

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Eighty-first Session
March 24, 2021**

The Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Moises Denis at 1:08 p.m. on Wednesday, March 24, 2021, Online. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Moises Denis, Chair
Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Vice Chair
Senator Roberta Lange
Senator Fabian Donate
Senator Joseph P. Hardy
Senator Scott Hammond
Senator Carrie A. Buck

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert, Senatorial District No. 15
Senator Ben Kieckhefer, Senatorial District No. 16

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jen Sturm, Policy Analyst
Asher Killian, Counsel
Ian Gahner, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mark Doubrava, M.D., Chair, Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education
Brian Sandoval, President, University of Nevada, Reno
Thomas Schwenk, M.D., Dean, University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine
Anthony Slonim, M.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, Renown Health
Joe Reynolds, Chief General Counsel, Nevada System of Higher Education
Sabra Newby, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

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Ross Armstrong, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services,
Department of Health and Human Services
Lindsay Anderson, Washoe County School District
Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
I will open the hearing on Senate Bill (S.B.) 342.

SENATE BILL 342: Revises provisions relating to higher education.
(BDR 34-845)

MARK DOUBRAVA, M.D. (Chair, Board of Regents, Nevada System of Higher Education):

Senate Bill 342 is an important next step in the Board of Regents' consideration and review of the proposed affiliation between the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and Renown Health. The progress and future growth of Nevada's medical community, and our two public medical schools, has been of particular importance to me throughout my career as both a doctor and a Regent. I am an undergraduate from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), and I received my medical degree from the UNR School of Medicine.

This legislation applies to not only the UNR and Renown affiliation but represents a broader opportunity for medicine and higher education in Nevada that extends to UNLV. Innovation, collaboration, the strengthening of existing partnerships with both public and private entities, and the ability to build new ones with our community partners is key to the success and future of higher education and medical education.

BRIAN SANDOVAL (President, University of Nevada, Reno):

As Chair Doubrava described, S.B. 342 will provide a monumental opportunity for the UNR School of Medicine and Renown Health to enter into a partnership that will elevate the health and quality of healthcare for all Nevadans. This partnership will advance the teaching and clinical research missions of Renown Health and the UNR School of Medicine.

THOMAS SCHWENK, M.D. (Dean, University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine):
Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 396 and NRS 281 do allow for the types of partnerships as described in S.B. 342, but this bill provides more clear direction to the Board of Regents for managing the personnel and contractual aspects of

these partnerships. This bill will give clearer guidance to all on how to manage these partnerships consistent within statute.

This proposed integration allows the creation of robust and high-level partnerships between a medical school and a large healthcare system. This type of partnership exists for nearly all medical schools in the Country. There are over 150 medical schools in the Country and of those, at least 140 have high-level integrations. Many of these date back decades ago and are well-known. Harvard, for example, has these types of relationships with its teaching hospitals. There are dozens of examples of these types of partnerships.

The reason these partnerships exist is because medical education and research is changing dramatically and requires a large and sophisticated clinical platform to accomplish its teaching and research missions. Medical schools are fundamentally different than any other school at a university. Colleges of engineering do not run factories, for example. Colleges of businesses do not run businesses. Colleges of education do not run schools. Medical schools have large and sophisticated clinical programs to accomplish their missions.

Senate Bill 342 is of benefit to the University but also to the community. The overall goal is to develop an integrated clinical enterprise between the clinically facing sides of the medical school with our counterparts at Renown Health. We look to have a shared vision, aligned governance and unified leadership for the clinical components of these two organizations. The overall mission is for Renown Health and the UNR School of Medicine to commit to elevating the health and quality of healthcare for all Nevadans.

This commitment includes a focus for those who are underserved in support of our diversity, equity and inclusivity goals, the reduction of healthcare disparities. We have received feedback that some believe this partnership would reduce our commitment to underserved patients and to the Medicaid population in particular. That is absolutely false. We are clear about our continued commitment to these underserved populations, and this partnership expands our ability to meet that mission.

