



# perspectives

Summer 2017

*award-winning*  
An official publication of the Nevada State Education Association

## 79th Legislative Session: A Session of Accomplishment



NSEA members, leaders and staff meet with Sen. Joyce Woodhouse (center)

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Ruben Murillo, Jr.  
President

## NSEA: A Force in Nevada Politics

On Monday, June 12, a week after the legislative session adjourned at midnight, I found myself sitting across from Nevada Newsmakers host Sam Shad for a radio interview in Las Vegas.

"You had a very successful session," remarked Shad.

"It was a session of accomplishment," I quickly replied.

That description, "a session of accomplishment," encapsulates NSEA's work, which started immediately after the 2015 session by building a strong NSEA management team. This led to the success of electing pro-public education legislators in the 2016 elections, which paved the way for a successful 2017 legislative session. The 2017 legislative session produced great results for public education in Nevada, repudiated the Trump/DeVos policies regarding public education funding and vouchers, and most of all, reestablished NSEA as a political force.

*"It's not whether you get knocked down, it's whether you get up." — Vince Lombardi*

The 2015 legislative session provided hard lessons for NSEA and public employee unions in Nevada, some of which were not fully realized until they were implemented. A strategy of compromise, with the Republican majority party, was adopted by many in 2015. In 2017, the Democratic majority in both chambers



of the legislature attempted to revisit collective bargaining bills, the prevailing wage, and other anti-public education legislation, only to see the governor veto many of these bills—his reasoning: these bills came out of 2015 with "bipartisan support." It was clear that the strategy, which pulled us through the dark days of 2015, was not going to work in 2017.

For the 79th legislative session, NSEA adopted a clear, new mindset. NSEA needed to pivot and adapt to the political realities of the new legislative session. The challenge of building new relationships and

strengthening old alliances could be daunting for some. However, as any fighter knows, in the bruising game of politics, an experienced political team counts. So, NSEA brought that experience to Carson City. Ignoring the shift in political power in Carson City would have been disastrous for NSEA, public education, students, and the communities we serve.



NSEA Pres. Ruben Murillo, Jr. delivers anti voucher postcards to Sen. Becky Harris.

NSEA and NEA laid the groundwork for the session with an aggressive election strategy in 2016 and shored up pro-public education allies committed to a pro-public education agenda. This foundation was strong enough to withstand the pressures of the session from its beginning on February 6 to the closing gavel on June 5, with even the pro-voucher advocates withholding votes on the budget in order to fund vouchers.

Consider the following quote published by the Nevada Independent ([bit.ly/govvoucher](http://bit.ly/govvoucher)) about the governor's mindset on whether he was willing to shut down the government to honor Republicans' ultimatum on Education Savings Accounts (ESAs):

*Continued on page 11*

# 79th Legislative Session Report Card

The 79th legislative session ended Monday, June 5 and the results are in: this was a session of accomplishment! NSEA was a major force in crushing ESA private school vouchers and engaging other policies that support educators and students. NSEA is proud of the thousands of members who took action during the legislative session. This session of accomplishment was a result of NSEA member engagement; together we will build on our momentum to realize NSEA's vision of a quality public education for all Nevada students. Listed below are NSEA priorities, agreed upon by the NSEA Lobby Team and representing just a few of the almost 100 bills lobbied by the NSEA Ground Team.

## Subject: Top Priorities

**Bill:** Senate Bill 506

**Issue:** ESA Private School Vouchers

**Position:** Opposed Strongly

**Result:** Bill killed, ESA program dead, budget passed without ESA funding

**Summary:** NSEA's top priority was to make sure that tens of millions of dollars from public education would not be diverted to private schools, and its goal was achieved. ESA private school vouchers are dead – no public money will go to private schools. NSEA, its members, and community and labor partners all worked together to support Democratic allies who blocked voucher funding. CCEA leadership did not testify on the voucher issue and was quoted by news media as having given up on the issue. Your state and national organizations never checked out and will continue to fight and win on this top priority public education issue.

The legislature passed a compromise package that included a new marijuana tax that is estimated to bring in \$70M per biennium. They also passed a bill to add a one-time \$20M to the Opportunity Scholarship program that will expire in 2019. Opportunity Scholarships are much more restrictive than vouchers, which is why privatization proponents were devastated when ESAs were killed. NSEA will continue working with NEA to stomp out the Trump-DeVos public education privatization efforts and work to see that all revenue is directed toward strengthening public education.

