

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Eighty-first Session
April 7, 2021**

The Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Moises Denis at 1:27 p.m. on Wednesday, April 7, 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

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Sarah Nick, Department of Education
Matt Nighswonger, Clark County Education Association
Velynda Kimes, Clark County Education Association
Vinny Tarquinio, Clark County Education Association
Joanna Miller, Clark County Education Association
Brenda Pearson, Ph.D., Clark County Education Association
Marie Neisess, President, Clark County Education Association
Jessica Jones
Kristofer DiPaolo, Clark County Education Association
Justin Red
Kenneth Belknap, Clark County School District
Dane Watson, Clark County Education Association
Sharon Whalum, Clark County Education Association

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Jordan Hankins, Clark County Education Association
Tony Ramirez, Clark County Education Association
Francesca Petrucci, Clark County Education Association
Ed Gonzalez, Hickey Elementary School
Rebecca Garcia, President, Nevada Parent Teacher Association
Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association
Jim Frazee, Vice President, Clark County Education Association
Steven Augspurger, Executive Director, Clark County Association of School
Administrators and Professional-technical Employees
Danny Thompson, Clark County School Association of Administrators
Katie Weir, Principal, Washoe County School District
Chelsea Capurro, Nevada Association of School Administrators

CHAIR DENIS:

I will open the work session on Senate Bill (S.B.) 76.

SENATE BILL 76: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-297)

JEN STURM (Policy Analyst):

The work session document packet ([Exhibit B](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 76. This bill was presented to the Committee on February 17 by the Department of Education (NDE).

SENATOR HARDY:

We are eliminating reporting because we got rid of the Zoom, Victory, Read by 3, and the Great Teaching and Leading Fund?

SARAH NICK (Department of Education):

Those recommended amendments did not take away the programs. They simply removed and streamlined the reporting requirements.

SENATOR HARDY:

How will we know these programs are working?

Ms. NICK:

In [Exhibit B](#) is updated reporting language so these programs, should money become available, are reported by an independent evaluator on a rotating basis.

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CHAIR DENIS:

We are not changing the statutes for these programs; the new funding formula causes this process to be within the formula rather than outside of it. These changes streamline the process to ensure we get the information necessary.

SENATOR HARDY MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
S.B. 76 WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT 3146.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 76 and open the work session on S.B. 151.

SENATE BILL 151: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-77)

MS. STURM:

The work session document packet ([Exhibit C](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 151. This bill was presented to the Committee on March 10 by Senator Dondero Loop.

CHAIR DENIS:

This bill states there is an unfunded mandate. Senator Dondero Loop, could you address that? Did we have a discussion about this during the previous hearing?

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

We did. The cost is because there will be new work required for the reports by the NDE. We have this element worked out.

SENATOR HARDY MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
S.B. 151.

SENATOR HAMMOND SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 151 and open the work session on S.B. 194.

SENATE BILL 194: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-676)

MS. STURM:

The work session document packet ([Exhibit D](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 194. This bill was presented to the Committee on March 29 by Senator Lange.

SENATOR LANGE:

The amendments listed deleted the cooperative agreement for higher education because they are already in *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) and were not necessary. Section 6 was removed because it is not applicable. Section 7 was deleted because there is already a civics advisory panel that we can use. As a reminder, civics teaches us about the rights and duties of citizens. We have seen a lot happen in our Country in the past years. I look back to when I was in school and had civics. It was important to what I believe today. This bill will create a great program for kids. I am especially excited for the service project because we should learn how to give back. The diverse American perspectives are important as well because we need to know and appreciate all cultures in our society.

CHAIR DENIS:

Could you address the fiscal notes?

SENATOR LANGE:

The NDE will put a small fiscal note on S.B. 194 because of the service learning project. I have already spoken with the Senate Committee on Finance, and we can work it out.

CHAIR DENIS:

For the service learning project, are there any exemptions if something comes up and students are not able to complete it?

SENATOR LANGE:

Students will have the entire Grades 9-12 of high school to complete this project. The teachers will begin to speak to the students regarding the project starting in ninth grade. It will be difficult to not get it done because the students will have lots of time. If something like a request for exemption occurred, that would be a conversation between the teacher, student, parents and maybe the NDE.

SENATOR HAMMOND MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED S.B. 194 WITH PROPOSED AMENDMENT 3208.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 194 and open the work session for S.B. 215.