As I have said, the fundamental objective of this affiliation is to take the clinically facing components of the UNR School of Medicine and marry those with corresponding programs at Renown Health. This would support our teaching and research missions. It would allow, for example, the possibility of

an increased medical school class size in the future, a new residency program, new fellowships, new training programs that would enhance care in the community, expanded access to care and new clinical research programs that would change the way medical care is delivered. That is what this proposed integration is about.

This bill is not a privatization of the UNR School of Medicine. Major components of our school that will continue to be accredited as a State-funded public medical school. The fundamental reason for this is to maintain affordable tuition and access for Nevada students, and our ability to continue serving underserved patient populations. We intend for this agreement to be long term. At the moment, the agreement specifies a 50-year commitment just so we have a long-term horizon. There are many checkpoints along the way and mechanisms for termination under extenuating circumstances. The reason for that long-term horizon is there are inevitable bumps in the road. These agreements are complex. They involve large, complex missions and institutions. What we want is the ability to ride over those inevitable speed bumps with a long-term commitment to each other so as to maintain our focus on the benefits to the community. We do not want the inevitable glitches that cause future leaders to decide walking away is the option.

There is an emphasis on integrated operations and governance whenever possible to achieve better outcomes and efficiency. A notable example of the proposed integrated governance is the appointment of the UNR President to voting membership on the Renown Board of Directors. Another major example of this integration is that the Dean of UNR School of Medicine will serve as the Chief Academic Officer (CAO) of Renown and thereby be responsible for all teaching and research programs among the two.

The President of UNR, under the authority of the Board of Regents, is the appointing authority for the Dean but with consultation and agreement from the Renown Chief Executive Officer. The reason is to maintain the commitment from both senior officials to that bridge. The Dean CAO will serve as chair of an affiliation oversight committee and executive committee to manage the partnership.

The Dean CAO will also chair the graduate education consortium council, which includes Renown, UNR and VA Sierra Nevada Health Care System. Those three entities come together to manage all our residency programs. The UNR

School of Medicine continues as the sponsor and sponsoring institution for all residency training programs, and has operational responsibility for those programs under the Dean CAO.

Primary oversight for all academic activities is the responsibility of the UNR School of Medicine. Primary oversight for all clinical activities is the responsibility for Renown Health's clinical operations leadership. There is a reciprocal integrated governance. A senior clinical leader at Renown, in this case the chief medical officer of the main medical center, will come across to the UNR School of Medicine to serve as the senior associate dean for clinical affairs on the UNR School of Medicine Dean's Cabinet, reporting to the Dean.

University Health, which is our separate clinical corporation but highly integrated with the UNR School of Medicine, will transfer to Renown through a member substitution agreement so the corporation as a whole moves over to Renown Health. As a result, Renown is then responsible for all clinical infrastructure and staff—but not faculty, which is a key distinction. Renown Health would be responsible for the installation of all clinical operations. Renown would be responsible for all clinical expenses such as leased space. Renown Health would then provide reimbursement to the UNR School of Medicine for the clinical portion of all our physician faculty services.

There are substantial funds flow agreements as part of this. It is commonplace in these agreements that the health system makes a financial commitment to academic investment in the school of medicine. In this case, Renown has initially committed to an academic support payment of \$1.5 million to the UNR School of Medicine to support academic programs which then support clinical distinction and grow clinical programs in the community. This is an example of how academic and clinical success come together for the benefit of both partners and the community. Finally, Renown Health is committed to \$350,000 a year for scholarship support.

ANTHONY SLONIM, M.D. (President and Chief Executive Officer, Renown Health): Renown Health, a locally owned, operated and governed private not-for-profit integrated healthcare association, has been a longtime partner of the UNR School of Medicine since its very first class of residence. We are excited for the opportunity to develop a stronger affiliation. This is in the best interests of students as it relates to their clinical education and the community for their health and healthcare. We will be able to work together and strengthen our

workforce in Nevada as we continue to invest in the health and healthcare needs of our community. This public-private partnership also has the added benefit of enhancing research in Nevada beyond what either organization can achieve individually.

