

NQE Legislative Update

April 6, 2009

Not only are the entire country and state experiencing serious financial difficulty due to the recession, NQE is as well. Our efforts to fund a full time lobbyist to represent students in Carson City this session were fruitless. Through personal funding, NQE board members have spent as much time as is possible in Carson and will continue to do so.

Despite funding restrictions, we are fortunate to have many organizations, legislators and individuals providing us with information and collaboration. The Grant Sawyer Building in Las Vegas, has provided us the opportunity to participate in numerous hearings without travel expenses. We are doing our VERY best to see that pro-student legislation passes.

K-12 education will not see more money added but will most likely experience further cuts. State budget reports just seem to get worse and worse. Because of the funding shortfall, legislators are making numerous policy decisions. NQE is very cautious of the details and their impact on students. Our legislative updates may indicate opposition or support of legislation that may be confusing on the surface. If that is the case and you have questions regarding our position, contact us. We'd be happy to answer any questions and engage in productive dialogue. legalert@nevadansforqualityeducation.net

We will continue to add information as we read, research and study the bills.

AB13-revises provisions governing expenditures by school districts for textbooks, instructional supplies and instructional hardware. NQE supports.
(see AB55 & AB429)

AB14-Requires school boards to establish a policy prohibiting criminal gang activity on school property to include the provision of training for the prevention of criminal gang activity. NQE supports with amendments to section 1.2

AB55-Creates the Public Education Stabilization Fund. NQE supports.

AB155-Requires the state Board of Education to adopt a program of multicultural education requiring certain licensed teachers to complete a course in multicultural education. NQE supports expanded multicultural education but is concerned with section 2 regarding training. Amendments are being proposed.

AB158-**Section 1**. Prohibits the board of trustees of a school district from expending more than 33% of its total expenditures for certain administrative expenses. **Sections 6 & 7**, Revises eligibility for receipt of the Millennium Scholarship, changes the availability to apply for the scholarship from 6 years to 2, revises the amount rewarded based on financial need and increases the GPA to maintain the scholarship to 3.0.NQE opposes Section 1 and Takes No Position on Sections 6 & 7 as they are out of our K-12 focus.

AB243-Requires certain employers to grant leave to parent, guardian or custodian of a child to participate in certain school conferences and activities. NQE is in support.

AB319-Prescribes certain rights for school employees.

NQE opposes this legislation. It is similar to legislation which failed in the 2007 session. This bill provides additional protection for school employees in addition to their already negotiated contract. Should this legislation pass, daily operational issues will slow down or come to a complete halt. Employees will not be able to receive simple direction or have casual work related discussion without 48 hours notice. Parents will not have the right to have questions and concerns answered in a timely fashion without filing paperwork and allowing the school 48 hours to address the issue. The ability to find out what Johnny's homework was on the day he missed or to find out why he was disciplined will take days to address.

AB348-Requires public schools to post notice of certain information concerning educational services available within the school district. NQE supports with amendments.

AB425-Revises provisions governing the licensure of certain educational personnel. This legislation will facilitate the ability to hire qualified teachers and allow teachers to move to different grade levels without additional student teaching requirements. NQE is in support.

AB428-Expands the issuance of a special qualifications license to applicants who hold a bachelor's degree to participate in a program of student teaching or mentoring or to agree to participate in a program of mentoring for the first 2 years of his employment as a teacher. NQE is in support.

AB429-Revises provisions governing the required expenditures for textbooks, instructional supplies and instructional hardware. NQE is in support.
(see AB55 & AB13)

AB458-Creates the K-12 public Stabilization Account and repeals the provisions applying certain tax abatements to taxes imposed for public education and authorizing certain tax credits against taxes imposed for public education: exempting certain taxes imposed for public education from reallocation of property taxed levied on property in a redevelopment area.