**Bill:** Assembly Bill 320

**Issue:** Teacher Evaluations

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** For two legislative sessions, NSEA members have been saying loud and clear: get student test scores out of evaluations. NSEA led the discussion this session with a bill to accomplish that goal, working to reverse the compromises created in the 2015 legislative session. With the strong pro-public education allies that NSEA had helped to elect in 2016, the ball was moved closer to that goal. Any use of state student test scores is prohibited from teacher evaluations. Instead, student growth will account for 20 percent of a teacher's evaluation next year and 40 percent in subsequent years. This is a major step forward in our effort to correct the 2015 agenda. Building on our 2017 legislative success, we will continue to work on this issue.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 178

**Issue:** Weighted Funding Formula

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** Public education will receive an additional \$72M this biennium, programmed through the weighted funding formula: all 1- and 2-star schools will receive \$1200 for every student who is low-income or an ELL scoring in the bottom quartile. NSEA will continue working for dedicated, predictable funding for Nevada's public education system to help provide all students the opportunity for success.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 303

**Issue:** Excessive High-Stakes Testing Audit

**Position:** NSEA Bill, Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** Throughout the state and country educators are saying the same thing: too much testing; give us back our classroom time. SB303 was brought forward by Sen. Joyce Woodhouse, who worked closely with NSEA, and moves Nevada closer to the removal of excessive testing of our students. SB303 is part of Sen. Woodhouse's "Time to teach, not test" initiative and requires the Nevada Department of Education to "conduct a full audit of student assessments at every grade level." This audit will shine a light on unnecessary and redundant testing so we can return valuable classroom time to educators.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 430

**Issue:** Achievement School District

**Position:** Supported bill to kill achievement school districts, opposed amended bill

**Result:** Amended bill failed

**Summary:** NSEA heard the message loud and clear from members and the community – no achievement school districts – and led the charge to kill this privatization scheme. Unfortunately, this program was part of the Governor's 2015 education reform package and any bill trying to kill the program faced a veto from Governor Sandoval. One proposed amendment, which NSEA saw as making a bad situation worse, added parent triggers to the program and could have outsourced jobs. NSEA will continue to voice support to keep public schools in the hands of the community where they belong and not allow them to be turned over to out-of-state private companies.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 386

**Issue:** Progressive Student Discipline

**Position:** Sponsored, Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** NSEA works on issues to support all educators in Nevada, and SB386 is a perfect example of legislation

# Report Card

that works to empower teachers and education support professionals. Student behavioral issues can cause serious problems, putting other students and school employees at risk. SB386, sponsored by Senator Joyce Woodhouse, is a tool to create a safe school environment by strengthening and extending progressive student discipline to other school facilities and transportation.

## Subject: Supporting Students

**Bill:** Senate Bill 390

**Issue:** Zoom Schools

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** The Zoom school English Language Learner program was created in the 2013 legislative session, and the program is showing results in the schools that have it. The Zoom and Victory school programs were highlighted throughout the session as examples of what is working to help students and lift our public schools. SB390 continues the Zoom school program.

**Bill:** Assembly Bill 447

**Issue:** Victory Schools

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** The Victory school program, which addresses at-risk students, was modeled after the Zoom school legislation in the 2015 legislative session. Like Zoom, the program is showing return on investment in the schools that have it. The Zoom and Victory school programs were highlighted throughout the session as examples of what is working to help students and lift public schools. AB447 continues the Victory school program.

**Bill:** Assembly Bill 64

**Issue:** Special Education Diplomas

**Position:** Sponsored, Supported Amendment

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** The testimony on AB64 was heartbreaking – a father of a special needs student said his son wanted to work and be a contributing member of society, but couldn't because he did not have a diploma. AB64 changes that and provides a pathway to a standard diploma. NSEA asked for and received an amendment to retroactively grant diplomas to those up to the age 22 who have already completed the requirements.