This contemporary model drawn from around the Country is notable because we will now work together in helping improve our State's health more efficiently and effectively than we could do singularly in the past. This bill allows the Regents to do good things to enhance our community's health.

SENATOR HARDY:

This wonderful partnership will open opportunities across the State and maybe even out of State as we become a full-fledged medical university center. Senate Bill 342 will lift all boats. I am interested in the prospects available.

DR. SCHWENK:

I agree, S.B. 342 will open up tremendous opportunities across the State. I should make clear this bill is expressly written to include UNR and UNLV. This bill is the future of medical education and research across the State.

SENATOR HARDY:

When others come on board, will there still be opportunities for clinical rotations for medical students?

DR. SCHWENK:

We would be receptive to more cross-fertilization students. As you know, residency education is much harder because of strict prohibitions with regard to where the residents rotate, the funding sources and responsibility for those residents. We already have a number of our students going to Las Vegas for rotations in various facilities. We want to see more of that.

SENATOR LANGE:

The UNR nursing and medical programs are at capacity and are difficult to get into. Will S.B. 342 allow you to expand those programs and allow more students?

DR. SCHWENK:

Yes, that is part of the plan. We have to go carefully and make sure we are developing the appropriate teaching platform and have provided proper faculty

development for hundreds of Renown physicians who will come online as teachers. We continue to have tremendous relationships in the community with hundreds of volunteer community physicians. Those relationships continue to be prized. We are selfish because we are looking for the best of both, which is to have excellent relationships in the community but also huge input from the large Renown system.

In summary, yes, we want to expand. We believe UNR and UNLV are probably two of the smallest medical schools in the County. We have an excellent pipeline of Nevada students that has increased over time with interest in the two schools. We want to serve the State in that regard.

SENATOR DONATE:

I started doing a deep dive into the research between healthcare organizations and medical schools when they collaborate. As you already mentioned, there is quite a variance with how institutions partner with external organizations. When I am reading this bill, is the intent for a university system to go into an agreement with just one entity or would it open the opportunity for further agreements with other groups?

DR. SCHWENK:

This bill provides guardrails for the Board of Regents to guide the medical schools in these partnerships. I do not think it speaks otherwise to how many partnerships you can have, it just gives the Board of Regents guidance on how to construct these partnerships.

JOE REYNOLDS (Chief General Counsel, Nevada System of Higher Education):

To answer Senator Donate's question, the answer is yes. The intent of this bill is to provide a broader opportunity for future agreements both at UNR and UNLV.

SENATOR DONATE:

This good bill can pave the way for increasing access. In the research that I read, a lot of difficulty that comes with creating a new partnership is in variances with institutional missions and your priorities. You did a good job of outlining your internal champions to help facilitate communication.

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VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

The mention was made this goes with UNLV as well but the bill itself seems to speak to only UNR. Can you clarify that?

DR. SCHWENK:

This should apply to all medical schools.

MR. SANDOVAL:

The intent is for S.B. 342 to apply to both the UNR School of Medicine and the UNLV School of Medicine. In the future, if the UNLV School of Medicine wants to have an affiliation with a for-profit or nonprofit hospital, this would pave the way for it to do so. It just so happens there is presently a proposed affiliation between Renown Health and the UNR School of Medicine.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

With that being said, would these universities be able to partner with our governmental agencies? I realize Reno does not have a county hospital but Las Vegas does. Would that be a possibility with this bill or is it only private entities?

MR. REYNOLDS:

Yes, we specifically included both public and private entities in S.B. 342 to allow partnerships in the future.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Thank you, I want to make sure we are partnering with all our Nevada System of Higher Education pieces. This is important legislation for Nevada.