SENATE BILL 215: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-181)

Ms. STURM:

The work session document packet ([Exhibit E](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 215. This bill was presented to the Committee on March 29 by Senator Denis.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED S.B. 215.

SENATOR LANGE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 215 and open the work session on S.B. 352.

SENATE BILL 352: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-843)

Ms. STURM:

The work session document packet ([Exhibit F](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 352. This bill was presented to the Committee on April 5 by Senator Denis.

SENATOR HARDY MOVED TO DO PASS S.B. 352.

SENATOR HAMMOND SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 352 and open the work session on S.B. 353.

SENATE BILL 353: Requires the Department of Education to review certain assessments. (BDR 34-528)

Ms. STURM:

The work session document packet ([Exhibit G](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 353. This bill was presented to the Committee on April 2 by Senator Dondero Loop.

SENATOR HARDY MOVED TO DO PASS S.B. 353.

SENATOR DONATE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 353 and open the work session on S.B. 363.

SENATE BILL 363: Revises provisions relating to charter schools. (BDR 34-530)

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Ms. STURM:

The work session document packet ([Exhibit H](#)) has been submitted for S.B. 363. This bill was presented to the Committee on April 2 by Senator Denis.

SENATOR HARDY MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
S.B. 363.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DENIS:

I will close the work session on S.B. 363.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will open the hearing on S.B. 120.

SENATE BILL 120: Revises provisions relating to school administrators.
(BDR 34-183)

SENATOR MOISES DENIS (Senatorial District No. 2):

Senate Bill 120 aims to align statutory requirements relating to probationary teachers and administrators by amending certain provisions concerning the evaluation and retention of administrators. I am proposing to amend S.B. 120 as introduced to address stakeholders' concerns related to school climate.

While trying to work on this bill during a pandemic, it was difficult to bring people together. The original language on this bill was a placeholder to have discussions and work out issues. I will be talking about the bill with proposed amendments ([Exhibit I](#)).

New teachers have a probationary period of three years. After that time, if a postprobationary teacher receives two evaluations with performance ratings of developing or ineffective, the teacher is placed back on probationary status. Under law, there are no conditions which a principal would revert to probationary status after the initial year. This omission fails to recognize there

are administrators who may not be effective in managing their schools and should be placed under probationary status, in certain circumstances.

The purpose of S.B. 120 is to recognize that school climate is the responsibility of the leader of a school, and principals need to be held accountable if the climate at a school is causing teacher turnover. The accountability measures we place on teachers should be extended to principals. The leader of the school will determine if teachers will do the best they can and achieve.

I will go through each section of S.B. 120 and mention the amendments as I go along. Section 2 makes principals at-will for the first three years of employment, which is in line with requirements for teachers. The section also outlines provisions concerning principals who are reassigned. Additionally, after those three years, a principal may be placed back on at-will status if the school's rating is reduced and at least one half of the teachers request a transfer from the school in each of two consecutive school years.

This is one of the sections of the bill I am proposing to amend by sharpening the focus on school climate. The amendment proposes to remove paragraph (a) of subsection 2 regarding school ratings. However, if at least one half of the teachers request a transfer in one school year, the bill would still require the school district to conduct a climate survey to determine the reasons why staff members are requesting to relocate. The amendment would add if the survey results reveal that climate is an issue at the school, the principal is required to undergo professional development training.

In the year immediately following a year in which at least 50 percent transfer, if 40 percent or more of the teachers request a transfer due to school climate issues, the principal will become employed at will and is subject to immediate dismissal. For school climate, the intent generally is to use the existing definition in NRS as a base and expand on the elements related to employment.

Finally, the amendment would create an exception from the postprobationary at-will employment status and teacher survey provisions for principals who have been placed at an underperforming school as part of a school district program or who have received an incentive to relocate to such a school. The amendment would require principals placed at underperforming schools pursuant to a school district program or who receive an incentive to relocate to such a school to take school climate training within the first year at that school.

I added these amendments because of discussions I had with various stakeholders, such as principals, teachers, school districts and the NDE. I have spoken with many principals who were concerned we would not attract principals to underperforming schools. Therefore, I wanted to ensure we had a way to incentivize principals, but we also have a plan in place to be successful.

Moving on to section 3, S.B. 120 requires certain administrators in postprobationary status to apply for reappointment every five years. If not reappointed, the administrator is entitled to be reassigned to the position from which the administrator was promoted. This section is not for principals. This section is for persons such as an associate superintendent or a supervisor. These are all positions that are above that of a district principal. This allows us the opportunity to reassess whether that person is doing well, and if not, it gives us the opportunity to make a change. Sections 4 through 10 make conforming changes throughout other sections of NRS.

