and Government Efficiency Commission to examine spending and efficiency in K-12 education. Nevada's charter schools authorization and accountability law was strengthened and now is one of the best in the Country. A legislative audit was called for the class size reduction program which has been completed and can be accessed online. Also, the Legislature enacted measures to improve schools response to bullying; and created the Safe2Tell program, a lasting legacy to our late friend, Senator Debbie Smith.

This Committee was incredibly busy last Session and now Nevada educators are putting these laws into action.

During the Legislative Interim two bodies of education convened: the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE), a statutory interim committee and the Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District.

The LCE has submitted nine bill draft requests (BDRs) for the 2017 Session relating to expanding the availability of competency based education; clarifying when a student with a disability ages out of special education; simplifying the guidelines and processes of teacher licensure; making class size reduction requirements applicable to charter schools; repealing and replacing the P-20W Advisory Council; creating an interim task force on school leader management; streamlining and studying K-12 reporting statutes and creating a dual language emersion program. During Session, you will hear some or all of the LCE bills. All were recommended unanimously by that Committee.

In the weeks ahead, you can anticipate hearing about other education topics in this Committee, in the Senate Committee on Finance or on the Floor of the Senate.

Modernization of the K-12 funding formula is a phasing-in process that continues. The process includes early childhood education; teacher training and licensure; the elimination of performance gaps between groups of students; workforce development through the coordination of K-12 and higher education; and the alignment of State policy to the new federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015.

Beginning on page 10 of the Committee Brief, I have included a list of BDRs that are at least loosely education-related. As of January 30, 2017, there were 99 education BDRs. A significant portion of them will come to the Senate and Assembly Committees on Education. Again, this Session, education is an important topic to be discussed.

Pages 17 through 19 review trending education topics nationally in K-12 and higher education. These two-plus pages are worth a quick read.

On pages 19 and 20, I have listed 10 of the more significant education reports required in statute.

Beginning on page 21, you will find a list of 15 education-related publications LCB staff has written for your information and can be accessed electronically. Included are links to the most recent education audits conducted by the Legislative Auditor; a primer on the *Nevada Plan for School Finance* and a list of significant educational governance and policy entities in Nevada.

The Legislative Counsel Bureau's most significant education publication is The Education Data Book, with data and information on education in Nevada. The 2017 edition will be printed soon and will be available online.

Education acronyms are listed on pages 24 through 26 and finally there is contact information for the key stakeholders in education.

I have provided you with one additional document. *No Time to Lose* is a report from the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Senator Woodhouse and I had the pleasure to be involved in the group. The NCSL convened a bipartisan group of 25 legislators who met during the past 2 years to study nations with high performing education systems.

This report contains the study group's findings and provides a high-level blueprint for building a world-class system of education.

CHAIR DENIS:

We will begin the hearing on Senate Bill (S.B.) 20.

SENATE BILL 20: Revises provisions relating to educational personnel.
(BDR 34-342)

NICOLE ROURKE (Associate Superintendent, Community & Government Relations, Clark County School District):

Senate Bill (S.B.) 20 is an effort to help CCSD's recruitment of teachers and the requirements for teacher licensure. We recruit teachers from across the country. There are a number of requirements teachers must meet specific to Nevada. We want to shorten the list of requirements to help in our recruitment of teachers.

There is a national teacher shortage and we are competing with other states in teacher recruitment. We want to limit the requirements to come to Nevada and be able to provide reciprocity with other states. This would encourage students and teachers to go into the profession.

Section 1, subsection 1, addresses requirements for the Commission on Professional Standards to adopt regulations governing examinations for the initial licensing of teachers and other education personnel.

We have eliminated three requirements: The laws of Nevada relating to schools; the *Constitution of the State of Nevada*; and the *Constitution of the United States of America*.

Remaining in section 1, subsection 1 are the examinations to test the ability of the applicant to teach and the applicant's knowledge of each specific subject he or she proposes to teach. We want CCSD teachers to know the content they teach in their classrooms.

