



RED FOR ED NEVADA: FULLY FUND OUR FUTURE



On Monday, February 18, 2019, hundreds of Educators across the state joined together for rallies in Carson City and Las Vegas in what was the largest public education rally in over a decade! We were joined by many of our community partners, including Fund Our Future, the Nevada PTA, and our students.

In Carson City, 22 legislators representing both parties were present at the rally; in Las Vegas, Rep. Susie Lee, Clark County School Board Trustees, and Chris Giunchigliani were a part of the rally. United in both the North and South, our state and local leaders helped create a day marked by hope and progress. The President's Day Rally marked the launch of the national Red For Ed Movement in Nevada. We are enthusiastic about what Red For Ed means for our state but are realistic about the work ahead. In recent years, we have seen budgets being cut, overcrowded classrooms, and outdated materials. We see educators working around the clock to make a difference in the lives of their students. Too many of our educators are leaving our profession because of an increased workload, an increase in the cost of benefits, and a decrease in base funding. We know our elected leaders can and should do better.

NSEA will continue to raise our voices together for our students, our schools, and ourselves as educators. We have not been

given the respect we deserve. Nevada must do better. With a growing group of pro-public education friends in the Legislature, we will do better.

Following the rally, NSEA members were able to meet with Legislators and address the Senate Committee on Education. These conversations revolved around the increasing expectations placed on educators without an increase in funding.

We have and will continue to call on our elected leaders to take a courageous stand this Session to ensure our schools have the resources they need, either by creating new revenue or redirecting existing revenue like those from the IP1 room tax. NSEA will keep you posted about events being planned by our local affiliates throughout the Session. One small ask from the Washoe Education Association that each of us can do to bring attention to our schools - wear Red every Wednesday to show solidarity with our brothers and sisters across the state as well as the nation. If you can, take a photo and post it on social media with #RedForEd and #RedForEdNV.



Our student speaker, Nathan Nobel, of Wooster High School stated it best, "We go to school because we dream of a better life through public education. It is the key to unlocking a better life." That is why we wore red, and that is why we will continue to wear red! Join our movement!

TESTING AUDIT FAIL: More Teaching, Less Testing



During the 2017 Legislation Session, Senator Joyce Woodhouse sponsored Senate Bill 303 at NSEA's request. The bill, which had bipartisan support in the Assembly and Senate, required the Department of Education to create and carry out a plan for auditing the assessment tools and examinations used to monitor the performance of pupils and schools for kindergarten through grade 12 in the public school system in Nevada. The report was to include a plan to improve and streamline the assessment tools and examinations used to monitor the performance of pupils and schools in the public school system in Nevada.

Unfortunately, the audit, which was due no later than December 1, 2017, was not submitted by the Department of Education until January 20,

2019. The final report did not follow the requirements contained within SB303.

The Department's report is written with a certain result in mind that simply does not conform to the realities in our classrooms. The audit does contain some important information about the amount of time teachers spend administering assessments. For the SBAC Annual Assessment, 69% of District Test Directors stated that "way too much time" or "slightly too much time" was spent on assessments. For the SBAC Interim Assessment, 84% of District Directors stated "way too much time" or "slightly too much time" was spent on Assessments. These percentages only highlight the necessity for a plan to improve and streamline assessment tools and examinations. This audit fails to address those very important elements of SB303.

After a 13-month delay, the report failed to make recommendations for streamlining student assessments. While tests like the SBAC and End of Course exams are widely disliked, the Department recommends more funding to communicate to stakeholders about the "benefits" of these assessments. Educators know about the benefits and shortcomings of these tests and appreciate the need to spend less time testing and more time teaching. It is that simple.

The Department's recommendation that a communications strategy about the "benefits" of certain assessments disregards the purpose of SB303 in the first place. NSEA is continuing to pursue policies that will contribute to more teaching and less testing in our classrooms.

SMALL VICTORIES

While the 80th Session is young, NSEA has been able to secure several small victories so far!

SB90 originally included language with new requirements for school nurses related to asthma medication. We were successful in removing this language due to the ambiguity of medical terminology and the potential liability concerns expressed by NSEA nursing members.

