

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Eightieth Session
May 29, 2019**

The Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Moises Denis at 5:14 p.m. on Wednesday, May 29, 2019, in Room 1214 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4404B 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 Dallas Harris
Senator Scott Hammond
Senator Ira Hansen
Senator Keith F. Pickard

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Marcia Washington (Excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, Assembly District No. 5
Assemblywoman Selena Torres, Assembly District No. 3

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jen Sturm, Committee Policy Analyst
Risa Lang, Committee Counsel
Shelley Kyle, Committee Secretary
Linda Hiller, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Chris Sewell, Chief of Operations, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation
Kelly Wuest, Administrator, Commission on Postsecondary Education
Jonathan Moore, Ed.D., Deputy Superintendent, Department of Education
Mary Pierczynski, Nevada Association of School Superintendents
Tammy Malich, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Education Services Division, Clark County School District
Jennifer Ordaz
Stephen Augspurger, Executive Director, Clark County Association of School Administrators and Professional-Technical Employees
Lindsay Anderson, Washoe County School District
Leonardo Benavides, Clark County School District
Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association
Natha C. Anderson, Washoe Education Association
Jennifer Jeans, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada; Washoe Legal Services
Jessica Ferrato, Communities in Schools
Paige Barnes, Nevada Association of School Boards

CHAIR DENIS:

I will open the meeting of the Senate Committee on Education with a hearing on Assembly Bill (A.B.) 526.

ASSEMBLY BILL 526 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the Commission on Postsecondary Education. (BDR 34-1214)

CHRIS SEWELL (Chief of Operations, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation):

Assembly Bill 526 establishes two things for the Commission on Postsecondary Education. Section 1 establishes the authority to suspend or approve a course of training for veterans and sets forth a process for notification and the contents of the notification. Section 1 also establishes an appeals process and requires the Commission to adopt regulations governing the appeals process and appeals hearings performed by the Commission.

Sections 2 and 3 add a seventh member to the Commission and require that member to represent military veterans.

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Sections 4, 5 and 6 of A.B. 526 incorporate section 1, the appeals process, into *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 394 which governs fines and revocation of licenses, penalties and statutes of limitation.

Sections 7 and 8 also incorporate section 1 of A.B. 526 under the statutory administrative responsibilities of the Director of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) in NRS 232 and the administrator of our Employment Security Division under NRS 612.

This is a very important bill for our Commission on Postsecondary Education.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I thought the Commission already had regulatory authority. Can you go into more detail on the authority this bill is giving the Commission?

KELLY WUEST (Administrator, Commission on Postsecondary Education):
Assembly Bill 526 provides us a hearing in cases where we are suspending a school from enrollment of new students and the possibility of a disapproval, or as we say in our layman's terms, a "withdraw" of the school for the educational benefits program. This provides for an administrative process in that suspension requirement that allows the Commission to provide input and due process for the schools.

CHAIR DENIS:

I will take testimony in support of A.B. 526. Seeing none, I will take testimony in opposition or neutral. Seeing none, I will close the hearing on A.B. 526.

SENATOR PICKARD MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 526.

SENATOR HARRIS SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will open the hearing on A.B. 92.

ASSEMBLY BILL 92 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions governing the English Mastery Council. (BDR 34-393)

JONATHAN MOORE, ED.D. (Deputy Superintendent, Department of Education):
The English Mastery Council was originally adopted to create recommendations to the Department of Education (NDE) around teaching and learning of English Learners (EL).

Section 1 of A.B. 92 extends the work of the Council to include students who score in the bottom 25th percentile of achievement in English Language Arts on the Statewide reading assessment.

Section 2 extends the sunset date of the Council to 2022.

Section 4.5 discusses the fiscal impact of the bill, including travel for Council members and transcription services.

CHAIR DENIS:

Assembly Bill 92 came as a recommendation adopted by the Legislative Committee on Education during the 2017-2018 Interim. It is set to sunset on June 30.

In 2013, S.B. No. 504 of the 77th Session was enacted to target the needs of students who struggle with English proficiency, otherwise known as EL students. Before 2013, we did not have a Statewide effort for that issue. The EL interventions funded through S.B. No. 504 of the 77th Session were intended to capitalize on the experience of our most successful existing EL programs and duplicate them in more schools throughout the State.