Subsection 2 of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 391.090 addresses those same tests and also is repealed. This addresses educational personnel to show knowledge in the United States Constitution and Nevada's Constitution.

Clark County School District is competing for teachers with many other states that do not have these three requirements.

The Nevada Constitution, Nevada School Law and United States Constitution, are not required content areas for lower grades such as Grade 2, algebra and foreign languages. When teaching United States government or social studies, the teachers will get this specific knowledge in their content area and will be tested on this in the Praxis testing.

I want to share some numbers about our recruitment. For the 2015-2016 school year, CCSD hired 2,200 teachers. This year, from August 21, 2016 through December 15, 2016, we hired 1,898 teachers. In the past 10 years, the yearly average number of teachers hired is 1,699.

We have developed ways to help in teacher recruitment. We have negotiated a new teacher salary schedule; developed a professional growth plan and to encourage teachers, we increased the starting salary to \$40,900. We continue to work on recruitment tools.

ANDRE YATES (Director, Human Capital Management Services, Clark County School District):

I am also the Director of Licensure for CCSD and oversee all teacher licensing. I track and monitor the 18,000 licensed employees of CCSD.

For a new teacher in the district, it is daunting to have provisions listed on his or her license. Each of the provisions equates to money from a teacher's pocket.

We compete nationally for teachers because our local supply is not large enough to meet demand for teachers. To be more competitive, we looked at the teachers' requirements, in addition to the new requirements, to determine which requirements have a direct impact on student achievement. We determined the three requirements proposed to be eliminated do not bring value to the classroom and have no direct impact on student achievement.

JODIE CARTER:

This is my first year in CCSD as a teacher of the hearing impaired. I have had a stressful issue weighing on my mind for quite some time.

To give you a glimpse into my world, I teach deaf and hard of hearing students with varying ability levels. I am trying to plan based on each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP).

In addition to planning, teaching and grading, I am doing special education paperwork, such as IEPs and progress reports. There is not much time during the school day to complete this paperwork. At the end of the day, the paperwork comes home with me.

Also, I am required to complete onboarding hours, professional development such as contract units, a professional growth plan and track data throughout the school year for both me and my students.

Completing this required course work would take valuable time away from the work I need to be doing and learning. These classes do not have any bearing on my students' achievements. They add additional stress. I replaced a teacher who felt her career and livelihood were on the line because of these classes.

Because of our low salaries, I enrolled in a master's program last summer to further my education. I am unable to continue in the program because the three

classes as provisions on my license take priority. Completing a master's degree would better serve me and my students than the three class provisions on my license.

My love is for teaching. These requirements make the job seem less enjoyable. Why make things harder than they have to be? Many Nevada teachers come from out of state. Please consider doing what is best. If it is absolutely necessary, please make it easier, more accessible and less expensive.

STEPHANIE LARAMIE:

I began as a teacher in 2003. I began with a residency certificate, qualified for a standard certificate and later obtained my professional certificate. Prior to relocating to Las Vegas last December, I taught high school English in Washington State, overseas on Ramstein Air Force Base and in Wyoming.

In December, I accepted a position with CCSD as a reading teacher and simultaneously applied for my Nevada teaching certificate. I received the license with no less than seven provisions to complete. Three provisions are to be completed prior to December 2017 and four before 2019.

As a teacher who has held certificates in various states and has taught for the Department of Defense, I was quite shocked to see the provisions. As a professional teacher and one who represents many others, I wanted to come before you today to urge you to remove unnecessary requirements placed on my certificate in Nevada.

To require teachers to take and pass examinations in Nevada School Law, the Nevada Constitution and the United States Constitution has no direct correlation with student achievement in the classroom.

In many ways, these requirements become an undue hardship. One of which is teacher retention. It takes my own time, outside of the classroom, to research the provisions I am not familiar with; obtain study guides, one of which is a book I could only purchase at the University of Las Vegas (UNLV) bookstore; study for the exams and maybe take a course and schedule time to take the tests.