SB41 originally included language instituting a new licensure system for Paraprofessionals (*in addition to numerous other changes to teacher licensing*). NSEA was successful in removing the paraprofessional language and also pushed back on short-sighted changes to teacher licensure.



CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY

As various Charter School Bills are introduced, NSEA continues to have serious policy concerns regarding the State Public Charter School Authority, and we will be working toward appropriate controls and accountability for Charter Schools throughout the Session.

For some history, charter schools were initially promoted by educators who sought to innovate within the local public school system to better meet the needs of their students. Over the last 22 years, charter schools have grown dramatically to include large numbers of charters that are privately managed, largely unaccountable, and not transparent as to their operations or performance. The explosive growth of charters has been driven, in part, by deliberate and well-funded efforts to ensure that charters are exempt from the basic safeguards and standards that apply to public schools. We have seen this in the lobbying efforts of National Coalition for Public School Options, which has been reported to have connections with K12 Inc., the largest online charter operator in the country. These lobbying efforts are not limited to online charters.

Too frequently charters are operated expressly for profit or are nominally non-profit but managed or operated by for-profit entities. These charters have devolved far from the original concept of charters as small incubators of innovation. Most importantly, the growth of charters has undermined local public schools and communities, without producing any overall increase in student learning and growth. It is important to note,

that most recent studies have shown that public schools outperform charter schools on average, and public schools educate every student, including English learners, students in poverty, and students with individualized education plans. While they are prohibited from discriminating, charter schools serve far fewer students with disabilities.

Charter schools rarely are held to the same standards as traditional public schools. Adding insult to injury, we now have learned the controls we thought governed Nevada's state public charter schools have not been followed. For example, site visits are a basic component of delivering oversight and accountability for any regulator. The State Public Charter School Authority went years without following the Charter Performance Framework, including not conducting site visits until last month. Many districts regulated charters also fall short in terms of regulations and accountability.

When asked why the State Public Charter School Authority was approving new charter school applications when they weren't able to properly regulate those schools, the response was there was no legal authority for them to deny applications. That is unacceptable. It is time for the legislature to assert strong controls of Nevada charter schools, including joining 21 other states in capping charter school expansion.

In addition to additional accountability, we are also requesting that the legislature continue its work to improve traditional public schools, providing the resources necessary so that every Nevada student can get a quality education from their neighborhood public school.



Joint Education Committee Hearing Added! We need your testimony! On Monday, March 4, 2019 at 6:00PM there will be a Joint Meeting of the Senate and Assembly Education Committees. They will be considering items related to school safety, which includes [SB57](#) and [SB89](#). You can find the agenda [here](#). The hearing will take place at the Legislative Building in Carson City, NV and at the Grant

Sawyer Building in Las Vegas, NV. ***This is the first Education Committee hearing that does not take place during the school day, so please attend and testify during public comment!***

THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!

Here are the Bills that NSEA has been testifying on at the Nevada Legislature!

(the bills are hyperlinked, so click the bill number to read more)

SB80: NSEA spoke in support of this bill. SB80 creates the Handle with Care program to receive reports from law enforcement when a student is exposed to a traumatic event.

SB185: NSEA spoke in support of this bill, which clarifies School Volunteer Background Checks requirements. SB185 addresses concerns of our University practicum students and also may reduce cost of fingerprinting for parent volunteers.

AB78: NSEA spoke in support of this bill, as we continue to have serious policy concerns regarding the State Public Charter School Authority and have requested appropriate controls and accountability.

AB92: NSEA spoke in support of this bill, which expands the duties of the English Mastery Council, and extends the termination date of the Council.

AB123: NSEA spoke in support of this bill, which requires information about student immunizations to be provided to health officials

AB155. NSEA spoke in support of this bill, which revises the eligibility requirements for Silver State Opportunity Grants.

AB186: NSEA spoke in support of this bill, which enacts the Agreement Among the States to Elect the President by National Popular Vote. We believe that our politics and political system should follow the basic tenet of one person, one vote.



NSEA provides public comments on a host of issues each week. Our public comments are uploaded to our YouTube Channel within a day of our testimony. You can subscribe to NSEA's Youtube Channel by clicking [this link](#) and view all of the comments we have made before various legislative committees.