AB505-**Section 1** Requires the Department of Education to work in consultation with the Nevada System of Higher Education to establish a plan to ensure that high school pupils are ready for postsecondary education and the workplace. **Section 5** Currently, 9th grade pupils develop a 4-year academic plan. This bill requires the plan to ensure that each 9th grade pupil and his parent or legal guardian are adequately notified of certain courses and programs, graduation requirements, receipt of the Millennium Scholarship and admission to the Nevada System of Higher Education. **Section 6** requires the boards of school district trustees to ensure that instruction on financial responsibility is provided to pupils. **Section 7** Provides that a pupil who was identified as a pupil with a disability who did not graduate before the age of 22 years may receive an adjusted adult diploma under certain circumstances. **Section 9** Requires the adoption of a peer and adult mentoring program to assist 9th grade pupils in the transition to high school. **Section 10** Requires school districts to provide sufficient opportunities during the school day to remediate pupils who are deficient in credits. **Section 11** Requires a policy to allow students to anonymously report unlawful activities being conducted on the school property, school bus, or at an activity sponsored by a school. **Section 16** repeals exemptions of certain children from compulsory school attendance. Many amendments are being proposed. NQE has no position at this time.

AB533-An act making a supplemental appropriation to the State Distributive School Account (DSA) for unanticipated shortfalls in Fiscal Year 2008-2009. In the sum of \$329,279,867 to cover

unanticipated shortfalls in the revenue from the Local School Support Tax and the ad valorem tax. NQE is in Support.

Assembly Concurrent Resolution 2 (ACR2)-Directs the Legislative Commission to conduct an interim study concerning the governance and oversight of the system of public education. This legislation is related to SB330 & SB326. NQE is in support of ACR2

Assembly Joint Resolution 12 (AJR12)-Proposes to amend the Nevada Constitution by adding the provisions of the Tax and Spending Control for Nevada initiative. NQE is in opposition.
Go to: <http://nevadansforqualityeducation.org/2006.html>

SB2-Makes an appropriation to the state Distributive School Account to ensure that the amount of money meets or exceeds the national average. NQE supports.

SB12-Revises provisions governing the Commission on Educational Excellence.

SB20-**Sections 1-4** Revises provisions governing the contents of reports of accountability submitted by the State Board of Education and school districts. **Section 7** Requires the Commission on Professional Standards to establish a training program for substitutes. **Sections 5,8,11 and 12** prohibits hiring a person as a substitute teacher unless the person has completed the training. NQE opposes sections- 5,10,7,8,11 and 12. Would reconsider with amendments.

SB30- Revises the provisions governing the publication of the quarterly list of expenditures of school districts. NQE supports.

SB56-Authorizes school districts to request a waiver of the required minimum expenditures for textbooks, instructional supplies and instructional hardware. NQE supports. (see AB13 & AB429)

SB77- Provides for the establishment of programs of teen mentoring in public high schools. NQE supports.

SB135-Requires boards of trustees of school districts to adopt a policy requiring pupils enrolled in kindergarten through grade 12 to wear school uniforms. NQE opposes school uniforms to be required by law and believes this issue should be determined at the local level and not by statute.

SB150-Creates the Public Education Stabilization Fund. NQE is in support.

SB163-Revises provisions governing safe and respectful learning environments in public schools to prohibit cyber-bullying. NQE is in support.

SB185-Requires school districts to use environmentally sensitive cleaning products. NQE has concerns with environmentally sensitive cleaning products regarding their ability to kill staph and mrsa. We are watching amendments and are not in support or opposition at this time.

SB326- Revises the duties and powers of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Department of Education; revising provisions relating to the appointment of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; creating the Division of Accountability for Public Schools within the Department; revising provisions relating to sponsorship of charter schools; creating the Nevada Charter School Institute;

prescribing the membership, duties and powers of the Institute; making the Commission on Educational Technology an advisory body; making the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools an advisory body; repealing the State Board of Education; repealing the Subcommittee on Charter Schools of the State Board of Education; repealing the State Board for Career and Technical Education; repealing the Commission on Educational Excellence; and providing other matters properly relating thereto. NQE is looking at this legislation in conjunction with SB330. NQE is neither in support or opposition at this time.

SB330-Revises provisions relating to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Department of Education and various councils and commissions, requires a model to measure and track student achievement, makes changes to graduation requirements, performance pay and creates the Commission to Oversee Educational Reform. NQE along with many other groups and individuals are working on this legislation. There is much being discussed and debated. At this point NQE is neither in support or opposition.