Outside of the classroom, on my own time I am attending professional development opportunities and grading papers, 180 papers to be specific when I

collect one assignment, an average of 600 papers per week. Also, during this time, I am planning meaningful and rigorous curriculums aligned with Common Core State Standards and consistent with my colleagues'.

There is also a financial obligation. If tests are taken separately, the cost per test is \$100. Please help to keep the teachers' certificate for those proven qualified educators.

MS. ROURKE:

For new teachers coming into Nevada and new to the profession, we require their participation in professional development. This class requires 45 hours of the teacher's own time. If they participate in the hiring incentives set forth in S.B. No. 511 of the 78th Session, they must perform another 30 to 60 hours to work in Appendix A schools or Title I schools where there are significant at-risk populations. It is important teachers spend their time in course work or professional development.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

Before graduating from a Nevada university, I believe there is a requirement to take a Nevada Constitution class that is usually imbedded within the United States Constitution class for students who come here before they graduate. Students graduate from Nevada universities with this background and knowledge.

Teachers coming from other states may have knowledge of a state constitution where they graduated and would not have the knowledge of the Nevada Constitution and Nevada School Law. I understand the two teachers who testified that these examinations do not help them with their student achievement. However, they are part of the process and now have a better understanding how government works.

How will we handle the requirement for students attending our State universities and new people coming in? Are you suggesting we remove the requirement we have now in our State universities?

MS. ROURKE:

We are not suggesting the requirement be removed from the universities' programs. We could provide a copy of the Nevada Constitution to ensure the new teachers would have the information.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

Mr. Yates mentioned a committee made a list and decided these were items that could be removed to provide easier access in a teacher's pathway to receive a license. What else was on this list?

MR. YATES:

We looked at the provisions typically issued on a license. Many are Praxis testing and those are competency based tests that demonstrate a teacher's competency for his or her area of instruction. These are key tests that measure and relate to the former No Child Left Behind, currently ESSA. These are critical provisions that do bring value to student achievement and have some type of measurement.

There is a new requirement for a parental involvement and family engagement class which is only a class and not a test option. This was adopted by the Legislature and parental engagement is key to the success of students. This is a valuable provision. We determined the provisions could be removed from the license.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

For years, I taught the Nevada Constitution class at UNLV and was required to take the test and pay the fee. I did receive value from the class and still see value in the Nevada School Law portion.

Teachers have said Nevada School Law has been important to know in the classroom and have referred to it at times in their daily teaching. In these times, we need to be aware of lawsuits.

I am concerned about the Nevada School Law portion of this bill. Will we need to adopt a regulation stating how teachers would receive information regarding Nevada School Law?

MS. ROURKE:

There are training requirements throughout the statutes. A requirement in Nevada School Law is for school districts to train on safe and respectful learning environments and CCSD covers this thoroughly. In professional development, there are topics covered that are in Nevada School Law.

Another example is training given to our teachers before they participate in IEP meetings. Teachers are well trained and made aware of their roles on the IEP teams and a parent's educational rights.

These are examples where Nevada School Law is covered in other ways. We would be willing to work with you if you feel a different provision is needed.

SENATOR HARRIS:

We have discussed removing the test and have not discussed what the test entails. What is the content of the test? How many questions are on the test? What is the rigor of the test?

MS. ROURKE:

The Nevada School Law test consists of 70 questions, the Nevada Constitution, 55 questions and the United States Constitution, 55 questions. Having not taken the tests, I do not know the rigor of the exams.

MR. YATES:

Over the years, I have spoken to numerous teachers who have lost their positions as a result of Nevada School Law and sometimes the Nevada Constitution. Not often is it because of the United States Constitution.

On average, we lose five to ten licensed employees each year based on the unsuccessful pass rate of the tests. This does not include our substitutes. These provisions prevail on the substitute licenses, as well.

When a teacher moves from Nevada and the provisions expire on his or her license, the license becomes invalid. They cannot return to the State to teach without successfully passing the tests.