That bill also created a 16-member English Mastery Council to recommend criteria for teaching EL students, ensuring that school districts develop policies to reflect those criteria and making recommendations about teaching and licensing teachers as English as a second language specialists.

I was on the Interim Committee and wanted to get that on the record. If no one has questions, I will take testimony in support of A.B. 92.

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MARY PIERCZYNSKI (Nevada Association of School Superintendents):
We have supported the English Mastery Council, and we think they have done some good work. We support A.B. 92.

CHAIR DENIS:
We received six letters of support for A.B. 92 that I want to submit ([Exhibit C](#)). I will take testimony in opposition or neutral on A.B. 92. Seeing none, I will take a motion.

SENATOR HAMMOND MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 92.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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I will open the hearing on A.B. 168.

ASSEMBLY BILL 168 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions governing the discipline of pupils. (BDR 34-539)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SELENA TORRES (Assembly District No. 3):
I am honored to present A.B. 168 on behalf of my friend and colleague, Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, who passed away unexpectedly on May 4. There were some amendments to the bill that were done in conjunction with the working group and Assemblyman Thompson. We want to ensure this legislation and its great policy gets heard today, as this was his vision.

I have submitted two handouts, a fact sheet ([Exhibit D](#)) and a section explanation of A.B. 168 ([Exhibit E](#)).

TAMMY MALICH, Ed.D. (Assistant Superintendent, Education Services Division, Clark County School District):

The impetus for A.B. 168 is based on research of best practices for restorative justice and relinquishing punitive discipline, which we know does not change behavior or create safety.

Instead, A.B. 168 emphasizes social engagement and relationships rather than social control and punitive measures, as seen on page 2 of our presentation ([Exhibit F](#)). Restorative justice involves a collaborative process where all parties come together to address the needs of the student and repair the impact of the negative behavior.

We know that punitive discipline is ineffective. There is no data confirming that it makes a difference or changes behavior, page 3, [Exhibit F](#). Students treated with restorative measures feel more supported, invested in and connected to their school communities and are more likely to change their behavior. Teachers and administrators report a greater sense of efficacy in trying to change difficult behaviors, and this bill gives them support to do so.

Restorative practices also create a reduction in exclusionary discipline which tends to be harsher on students who are the most at risk. Exclusionary discipline has a negative impact on student achievement and widens achievement gaps. Additionally, there is always a greater impact on minority students, special education students and foster youth with that kind of discipline, page 4, [Exhibit F](#).

Finally, exclusionary discipline actually rewards negative behavior. We often hear from students who say that if they do not like a subject area or a subject where they struggle, they can continue to get worse in class and are rewarded by being sent home.

Assembly Bill 168 provides alignment with NRS 194.010, which is the statute discussing the age a pupil can be charged with committing a crime, setting aside children under the age of 8 because they are not able to comprehend their wrongdoing. That statute states that children between the ages of 8 and 10 can only be charged with serious offenses like murder or egregious sexual offenses. For children between the ages of 8 and 14, there must be clear proof that they knew the wrongfulness of their actions at the time they occurred, [Exhibit F](#), page 5.

The fact that lawmakers have determined that students are incapable of understanding the impact of their behavior, especially for the ages 10 and under, creating statutory and mandatory exclusionary discipline in statute, requiring them to be excluded for behaviors, is the premise behind A.B. 168.

Section 1 creates a differentiation between pupils aged 11 and older and aged 10 and under. It references charter schools, requiring them to make a reasonable effort to use restorative practices prior to removing a student from a charter school. It also reduces the number of days a special education student can be suspended, or suspended pending expulsion, from 10 days to 5 days for a single event.

Section 2 creates a differentiation between pupils who are 11 years of age and older and 10 years of age and under, [Exhibit F](#), page 7. It requires university schools for profoundly gifted students to also make a reasonable effort to utilize restorative practices prior to removing a student from the school. Section 2 also reduces the number of days a special education student can be suspended or suspended pending expulsion from 10 days to 5 days.