To address one more stakeholder concern regarding professional development, I propose to amend S.B. 120 to require each school district to develop a plan for professional development for school-based and district administrators each year and submit the plan to NDE. These professional development plans will be reviewed and approved by NDE. Additionally, the districts will be required to report on the professional development training conducted annually. One of the big challenges is if you are assigned to be a principal and you have a supervisor who is not able to get to you frequently, it would be unfair to expect that person to be successful without the appropriate tools. We require teachers to submit the development they are undertaking; this bill would do the same for districts and their administrators.

And the final amendment I would like to offer today is regarding principal-to-supervisor ratios. The amendment would request that school districts include nonbinding principal-to-supervisor ratios in the professional development plans submitted to NDE. There are national standards. I also looked at having the NDE create standards. The issue comes from the NDE saying we will follow a standard versus implementing it because there may not be the funds. I realize new teachers who are in an underperforming school may need more in-service training as compared to a teacher who is in a more successful location. Those kind of things could be listed in this plan.

Sometimes we do have situations where someone is in a position but could perhaps do better in a different position. It is important to teachers and students to have a climate in their school where they can achieve and learn. We have had instances where we have great principals and others who need help. Some principals just need professional development. This bill provides the opportunity to have those pieces in place so all our principals can be successful. This is not about punishing principals. It is about helping them become better and aligning their development with the same requirements we have for teachers.

SENATOR LANGE:

Can you explain the section 3 provision about applying every five years and how that will work? Who is affected by this?

SENATOR DENIS:

Section 3 states:

Each probationary administrator employed by a school district, except a principal, assistant principal or other school administrator, school district administrator or central office administrator below the rank of superintendent, associate superintendent, or assistant superintendent who may be a member of a separate bargaining unit pursuant to NRS 288.170

SENATOR LANGE:

Can you give me an example?

SENATOR DENIS:

An example would be an associate superintendent or a supervisor that supervises principals.

SENATOR LANGE:

So these individuals would be on postprobationary status?

SENATOR DENIS:

They could be. They also would be on probation in their position. This only impacts individuals in that status; it does not impact principals.

SENATOR LANGE:

It does not impact people who are not on probation?

SENATOR DENIS:

That section talks about each postprobationary administrator. They are already past the probationary period and are in a position.

SENATOR LANGE:

Do they only have to reapply once in one five-year period, or do they have to reapply every five years forever?

SENATOR DENIS:

They will have to reapply every five years.

ASHER KILLIAN (Counsel):

You have described this process accurately. The idea is these are postprobationary administrators. They have already served that initial probationary period and they are no longer at-will employees. These particular postprobationary administrators will have to reapply every five years to continue holding the position they have. It would not necessarily be an application for employment. They would remain employed with the district.

SENATOR LANGE:

I am not comfortable with this idea. I think that once you have done the things to get off probation, I do not think you would remain on probation forever and have to reapply. I would encourage you to look at this section again.

I am excited about the in-service section. When teachers have to go back to school, they get excited to learn new things and apply that new knowledge. Principals and administrators do not have any in-service. They do not have anything to reenergize their batteries. It is important the school districts do in-service for their administrators. It keeps them up to date on the latest trends in education. There is something about being together with your colleagues and talking about what is happening in your schools. This is an important piece of this legislation.

SENATOR BUCK:

I agree with Senator Lange on her concerns with section 3. If you read the language, it says anyone "below the rank of superintendent, associate superintendent or assistant superintendent." This would mean directors and coordinators. Is that correct?

MR. KILLIAN:

If you look at the structure at the beginning of that sentence, it is the opposite. It applies to all postprobationary administrators except for this list of people. It would not apply to principals, assistant principals, or district or central office administrators below that rank. It would apply to the superintendents, associate superintendents and assistant superintendents.

SENATOR DONATE:

Have you heard of any issues that may arise on behalf of administrators of color? For instance, does your amendment address any racial biases that may arise against these administrators? My reasoning for this is administrators of color already face a tough fight moving up the ladder. I am worried racial prejudice may arise from teachers when conducting the climate survey, especially when we know teachers are predominantly White. Has anything like this been brought up to you before?