The tests are only offered locally in southern and northern Nevada. If the applicant has an invalid Nevada license and lives in another state, it creates a challenge and expense for the applicant to travel to Nevada to take the tests and be considered for employment.

CHAIR DENIS:

What is the cost to take the tests?

MS. ROURKE:

The tests are given twice a year. Collectively, the cost is \$60. Individually, the cost is more. There are other times the tests are made available based on need. The costs escalate as additional opportunities are provided.

SENATOR HARRIS:

What are the numbers of teachers we hire from out of state?

MS. ROURKE:

We can provide you with those numbers. Over half of our teachers are from out of state.

MR. YATES:

On average, about 70% of our teachers will be from out of state, which is a large portion. We are unable to satiate our needs with our in-state private and public institutions.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Section 1, subsection 1 of the bill, details initial licensing of teachers and other educational personnel. What do other educational personnel include beside substitute teachers? Would this include other teaching professionals or support staff?

MR. YATES:

Yes. School psychologists, nurses, social workers and all related services personnel are subject to the State required testing. The support employees are not licensed.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

I came to CCSD as a graduate from Carroll College in Helena, Montana and was required to take and pass the test on Nevada School Law and the Nevada Constitution. The United States Constitution was imbedded in my college undergraduate work and the test was waived.

Under our present licensure requirements, is there any waiving for both new teachers and those coming from out of state? For example, if the United States Constitution is imbedded in their undergraduate course work, can it be waived so at least one of these requirements is not there?

MR. YATES:

Yes. The United States Constitution is often waived with three years of experience and sometimes it is removed later.

An extra step has been created for staff to analyze transcripts from across the country to ascertain if the course work is imbedded in a teacher's program from out of state.

SENATOR GUSTAVSON:

How many states do we have reciprocity with that use those credentials to come to Nevada to teach?

MS. ROURKE:

Reciprocity is a complicated topic. Full reciprocity does not occur on a one-for-one basis when we have these provisions. Including substitutes, we have almost 12,000 teachers with provisions on their licenses that include these. I will defer to later testimony on the matter.

We work with our colleges of education and develop Alternative Routes to Licensure programs to develop more teachers within the State. We do need to recruit across the country.

SENATOR GUSTAVSON:

Over the years, I have talked with people who have taught in other states and have moved to Nevada. They have given me many reasons why they cannot get a teaching job in Nevada.

Can we make it easier to attract teachers to our State? I understand they will not know the Nevada Constitution.

MS. ROURKE:

This is what we want to accomplish with this bill. There are other bills that will be brought forward this Session. The Department of Education (DOE) completed a study looking at ways to bring teachers to our State. The DOE, all school districts, the Legislature and a committee on professional development are working together to make this happen.

SENATOR GUSTAVSON:

A basic understanding of the Nevada laws affects the industry a school teacher is subject to. Knowing these laws is advantageous to safeguard their well-being. Why would we not want our school personnel to know the basic laws in their professions?

Ms. ROURKE:

There are additional requirements for training throughout the statutes. Teachers receive ongoing training on the hot topics. This is an additional testing requirement and we are willing to work on a different approach.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

I have concern about military spouses coming to our State with respect to reciprocity. There are times when a military salary is not enough. The cost of living in Nevada is much greater than living in Georgia. How might this impact military families?

Ms. ROURKE:

If a military spouse left the State and had not met these requirements, the spouse would be required to begin the process again upon his or her return to our State.

Most often, teachers are focused on the provisions to meet their content area and taking the Praxis tests. Nevada School Law, the Nevada Constitution and the United States Constitution have longer expiration dates and are often the last to be taken.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

There seems to be a lack of information and help for teachers to meet the requirements of these tests.

If we remove these requirements, there will be other requirements to meet. I am concerned about all the requirements we heap on teachers. These days there seems to be more pressure on teachers.

We need to think outside the box and find a way to deliver professional development and other things during the school day. If we want to remove obstacles and find ways to increase our teacher pipeline, we need to move

beyond these small things, like removing tests. We need to discuss making the life of a teacher easier as we move forward.