Section 3, page 8, [Exhibit F](#), defines restorative justice as a nonpunative intervention and provides a list of possible intervention options, including positive behavioral interventions and support, behavioral intervention, student support team referral and/or student intervention team referral to an outside agency. Other options include a community services referral or a conference with the school principal and any other appropriate staff.

Section 3 of A.B. 168 also provides for some data accountability and reporting, requiring data collection for the number of expulsions, suspensions and administrative reassignments, page 9, [Exhibit F](#). It also requires data to be disaggregated by student subgroup and by type of offense, putting responsibility on the principal to review the data and take appropriate action. Section 3 also requires quarterly reporting of the data to the board of trustees for each school district.

Section 5.5 is about equity and consistency across State school districts, page 10, [Exhibit F](#), providing for a progressive discipline plan (PDP) at the district level versus every school creating its own separate PDP. This creates a greater sense of equity and is easier for students and parents to navigate as they move from school to school knowing what is expected at the district level for all schools. The PDP process requires input from school administrators, teachers, and support personnel to address specific needs and concerns within each school district.

Section 5.5 of A.B. 168 also requires that the PDP "Provide for the placement of a pupil in a different school within the school district in accordance with NRS 392.466" and requires the Plan to be posted on the district website.

Section 6 is previous legislation from Assemblyman Thompson, NRS 392.4655, Habitual Disciplinary Problem (HDP), page 11, [Exhibit F](#). The changes in A.B. 168 in section 6 change the permissive language regarding the "may" develop a plan of behavior for a student identified as a potential HDP to "shall" develop a plan. If a school is going to label a student as HDP, the school "shall" create a plan of action. Because we are requiring a school to create a plan, it gives parents the choice to opt out of the behavior plan if they do not want to take advantage of that plan.

Section 7 of A.B. 168 contains big changes that will affect most of the schools in Nevada, pages 12 and 13, [Exhibit F](#). For a pupil 11 years of age and older who commits a battery on an employee or who sells or distributes any controlled substance on the premises of a public school, it requires schools to provide a restorative justice action plan for that student. Section 7 also allows that pupil to be suspended, expelled or placed in another kind of school, especially if there is a safety concern or if school administrators feel it is in the best interest of the students. School employees who are the victims of battery are allowed to appeal the school plan of action.

In section 7, if a pupil is placed in another school, an explanation of necessary services to address the needs and behaviors of the pupil is required to help that student be successful at that next school. It also requires the districts to create a plan of action based on restorative measures and provide necessary resources at the new school of assignment so the negative behavior does not get repeated.

Finally, section 7 of A.B. 168 requires the superintendent of a school district to amend a suspension or expulsion in cases where a restorative justice action plan may be used more successfully. Statute already requires that the superintendent be allowed to set forth in writing the modification for good cause. This change in section 7 just allows the superintendent to make the change if he or she feels a restorative justice plan can be more successful for the student. It also removes the mandatory requirement to expel youth under the age of 10, but it allows expulsion in extraordinary circumstances if approved by the board of trustees. As in other parts of the bill, this section reduces the number of days a

special education student can be suspended or suspended pending expulsion from 10 days to 5 days.

Section 8 of A.B. 168, page 14, [Exhibit F](#), provides authority to the board of trustees of a school to suspend or expel any pupil aged 11 and older for offenses other than those related to attendance. It disallows permanent expulsion for youth aged 10 and younger for any reason other than possession of a firearm or dangerous weapon. It also authorizes the board of trustees to suspend, expel or otherwise remove a pupil charged with a crime regardless of the judicial system outcome. This can happen only after a school conducts an independent investigation of the circumstances and provides notice to the pupil and his or her parents of the criminal charges.

SENATOR PICKARD:

During the last Interim, I worked on the Juvenile Justice Partnership with the Clark County School District (CCSD) where we talked about the restorative justice that is occurring at CCSD. How does this differ from what we have done in Clark County? Is this just an extension of what they are doing?

DR. MALICH:

This extends what CCSD is doing in restorative measures, keeping it flexible enough so districts can have the latitude to exercise freedom in what kind of restorative measures they want to implement or continue to implement.