## Subject: Supporting Educators

**Bill:** Assembly Bill 434

**Issue:** Teacher Incentives

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** The Trump-DeVos proposal to cut Title 1 school funding to pay for private school vouchers is appalling. Caught up in this is a proposal to do away with educator tuition reimbursement programs for educators who commit themselves to Title 1 schools. That's

why NSEA was proud to support AB434, which will provide \$2.5M worth of incentives to attract new and veteran educators to Title 1 and underperforming schools.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 164

**Issue:** School Bus Leases

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** Allows school districts to lease school buses for private events. Provides more work opportunities for district drivers.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 300

**Issue:** Peer Assistance and Review (PAR)

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** Peer Assistance and Review takes many different forms across the state. The main goal, however, is to keep teachers in the profession. The CCSD PAR program (started in 2014) received funding from the 2015 session. The 79th session granted state funding for both CCSD and WCSD's PAR (started in 2012). NSEA worked on amending the language to also include funding for rural districts to research and/or start the program in the second year.

## Subject: Collective Bargaining, Pensions, & Social Justice Issues

**Bill:** Senate Bill 552

**Issue:** PEB Orphan Issue

**Position:** Sponsored, Supported

**Result:** Passed, signed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** SB552 was a top priority for NSEA-Retired (NSEA-R) this session. This bill will help a group of retired educators, referred to as "orphans" in the state health system, who have faced higher healthcare costs because they are stuck in a small high-risk insurance pool. This bill makes an appropriation and transfers responsibility for these retirees' healthcare back to local districts over time; it also affixes healthcare costs to those paid by retired state employees.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 356 and Assembly Bill 271

**Issue:** Collective Bargaining

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Vetoed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** SB356 and AB271 were two attempts to restore collective bargaining rights to public employee

*Continued on page 10*



# 79th Legislative Session

## Champions of Public Education

NSEA's success this legislative session wouldn't have been possible without real Champions of Public Education in the legislature. Following is a list of those champions and their contributions.

### Legislative Democrats—Champions

No other issue defined the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session like that of ESA private school vouchers. Before the session started, Republican legislators talked about vouchers as their top legislative priority for the session. Governor Brian Sandoval supported their cause, publicly committing to the program during his State of the State address and including a \$60 million general fund appropriation for the program. Early in the session, Senator Michael Roberson secured a commitment from his entire Senate Republican caucus to vote against any budget that did not include ESA vouchers, and the Assembly Republican Caucus followed suit weeks later. Just about every political pundit thought that a deal on vouchers was inevitable. However, the pundits underestimated the resolve of the Democratic caucuses to defend the institution of public education. They also underestimated NSEA, its coalition partners, and NSEA's connection to the legislators in the majority.

### Speaker Jason Frierson—Champion

While Speaker Frierson was publicly more measured in his approach to vouchers and the legislative session in general, behind the scenes he masterfully managed his caucus to hold the line against public money for private schools and to produce real results for public education. Frierson sponsored SB320 and navigated the threat of veto to finally get student test scores out of teacher evaluations. Frierson also sponsored AB434, providing \$2.5 million for new and veteran teachers to teach at Title I and underperforming schools.

### Majority Leader Teresa Benitez-Thompson—Champion

Assembly Majority Leader Teresa Benitez-Thompson was an influential internal organizer around many NSEA priority issues. Most notably, Benitez-Thompson was point on internal discussion around ESA private school vouchers. She also sponsored AB127, which addressed school safety issues, including emergency drills and building safety. Additionally, Benitez-Thompson was a key figure in getting SB550 amended to address the budget shortfall at the Washoe County School District .

### Assemblymember Maggie Carlton—Champion

Assemblymember Maggie Carlton chaired the powerful Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, where she wielded an effective gavel that helped block any public money for private schools. Chair Carlton also used her committee position to halt the expansion to the Achievement School District and press for an amendment

to SB300 (Peer Assistance and Review) to expand the program statewide, so all districts could receive funding for this innovative program. Carlton sponsored AB1, requiring the payment of undergraduate fees of a child of an educator who is killed in the performance of his or her duties, such as Michael Landsberry, the Sparks Middle School teacher killed in 2013.

### Assemblymember Tyrone Thompson—Champion

The Assembly Education Chair Tyrone Thompson was the measure of consistent education advocacy throughout the legislative session. In addition to his smooth facilitation, Thompson sponsored AB447 to extend the successful Victory Schools Program into the next biennium and also was engaged in the development of the weighted funding formula.

## Sometimes it seemed like all good things in the legislature started with Joyce Woodhouse

### Assemblymember Olivia Diaz—Champion

Teacher and NSEA member Olivia Diaz further strengthened her relationship with NSEA this legislative session, bringing years of experience as a legislator and educator to bear on the legislative session. Diaz had her hand in many of the significant education proposals, including the development of the weighted funding formula, as well as working on the orphan issue as it relates to state pension retirement recipients (PEB). She also kept regular communication with the NSEA ground team.