SENATOR DENIS:

It has not. I have not heard this issue come up. I do not know if this bill addresses that issue. I think there are plenty of other employment laws which apply in a case such as that.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I can think of one particular school that had administrators of color and whenever those individuals were successful, they were pulled to do other assignments because of their success. We kept losing people for what I would consider a good reason. We do need to be cognizant of that.

Going back to Senator Lange's comments about the five-year cycle, one of my concerns is because these are traditionally administrators underneath a superintendent, you could have several scenarios happen. One could be you have a superintendent there for five years and when the new superintendent comes in, they all need to reapply. Therefore, the new superintendent gets rid of everybody. You also could have a superintendent in for three years and when that person leaves, they wait two years.

We have people in our schools districts who are good administrators. We are lucky to have these people in their positions. This bill is asking them to reapply to a job they are successful in. If you are in the private sector, you are not asked to apply for a job every five years you have good evaluations for.

If the focus of this bill is to address climate issues in schools, then why are central office administrators on five-year rotations? If your answer is because they are supervising the people at the schools, I hope it does not take us five years to figure out we have a problem.

I worked for a lot of principals in my life. At one school, I had 6 different principals in 15 years. It was not because they were bad. It was because they were good. Now you have that problem of administrators leaving for successful reasons. What happens when you have a low-performing school, you take the principal out, you have teachers that are not happy and you would like to put a principal in that position? Who would want to take that position? If you do not succeed or the staff does not like you, you are out.

I am in favor of accountability, but I know we have moved principals in the last two years and there are those we have not. The professional development piece is great, but I think applying for your job every five years tells me it does not matter what kind of job you do because you will have to reapply every five years. Teachers transfer in and out of schools for many different reasons. If a teacher is transferring because of poor leadership or climate, and a host of them are doing so, then you correct this at the supervisory level. In all the schools of Nevada, how many principals are we talking about? How many schools are we talking about?

I noticed when you were talking about sections 4 through 10, in section 6 I noticed you crossed out administrator. Can you address why that is?

MR. KILLIAN:

That was a technical change since the provisions of sections 2 and 3 effectively give different rules for administrators. That is meant to accommodate those sections that provide a different rule for administrators than was originally included and applies to teachers here.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will have to wrap my head around that. All of our administrators were teachers and then they become deans, vice principals, or directors of departments. There are many avenues for people in our school systems. If someone is highly ineffective, is a problem or does something illegal, we should take care of that. I am not questioning that at all. I am questioning we are giving people an uncomfortable five-year span of "I'm doing a really great job and I still have to

reapply for my job." Another example is "I have moved to a school and my staff does not like that I am asking them to work." Perhaps they did not have to work as hard for the previous principal and they were not being told to be on task. I am uncomfortable with elements of this bill.

SENATOR DENIS:

We want effective leaders for our kids. If it is a climate issue, it is one thing. If it is not a climate issue, there are many reasons teachers will transfer. If you build a new school near another, perhaps the teacher will want a new classroom. This bill gives the opportunity for administrators to get training if they have a 50 percent transfer due to climate. In the second year, if you lose an additional 40 percent, that is 90 percent of your staff you have lost. I can understand some people would be unhappy with new leadership, but to lose 90 percent in a school is something else. If you got to that point, changes probably need to be made.

You asked how many schools does this bill impact. I do not think of this as school-focused but student-focused. How many students does this issue impact? If it impacts the teachers, it impacts the students. We could be talking about thousands of students who are being impacted by an ineffective leader.

Like you said, the vast majority of administrators are effective. This would not apply to them. I have received emails from principals who are not afraid of going into a low-performance school because they want to go there and be successful. This bill does not deter them.

SENATOR BUCK:

I agree with all points Senator Dondero Loop brought up. If a teacher requests a transfer, that does not mean it is because of the administrator. Teachers could leave for many reasons not related to climate. When I was a school administrator, I went into a low-performing school. Under this bill, I would have probably been removed after two years because to make change you have to get people to work and align to a vision. I would like to know more about the survey portion of this bill.

SENATOR DENIS:

This bill does not create a survey. A school climate survey is already used.

SENATOR BUCK:

Will there be an exit survey for teachers to find out the reason for leaving? If they are leaving because of a promotion, different job, different grade level or something else, I would for sure want that vetted out.

SENATOR DENIS:

I agree. The reason for the survey is to find out why they are leaving. There are many reasons why a teacher leaves, and they would not apply if they are not tied to the climate in the school building.