SENATOR MOISES DENIS (Senatorial District No. 2):

To clarify, S.B. 342 talks about the University of Nevada. Our staff has a clarification on that definition.

JEN STURM (Policy Analyst):

Based on collaboration with our Legal Counsel, "the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada" is the language used in the Nevada Constitution. This is why it is the language used in S.B. 342. There is only one University of Nevada that includes the campuses in Reno and Las Vegas.

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SABRA NEWBY (University of Nevada, Las Vegas):

We are in support of S.B. 342. While this is not necessarily an option UNLV wants to take up at this point, we are thankful to UNR for bringing this bill forward and adding another tool in the toolbox.

ROSS ARMSTRONG (Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services):

I am testifying in neutral to S.B. 342. We appreciate the comment the sponsors made that Medicaid patients will continue to benefit from university services. Our universities of UNR and UNLV have great partnerships with us to help our workforce and our neediest kids.

SENATOR DENIS:

As you have heard from various individuals, this bill can be used at both medical schools. Senate Bill 342 can provide for better medical education and better services overall for the community.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will close the hearing on S.B. 342.

CHAIR DENIS:

I am willing to entertain a motion on S.B. 342.

SENATOR DONATE:

While I am fully supportive of this bill, I would like a clarification from Legal on the writing of profit versus nonprofit in the bill. I want to make sure governmental institutions like University Medical Center would be included in this bill if UNLV wanted to pursue that option. Can we take a look at this before we vote to pass the bill? I am supportive of S.B. 342.

CHAIR DENIS:

Ms. Sturm, can you clarify that language?

Ms. STURM:

I can clarify that language and get back to the Committee.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Chair Denis, I do not want to delay anything, but I do agree with Senator Donate. It would be better to get those answers and put S.B. 342 on a work session for future.

MS. STURM:

The bill allows affiliation with any publically or privately owned medical facility or related entity, whether for profit or nonprofit. The Board of Regents would be free to affiliate with a government medical facility or a private medical facility of any kind pursuant to the provisions of the bill.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I do not know whether I have had enough time to process this bill to vote.

CHAIR DENIS:

We will put S.B. 342 on our next meeting as a work session so everyone has a chance to review. As there are questions, we will hold off on voting for now. We will move on to S.B. 272.

SENATE BILL 272: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-940)

SENATOR HEIDI SEEVERS GANSERT (Senatorial District No. 15):

As part of my testimony for S.B. 272, I will share my presentation ([Exhibit B](#)). As shown on Slide 2, this bill is part of a four-bill plan that Senator Kieckhefer and I are calling the Nevada Education Recovery Plan. We spent time with Superintendent Jhone Ebert to figure out how to help students. With the disruption caused by Covid-19, our students are experiencing learning losses and feeling disengaged learning from home. We have some information about learning loss but not as much as I think we will gain over time. Today, we are presenting S.B. 272, which establishes the Nevada Educator Corps. The next bill would be S.B. 273, which focuses on literacy.

SENATE BILL 273: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-941)

SENATOR BEN KIECKHEFER (Senatorial District No. 16):

As a part of targeting early childhood and graduating high school students, two other bills will be introduced, also listed on Slide 2 of [Exhibit B](#). Senate Bill 312 is an expansion of our existing pre-K programs.

SENATE BILL 312: Provides for the use of certain federal funding for the costs associated with the enrollment of prekindergarten pupils in prekindergarten education programs in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. (BDR S-942)

At the other end of the K-12 spectrum is S.B. 316, which would create a pilot fifth-year program for small pods of up to 20 students in high schools to help them get all their needs met for graduation.

SENATE BILL 316: Provides for the use of certain federal funding for a pilot program for certain pupils enrolled in a public high school. (BDR S-943)

These two bills you may see in the not-too-distant future, but they are all meant to complement the two bills that Senator Seevers Gansert has mentioned and support the work Senator Dondero Loop has done with S.B. 173.