### Assemblymember Ozzie Fumo—Champion

While only in his first year in the legislature and without an extensive background in public education, Assemblymember Ozzie Fumo proved to be one of the most accessible and engaged legislators with NSEA during the session. Fumo carried two bills on behalf of NSEA, and when discussions on vouchers occurred behind closed doors, Fumo was the first to reach out to NSEA for guidance. Fumo even asked to be on the Education Committee so he could support us on key votes.



*NSEA members meet with Senate Majority Leader Aaron Ford.*

### **Assemblymember Brittney Miller—Champion**

Another teacher and NSEA member, Assemblymember Brittney Miller was a staunch advocate for students and the public education system throughout the session. Miller brought a fearless sense of urgency to the Assembly Democratic Caucus that helped fortify opposition to anti-public education proposals. Miller also sponsored AB320 (requiring the Board of Education to make recommendations for teacher–student ratios in each grade level).

### **Senator Joyce Woodhouse—Champion**

Sometimes it seemed like all good things in the legislature started with Joyce Woodhouse. Senator Woodhouse chaired the powerful Senate Finance Committee, and while gentler with the gavel than her counterpart in the Assembly, Woodhouse used her position to launch an incredible number of pro-public education proposals. On behalf of NSEA, Woodhouse sponsored and passed two pieces of legislation, SB303 (requiring an audit and streamlining of state student assessments) and SB386 (strengthening and expanding the progressive student discipline system). Woodhouse also orchestrated the passage of SB552 to address health care costs for hundreds of retired educators and was the primary sponsor of SB200 (computer education), SB241 (STEM/STEAM program), and SB548 (establishing the Nevada Institute on Teaching and Educator Preparation).

### **Senator Mo Denis—Champion**

Senator Mo Denis chaired the Senate Education Committee, where he used his position to advance some of the most important education legislation of the session. At the top of this list was the passage of SB178, beginning a responsible implementation of the weighted funding formula to make sure additional resources get to English Language Learners and at-risk students who need the most help. Denis also sponsored SB390 to extend the wildly successful Zoom school program for the next biennium as well as SB300 (the Peer Assistance and Review Program). While the senator's efforts to address the problems with the Achievement School District fell short, with his early morning and late-session work group meetings, he certainly can't be faulted for lack of effort.

### **Senator Nicole Cannizzaro—Champion**

While new, Senator Nicole Cannizzaro didn't serve on the Education or Finance committees, she did find herself appointed to an informal, bipartisan work group on private

school vouchers. Under significant pressure to craft a deal on vouchers, Cannizzaro stood strong in her defense of public education. Media reports of the work group credit Cannizzaro with scuttling a possible deal that would have included ESA vouchers. Cannizzaro also sponsored SB420, which requires school boards to adopt policies relating to right of expression for student journalists and outlining protections for educators advising student publications.

### **Senator Aaron Ford—Champion**

There is no denying the grace with which Senator Aaron Ford navigated the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session, and he orchestrated the highlight of the session, as Democratic senators deftly killed ESA vouchers on the Senate floor. Ford had one of the loudest voices against vouchers, calling them "the wrong priority for Nevada's kids" even before the session started. While unable to overcome Governor vetoes, Ford led the legislative effort to improve worker standards with proposals to raise the minimum wage and enact paid sick days for Nevada workers.

### **Senator Julia Ratti—Honorable Mention**

While first-year Senator Julia Ratti did not serve on Finance or Education committees, as chair of the Revenue and Economic Development committee, she was a consistent advocate for innovative ideas on increasing the funds for the state budget and school districts. In addition to SB508 (the marijuana tax), Ratti also sponsored SJR14, a resolution to change the constitution as it relates to the cost of real estate depreciation and the impact of this depreciation on the county economy.