MS. ROURKE:

We have done a number of things to ease the burden for teachers. We have gone from four professional development days to spreading that time across the school year to include some professional development throughout the year and throughout their contracts. Professional development is ongoing, consistent and there is follow-up rather than one-shot workshops. We try to make it more meaningful and more informative for their teaching and for student achievement.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Hearing the responses and testimony today, the piece that concerns me revolves around the protections for the teachers knowing the Nevada School Law and what they can and cannot do in the classroom. From CCSD's perspective, you feel you cover it.

Senator Woodhouse pointed out there could be waivers for the United States Constitution based on education and other things the DOE could establish.

If CCSD is doing such a great job of sharing the information the teachers need to know about Nevada State Law, why not allow for an exemption with regard to these requirements for our teachers?

MS. ROURKE:

That is something we can look at. We certainly provide a lot of training that is required by statutes. We would have to discuss if everything is covered and look at alternatives.

CHAIR DENIS:

There are ways to get information that do not require a class and we could discuss the alternatives. My wife is a fairly new teacher to the profession and I see what she must do each day and the requirements and classes she needs to complete. She may have a child who is not doing well in the classroom and needs additional help.

Anything we can do to help teachers so they can focus on improving student achievement is great.

SENATOR GUSTAVSON:

I know Nevada suffers from barriers for occupational training and licensing, not only in education, but many fields. I am a supporter of deregulation in certain areas. We seem to be adding requirements to licenses.

There is a big difference between the United States Constitution and the Nevada Constitution. I have strong feelings about knowing the United States Constitution. There is a significant amount of information in the Nevada Constitution, none of us will know all of it. Are there sections of the Nevada Constitution that a teacher should know?

MS. ROURKE:

The reason we looked at eliminating some requirements is when a provisional license is issued with a long list, it is daunting. We are competing with other states for teachers and their lists may be shorter. Often it is a race to the finish to acquire a teacher contract which requires licensure.

CHAIR DENIS:

Will we be able to attract more teachers by removing these requirements?

MS. ROURKE:

This is not a single obstacle to anyone coming to this State. It adds to the list. Our first battle is finding people who are willing to relocate. When one is willing to move, one may wonder where it is simpler to qualify and become licensed. We want to focus on those areas specific to the content taught.

SENATOR HARRIS:

This has been brought forward by CCSD and we have heard from great teachers from the district who are facing barriers on the licensure process. Where are the rest of the school districts on this particular piece of legislation?

CHAIR DENIS:

If there is support on S.B. 20, please come forward.

ANNA SLIGHTING (HOPE, Honoring Our Public Education):

I am representing HOPE, Honoring our Public Education, a parent advocacy group. Honoring Our Public Education stands in support of S.B. 20. I am submitting my written testimony ([Exhibit E](#)).

LINDSAY ANDERSON (Director, Government Affairs; Washoe County School District):

The Washoe County School District supports S.B. 20.

The cost to take an exam to satisfy these provisions of Nevada School Law and the Nevada Constitution is \$330 at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). We are in a crunch to find quality substitute teachers and this has an impact on our efforts.

JESSICA FERRATO (Nevada Association of School Boards):
We are in support of S.B. 20.

We have a hiring shortage in the State and it is difficult to obtain teachers in our rural counties. This is a small barrier to employing teachers in rural counties and we do not see the impact to student achievement.

MARY PIERCZYNSKI (Nevada Association of School Superintendents):
Hiring teachers for the rural districts is a problem just as it is in Washoe County and Clark County. Part of this bill is about smoothing out the teacher pipeline.

There are five tests in the Praxis test series. Teachers are tested on core, reading and writing, math, principles of learning and their content areas. With these five tests and the tests we are discussing, new teachers have potentially eight tests plus a three-credit course they must take. This is daunting. It is difficult to look at their licenses and see all these provisions.

