

Assembly

MINUTES OF HEARING - COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION - 56TH SESSION
FEBRUARY 24TH, 1971

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PRESENT: Swallow, Frazzini, Wilson, Smalley, Foote, Hawkins, White

ABSENT: None

GUESTS: William B. Bianchi, Las Vegas CCCTA
Len Robinson, Las Vegas (NSEA)
Ross Culbertson, Las Vegas (CCCTA)
Edward Greer, Las Vegas
Max E. Bunnell (NSEA), Overton, Nevada
Robert J. Zander, Elko, Nevada
Al Seeliger, Nevada School Trustees Assoc.
George W. Brighton, Reno, Nevada (Washoe County School District)
Don Perry, Carson City, N.S.C.A.
Lonnie Shields, Reno WCTA
R. Courtney Rilery, Ex. Div. State Adv. Council
Shirley Wedow, Nevada PTA
Virginia Cain, Reno, Nevada
Richard L. Morgan, NSEA, Carson

Chairman Swallow convened the meeting at 10:40 A.M. for the purpose of discussing AB 2. He turned the meeting over to those, first who wished to speak for the measure and then to those who wished to speak against it.

Bill Bianchi: I represent the Clark County Classroom Teachers' Association and I appreciate the opportunity to speak on their behalf and we would like to indicate what positive action on your part would mean to Nevada education. We feel the class needs a better educational climate for the children in the State of Nevada. This law means the teachers would have a heavy burden removed from them and would cause for higher morale, and a return to creativity and increase their desires to improve. Would allow to return to local control and determination of needs and changes necessary to develop the educational program. It would give the public the feeling that they were in control of the local schools. This is an important bill and we would like very much that you give the bill a do pass today. If any of you have any questions I would be glad to answer them.

Chairman: Does anyone have any questions?

Assemblyman May: Chairman Swallow and Members of the Educational Committee, may I take this opportunity to ask whether we are considering AB 1 or AB 2, I find them identical in content.

Chairman: Yes, Mr. May, we are considering AB 2.

Mr. May: In that case, I would like to speak for myself as a private introducer as well as those other introducers of AB 1. This bill should not become a partisan measure. Pride of ownership should not be considered. It had not come to our attention that there existed identical bills until such time as a vote was introduced. However, at this time we can only recommend that AB 2 be given a do pass

Lonnie Shields: Chairman Swallow and members of the Education Committee. I am Lonnie Shields and I was asked to represent the Washoe County Teachers' Assoc. and my speech has practically the same context as my colleague from Las Vegas. He practically said it all. I would like to say that the morale factor in the classroom is probably the most important factor to be considered when you are considering repeal of 1.7. Teachers are the only group in the state who have limits put on their top salary. To teachers and particularly to me this is discriminatory. Therefore, we are asking do pass from your Committee. Thank you.

Max Bunnell: I am Nevada State Education Association President and teacher of classroom of Black Valley High School. I feel that the educators of this state are pleased to note that a very high number of Assembly members introduced these bills, AB 1 and 2 and I also would like to note that both the platform of the Democratic and Republican party called for a repeal of this legislation and both candidates for the Governor pledged for this repeal. so, it appears to me that there is a definite concern that apparently there was an error made and would like to encourage this committee to do pass and bring it out on the floor. I would hope that this would meet with your considerations and if there are any questions I will do my very best to answer them.

Chairman: Are there any others who would like to speak at this time?

Burnell Larson: I am speaking on behalf of State Board of Education and I am Superintendent of Public Instruction and am on record for passage of this bill. I would recommend that you consider seriously sending it out with a do pass recommendation.

Shirley Wedow: I am coordinator the state PTA and we do want you to know that the State Parent Teachers' Association at an organizational meeting last year went on record as favoring the repeal of this restriction on teachers' salary and would recommend a do pass.

Mrs. Frazzini: How many people does your organization represent?

Mrs. Wedow: About 26,000 members.

Mr. Wilson: Since you are around so much what is the feeling of your organization in regard to the salaries of the beginning teacher? The present salary structure.