### **Governor Brian Sandoval—Honorable Mention**

It's not easy to be a Republican during the 79<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session and make NSEA's Champions of Public Education list, but Governor Brian Sandoval did just that with an honorable mention. Despite lining up with his Republican colleagues during most of the session on issues like private school vouchers and collective bargaining, Sandoval showed his leadership and independence at the end of the session by refusing to kowtow to Senator Michael Roberson's threats to shut down the Nevada government over the issue of ESA vouchers. Meanwhile, Sandoval built on his legacy of financial support for public education with significant and targeted investments in public education that made the start of responsible implementation of the weighted funding formula possible. ••



## Still Deeply Committed to Public Education

by Tom Wellman, NSEA-R President

As we close out of the 2017 legislative session, many lobbyists are slapping each other on the back and savoring the victories that were won during this session. It's true there were many hard-fought battles that resulted in victories for public education, students, and members of NSEA. It's important to note that many retired members played an important role in this legislative session. Retirees attended many of the legislative hearings held throughout the session. As the daytime face of NSEA, we frequently went to the table to testify at countless hearings that were held during the day when active members were teaching in the classroom, driving the school bus, or supervising after school programs. Why did we go? Why did we still participate in this process? As retired teachers and support professionals, we are all still deeply committed to improving the quality of public education for both students and school employees. We may have retired from our jobs but not from public education.

We approached the 2017 session with a couple of very important goals in mind. First and foremost was to address and fix the issue of the orphans, retired members who chose to enroll in the PEBP (Public Employees Benefit program). The orphans have seen alarming rate increases to their insurance premiums, and that's tough to take when you are on a fixed income. With the help and direction from some key legislators and NSEA staff, we went to the table on at least four occasions to tell our stories and to put faces on this issue. We held a lobby day on March 2, where twenty retired members from across the state arrived in Carson City to meet with their legislators and further helped to put individual faces to this problem and relate the financial struggles which many of our members have experienced as a result of this inequity. Mission accomplished and WE WON!!! SB 552 was passed with strong bipartisan support in both chambers and has been signed by the governor. This was an important victory for all members from across the state.

The orphans should start to see financial relief by July 1, 2017, when their premiums go down to the same level of the state employees. This situation has plagued retirees since 2009 when premiums began to escalate. It's great to finally close the book. Special thanks go out to Peggy Rosch, Kay Padgham, Judi Hamblin, Brian Morgan, Gerri North, Jeanne Woodard and, of course, Sherry Grund for always being willing to go to the table and tell their stories. Special thanks to Chris Daly and Natha Anderson for their feedback and support as we navigated through the session. Brian Lee and Ruben Murillo, Jr., we couldn't have done this without you. We are stronger together and we make a bigger difference



NSEA-R members meet with Congresswoman Dina Titus.

With the Sine Die of the legislature, NSEA-R leadership began making the rounds of the congressional delegation who have offices located in Southern Nevada. We have met with Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto, Congresswoman Dina Titus and Congresswoman Jacky Rosen. The number one concern voiced by the representatives is about rumored changes, fixes, or tweaks to Social Security and Medicare. Each representative is equally concerned about any and all proposed legislation to amend or alter either one of these

programs. Each one wants to hear your personal stories and your concerns about these programs. Please make time to email, call, or snail mail your elected leaders and let them know your individual concerns that are critical to all retirees. Also, let them know specifically what you are happy or pleased about at the federal level. Information including each attabooy or complaint is so important to help them decide to support or not support a bill.

Please remember that all elections matter and every vote counts. Take time to research the candidates running for election. Make sure to find out if they support not only the issues and values important to you, but also a secure retirement. We CAN make a difference! Please get INVOLVED. ••



# ESA Private School Vouchers (DEAD) v. Opportunity Scholarships (Received Additional Funding)

ESAs and Opportunity Scholarships are getting a lot of attention since the voucher program was killed in the legislative session. A June 12 Las Vegas Review Journal headline read, "GOP blame game splits Nevada GOP." Many Republicans saw ESA vouchers as "our hill to die for," describing the Opportunity Scholarships as follows: "They can say what they want, but you can't put lipstick on a pig and make it pretty." With ESA funding dead, NSEA turns its attention to Opportunity Scholarships and is committed to seeing all available revenue directed toward public education. Following is a comparison of the two programs.



## Funding

ESA vouchers, if funded, would have drawn directly from the state budget. Thankfully, they were killed.

Opportunity Scholarships rely on donations only from individuals and companies that pay the modified business tax. The funding stream is far more restricted than ESA vouchers would have been.

## Impact on budget and public education

Some legislators testified they wanted to see vouchers "fully funded," which would have directly drained hundreds of millions of dollars from public schools. Thankfully, Nevada's students were protected, and public money was not allowed to be diverted to private schools.

