

## COMMENTS TO THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

*August 26, 2020*

The Nevada State Education Association has been the voice of Nevada educators for over 100 years.

First, we would like to thank Chair Miller for calendaring so many important items on today's agenda. Our comments are directed at item #10 on the findings of the validity of the Statewide Performance Evaluation System.

During a presentation to the Teachers and Leaders Council on May 27<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Bradley Marianno was asked for a simplified overview of the report's findings. Dr. Marianno stated, "The NEPF is not currently valid." TLC member and NSEA President Brian Rippet responded to this statement by emphasizing this was a very strong finding.

We know Nevada has struggled over the years, and from legislative session to legislative session, to develop an accountability system and an evaluation system that fosters student learning and growth and improves educator's instructional practices. In order to do so, this system must be fair and valid. Unfortunately, the old accountability system including evaluation along with student assessments and school star ratings have failed to foster the improvements in achievement or student engagement they were intended to deliver.

Now during COVID-19, these one-size fits all accountability schemes are even further out of date, as some Nevada school districts have moved to distance learning, others are operating in a hybrid model, and others are operating with all students in school buildings.

During this pandemic, when schools buildings are fully open or operating in a hybrid model, students and educators may have counterincentives to come to school when sick; to teach to tests instead of teaching and reinforcing health and safety; and to maximize numbers and time in classrooms, even when outside of the guidelines.

It is past time for a complete rethinking of Nevada's old accountability system. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Nevada should suspend the requirements under NEPF, NSPF, and student assessments. Then, our leaders should take this opportunity to rethink our accountability system so it is fair, valid, and actually supports and fosters teaching and learning in our schools.