SENATOR PICKARD:

We know that charter schools do not have the benefit of a school police department; they use the municipal police departments instead. In Clark County, the charter schools use the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department in the escalating part of discipline of students. How does A.B. 168 function without that resource in the charter schools?

DR. MALICH:

Assembly Bill 168 is not dependent on having school resource officers, police officers or local jurisdiction because these are not necessarily all offenses for which a juvenile will be charged with a delinquent act. In the event that a student is charged, it would be handled through the judicial system. The bill is aimed more at how the school responds to students. Currently, we have two standards—one is with law enforcement that may or may not cite a student for battery and the other is the school district, which has a lower threshold and will

continue to take an appropriate course of action. This changes the mandatory language for expulsion that we have in statute. We have zero tolerance in Nevada, but A.B. 168 makes it permissive, giving districts the opportunity to instead invoke restorative justice models and work with students to try and change behavior. It also offers schools the option to expel if it is a safety concern or if it is in the best interest of the students.

SENATOR PICKARD:

My concern is in setting a second type of standard where we are coming up with a different program because we do not have the same resources in place. At the district level, those resource officers are an integral part of schools, like in the community policing model where the officers become positively socialized with the students and are no longer viewed as punitive individuals. The charter schools lack that opportunity because they have no resource officers.

Are we utilizing resources such as the Harbor in Clark County? It is a juvenile assessment center with the motto, "A safe place for guidance." Are we plugging in those resources?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES:

Those two programs will work hand in hand with A.B. 168. One thing the bill requires is to create the restorative justice model and the plan for that individual student. If he or she needed additional supports, it requires the district administration to find those supports. In CCSD, access to the Harbor would definitely be an option for the schools.

SENATOR PICKARD:

As this rolls out, we need to make sure the charter schools are aware of the programs available through the Harbor.

Does the language in section 8 remove the school's ability to expel a student for possession of a firearm, which is a crime in Nevada?

DR. MALICH:

No. it does not change the firearm language of the statute which is in section 3. It would not mandate an expulsion for a weapon for a student aged 10 and younger, but does not disallow it. It does require that the first offense is expulsion for one year and the second time, permanent expulsion. It disallows

permanent expulsion for an elementary student except in the case of firearms. It does not change the firearm language at all.

VICE CHAIR WOODHOUSE:

I have followed this issue and conversed with Assemblyman Thompson about it because he was so passionate about this issue. This is an issue that all of us in the education field have struggled with. I appreciate all the work that has been done on A.B. 168 and I do want to ensure that we follow through on this so our students' needs are properly addressed through this kind of legislation.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES:

Dr. Malich and other members of My Brother's Keeper are committed to continuing to work on these issues within our community.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

I have not really processed this bill. Assemblyman Thompson and I worked on two bills that were similar in 2013, dealing with flexibility in discipline in the schools by giving more flexibility to the administration to deal with certain situations. At one point, there was automatic expulsion for several days for children who brought certain things to school.

To put things into perspective of where I am coming from as an educator, on one of the last days of school, we had an elementary school student go to play in the desert with a pocket knife in his pocket. Like a lot of kids, he put his jeans next to the bed, got up in the morning, put his jeans on and went to school forgetting that he had a pocket knife in his pocket. When that was discovered, he was expelled for the first three days of the next school year.

I think the principal has to have some flexibility to assess a situation. If A.B. 168 gives them that flexibility and they are not restricted in developing those restorative justice plans and considering the environment and the circumstances, then I would be able to support this bill. I need to look through the bill first.

I know there is a system in place now, when we talk about restorative justice, where certain principals have to abide by certain things. Does A.B. 168 give more flexibility? We do not want to be expelling everybody like we used to, but we also want to be able to not keep them in school when they should actually have some discipline.

DR. MALICH:

This bill absolutely gives principals more discretion and also gives them the opportunity to determine if the most appropriate course of action is restorative justice or removal. Statutory language mandates that any pupil from kindergarten through 12th Grade be removed for the big three reasons in statute. Principals have no latitude, even with kindergarteners, but this bill would not mandate it for ages 10 and younger. It would give flexibility even in the older age group to determine if the restorative justice plan is a more appropriate course of action.