As a part of a compromise package that included the adoption of a marijuana tax worth \$70 million for the biennium, Opportunity Scholarships were granted a \$20 million expansion of the tax credit program for the biennium, with the expansion expiring in 2019. The

revenue paid to private schools rely on donations to scholarship companies, and Nevada gives tax credits to companies or individuals who fund the scholarships. NSEA believes all money should be going to strengthen public education and is committed to making sure the increase in tax credits for Opportunity Scholarships ends in 2019.

## Who qualifies for the money?

The ESA voucher program was the most dangerous, reckless threat to public education. It would have allowed nearly anyone, with little restriction, access to public education dollars. Reports in local newspapers showed suburban, wealthy families comprised the majority of early applicants to the ESA program. Before its start, the program was already a failed scheme designed to benefit a few at the expense of many.

Opportunity Scholarships are income-based and awarded to students whose families have incomes no greater than 300% of the federal poverty level.

## Where are taxpayer dollars being used?

The ESA program had the loosest parameters on where public money could be spent. Taxpayer dollars could have been used for private schools, for-profit schools, religious schools, home schools, and some related expenses such as transportation. Furthermore, private schools that discriminated on the basis of religion, sexual orientation, and socio-economic means would have not been prohibited from receiving tax dollars.

A review of the schools receiving Opportunity Scholarship donations, required to be published on the Department of Education website, demonstrates exactly what voucher opponents feared most: donations are going largely to religious schools. One can see that if the voucher program had been funded, unrestricted taxpayer dollars would have flowed freely from our public schools to religious schools located primarily in Clark County. ••

# Voucher in the News

No other issue this legislative session brought more passionate debate than killing funding for ESA private school vouchers. When the dust settled, NSEA and its partners kept public money out of private schools. Below is a sampling of the media coverage on the fight, the victory to kill funding, and the aftermath.

## Winners, Losers, and Game Changers: A Legislative Roundup – KNPR, June 7, 2017

Gov. Sandoval described an agreement over Education Savings Accounts as “a good compromise.” What happened to ESAs?

**Ralston:** The governor is spinning that. There is no compromise on ESAs.

Read more by visiting [bit.ly/ESADeal](http://bit.ly/ESADeal)

## ESA Blame Game Splits Nevada GOP – Las Vegas Review Journal, June 12, 2017



“They can say what they want, (comparing ESAs to Opportunity Scholarships) but you can’t put lipstick on a pig and make it pretty.” – Assemblyman John Ellison

Read more by visiting [bit.ly/GOPESA](http://bit.ly/GOPESA)

## Nevada Republicans may have lost ESAs now, but fight isn’t over – Las Vegas Review Journal, June 6, 2017

“While Republicans will push hard for the program next session, Democrats and their allies will be ready to push back just as hard.”

Read more by visiting [bit.ly/ESA2019](http://bit.ly/ESA2019)

## The Indy explains: ESAs, Opportunity Scholarships... - Nevada Independent, June 11, 2017

“We don’t like it (Opportunity Scholarships). We’re going to hold the makers of this deal to their commitment that this was a one-time appropriation and so we get back to the next session and cut it to the \$6 million or eliminate the program.”

Read more by visiting [bit.ly/ESAvOPPY](http://bit.ly/ESAvOPPY)

## Report Card, continued from page 5

unions. SB356 was designed to return to the collective bargaining provisions used before SB241 was enacted in 2015. This included restoration of “evergreen” language to extend financial provisions after the expiration of a contract, loosening of timelines for arbitrator selection, and restoration of paid union leave time. When it became clear that SB356 would be vetoed, our labor allies amended and pushed through AB271, which just restored the paid union leave time language. Despite significant bipartisan support in the Assembly (the bill was sponsored by Republican Assemblymember Jim Wheeler) AB271 was also vetoed.

**Bill:** Assembly Bill 154

**Issue:** Prevailing Wage

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** Vetoed by Governor Sandoval

**Summary:** NSEA stood with its labor allies and testified in support of AB154, which would level the playing field for union workers on public works projects like public school construction. NSEA believes skilled union labor should be used on public school projects and will continue to fight

along with our union sisters and brothers to bring a 100 percent prevailing wage to Nevada.

