

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Eighty-Second Session
May 30, 2023**

The Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod at 2:50 p.m. on Tuesday, May 30, 2023, in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda [[Exhibit A](#)], the Attendance Roster [[Exhibit B](#)], and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/82nd2023.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair
Assemblywoman Angie Taylor, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Natha C. Anderson
Assemblyman Reuben D'Silva
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy
Assemblyman Gregory Koenig
Assemblywoman Selena La Rue Hatch
Assemblyman Richard McArthur
Assemblywoman Erica Mosca
Assemblywoman Clara Thomas
Assemblywoman Selena Torres

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Dina Neal, Senate District No. 4



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst
Asher Killian, Committee Counsel
Cameron Newton, Committee Counsel
Judi Bishop, Committee Manager
Lori McCleary, Committee Secretary
Gina Hall, Committee Secretary
Ashley Torres, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Alexander Marks, Communications Specialist, Nevada State Education Association
Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

[Roll was called. Committee rules and protocol were explained.] We have a work session as well as a bill. Since Senator Neal is here, we will hear the bill first. I will open the hearing on Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint).

Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the recruitment and retention of school staff. (BDR 34-439)

Senator Dina Neal, Senate District No. 4:

I am here to present Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint), which is a Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education bill that we have passed out of the Senate. Basically, S.B. 71 (R2) creates the Nevada State Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force. The proposed purposes are to evaluate and address the challenges throughout the state in attracting and retaining education support professionals (ESPs).

It also adds paraprofessionals, school police, school resource and other providers of security services at the schools, school nurses, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, bus drivers, secretaries, custodial and maintenance staff, and food service workers. The bill sets forth membership powers and duties. The amendment in the Senate was basically adding ten ESP representatives and ten teacher representatives, which would be added by the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education. Ultimately, that is the bill.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are there any questions from the members?

Assemblywoman Torres:

I definitely think it is important ESPs are part of the conversation about what we can do to retain them. We know we do not have enough professionals on our campuses, whether they are educators or education support professionals. Are there concerns regarding whether they should be separate committees? Why did we have them added to this current Task Force?

Senator Neal:

In the Senate Committee on Education, the committee is not a fan of task forces. There was no interest in having two task forces. There was interest in expanding one.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Is there the ability for them to have subcommittees within this Task Force so they could separate? I can imagine there would be instances where there might be conversations that make more sense for one group but not others.

Senator Neal:

I do not think subcommittees are prohibited in any of the language. That would be up to the chair they elect for the committee.

Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:

I do agree with my colleague. I think subcommittees make sense because while there are times those job families overlap, there are other times where there are special needs.

My first question is, has this been advertised and how will it be advertised? As a current teacher prior to running for office, I did not know that much about this and I do not know if that many teachers know about it. I am wondering about the process.

Senator Neal:

It is my understanding this particular Task Force was established in 2019. I have no idea what the advertisement was associated with this. Chair Bilbray-Axelrod sat on the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education that brought this recommendation forward. Maybe that is something the Committee can address. I do not know the answer.

Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:

My second question is, I see the goal of this Task Force is to report to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education. Is the goal for them to have a bill draft request (BDR) or is the goal just to let us know? I think I have raised this issue before in committee; teachers and education support professionals are asked what they need and then they are ignored. They then feel worse for having been asked and then ignored. I am wondering about the intention.

Senator Neal:

The plan is after this Task Force meets and they have talked about the challenges to recruitment and retention—I do not know how many BDRs the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education has—it could be set up as an agenda item for the

Interim Committee to have this Task Force present issues. It would be up to the chair and the Interim Committee to make a decision on whether or not there were issues they felt should turn into BDRs, whether it is two or three BDRs. Ultimately, what happens during the interim education process is there are a series of meetings that are set through staff. They are either monthly or quarterly meetings over the two years. There are issues that are agendized by the chair and those are the items that will be discussed over the interim. If they select to have this interim advisory task force come in to ask about the results of meetings over the past year and lay out their report to the Interim Committee, then the chair could decide what issues should be brought forward as a BDR. If you are sitting on the Joint Interim Standing Committee, you would at least have a chance to propose to the chair those options.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

The intent from the Interim Committee was we thought it should be folks who are in the schools every day. This Committee is very special in that we have so many teachers who are in the classroom. I appreciate we added some extra folks. As far as the meetings go, they are by Zoom or teleconference if necessary, but the quorum should be met easily.