Mrs. Wedow: I believe that in the beginning salaries were raised and considerably so after the passage of this legislation which allowed them to have more than they had before and if you are referring to the fact that this particular piece of legislation may have helped to bring beginning teacher's salary up it certainly has, and we do feel that the beginning teacher should have a good salary in the State of Nevada but we also feel that teachers should not be penalized after they have put in all the time and effort and have become more experienced, they shouldn't have any loss because of this.

Mr. Wilson: So you feel that the ground for the beginning teacher is all that he would like at this time?

Mrs. Wedow: Well, I haven't heard any indications otherwise but may be someone who is in touch with the teachers could answer your questions better.

Mr. Wilson: I was talking about the beginning teacher. What is the attitude what is the fact at this time in regard to that teacher. I think this is important.

Len Robinson: As far as the beginning teacher is concerned I think they are as interested in this particular bill as the older teacher because it gives them something to shoot for in the terms of education.

Kirk Adams: I think it is a privilege to be here. I am Kirk Adams an elementary school principle from Las Vegas representing the legislative committee of the Nevada State elementary school principle's association, President to the Clark County Elementary School Principle's Association, secretary to the Clark County School Administrators. We urge support of AB 1 and 2 and feel it is vital to the interest to the children of the State of Nevada. Recommend that the control of salaries be provided by the local boards of education rather than be set by state regulation. They recommend a do pass. We feel that repeal of 1.7 is imperative. Are their any questions you would like to ask? Thank you very much.

Unknown: : I represent Nevada School Trustees Association and we recommend do pass on this bill on the basis that it gives us no difficulties in the matter of negotiations and we feel that it should be a matter of negotiations for their salaries. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Is there anyone else who would care to speak one way or another?

Al Seelinger: I am Executive Secretary for Nevada School Trustees. When you mentioned that there were some in here that didn't know whether they were for or against, my friend will be here. Speaking as a representative of the school board, I, of course, fully endorse. The reason and I emphasize reasoning for the removal of the controls enforced by the 1.7 ratio, Nevada is placing jurisdictional power where it belongs with the school board. I might also mention that there are a number of County School Boards who have indicated to me that the 1.7 ratio has posed no particular problem and that, I imagine, refers to matters of staffing and things of that nature and I believe that most of them are inclined to upgrade their salarie schedules as much as possible. However, I think we are aware also of the situation during the 1969 legislative session when the legislature imposed this restriction or guideline. Now I hope it doesn't happen but it is possible that before the end of the 1971 Session circumstances may arise that similar action may be considered. We all know that salary items constitute the main proportion of the school budget taking more than 80 to 85% of the school budget. When I refer to salaries I am not refering to salaries of classroom teachers, I am refering to salaries of all employed people in the school district. But even with that amount this does not leave very much to run the school district. To date not having any information upon what salary demands are being made the removal of the 1.7 ratio will involve additional funding. As long as we have support and recognition from the Legislature that school boards are autonomous we will not have an individual coming in from outside to dictate to us how we are to spend our money, I am sure that we can solve our problems. Thank you very much.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Does anyone have any questions they would like to ask? Are there any further comments? Do those on the Committee have any questions they would like to ask?

Miss Foote: Mr. Chairman, I don't have a questions but I would like to make a remark. During the election as has been brought up in this meeting today there were people who did come out and say they would support a change such as we considering today. I made no such commitment. I do feel that in the last Session of the Legislature when this 1.7 was enacted it was voted on favorably my many of us because we were told day after day what the teachers wanted was a better beginning salary. I would suggest in any further action by any group coming before the State Legislature whether I am here or not, that they consider very careful their remarks when they are asking for beginning salaries because you only have so much money to work with and if you are going to see the that the bottom is increased the top has to be. There has to be a lid put on it. So, I am not saying this as a threat, I am only saying this as a suggestion, I think that we perhaps did not understand all of the things that would happen if such a lid were put on. On the other hand, the people who suggested the base be raised, put us in somewhat of a spot, too, because were told that this was what had to be done. We did and then nobody has been happy. So, I hope that any further suggestions of this would be thought out and all the ramifications be considered before a big push is put on before this legislature.