Regarding military families, there is a military spouse teaching in rural Nevada and she is credentialed in six states. Nevada was the most difficult credential for her to get. It would help a lot if we could smooth the process.

JARED BUSKER (Children's Advocacy Alliance):
We are in support of S.B. 20 for the reasons mentioned.

Throughout the State, we host advocacy trainings and do recognize the importance to have some background of the Nevada Constitution. We hope the State will emphasize its importance.

PATRICK GAVIN (Executive Director, State Public Charter School Authority):

We are in support of the intent of S. B. 20 which is to ensure we lower, as much as possible, the barriers to entry and encourage full reciprocity in this critical profession.

This pipeline challenge for teachers is true regardless where you are in public education. Thank you for the thoughtful conversation about what we can do to ensure we continue to support our teachers and ensure they receive the important information they need, but in a way they can focus as much time as possible on teaching and learning.

JUSTIN HARRISON (Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce):

We are in support of S.B. 20.

The Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce has been actively engaged with the CCSD's We Care Program. Chamber members actively engage and introduce themselves to prospective teachers introducing them to the community and encouraging them to accept positions with the district.

JOHN VELLARDITA (Executive Director, Clark County Education Association):

I am here representing teachers. I want to put this into context.

You cannot argue against the relevancy of learning the content of the Nevada Constitution or the United States Constitution. The question is the applicability in today's classroom for those that need or do not need to teach it.

In 2014, we were facing a need for 2,700 teachers in Clark County and were competing with 10,000 openings in the western United States. We had the lowest starting pay rate at \$34,000. As a result, we started the 2014-2015 year with 750 vacancies.

Senate Bill No. 511 of the 78th Session passed and provided an incentive to recruit people; however, it came after the hiring peak. Therefore, it did not have an effect during its initial year.

In 2015-2016, we negotiated a new salary schedule which raised the starting salary to \$40,900 and we implemented site-based professional development in every building for every teacher. We introduced a new professional salary

schedule which essentially rewards advancement and compensation to educators, if they improve their practice.

We should be focusing on what improves the practice so we have better practitioners and it correlates to student outcome. I do not see how this requirement meets this goal.

If it is removed, it will be easier for recruitment purposes. I do not see the relevancy in today's classroom. We are competing for these educators' time.

Educators are paid for 7 hours and 11 minutes a day in Clark County. They work 12 to 13 hours a day and are working weekends. In order to advance, they need ongoing professional development on their salary schedules which they do anyway.

There are other requirements. Most of these requirements are on their own time and is their investment. The North Star of that investment is student achievement. That is the correlation.

We support S.B. 20 and understand some of the reasons of concern. In the context of what CCSD is facing, this is a step in the right direction.

DAVID GOMEZ (Nevada Peace Alliance):

We support S.B. 20. Mr. Vellardita stated what we believe.

STEPHEN AUGSPURGER (Executive Director, Clark County Association of School Administrators and Professional-Technical Employees):

I have ambivalent feelings about this topic and appreciate the concerns heard today. When it is looked at in the context created by Mr. Vellardita, this is something we need to move forward and quickly.

It is an obstacle and needs to be removed. It has nothing to do with actual practice in the classroom. If that concern exists, there are ways the information could be communicated to teachers and not present the block it does now.

As one who has concerns about this, if we look at the context presented and the goal it will achieve, I support passage of S.B. 20.

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SENATOR SEGERBLOM

Do you support having administrators know the Nevada Constitution and the United States Constitution?

MR. AUGSPURGER:

Yes and no. It is my personal opinion that everyone should know that information. We do not have a shortage of administrators. We have a shortage of teachers.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

Is it required for administrators to pass the test?

DENA DURISH (Deputy Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Department of Education):

There are requirements for licensure to earn an administrative endorsement. One requirement is passing Nevada School Law. It is a more in-depth course than the requirement for the basic license of an educator.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

How about the United States Constitution?

MS. DURISH:

In order to hold an administrator license, you must have a base teaching license. Everyone who would have gone through the process to receive the administrator endorsement license would have met these three prior requirements.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

If we remove the three requirements, future administrators would not have to pass the test on the United States Constitution.