SENATE BILL 173: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR S-1003)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

These four bills are meant to help our students catch up on their learning losses and improve learning outcomes. They do complement the work of Senator Dondero Loop.

What do we know? Right now, not a lot of data is out there. Washoe County was able to present a report in February about the critical absenteeism rates. On Slide 3 of Exhibit B, the rates in high school are as high as 51 percent versus 17 percent last year. Kids are not attending or are not attending full time.

On Slide 4, if we look at the data before Covid-19 in fourth grade, our scores on the Nation's Report Card were finally reaching peer levels as far as reading. Our fourth graders were virtually reading at the same level as their contemporaries across the United States. This was the first time ever for the State of Nevada. Before that, you can see we were tracking national rates. On Slide 5, you can see a similar pattern. Going back to Slide 4, the turn in scores was in 2017. During that time, we started to converge on fourth-grade reading scores. Interestingly, when you look at fourth-grade math scores on Slide 6, 2017 was also a turning point in those scores as well.

We were making gains. Now we have gone through this Covid-19 epidemic, and students are starting to return to school or attending hybrid modalities. We are expecting significant learning losses. We need to catch up, look beyond that and change the trajectory to an upward one where we are having gains in outcomes, not just tracking the averages across the Country.

The next question is what is the state of our schools? Across the State, 114,559 public elementary students are reading below their grade level as shown on Slide 8. In Clark County, 12,000 students did not have a full-time teacher on their first day of school in fall 2020, which is shown on Slide 9.

When I consider this issue, it seems like we have a supply problem. We do not have enough teachers; we have learning losses, and we were making gains but have now lost them. What can we do about this? How can we get all hands on deck? How do we help these students recover and improve their outcomes across the board?

Senator Kieckhefer and I came up with the Nevada Educator Corps as a result, presented on Slide 10. The members of the Corps could provide in-person and online tutoring services. Members could be retired teachers, licensed teachers and college students with a special license to teach. Those students are required to have at least 30 units of college courses. This Corps would do a boot camp. Licensed teachers would probably be ready to tutor students, but ones who are retired and especially the students need to have a short curriculum. Part of that curriculum would be about social-emotional and the trauma-engaged content we think students will need. These students have been engaged online, disengaged from schools and have not been around their friends. In addition, the students who are members of the Corps could have lessons on pedagogy such as how to put together plans and how to tutor.

It is proposed in S.B. 272 that the regional professional development programs could put that programming together. That programming would not be 40 hours necessarily, it would not be 80 hours either. It would be something that could be handled in one to three days to get these folks up to speed and address the needs of the students as soon as possible. We want to help the students recover from learning losses due to Covid-19, and maintain and improve the Nation's Report Card scores we were finally making progress on. The Nevada Educator Corps is one piece of this broader plan to help our students recover from the pandemic.

Getting into the details of S.B. 272, section 1, subsection 1 introduces the concept of the Nevada Educator Corps. Section 1, subsection 2 has the Department of Education (NDE) establish a database of members for tutoring services. The tutoring services would be potentially during or after school, but I think most of those tutoring services would be after school and during the summer. The individuals eligible to be a part of the Corps are in section 1, subsection 3. College students previously mentioned who could be part of the Corps would need to get a special license that the Superintendent provides through regulation. This license would be a limited license for a period of time to administer tutoring.

Section 1, subsection 4 talks about payment and hours for Corps members. A proposed amendment for this section will be presented by Chris Daly later. We want to make sure we pay these members enough but not conflict with collective bargaining agreements. While talking with the school districts, it appears they typically use up to 26 hours per week. Instead of 700 hours of tutoring in a school year as listed in the bill, we would align with the 26 hours per week to keep the members as hourly workers and without paid benefits.

