

## SUPPORT– SB 191

Date: March 13, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Education

Re: NSEA Supports SB 191

The Nevada State Education Association represents teachers, other licensed education professionals, and education support professionals across the state. We believe every Nevada student deserves a high-quality public education.

**NSEA fully appreciates the important function of libraries in public education, and we are proud to be an organizational sponsor of SB 191 to ensure that every student has access to a school library.**

School libraries play a critical role in our schools and communities. School librarians and library assistants support student achievement by providing research help, digital learning opportunities and professional development programs in addition to providing the traditional library services to help prepare strong students. We know when spending for school libraries increases, so does improved student literacy. Numerous studies have shown the impact a school library and a teacher librarian have on a school environment and student achievement in reading and writing and even math. (Phi Delta Kappan March 28, 2018)

Access to a school library is an equity issue as “our poorest and most racially diverse communities have the least access to library services.” (Pribesh, Gavigan, & Dickinson, 2011) Graduation rates and reading and math achievement were significantly higher in schools with high-quality libraries and certified librarians, even after controlling for other factors like school spending, class size, and poverty.

NSEA has worked with Senator Woodhouse to develop SB191 to require library space and materials as well as library services in every school. SB191 defines the role of teacher or school librarian and library assistant and provides library assistants access to important professional development through available library science programs. Recognizing the lack of certified librarians in our state, SB191 allows for our existing library assistants to continue in their role, avoiding the specter of layoffs that would only work against the goal of promoting access to library service. NSEA believes that SB191 is the most responsible, long-term path to getting certified librarians and the critical library services they provide in every school, regardless of zip code.