

NSEA SUPPORTS SB89 AND SEEKS AMENDMENT

Date: March 4, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Education & Assembly Committee on Education

Re: Support for Senate Bill 89 – School Safety

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

NSEA supports SB 89 to provide a safe and respectful learning and working environment and seeks an amendment to include educator voices on the Statewide School Safety Committee.

NSEA appreciates the work done by Governor Sandoval's Statewide School Safety Task Force, which studied numerous issues impacting our student's learning environments and made thoughtful recommendations. A safe and respectful learning environment is a top priority for many of our members as student learning environment is our working environment. We believe the addition of a licensed educator and an education support professional to the Statewide School Safety Committee would allow for deeper discussions of entire school environments, inside and beyond the classroom.

One aspect of SB89 that NSEA strongly supports is addressing the ratio of pupils to specialized instructional support personnel. The caseloads of counselors, nurses, speech language pathologists, library media specialists, social workers, and numerous other licensed personal are overwhelming. This leads to unacceptable student wait times for critical services, compromises the attention that these professionals can provide any individual students, and makes work expectations unrealistic for our members.

Over the years, NSEA has been engaged in improving the process for student disciplinary practice. We have supported efforts to create our progressive discipline system, and now appreciate integration of restorative justice principles. NSEA believes there is an opportunity to hold students accountable for their actions, address wrongs that have been committed, and reduce incidents where educators sustain serious injuries. However, this system of student discipline will require much greater attention and significant new resources.

NSEA is committed to creating a safe learning environment for every child in our state. We believe SB 89 is a strong beginning to address the issues impacting our schools.