There will be people who will not be happy when a new leader comes into the building. There will always be some with a different philosophy, and they will want to transfer to a school that aligns with that philosophy. I know of at least one or two schools in my district where you had a principal that made life miserable for everybody. The teachers could not teach anymore because they were so upset. These were teachers who were successful but were having a hard time due to being berated. That is the kind of thing we would want to survey to find out.

SENATOR BUCK:

Where are the principal's supervisors in this situation? When I was a principal supervisor, there was a lot of coaching for the principals. Why are they not part of this process outlined in the bill? If teachers are having issues, why are they not a sounding board for that principal's supervisor that should apply the due process?

SENATOR DENIS:

Looking at that issue, I agree with you. The principal's supervisor should provide the training to them. That is why I added the issue of the ratios. The districts have to look at their ratios and how that affects them. Clark County has a 1-to-31 principal-supervisor ratio. Washoe is a 1-to-20 ratio. The larger the number, the less time a principal supervisor has to visit their reports. As the districts develop their plans, they need to take that into consideration. Especially in a school which is low-performing, that principal needs to be supervised more. The districts already have their plans of how to supervise their principals, and I did not want to change how they are doing that. With the concern being the ratios, it is a financial issue. If you add more supervisors, then you need more money to do that.

SENATOR LANGE:

You cannot have one person supervising 30 principals. Something has to change. That means hiring more people, but I do not know if we can legislate that. Serious conversation needs to happen with the school districts because it is unconscionable we would have such a high ratio. In addition, that is assuming everyone is doing what they need to do. If you have three people who are having trouble, it is even worse. It is a fiscal note to the school districts, and everyone always complains the districts have too many administrators, but I think there is a give-and-take. Perhaps they have other administrators they can put out in the field to supervise. Something needs to happen with this ratio issue. It is troubling to me.

SENATOR DENIS:

The reason we have the professional development piece in this bill is because it gives them the opportunity to look at this issue. Are we moving forward, knowing these kinds of issues will help the Legislature if we can provide a solution? The issue is obviously fiscal in nature. We do not have enough teachers let alone supervisors.

SENATOR LANGE:

I could equate this to a class size issue. I would like to get our school districts out of the bottom rankings and to the top. We have to make serious changes.

SENATOR DENIS:

We created a new funding formula so we have funding going to the students and what their special needs are. Those low-performing schools will get additional funds to help them.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I thought this was already in NRS. Persons above principals are usually at-will employees anyway.

SENATOR DENIS:

My understanding is we do not have this in NRS. As a result, those people could stay in their positions forever regardless of issues.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

You could have a school where everybody gets along, but they are not doing what they are supposed to do. In other words, they need an additional push and

more effective strategies for kids. How do you fix that situation? People will not leave that situation.

SENATOR DENIS:

In that case, that is where the supervisor would track the achievement of the students. The switch to the new student-centered funding formula will help with this issue. There would be accountability. Those schools would have to show they are improving. It is already a part of a principal's responsibility to improve student achievement.

SENATOR BUCK:

I would add "administrator" back into section 6. It appears you are unfairly singling out one bargaining group.

MR. KILLIAN:

The existing provision of NRS in section 6, NRS 391.660, effectively allows a collective bargaining agreement to have a different rule than the rules set forth in NRS. The provisions of sections 2 and 3 for administrators are intended to govern regardless of the collective bargaining agreement. That is why the reference to section 2 and 3 are added to that section and the reference to administrators is deleted. If the change to section 6 were reverted, the net effect of that change would be the provisions of sections 2 and 3 could be negotiated around and overruled by a collective bargaining agreement.

VICE CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

At the present ratio, principals are not being supervised. It appears there is not enough supervision over the principals, and the principals' supervisors need to have the tools to remove ineffective principals, but they do not have the time.

I am not sure the principal is the scapegoat here. We need to think about the different parts. Sometimes you can be an amazing teacher but not necessarily an amazing principal. With all the strategies and issues going on right now, I would think we would want to coach the person out of that job, or up to take care of that job—and not just get rid of the person.

SENATOR DENIS:

I agree. This bill is not about getting rid of persons, it is about helping those who are there become better. We want kids to achieve. We want teachers able to teach them. That is what S.B. 120 is about.

MATT NIGHSWONGER (Clark County Education Association):
I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit J](#)).

VELYNDA KIMES (Clark County Education Association):
I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit K](#)).

VINNY TARQUINIO (Clark County Education Association):
I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit L](#)) from a frontline educator, Liza Amor.

JOANNA MILLER (Clark County Education Association):
I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit M](#)) from a frontline educator, Meggan Glimp.