CHAIR DENIS:

During the last Interim, we had many discussions about this issue with Assemblyman Thompson when he specifically asked us for input.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I thoroughly enjoyed working with Assemblyman Thompson on the CCSD Juvenile Justice Committee. We had many conversations about this subject both in meetings and outside of meetings. This was absolutely one of his top priorities.

CHAIR DENIS:

I will take testimony in support of A.B. 168.

JENNIFER ORDAZ:

I am a member of Make the Road Nevada (MRNV) here to support A.B. 168. Yesterday I became the first in my family to graduate from high school, at Rancho High School. Today I am speaking for the hundreds of students who could not complete their education due to the ongoing school-to-prison/deportation pipeline.

I witnessed my classmates at Rancho High School be personally affected by an aggressive approach to discipline. During my sophomore year, there was a fight between two students and they tackled nonviolent, innocent student witnesses in the cafeteria, including my friend right next to me.

My brother's sophomore year, they pepper sprayed everybody in the cafeteria over a food fight. Pepper spraying and tackling students has become normalized. This is not making our schools safer. Instead, these zero-tolerance

discipline policies create mistrust between staff and students. I felt judged by my teachers and administrators always assuming I was doing something wrong. One time they accused me of ditching and would not let me retake my test. I hated this feeling. I like school, but missed the test because I sprained my ankle and it hurt so bad I would not go to work. My senior year, I worked full-time at MRNV while maintaining a 3.5 GPA.

Restorative justice would help students explain their side of the story and create more accountability. We need restorative justice programs to get to the root of problems so we can have a safer school environment and can all thrive. Now that I have graduated, I will continue the fight against the school-to-deportation pipeline. I will also be attending the College of Southern Nevada in the fall to pursue a career in real estate or the medical field. I support A.B. 168.

CHAIR DENIS:

I remember that incident you mentioned because my son is at Rancho High School, and we were notified as parents.

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

We support A.B. 168. We believe this is a great balanced bill that will be good for schools and good for kids.

LINDSAY ANDERSON (Washoe County School District):

We worked many hours on the individual words in this bill to ensure that the amendment addressed the concerns we are trying to focus on. We are proud of the way it stands right now. We support A.B. 168.

LEONARDO BENAVIDES (Clark County School District):

Like the others, we put a lot of hours into this bill. We thank Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson for putting the stakeholder group together and Assemblywoman Torres for carrying on the project. We support A.B. 168.

MS. PIERCZYNSKI:

We were involved in the work group too and we are happy to support A.B. 168.

CHRIS DALY (Nevada State Education Association):

The Nevada State Education Association (NSEA) supports A.B. 168. When the bill was first heard in the Assembly Committee on Education on March 5, we

expressed some concern about an incident where a teacher was physically harmed. We proposed an amendment at that time. The NSEA believes in the principles of restorative justice, which proactively build healthy relationships and a sense of community to prevent and address conflict and wrongdoing. We know our NSEA members practice aspects of restorative justice every day in the classroom. We support A.B. 168.

NATHA C. ANDERSON (Washoe Education Association):

We support A.B. 168 and also participated in the work group. I particularly appreciate the changes to section 3.3 and section 7, subsection 2, both aimed at protecting our educator employees.

JENNIFER JEANS (Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada; Washoe Legal Services):

The two agencies I represent support children in foster care and the parents of children with disabilities who are seeking to have their children's educational needs met in school. We are also part of the working group that collaborated with My Brother's Keeper and Assemblyman Thompson on this bill. We support A.B. 168 because it provides greater support for these children.

Foster children and children with disabilities are two groups of students who struggle disproportionately both academically and with school discipline. At a recent Clark County foster care stakeholder meeting, we were advised that the CCSD school with the most foster children is the Juvenile Detention High School. We believe implementing restorative justice alternatives, rather than removing these children from the classroom, will better educate them and ensure their success. Foster children are already more likely to be missing classroom time due to the crises they face. We believe this is a contributing factor to their disproportionately low graduation rate.

Reducing the suspension time from two weeks to one week will greatly increase the educational opportunities for these children and will not provide any disadvantage regarding disciplinary action. For these reasons, we think the impact of A.B. 168 will be significant, and we support it.

JESSICA FERRATO (Communities in Schools):

We support A.B. 168.