**Bill:** Senate Bill 106, Assembly Bill 175, and SJR 6

**Issue:** Minimum Wage

**Position:** Supported

**Result:** SB106 and AB175 vetoed by Governor Sandoval; SJR6 passed and advances to 2019 session

**Summary:** SB106 and AB175 were the main attempts to raise the minimum wage, which has not been increased since 2010. SJR6 is the constitutional amendment that was forwarded as the back-up plan in case other legislative efforts to raise the minimum wage were unsuccessful. Many education support professionals across our state earn less than a living wage, and NSEA remains committed to ensuring a living wage for all our members. We also understand that poverty is a strong factor when students are prevented from reaching opportunity and success in school; raising the minimum wage is one of the simplest ways to help students in poverty. NSEA was joined by labor and progressive allies in supporting the two bills. ••

# President's Message, continued from page 3

"And you know we worked really hard on trying to come up with a compromise with the Democrats on the ESAs, but at some point it became very clear that the Democrats weren't going to support that."

This issue of Perspectives includes a "champions of education" section to highlight the heroic efforts of our pro-public education allies. Many members thanked these allies, and I encourage you to take a moment to send an email, thanking them for their efforts on behalf of Nevada's students.

NSEA was active in supporting and opposing different education legislation throughout the session. If you visit the NSEA YouTube channel [www.youtube.com/nseaonline](http://www.youtube.com/nseaonline), you will see more than 100 instances of testimony the NSEA ground team provided. In this issue of Perspectives, you will also find a legislative report card showing NSEA's many successes in moving toward its vision of a quality public education for all students. I'm proud of the accomplishments of the NSEA Ground Team, the guidance the NSEA Lobby Team provided, and our members for helping us achieve our goals. NSEA's presence in the hallways, hearing rooms, and offices in the legislative building was constant throughout the session, right up to Sine Die at midnight on Monday, June 5, with the close of the legislative session. Our work doesn't end there.

Today, NSEA and its members have an opportunity to cement their role as the trusted voice in public education issues. NSEA was successful because of its experience,



*NSEA Pres. Ruben Murillo, Jr. interviewed by Reno media on vouchers.*

relationships, ability to transform itself, the relationships its leadership developed, and the engagement of its members throughout the legislative process.

More than 85,000 texts and 95,000 emails were sent to members, resulting in thousands of calls, written letters, testimonies, emails, Facebook posts, texts, and tweets to let legislators know where NSEA members stood on vouchers, evaluations, testing, and many other

issues important to our profession. The successes and, yes, failures of the 2017 legislative session provided a teachable moment about the importance of unity. Imagine how much more could have been accomplished if every educator, teacher, and education support professional across the state were speaking with one message.

NSEA's success was the result of utilizing our strengths, partnerships, and relationships to bring positive change to this legislative session. NSEA has come a long way from the 2015 legislative session. We learned valuable lessons and didn't look back. Now, we must prepare and work toward the 2018 election and laying the groundwork for a successful 2019 legislative session. If we work together, we can accomplish much success. ••



*NSEA members mailed more than 1,100 postcards to legislators on the voucher issue.*

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## NSEA Membership/Discount Card

REPRESENTATION AT ALL LEVELS



**This is your NSEA membership card!**  
**Cut this card out and carry it with you to**  
**have easy access to your NSEA member**  
**benefits.**

## NEVADA STATE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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## Calendar of Events

### July 2017

- 1 NEA Board of Directors Meeting
- 1-5 NEA Representative Assembly –  
Boston, MA
- 4 **Independence Day**  
*(NSEA Offices Closed)*
- 3 NEA Representative Assembly –  
Boston, MA
- 12 ESEA Executive Board Meeting  
ESEA Rep Council Meeting
- 26 NSEA Budget Committee Meeting

### August 2017

- 4-6 NSEA Board of Directors Retreat
- 9 ESEA Executive Board Meeting  
ESEA Rep Council Meeting

- 18 NSEA-R, CREA, UCN-R, and WREA Training
- 22 WEA Board of Directors Meeting
- 26 NSEA Budget Committee Meeting

### September 2017

- 4 **Labor Day**  
*(NSEA Offices Closed)*
- 5 WEA Board of Directors Meeting
- 8 NSEA-R Board Meeting
- 11 **Patriot Day**
- 19 WEA Board of Directors Meeting
- 13 ESEA Executive Board Meeting  
ESEA Rep Council Meeting
- 22-24 NSEA Board of Directors Retreat
- 27 NSEA Budget Committee Meeting