

SUPPORT– AB 237

Date: March 20, 2019
To: Assembly Committee on Education
Re: NSEA Supports AB 237

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 AB 237 to expand the education personnel eligible to access the School Supplies Reimbursement Account. NSEA also supports a conceptual amendment to streamline the distribution funds from this account near the beginning of the school year.

It is well-known that most teachers spend hundreds of dollars every year on supplies for their classroom. A 2016 questionnaire from the National Center for Education Statistics found that 94% of teachers spent their own money on classrooms with an overall average of \$479 spent. Teachers at public schools spent more than teachers at charters or private schools. Meanwhile teachers at schools with higher percentages of students eligible for free and reduced lunch spent the most out of pocket.

However, many other educators who engage with students also spend hundreds of dollars out of pocket on expenses. Librarians spend their own money on book-related materials and other instructional materials. Counselors spend their own money on mandated lessons and group activities. Speech language pathologist spend their own money on manipulatives and tests. Meanwhile, many paraprofessionals and long-term substitutes spend their own money on many of the same education classroom supplies similar to items teachers purchase for their students.

Finally, the distribution of funds from the School Supplies Reimbursement Account can be bureaucratic and cumbersome. The timeline of the reimbursement typically does not align with the timing of bigger purchases at the beginning of the school year. This causes many teachers to not even bother with the process of saving and submitting receipts to access funds. Simplifying the process of accessing these funds at the beginning of the school is good public policy that would benefit educators.