PAIGE BARNES (Nevada Association of School Boards):

We support A.B. 168.

CHAIR DENIS:

I will take testimony in opposition or neutral. Seeing none, I will close the hearing on A.B. 168 and open the hearing on A.B. 276.

ASSEMBLY BILL 276 (2nd Reprint): Creates the Nevada State Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force. (BDR 34-1062)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BRITTNEY MILLER (Assembly District No. 5):

We all know the importance of a teacher in a child's life, both academically and socially. We have a national teacher shortage that has been increasing for decades, and Nevada is not immune to this crisis in education. There has been extreme turnover in all districts in the State, not just the urban school districts.

In CCSD today, there are 950 open teaching positions. Washoe County School District (WCSD) has more than 100 openings. In CCSD, at the end of each school year, they need an additional 400 teachers to account for attrition and growth there. Keep in mind that these high vacancies are in school districts with the largest class sizes in the U.S., so if we were at the teacher-pupil ratio recommended by the NDE, imagine how many more open positions we would have.

Finding the best teachers who are qualified, experienced and certified starts with examining how many students entering universities are planning to study education to become a teacher. This number is the lowest it has been in 45 years. Recruitment is important to bring teachers to Nevada, and retention is a big factor in that process, making it desirable and worthwhile for teachers to stay in the profession. This is where we fall short in Nevada, and CCSD spends approximately \$900,000 annually on recruitment. That money, time and energy could be spent elsewhere if we did not have to recruit every year. Nationally, it is reported that 40 percent of teachers leave teaching within the first 5 years.

Assembly Bill 276 is in response to this crisis. While Nevada has employed many strategies trying to find teachers all over the world, there is still one group of people who have not been at the table—the teachers themselves. Teachers are the best people to answer why they pursued teaching in the first place. They can also tell us what they need to stay in the profession. The creation of the Nevada State Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force through A.B. 276 includes in its membership fully certified teachers who have been teaching in Nevada schools for the last five years. There will be teachers

from 1 of each of the 15 rural counties, 3 teachers from CCSD and 2 teachers from WCSD. The Task Force will meet quarterly to evaluate the challenges and make recommendations on how we can attract and, most important, retain teachers in Nevada. The report and findings will be submitted to the 2019-2020 Interim Legislative Committee on Education.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

It sounds like you will have 20 people on the Task Force; an ambitious and large number. I know from experience that it can be unwieldy when you get above around 13 individuals. A smaller number might be a little more successful; maybe you do not need one teacher from every rural county.

I taught for 16 years and sometimes people ask me why I stopped teaching. I tell them it is not the money; it is all the other things that kept piling on every year, over and over, asking us to do more and more. It got to be where I could not see the benefit to my students' achievement for some of the things, and I just got frustrated. After about three years, the frustration level starts to build up and some teachers choose not to deal with it.

Limiting the Task Force only to public school teachers might be a little short-sighted. There are a lot of private school teachers who go back and forth between public and private school teaching. They would have a lot to add to the conversation. When I went to a charter school and was on the board, we changed some of the policies to make teachers feel like they were welcomed. We put money in so the teachers could get more education or we would pay them not to take sick days. Little things like that, thinking outside the box, helped retain them in the system. We have to help figure out how to retain teachers in the system, and nobody knows better than those who have been frustrated by the system.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

That is why we put the quorum at ten, in case we struggle with the number. I do not want our rural districts to be left out because they speak the best for themselves.

There is a small fiscal note from NDE for the support they will be offering in facilitating the Task Force, as well as a small per diem for the participants.

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SENATOR HAMMOND:

If they travel. Do they need to be on site for meetings, or can they do it by phone?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

That is the support we will get from NDE. Like we do everything else in Nevada, we will be rotating locations for meetings and videoconferencing as well.

CHAIR DENIS:

I will take testimony in support of A.B. 276.

MS. ANDERSON:

The Washoe Education Association (WEA) supports A.B. 276. When Assemblywoman Miller brought the idea for it forward, I wondered if yet another task force would be a good idea. However, the makeup of this group is different from other task forces, so this bill is asking different people to serve. When we all ask the questions about why teachers are not staying in the profession, using different voices might give us some different ideas we have not thought of.