Section 1, subsection 5 starts to discuss the training for Corps members. The training would need to be differentiated per member. As I said earlier, there will be a social-emotional, trauma-informed piece that all members will need to cover. Section 1, subsection 7 contemplated the licensure piece. If we have a member who is an inactive teacher and his or her license is not current but eligible for licensure, that individual would get the license for free.

Section 2 talks about the funds for this Corps. The funds right now are listed as from the General Fund. This will be changed to the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund retained by Nevada. It will not draw from current ESSER funds or those to be distributed to school districts. This part of the \$47.7 million being held back is available to NDE.

To reiterate, amendments to this bill will be around the pay, hours of eligibility, the special license and funding.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

We heard a bill from you previously. Is S.B. 272 a combination of that bill?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

This bill is one piece. The several other bills we have drafted are referred to the Education Committee but not yet scheduled to be heard. Because we had the opportunity to discuss S.B. 272, Senator Kieckhefer and I have been thinking broadly about how we can help our students recover. That is why I mentioned more bills coming. In addition, there is the bill about summer education which we absolutely need to do. It is all hands on deck about how many different ways can we approach and help students on different levels. Senate Bill 272 is about tutoring K-12 students. We have fifth-year students who will have to stay in their grade because some will be unable to finish their school year. Some we are not sure where they are in terms of completion. Senator Kieckhefer's bill, S.B. 312, addresses pre-K students. I have a bill on literacy, S.B. 273, as we are finally making some progress.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

That is what I needed to get at. There are other bills that go with this?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Yes, we will have to approach each bill one at a time as they are heard. Senate Bill 272 was the first one offered a hearing.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

In regard to retired teachers who hold a license, I would be one of those individuals. That is a school district piece; they need to identify those teachers in hard-to-fill positions just like we have done in the past. That is not a State regulation, that is a school board regulation. As for your 30 hours of coursework for college students, in Clark County they need to have 60 hours to substitute. I am trying to figure out why the difference is there.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

The Corps is meant to support classroom teachers. The students who would be members of the Corps are not teachers, they would be tutors. Senate Bill 272 aims to have these Corps member students get some training to help students because of the supply issue we are facing. We do not have enough teachers in the classroom. We cannot hire enough. We have retired teachers who have tremendous qualifications. This is about supporting the classroom teacher because it will be a heavy lift with the learning losses we have experienced. The social-emotional piece is important too. How do you help these students get back into the classroom and start to catch up?

This bill is not intended to be an alternate route to licensure. It is not intended to make these members long-term substitutes. They are intended to be a part of this Corps to assist with tutoring.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Is this bill something the Washoe County School District (WCSD) asked for?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

No, no one asked for this.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Have you had conversations with the WCSD and Clark County School District on this bill?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Yes. I had conversations with the WCSD and the Clark County School District. We discussed what this plan could look like, how it would fit with what they have or are planning on doing, and how we can support the teaching in the classroom. Both districts may testify when we go to comments on this bill.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

When you talk about the database of teachers in section 1, subsection 2, does that already exist at the NDE? Is that something they would have to create? Would they need software to do that? I know NDE keeps everyone who has a license in a database, but how would that work exactly?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

The Department of Education already has a database of actively licensed teachers and probably inactive teachers. Concerning the students who would join the Corps and have to be added, we would message the various Nevada colleges to determine which students would be interested in an opportunity like this. This is about tutoring. It would not replace teachers, be about alternative licensure or allow long-term substitute teaching. This bill is about getting more people to help students and reinforcing what is happening in the classroom.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

As a parent with two students in high school, I can say finding qualified tutors is not always the easiest thing to do. Having access to tutors who have training

or are put forward by the school as qualified on the subject matter you are looking for would be an incredible help to parents.