BRENDA PEARSON, PH.D. (Clark County Education Association):
We support S.B. 120 with Senator Denis's amendments. Teacher turnover occurs when teachers move from one school to another, a process well-known in the Clark County School District (CCSD). Teachers leave schools for many reasons, including school leadership. National research shows that when a school experiences a high degree of turnover, student achievement suffers. The Clark County Education Association analyzed teacher turnover rates and student proficiency in all 291 elementary and middle schools in CCSD and found that teacher turnover is negatively correlated to student achievement. In other words, when teacher turnover increased, student proficiency in both math and English language arts decreased.

School climate can affect staff morale which, in turn, can directly affect student outcomes. Experience has shown that principals who create bad morale cause high staff turnover. High staff turnover creates instability in a teacher's lessons and students' education and inadvertently affects student proficiency. In the past two years, CCSD had over 17 schools in which a bad principal and school climate caused an exodus of teachers. During that same time, 16,396 students were impacted. In a number of those cases, parents demanded the removal of the principal from the schools for the same reasons the teachers were leaving. Many of those schools saw a decline in student proficiency.

Senate Bill 120 is about our community, families, educators and administrators, and it aims to put our students first. It is about putting processes in place to ensure our school system is doing all we can to make sure our students receive a high quality education they deserve.

MARIE NEISESS (President, Clark County Education Association):

In 2019, legislation was passed that removed key accountability provisions regarding school administrators. Administrators play a vital role in the success of educators, students, staff and the community in general. Administrators are the instructional leaders of the school. Educators and staff should look to administrators for guidance, mentorship and opportunities to collaborate to put our students' academic achievement first.

However, since the change in the law, we have seen that is not the case across the CCSD. Instead of holding our administrators to the highest professional standards, they have a one-year probationary period due to the law change. That is in contrast to teachers who have three years' probation and if they go two years in a row with an unsatisfactory evaluation, they are placed back on probation. Schools with poor climate leave educators in situations that cause them to leave. As a result, student achievement suffers because of high turnover.

The 2019-2020 school year saw over 17 schools with a bad climate because of an ineffective administrator. Most educators in those schools transferred out of the buildings. Half of these schools ended up in the news because parents objected to these ineffective administrators' tactics. Due to the rollback and the administrative accountability in the Eightieth Session, there were no incentives to address school climate issues which negatively impacted student achievement.

Retaining educators has always been an enormous issue for CCSD, and ineffective administrators can cause educator turnover. Administrators who engage in effective leadership have nothing to worry about. Just like educators are held accountable, administrators should also be held accountable. Senate Bill 120 aims to address the lack of professional development that administrators are given and provide an incentive to take every opportunity to become the best leader they can be. The Clark County Education Association agrees that administrators should be provided professional development geared toward improving their leadership skills to ensure they can be successful and effective in leading their schools.

However, we also believe that administrators should also be held to the same standards as educators across the State with similar probationary periods and requirements to ensure their teachers are not leaving in large majorities over

school climate issues because the students in Nevada cannot afford to lose more educators. It is time for us to clean up statute and devise a process that gives everyone notice as to what is expected and ensure we put the students of Nevada first.

JESSICA JONES:

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit N](#)).

KRISTOFER DiPAOLO (Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit O](#)) from a frontline educator, Kelsey Henderson.

JUSTIN RED:

I speak in favor of principals being held accountable. My last principal at my previous school was probationary, had never taught in a general education high school class and had never been a high school principal before. Rather than taking the time to get to know the community and the students, the principal immediately implemented drastic changes on our campus that made our school a less safe place. Class sizes were high with classes of more than 50 students. The classes were so large, teachers could not know all their students.

We had a potential threat on our campus when a previous graduate showed up on our campus and went through an entire day at school in classes that he was not enrolled in. In this situation, other teachers and I took every measure we could through the proper channels to bring accountability to our campus. We went to our union representatives, I gathered other teachers who felt similarly as I did and we tried to hold this principal accountable. That did not happen. There is simply not the means for that to occur. The wheels of accountability do not turn fast enough against the powerful administrators union. There was no accountability for what occurred. Instead, I was held accountable for speaking out and moved to surplus away from the school which was my home.

KENNETH BELKNAP (Clark County School District):

I am a high school social studies teacher in CCSD and support S.B. 120. I support this bill because as a teacher I have seen the dramatic impact administrators have on the climate and student outcomes at a building.

