

May 15, 2025

Nevada Assembly Committee on Ways and Means
C/O Chair Assemblymember Danielle Monroe-Moreno
401 S Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Good morning, Chair Monroe-Moreno and members of the Committee.

My name is Marie Neisess, and I serve as the President of the Clark County Education Association (CCEA), the only officially recognized teacher union in the Clark County School District (CCSD). We represent over 18,000 educators and bargain on their behalf.

I thank Speaker Yeager for bringing AB 398 forward and am speaking in strong support of AB 398.

This is my 32nd year in CCSD, and my entire teaching career has been dedicated to working in Title I schools. As an elementary teacher, I've seen firsthand the detrimental effects of high teacher vacancies on a child's education.

On more than one occasion, third-grade students I once taught had a revolving door of substitutes from kindergarten through second grade. I was the first fully licensed teacher many of them had ever had. Sadly, this is not an isolated case. This is the reality in too many of our urban core schools. Let me be clear, regardless of zip code, every child deserves access to a fully licensed, qualified teacher.

This crisis affects not only general education students. High teacher vacancies also disproportionately impact our special education students.

As CCEA President, I regularly hear from educators working in high-need schools. They're stretched thin, constantly stepping in to support classrooms without a licensed teacher. Also, high vacancies lead to higher class sizes. This is unsustainable, and it's unfair to our students and educators.

I am here to emphasize that we will continue to struggle with low proficiency rates in reading, math, and science without persistent progress in placing qualified educators in our most underserved classrooms. In 2023, we addressed this by recognizing the need to pay educators more. SB 231 provided an additional \$5,000 on educators' base salaries to those teaching in these critical roles. This investment had a significant impact on retention and recruitment in Title 1 schools and special education positions. However, that funding has ended. We must maintain and expand this support if we are to continue to make progress.

More than 7,000 CCSD educators have signed a petition calling for the continuation of funding established during the last legislative session through SB 231. We cannot afford to lose the momentum we've gained. If we are genuinely committed to delivering a high-quality education for all students, we must invest in the educators

who make that possible. AB 398 continues the vital work by providing targeted compensation to help recruit and retain licensed teachers in hard-to-fill roles.

I urge your support of AB 398.

Thank you.



Marie Neisess
President, Clark County Education Association