The financial aspect for families who could use the help in providing that extra support is another key part of this bill. Helping families who do not have the resources to find help on their own and be able to access those tutoring services would be impactful.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

We have students who are disproportionally affected. Students who are low income or of color have not gotten the resources they need because of technology. They do not have access like more-affluent students who could get help from parents or have hireable tutors. There is a greater impact for low income and students of color with this program. Something I did not mention earlier is the schools and students prioritized would be those who need the most help. Potentially, they could use the Nation's Report Card scores to see who needs the most help. Tutoring could be in group sessions or in online, in-person or one-on-one. The schools themselves would help decide how the tutoring would occur to make sure we help as many children as possible.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Would the NDE subgrant the funds to the districts, or would they hire the tutors. Who hires the tutors? Would it be the school district has another human resources piece, or would the NDE do it?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

The database is established by the NDE, and the ESSER funds would be held back by the NDE. The NDE would work together with the school districts to identify the tutors, but I am not sure how the paychecks would roll out. We can work on that between the school districts and the NDE. It may be the school districts. What is different now than what we have seen before is we are in an online mode. Based on their knowledge, tutors who live in a certain region of Nevada may help students somewhere else in the State. It would be great if we could have all the tutoring in person, but that may be limited for some time.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I worry about how the NDE is short on staff, as are the school districts. I do not know how they would manage the tutoring jobs. You would have to identify if

the ESSER funds would pay for this. They may have already earmarked ESSER funds for other things.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Those are the details we need to work out. This is about kids. How do we help our students, and I know you have been thinking about this with S.B. 173. How do we help our students with the learning losses they are experiencing, and how do we get back on that trajectory where our students are improving and starting to meet or exceed their peer performance across the Country? It is about getting them back to where they were and raising the bar. Of the \$47.7 million ESSER funds being held back, \$2.4 million of that is allowed for administration. The portion of those dollars set aside for administration could help with any of the programs moving forward.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I agree. I am cautious with telling the NDE how to run its business. The Department is working hard.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

I completely agree with you. The NDE works overtime to help our students. Senator Kieckhefer and I spent quite a bit of time with Superintendent Jhone Ebert brainstorming what types of programs could help our kids. We have substantial funds from the federal government which will come down to us. Just out of the ESSER funds, I think \$430 million was processed and \$47.7 million sent straight to the NDE. Funding is available, it is just a question of how we use it. This bill is one of several ideas. We will probably have more to help our students.

SENATOR LANGE:

I have a lifetime teaching certificate. I can teach K-12 in any subject. My certificate is reciprocal with a lot of different states outside of Nevada. Under section 1, subsection 3, paragraph (a), would I or other retired teachers in the same boat be eligible to teach in this program?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Absolutely. You are a highly credentialed teacher and are the kind of person who could help a lot of students. We need more people like you. The license issued in the Corps would be a limited one, so out-of-state teachers would likely be issued the special licensed category and not be licensed as a regular teacher

in the State of Nevada. It could be the limited special license specifically for tutoring.

SENATOR BUCK:

When I was a principal, grant money for before- and after-school tutoring was always helpful. I saw the difference it made for students.

We always talk about how we want to encourage people into the teaching profession. Looking at those college students perhaps getting their teacher credential, how do you see this bill as helping the teacher pipeline?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

This bill will expose students who maybe did not think about getting into education. The NevadaTeach Program is helpful as well. That program is where you get credentialed for teaching but also graduate with a STEM degree. This bill will expose college students to teaching and have that experience with students in tutorship to see how much they can help. It is all positive to me; all of it is an upside having more people involved.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

In section 1, subsection 3, paragraph (c), 30 hours of credit can be in any subject; it does not necessarily have to be in education. You do not have to be an education major to qualify for this opportunity. Exposing more college students to the role of teacher-student, helping a younger person with their education, could inspire people to join the profession. I hope it does because a lot of teachers get an incredible sense of satisfaction working directly with students and helping with their education.

SENATOR BUCK:

I like how S.B. 272 is a supplement and does not supplant Senator Dondero Loop's bill. This would add a great caveat to get those needed educators.