Chairman: I think from what you have said that this has been a unique experience for all concerned and I don't think that in view of history that it will repeat itself. I think it will work out, pretty well, Thank you very much for your comments. If there are no further comments then we will excuse you and we thank you for coming.

Guests left.

Chairman: If I can remember correctly, it was suggested it be an education measure and I see no reason why it would affect directly the Ways and Means Committee and so as I recall, the measure was introduced to Education with a possible rereferal to Ways and Means if necessary. I don't frankly see the need for a rereferal. I don't know what we can do about it if they do request it.

Mrs. Hawkins: May I suggest that you speak to the Chairman of Ways and Means and explain the reasoning of the Committee to them and if possible pave the road.

Chairman: I would be happy to do that. I think there is one other person less likely to ask for rereferal and that is the Chairman of Ways and Means. Does anyone know Mr. Swackhamer very well. Marge, would you ask him?

Miss Foote: Yes

Miss Hawkins: Mr. Chairman, we do have an opinion down at the end.

Mrs. White: I think we ought to get it out do pass and then let somebody else do it.

Mrs. Foote: Mr. Chairman, my intention of saying that I would go to Mr. Swackhamer would be just that we would then be aware that they were going to be interested in it. Because anyone has the right on the floor of the Assembly to suggest a rereferal.

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Miss Hawkins: If they want it they can ask for it.

Mrs. Frazzini: I would like to move that we put out AB 2 with do pass.

Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Wilson: I would like to ask if this does go to Ways and Means are we going to oppose it? If not then let's go ahead.

Chairman: It should be a committee decision so that we will know which way to go.

Mrs. Frazzini: I oppose rereferal.

Chairman polled the committee and the chairman said he would so state on the floor.

Miss Hawkins: I have something to say on -----

Chairman: We do have time to conduct some other business.

Miss Hawkins: First I would like to say something, Marge, there were a lot of things contributed to what the teachers want that are just not true. And we have been blamed for a log of things and I think in regard to this that it was basically, I am speaking for my own county, in that all the members of the administration decided that they had to get that up to attract teachers and this is not exactly the teachers point of view. When they say this is what the teachers wanted we take that with a grain of salt.

Miss Foote: It was the teachers' association that did come here traipsing up and down the hall. It wasn't the PTA.

Mr. Wilson: Let me tell you. This thing started about three years ago. Even in the Governor's conference in Salt Lake City. They sent representatives of the teachers up there, and they were saying at that time OK we want better salaries. And, any member of this Legislature can tell you in the last session that ^{when} this was. Then when they found out that this wasn't really what they wanted. It was suggested that they reduce the 2 to 1 ratio in order to raise salaries. Every member of the legislature was completely confused. They did know what they wanted.

Miss Hawkins: It was a problem to get somebody for \$6,000 a year who had just spent \$10,000 to get an education and then to say you have to start at \$6,000. They recognized the fact you are simply not going to get people into the profession that way. So that is the reason they did want that raise. But when they said ok we will slash it off up here, naturally that was upsetting, too.

Mr. Smalley: It probably came from lack of organization on the part of the teachers. There were too many people who wanted to do things.

Miss Hawkins: Well, I do know what goes with teachers, perhaps with other groups as well. That when the classroom teacher has a representative that goes to a Board meeting may not be representing the people of her school, he or she is representing his own opinion. Then the teachers in the school is never given any information as to what goes on at the Board meeting and it continues on up the ladder until the people down here who are paying the dues. Talk about taxation without representation, they have got it.

Miss Hawkins: I would like to ask a question about putting AB 1 with AB2. Is this feasible? Is this desirable?

Chairman: I am not sure what would be the proper procedure.

Miss Foote: I would just like to make this comment. When the bill becomes law the introducers names are lost pretty much to history. The voting record is what counts.

Miss Hawkins: That doesn't bother me but it does seem to bother others.