MS. DURISH:

That is correct.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

Some may wonder why we are asking so many questions. There are many bills before us and there was work done during the Interim. There have been prior issues and conversations amongst others we were not privy to.

I thought it necessary to ask these questions to ascertain the necessity of the bill. The information I have heard today from testifiers has enlightened me. We have had an important discussion today on a bill we did not know the content of until recently.

CHAIR DENIS:

Is there opposition to the bill?

DAVID W. CARTER (State Board of Education, District 2):

I am speaking in opposition to S. B. 20.

I have several reasons. As one of the four elected officials on the State Board of Education, we are working at the Board to improve raising our rating in education standards.

I question whether this low rating may be the reason we are not getting more teachers. I believe the teachers need to understand their limits and the protections given to them in Nevada law.

We at the Board are working on reciprocity and how we can improve it across state lines. Seeing the turmoil at universities and schools across the Nation in recent months, it seems students do not understand the Constitution. It is important we understand State Law, the United States Constitution and the Nevada Constitution.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Did I understand you to say the State Board of Education has taken a position in opposition to S.B. 20?

MR. CARTER:

This is my personal opinion as representing the 11 northern counties of the State of Nevada as a member of the State Board of Education.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

So, the Board has not taken a position per se?

MR. CARTER:

To my knowledge this was very new, so it has not been discussed in meetings I have attended since I was sworn in as a member in January.

BONNIE MCDANIEL:

I am a 50-plus-year resident of Clark County. I strongly oppose S. B. 20. I am submitting my written testimony ([Exhibit F](#)).

PATRICIA JESINOSKI:

I am speaking against the changes suggested in S.B. 20.

It appears the intent of this bill is working toward the elimination of teaching students the history of the United States of America and the State of Nevada.

Removing the requirements of the teacher's knowledge or understanding of Nevada School Law, the Constitution of Nevada and the United States Constitution creates the intent of schools no longer being required to teach these history subjects.

When we remove the basics of our Country and State history, our schools should no longer be a government-subsidized educational establishment.

When government continues to erode basic knowledge of our Country and State, you remove the students understanding of why citizens feel pride in their State and Country. This appears to be a move toward globalization, not the sovereign nation we are.

Students stopped learning a second language when colleges and universities no longer required a foreign language. Pharmacy schools stopped teaching drug compounding and pharmacists stopped filling compounds because they had not learned drug compounding.

If it is our intent to increase the success of education in this State by students actually graduating, then we do not stop teaching foundations.

If we want to attract teachers to fill the shortage from outside the State to meet the requirements, you can do what the State Board of Pharmacy did with the need in our State.

When I came as a pharmacist to Nevada from Minnesota, I was able to work from my Minnesota and Iowa licenses. I had to pass the licensure test within six months of my start of pharmacy practice in Nevada. This type of exception could be made for new teachers to our State to comply with the requirements.

As a pharmacist to maintain a license in three states, each state had different reporting timeframes, different class continuing education requirements and money outlay. It was quite a juggling act. It depends on a dedication and desire to maintain licenses.

CHAIR DENIS:

I want to clarify this bill. If a teacher teaches history or government, he or she is still required to know the course material. I do not believe there is anyone here who would support such a bill. We are discussing teachers who teach in other areas, not in those content areas.

JUANITA CLARK (Charleston Neighborhood Preservation):

I was a teacher in CCSD and a teacher in other states as well. The Constitution is the foundation of everything. This knowledge makes each of us a better person.

Child care requires knowing the Constitution. Requires means you are a better parent, you are a better child-care giver and you are a better friend if you know the Constitution. You are better at everything if you have an appreciation for the Constitution. You can only be as strong as your base. The Charleston Neighborhood Preservation group does not support S.B. 20.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

Ladies, those of you who are testifying with passion, I understand. I have taught these classes and I love the material. We are missing the intent of the bill.