I have worked at the same building for my seven years in CCSD, and within the first four years I saw almost the entire staff, over 100 educators, leave the

building. In those years we lost so much valuable experience, institutional knowledge and educators who have been at the building since it opened. The only change that happened in that time is we got a new principal and administrative staff. During this transition I saw great educators who did good work become scrutinized and nitpicked to the point they had to leave the school while the administrator turned a blind eye to educators who were not doing a good job because they did not rock the boat.

These teachers did not leave the school because they were afraid of working harder. They wanted to make the school a better place but were boxed out by administration more interested in dictating orders, not building a student community. When administrators come in and actively try to run off educators who have been in a building for years, it hurts our kids. Our schools are supposed to be communities. How can you have that when dramatic turnover occurs year after year?

Students in these schools lose out on higher-quality education because the senior teachers are often replaced by new teachers, or worse, they are replaced by long-term substitutes. Accountability to administrators will not cause a shortage. There are hundreds of individuals in CCSD's administrative pool waiting for an opening. If these administrators are afraid of accountability, why not give these people in the pool an option and let them try it?

I am shocked by the deference many of you showed toward our administrators during this meeting. You have made statements that teachers are leaving buildings because a new administrator is making them work harder or the district's principal supervisor cannot manage 30 school principals. Teachers are constantly working hard to serve our kids, and it is insulting to insinuate otherwise. A difference exists between asking people to work hard and micromanaging them. I am glad that some of you are asking questions about people's workloads, but the fact you worry about middle management over frontline educators who have one class period of well over 30 and sometimes 40 students is asinine. Maybe we can fund our schools to get student-class ratios down, and then we focus on getting the workload of middle management down.

Teachers are already held accountable for everything that happens in our classrooms. Why do principals get a free pass when they are responsible for an entire school building and students' educational careers?

DANE WATSON (Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit P](#)) from a frontline educator, Paige Myers.

SHARON WHALUM (Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit Q](#)) from a frontline educator, Michael Kuennen.

JORDAN HANKINS (Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit R](#)) from a frontline educator, Haleemah Hall.

TONY RAMIREZ (Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit S](#)) from a frontline educator, Cheri Raymond Griggs.

FRANCESCA PETRUCCI (Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit T](#)) from a frontline educator, Kristan Nigro.

ED GONZALEZ (Hickey Elementary School):

I support S.B. 120 and I appreciate the amendments that Senator Denis has added, especially when it comes to professional development and looking at the ratios for supervisors. What I appreciate about this bill is it is not vindictive. Everyone's intention is to help improve principals.

I do want to highlight some things that have not been mentioned. It is a good point discussing supervisor ratios. In the reorganization with A.B. No. 469 of the 79th Session, the supervisor ratio was capped at 25-to-1 in CCSD. In the Eightieth Session, legislation was passed which lifted that cap. While this was not a major contention on the Senate side, in the Assembly it was because CCSD mentioned lifting the cap brought up the ratios from 25 schools to around 60 schools. This change resulted in only a savings of \$500,000. The results of this legislation were disastrous. Principals did not have any kind of supervision and the CCSD backtracked by adding more supervisors. When we are talking about supervision, it is important to look at this issue closely. A Vanderbilt study from a couple years ago suggested a ratio of 12 to 19 principals per supervisor.

REBECCA GARCIA (President, Nevada Parent Teacher Association):

We support S.B. 120 with the proposed amendments. The impact of a quality administrator cannot be underestimated. School principals impact student success, parent engagement, teacher retention, and the climate and culture at the school. We must ensure our students succeed and all adults work toward that goal. With the proposed amendments, S.B. 120 provides for greater accountability and professional development. Administrators have been asked to take on increasingly complex administrative duties in addition to instructional leadership. Proper support, resources and training must be provided.

In Clark County, the Legislature mandated the reorganization which granted more autonomy to principals. Accountability must also be expected. In 2019, the Las Vegas Review-Journal reported that in the prior four years, not a single CCSD administrator had been rated as ineffective. Only one was rated as developing. Yet over 100 schools received one and two star ratings. The role of a school leader is too important to allow this disconnect to go unaddressed. I have personally dealt with the challenges as a parent and as a teacher in trying to seek support from principal supervisors. The limitations in place make that very difficult. Senate Bill 120 with the proposed amendments is a start toward better accountability in the critical roles principals play in our education system.

CHRIS DALY (Nevada State Education Association):

I present opposition testimony to S.B. 120 ([Exhibit U](#)).