Chairman: It can be done but I have never seen it done.

Discussion followed on this and it was decided that it was done and might start a legislative trend that shouldn't be.

Mrs. Frazzini moved to indefinitely postpone AB 1.

Motion Seconded.
Motion carried.

Chairman: This will go out this afternoon.

Chairman: We would consider acting on Juanita's AB 21 today. I personally feel that you have done a great job on this legislation, and accomplishing what you started out to do and we are moving in the right direction. I was really pleased with the responses we have initiated. I would like to have comments.

Mrs. Frazzini: Mr. Chairman, I rather go along with Mrs. White that maybe not a law but a resolution urging to keep classes as small as possible and with no exception to go over thirty, or something like that.

Miss Hawkins: They use a ratio to tell you that this is not overcrowding. When he said one teacher to seventeen pupils, he took that the music and art teachers had several free periods during the day. He came up-----

Mrs. Frazzini: How many children are in the class room with that particular teacher is all I care about.

Miss Hawkins: Here they are putting someone as an aid in the classroom who may be very poorly trained in that area.

Miss Foote: I think that the argument has some truth to it that they have not proven the class size is not necessarily proof that they are learning but on the other hand with the number of children in society who are coming emotional problems if you have one kid who doesn't know how to sit down you have the same difference as ten more kids.

Miss Hawkins: They say the whole type of child has changed in the last five years. You have a real problem when you get over thirty.

Chairman: Any more discussion?

Mrs. Frazzini: May I ask the Committee to prepare a resolution that quotes these things and urging the State Department of Education or who to whom we would direct it.

Miss Hawkins: I think the State Board.

Discussion of all members followed on this.

Mr. Wilson: Dr. White what is your opinion on this?

Mrs. White: I would be willing to go along with a resolution. The State Board can do this if they will. I just want youngsters to learn to read.

Chairman: Let's assign a subcommittee of volunteers to help Juanita on this.

Foote: I don't want to volunteer but I would like to make a suggestion. I suggest that this some way to show the intent that we are not just trying to make it easier for the classroom teacher. But that we are really trying to put the child in a situation where he can learn.

Mrs. White: I move to draft a resolution.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

A subcommittee was appointed with Mrs. White, Hawkins and Smalley as members.

Mr. Wilson moved to indefinitely postpone AB 21.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

Chairman brought up AB 31 and said he did not see what we could do on AB 31 and SB 5 as at the hearing another measure was suggested to us. We must consider what we are going to do. It seemed that almost everyone was opposed to way these were drafted. There was an alternate proposal by Mr. Larson which was given to us and should be in all your minutes and it seemed to be acceptable by most parties concerned. There was strenuous opposition by some. The Senate is having a rough time in their committee. It should be a finance committee problem.

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Chairman: Mr. Hug at the closing of the hearing has suggested that the figure of \$12,000 that had been set up as a basis should be enlarged upon. Perhaps we should postpone action until we hear more details.

Motion was made to postpone until we have further information.

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Frazzine: Are any parents that were concerned and working on this and are they still trying to work out something.

Chairman said he did not know.

Secretary said that it was agreed that the people from Las Vegas in education and the parents had agreed to talk things over.

Chairman said yes he did recall this.

Motion seconded.

Motion carried.

Chairman: AB-393 which modifies provisions relating to teacher's salaries was to be discussed next. Chairman suggested that a hearing be set up.

It was agreed to set up a hearing for March 8 at AM recess.

AB-372 which limits purposes for which drugs and intoxicating liquors may be brought onto premises was brought up for discussion.

It was decided to have a meeting on this March 3 at 10:00 A.M. recess and Mr. Miller to be invited asking him if he would like to invite Mr. Laird.

AB-414 which would create office of educational ombudsman in State Department of Education would also be on the agenda at this meeting.

AB-446 which would require longer probationary period to become public school teacher will also be on the agenda for this meeting.

Lowman, Getto, Prince and Dini were to be advised of this meeting by secretary it was decided.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Chairman we would probably not have a regular meeting Monday.