Assemblywoman Taylor:

Thank you, Senator Neal, for presenting this bill and adding the education support professionals. We know how much we need them in our schools. Section 7.4, subsection 1, paragraph (c) says, "To the extent practicable, the Joint Interim Standing Committee shall appoint 10 licensed teachers and 10 education support professionals to the Task Force." Is that inclusive of the one licensed teacher we see in section 7.5, subsection 1, paragraph (a), the two licensed teachers in paragraph (b), and the three licensed teachers in paragraph (c)?

Senator Neal:

It is.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

I have a comment. As an educator I, and I believe everyone on this Committee who is an educator as well, realize we cannot be in the classroom without our bus drivers delivering our kids, without our secretaries, and without our incredible school counselors helping in so many other areas. I appreciate the addition under section 3, subsection 7 of drivers of school buses. I know in numerous schools in the county where I come from, as well as Clark County, we have had kids not be able to attend school because we do not have enough school bus drivers. I also appreciate section 7.8, subsection 2 where there are recommendations being made to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education to not only address the challenges of attracting and retaining, but also providing incentives. I appreciate the language utilized that was created from the interim, but also from your presentation today. Thank you very much for pointing out it is not just the teachers who are being hurt and we do not have enough of, but it is also all the other essential individuals who help our schools run.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are there any other questions? [There were none.] I will open the hearing for support testimony. Is there anyone in Carson City or Las Vegas who would like to present support testimony?

Alexander Marks, Communications Specialist, Nevada State Education Association:

I am speaking in support of S.B. 71 (R2) creating the Nevada State Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force to address the record vacancies in personnel for the folks who make our schools run.

We appreciate the inclusion of our education support professionals to this bill. There has been a lot of discussion this session on our teacher vacancies, and we are glad to see the ESP vacancies are also being addressed. Students have a range of needs that must be met for learning to take place, and ESPs are the backbone of our public education system.

Over the past two years, our school districts have tried to weather an unprecedented shortage of ESPs. Even today, we have 504 vacant positions in Clark County and another 210 vacancies in Washoe County. The Nevada State Education Association raised this issue in the Interim Committee, so we are glad to see it is making its way through this process because it addresses a very real issue of recruitment and retention of ESPs. We hope this task force bill continues on in the process, as we believe it is an important step in making sure there are specific needs being met for our ESPs and that the voices of classified and other licensed professionals and ESPs are included in this work.

Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents:

In the predecessor to this bill, the Nevada State Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force that was set up a couple of sessions ago was excellent. You could tune in and listen to it, which I did several times. The many things they brought up that we do not think about when we are not in that school every day were mentioned, discussed, and some good suggestions came about. It was a worthwhile task force, so I think this will be worthwhile as well. The Nevada Association for School Superintendents is in support.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Seeing no one else in person wishing to offer support testimony, is there anyone waiting on the phone? [There was no one.] We will move to opposition testimony. Is there anyone in Carson City, Las Vegas, or on the phone wishing to offer opposition testimony? [There was no one.] We will move to neutral testimony. Is there anyone in Carson City, Las Vegas, or on the phone wishing to offer neutral testimony? [There was no one.] Are there any closing comments? [There were none.]

I will close the hearing on Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint). We will take a one-minute recess.

[The meeting was recessed at 3:04 p.m. The meeting was reconvened at 3:05 p.m.]

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

We have three bills on work session. We will start with Senate Bill 282 (2nd Reprint).

Senate Bill 282 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions governing education. (BDR 34-532)

Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst:

As nonpartisan legislative staff, I can neither support nor oppose any measure.