JIM FRAZEE (Vice President, Clark County Education Association):

I present supporting testimony ([Exhibit V](#)).

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

We appreciate the amended language that Senator Denis brought forward, but we are speaking in the opposition position to S.B. 120 because we think the language does not go far enough. We can support this bill with changes made in four areas.

The proposed amendments of [Exhibit I](#) in item 2 under proposed amendments, we recommend adding "as confirmed by a supervisory investigation." We would add the same language to item 3 after the work "issues." There are two other areas, one has been discussed significantly today. That area is the language in section 3 that requires administrators other than those identified in the bill to

reapply for their jobs every five years. That language needs to be deleted for us to be in support of S.B. 120. Finally, section 6 should have the term "administrator" retained rather than removed.

DANNY THOMPSON (Clark County School Administrators Association):

I agree with Mr. Augspurger's statement. If you do not make these changes, I do not know if anyone would apply for a job which they had to reapply for every five years. In any other industry, you would never get anyone to apply. Regarding the changes in sections 2 and 3, teachers only need to request a transfer under that language. They do not need to transfer to trigger witch hunts and other situations where it is not fair to the principal. Finally, allowing principals to negotiate disciplinary action by putting them back in section 6 is only fair.

KATIE WEIR (Principal, Washoe County School District):

I oppose S.B. 120. I was recruited by my school district to move to an underperforming school. I also serve as a mentor to a new principal in my district and a mentor to an aspiring administrator. Those who spoke in support mentioned fabulous supervisors. My fear is this bill deters highly-qualified and effective administrators from applying to lead underperforming schools. They also spoke to administrator accountability. As Vice Chair Dondero Loop mentioned, there are already many tools in NRS to address principal and administrator performance.

For example, I am a member of a process in my district called the Peer Assistance Review Panel, consisting of an advisory panel and a consulting or mentor principal. The Panel has an equal number of administrators recommended by the Washoe School Principals Association and the area's superintendent. The consulting or mentor principal provides direct support to the client and collects data through peer observations. Based on the data and information gathered through the program, the panel makes recommendations to the district which could include continued use and possible revision of the focus assistance plan throughout the year, recommendations for a second year in the Panel, a return to a formal cycle of evaluation or probationary status and recommendations to the superintendent regarding changes in contract.

This process allows the supervisor to place an administrator in a year-long process for support and improvement tied directly to their evaluation and performance. I participated in this process for three years as a member of the

Panel and it is incredibly effective. Perhaps a similar system could be implemented Statewide, as most testifying in support of this bill are CCSD teachers and staff.

CHELSEA CAPURRO (Nevada Association of School Administrators):

We would echo the comments made by the Clark County Administrators. We feel the same with the changes which need to be made to get us to a position to support on S.B. 120. Senator Donate made a great point about the issues which could arise related to making a decision based on a teacher survey.

SENATOR DENIS:

As with all the things in education, we are trying to educate our kids and improve student achievement. That is the intention of S.B. 120. We can get to a place where we can help. The vast majority of our schools have great leaders, and if we can assist some of the administrators who need help that will make it even better for our students.

SENATOR DONATE:

I will close the hearing on S.B. 120.

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CHAIR DENIS:

With no further items on the agenda, the meeting is adjourned at 3:51 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. 76	B	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 151	C	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 194	D	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 215	E	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 352	F	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 353	G	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 363	H	1	Jen Sturm	Work Session Document
S.B. 120	I	1	Senator Moises Denis	Proposed Amendments
S.B. 120	J	1	Matt Nighswonger / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony
S.B. 120	K	1	Velynda Kimes / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony
S.B. 120	L	1	Vinny Tarquinio / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Liza Amor
S.B. 120	M	1	Joanna Miller / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Meggan Glimp
S.B. 120	N	1	Jessica Jones	Support Testimony
S.B. 120	O	1	Kristofer DiPaolo / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Kelsey Henderson
S.B. 120	P	1	Dane Watson / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Paige Myers
S.B. 120	Q	1	Sharon Whalum / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Michael Kuennen

S.B. 120	R	1	Jordan Hankins / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Haleemah Hall
S.B. 120	S	1	Tony Ramirez / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Cheri Raymond Griggs
S.B. 120	T	1	Francesca Petrucci / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony Kristan Nigro
S.B. 120	U	1	Chris Daly / Nevada State Education Association	Opposition Testimony
S.B. 120	V	1	Jim Frazee / Clark County Education Association	Support Testimony