My wife is a fifth grade math teacher and the only subject she teaches is math. She has these provisions on her license she will need to remove. She enjoys discussing Nevada School Law and it helps in her classroom.

At the same time, all she is thinking about is math, her delivery to her fifth graders and making sure she covers the standards. This is all on her mind right now and she does not want to divert from that.

The intent is not to dismiss the need for these requirements. The civics teachers, government teachers, and U.S. history teachers will still be required to understand this material in order to pass the material and knowledge to their students. That will not change.

It is how much does a fifth grade teacher need to know about these topics. Do they need to pass these tests? We are learning as we go along.

As we go forward, I want to make sure the opposition understands it is not about getting rid of the Nevada Constitution and United States Constitution knowledge.

CHAIR DENIS:

Anyone else wishing to speak in opposition to S.B. 20? Is there neutral testimony? Please come forward.

MS. DURISH:

As the agency responsible for the implementation of these changes, the DOE is not speaking in support or opposition to S.B.20.

If the bill does proceed, we ask there be some clarification and/or language added to ensure when the effective date would be and if it would indeed impact the existing license holders that have these provisions on their licenses.

Across the State, we currently have 11,000-plus licensees with either one, two or three of those provisions on their licenses. A large portion of them, a little over half, are substitute teachers or substitute licensed, not necessarily currently employed by a school district, but they are licensed to substitute. This impacts the rural areas where there are substitute shortages as well as in our two urban districts.

About 4,800 of those licensees are those with academic licenses: elementary, middle school, high school or special education.

For the good of the group based on some of the questions and previous testimony the Commission on Professional Standards in Education is allowed to adopt regulations to oversee the administration of this requirement and they have adopted *Nevada Administrative Code* 391.030.

Those regulations were adopted in 1989 and have been amended seven times; the most recent was in 2007. Currently, UNR administers the test and in earlier testimony you have been given the cost of the test and testimony regarding content of the questions.

We certainly do not want to be passing around tests, although it is 2017 and a quick Google search will lead you to Websites where teachers have provided guidance and/or are providing study guides. Certainly, we could provide a study guide that has been published by UNR to Mr. Butterworth to distribute to the Committee.

A couple other areas of clarification I would like to share. There have been conversations regarding reciprocity.

As a State licensing agency, we belong to a group called National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC). My licensure director, Jason Dietrich and his team attend conferences, hold webinars and go to various meetings.

We sent a survey to our western region group and did not hear back from all of them in time for today's hearing. Of the group, I can share with you, Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana and Oregon do not currently require state constitution or United States Constitution classes. They only require the Nevada School Law for administrators. Oregon requires the Oregon State law regarding students and civil rights.

These are districts we compete heavily with. If you would like additional information, we could reach out to other states for definite statistics.

Conversations have been brought up about the content of this. I had to giggle at some comments of not everyone understanding. I have been in this job for a little over three years and I can barely wrap my head around NRS 391, NRS 388, NRS 288 and NRS 385. Statutes I interact with daily.

The NASDTEC has *The Model Code of Educator Ethics* that many states are looking at adopting and having as part of teacher training programs. This is something we have been considering.

We do have full reciprocity with all 50 states, with the Department of Defense and our U.S. territories. Ms. Rourke mentioned it is tricky when it comes to some requirements. I encourage all of you to look forward to Assembly Bill (A.B.) 77 that you will see in April with some proposed changes to help with reciprocity.

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ASSEMBLY BILL 77: Revises provisions related to teachers and other educational personnel. (BDR 34-253)

CHAIR DENIS:

Your information on what other states are doing in this area is helpful. I will close the hearing on S.B. 20 and open for public comment. Seeing none, the meeting is adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Shelley Kyle,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Moises Denis, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit / # of pages		Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	4		Attendance Roster
	C	2	Senate Committee on Education	Rules, 2017
	D	32	Todd Butterworth	Committee Brief
	E	1	Anna Slighting	Written Testimony
	F	1	Bonnie McDaniel	Written Testimony