SENATOR DONATE:

I like the idea and the conversation on tutoring. Would you consider increasing the credit amount in section 1, subsection 3, paragraph (c) to 60 credits and remove the special license requirement in exchange? My reasoning goes back to my undergraduate studies when a lot of my tutors were just graduate students tutoring as a side job. We could open up the potential number of students. I do

not want the special license to be a barrier to students who do not have access to get a good job and want to do this tutoring on the side. Maybe we require the students to be college upperclassmen?

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

We do not want to create barriers but are in an unusual time where it will be hard for students to get back into the classroom. We need some basic training for those college students who wish to tutor. I am not so worried about the credit hours; we do not want to set the threshold too high. As I mentioned earlier, the training can be a day to three days, maybe five. It would not be a lot of training but enough to prepare them to ensure they can help these students and understand how to convey things.

When I was an undergraduate, one of my jobs was tutoring. I tutored calculus as a sophomore. I did not know how to tutor, but I could help students with problems. For K-12 tutoring, it makes sense to have some training. Knowing how to present the material and having the knowledge on how to respond is necessary, given what our students are facing and what is happening with depression and suicide.

LINDSAY ANDERSON (Washoe County School District):

We are neutral on S.B. 272. Having the option to engage with additional tutors through the State portion of federal stimulus dollars to support our students is something we would explore. We are building out our two-year WCSD strategic plan to address fallback academic growth due to Covid-19. A couple of amendment and logistical ideas came up during our conversations with Senators Seevers Gansert and Kieckhefer that need to be worked out, but we are looking forward to that continued discussion.

CHRIS DALY (Nevada State Education Association):

The Nevada State Education Association has not yet taken a position on S.B. 272. We appreciate the intent of expanding tutoring opportunities for students and building a tutoring core. One item we did flag—and submitted a proposed amendment to the bill—is language regarding pay for members of the Nevada Educator Corps. Many of our local affiliates representing licensed educators who are eligible to become members of this Corps already have agreements regarding payment for this type of extra duty. We have submitted language in lieu of the \$20 per hour rate to make the rate equivalent to the

average pay for similar duties delineated in those agreements. Active licensed educators should be given priority for available positions with this bill.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

This is a time where we need all hands on deck. These tutors can help reinforce the classroom teachers. Our children have had a difficult time, there will be a transition period, and there will be catch-up work. Senate Bill 272 is one of the ideas that could help our students return to school, be more successful and improve outcomes over time. Our trajectories were moving up. We were finally getting there, and we want to continue that trajectory.

CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the hearing on S.B. 272. I do have a number of bill draft requests (BDR) to introduce. We will consider BDR 34-843, BDR 34-528 and BDR 34-842.

BILL DRAFT REQUEST 34-843: Revises provisions relating to education. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 352](#).)

BILL DRAFT REQUEST 34-528: Requires the Department of Education to review certain assessments. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 353](#).)

BILL DRAFT REQUEST 34-842: Revises provisions relating to education. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 354](#).)

SENATOR HARDY MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR 34-843,
BDR 34-528 AND BDR 34-842.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

* * * * *

CHAIR DENIS:

We will now move to public comment.

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MS. ANDERSON:

For a good news minute, the Damonte Ranch High School Leadership students put together 550 goodie bags to recognize Renown Health staff at the South Meadows Facility and thank them for being an outstanding partner in education. The bag included Hershey's Kisses, Life Savers and handwritten thank you cards from students. Recently, Renown Health donated \$5,000 to Damonte Ranch High School, and it was used to purchase laptops for students in need. Renown Health has been a partner in education for more than 20 years and received the inaugural Partner in Education Champion Award in 2018. We thank the Damonte Ranch High School students and Renown Health for their partnership in the name of kids.

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CHAIR DENIS:

Seeing no further public comment, the meeting is adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Ian Gahner,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Moises Denis, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit Letter	Begins on Page	Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
S.B. 272	B	1	Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert	Presentation
S.B. 272	B	2	Senator Ben Kieckhefer	Presentation