As a local leader through WEA, with the help from NSEA and the National Education Association, I have created a group called the Mid-Career Early Leadership Institute. Because of that, we are learning new things about what people believe and want in their careers. Senator Hammond's points are very accurate in many ways as to why people are leaving. It is not always what people think it is, but it is just that there is more and more being put on our plates.

CHAIR DENIS:

Has there been a task force of former teachers to find out why they are not teaching anymore?

MS. ANDERSON:

That is at the bar every Friday night. In all seriousness, we do sometimes take an exit survey of people who leave with less than ten years in the profession.

CHAIR DENIS:

Maybe that is something we need to look at. It might result in some ways we could keep teachers in place.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

That is not a bad idea. In the bill it refers to using current teachers for the Task Force, but if you put someone on there who left the profession, you might get even more insight.

MS. PIERCZYNSKI:

Everybody knows we need more teachers. One good thing about this Task Force is that it could point out the problems and also make recommendations. I support A.B. 276.

MR. DALY:

The NSEA is in support of A.B. 276. The issue of teacher recruitment and retention is now accepted to be one of the vexing issues with public education. There are still significant vacancies at the end of this school year and projected into the next school year.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

I think A.B. 276 is a great idea. I do not want to amend this bill, but when the appointments are made, I hope we can put on the record that there is diversity to ensure we have teachers representing elementary school, middle school and high school on the Task Force. It is important that all are represented because all the grade levels will have different experiences and issues.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

I agree. As a former elementary teacher who moved to middle school, I know there are different issues. We are going to ensure that we not only have grade level representation diversity on the Task Force, but diversity in general for our teachers throughout the State. I hope there will be a pool of applicants so we will have many choices.

CHAIR DENIS:

I thought Senator Hammond's question about having a former teacher on the Task Force was a good idea. Is there an opportunity to do that?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

At this point, I am not interested in that, but I do see the value in that voice. There is also a lot of value to hearing from people who are still sticking it out. One of the things we hear often is that we spend all our incentives on brand-new teachers to get them in and reward them, but we are leaving the

veteran teachers behind. When you are a veteran standing right next to the new teacher who is getting incentives, you think to yourself, "I've been holding down the fort for 10 years, where is my incentive?" I also want to ensure that the energy on the Task Force is positive and solution-based.

CHAIR DENIS:

I was not suggesting an amendment. The other thing is that if you want that input, one of the meetings could include some former teachers to come and talk about their experience.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

Yes, they absolutely can do that.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Also, when the Task Force is put together, it could reach out to other groups and teachers to interface with the Task Force itself. I agree that you want to have active teachers in the building talking to other teachers. I also highly recommend you reach out to some of the other groups.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

Absolutely.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

I agree that you have to find a way to invite the former teachers in to talk. The biggest expense we have is training new teachers, so that is why we want to retain our veteran teachers. It would not cost much to get some of the teachers who have left the profession to come back in if there are changes made and if they can see that, maybe they would teach again. It is not easy to get all these boards and task forces staffed because there are so many of them and not a lot of people who come forward. The more broad you make this, the more participation you could get.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

I appreciate all your input. One thing I did not want to do was to completely structure this Task Force so they could do it themselves.

SENATOR PICKARD MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 276.

SENATOR HARRIS SECONDED THE MOTION.

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SENATOR HAMMOND:

Who does the Task force report to and when do they do it?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

To the 2019-2020 Interim Legislative Committee on Education, the last Committee meeting so there can be bills formulated based on those findings.

SENATOR PICKARD:

You should do it at the second-to-last meeting so the Task Force can act on it.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

* * * * *

CHAIR DENIS:

I will open public comment. Seeing none, we are adjourned at 6:19 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Linda Hiller,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Moises Denis, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit / # of pages		Witness / Entity	Description
	A	2		Agenda
	B	6		Attendance Roster
A.B. 92	C	8	Senator Moises Denis	Letters of Support
A.B. 168	D	2	Assemblywoman Selena Torres	Fact Sheet
A.B. 168	E	4	Assemblywoman Selena Torres	Section Explanation
A.B. 168	F	14	Tammy Malich / Clark County School District	Presentation