Senate Bill 282 (2nd Reprint) was heard in this Committee on May 29, 2023. The bill clarifies that the hiring of staff by a principal of a local school precinct must conform to the applicable collective bargaining agreement. The bill also makes the principal of a local school precinct a voting member, rather than a nonvoting member, of the organizational team. Additionally, S.B. 282 (R2) removes the school organization team procedure to submit objections to the plan of operation and instead establishes procedures requiring a plan to be approved by at least 75 percent of the organizational team members who are present at the time of the vote before submitting the plan to the school associate superintendent. Before a vote on a proposed plan of operation, the principal must make every effort to notify the organizational team members of the date, time, and location of the vote.

Senate Bill 282 (2nd Reprint) establishes qualification for the principal position, revises the procedure for filling a principal vacancy, and authorizes the school organizational team to reject the superintendent's selection in certain circumstances. It also specifies that if the year-end balance carried forward by a school precinct exceeds 5 percent of the actual expenditures in the immediately preceding school year, that amount must be used on certain programs. If such funds are not spent within two years, they must be deposited into the Education Stabilization Account [[Exhibit C](#)].

No amendments were proposed for this measure.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Members, are there any questions? [There were none.] I will entertain a motion to do pass Senate Bill 282 (2nd Reprint).

ASSEMBLYMAN D'SILVA MOVED TO DO PASS SENATE BILL 282 (2ND REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES SECONDED THE MOTION.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are there any comments on the motion?

Assemblywoman Hansen:

I am very conflicted. There are many provisions in the bill I like. I like the school organizational team (SOT) having a vote and the principal having a vote. We know the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the collective bargaining issue, so that is taken care of. I am

having trouble with the carry-over funds. I am a local-control kind of gal. With the new SOT voting power, I feel they would have oversight over those school funds, but even if they did not and they got swept, I am feeling more comfortable they went to a district. Being part of rural districts that had money swept, I am sensitive to that. I will be voting no.

Assemblywoman Thomas:

Like Assemblywoman Hansen, I know some of the language in the bill supports what she said. I will just cut to the chase. I am a no.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Is there any other discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYWOMEN HANSEN AND THOMAS VOTED NO.)

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblyman McArthur. The next bill on work session is Senate Bill 291.

Senate Bill 291: Makes various changes relating to education. (BDR 34-503)

Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst:

Senate Bill 291 was heard in this Committee on May 29, 2023. The bill removes the requirement that a student teacher must have completed at least four weeks of student teaching in a school district to qualify for employment as a substitute teacher. Additionally, the bill appropriates \$1,575,000 to Nevada's Department of Education for the Nevada Institute on Teaching and Educator Preparation and requires the Institute to report to the Interim Finance Committee on each expenditure made from this money [[Exhibit D](#)].

No amendments were proposed for this measure.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Members, are there any questions? [There were none.] I will entertain a motion to do pass Senate Bill 291.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS SENATE BILL 291.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN THOMAS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblyman McArthur. The last bill on work session is Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint).

Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the recruitment and retention of school staff. (BDR 34-439)

Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst:

Senate Bill 71 (2nd Reprint) revises the name and membership of the Nevada State Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force to include education support professionals. The bill requires the Task Force to be composed of ten teacher representatives and ten educational support professional representatives to the extent practicable and establishes member qualifications and appointment procedures.

Finally, S.B. 71 (R2) expands the duties of the Task Force to include evaluating the challenges in attracting and retaining both teachers and education support professionals.

No amendments were proposed for this measure.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Members, are there any questions on the bill we just heard? [There were none.]

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TAYLOR MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
SENATE BILL 71 (2ND REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblyman McArthur. That takes us to our final agenda item, which is public comment. Is there anyone in Carson City, Las Vegas, or on the phone wishing to make public comment? [There was no one.] We did get a bill referral, so we will be meeting Thursday at 1:30 p.m. This meeting is adjourned [at 3:12 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Lori McCleary
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is the Work Session Document for Senate Bill 282 (2nd Reprint), submitted and presented by Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit D](#) is the Work Session Document for Senate Bill 291, submitted and presented by Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.