

LB147 School & Classroom Safety Legislation

- Nebraska teachers report bruises, cuts, torn ligaments, a broken nose, concussions and being hit in the stomach while pregnant in survey conducted by NSEA that asked its members for information about student violence they have encountered in the classroom.
- NSEA sent the survey in mid-December 2019. Responses have been received from more than 165 NSEA members who have observed or been the victims of violence while teaching. **The responses included pleas for additional services for students, additional school staff, and support from state and school district officials.**
- The problem is real and is of significant concern to teachers. More than 7,000 NSEA members responded to an earlier NSEA survey regarding student discipline and classroom safety, making clear that they need strong support and additional resources and training to ensure safe classrooms for all students – and for themselves.
- **NSEA has been working to provide that support and those resources. Our goal is to ensure all students and staff can learn and teach in a safe and supportive environment.**
- NSEA supports LB147 with amendment AM1803. This amendment reflects compromise language agreed to by the major state education groups including: the Nebraska State Education Association, the Nebraska Association of School Boards, the Nebraska Council of School Administrators, and The Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association.
- **The proposal would give educators more control over their classrooms and would provide educators and students a safer and more productive learning environment via two major components:**
 - 1) It would require school districts to maintain a publicly available ***policy on how and when a student can be removed from and returned to a classroom***, including a discipline process that is proactive, instructive and restorative, along with provisions for instructional and/or behavioral interventions for that student. It also requires appropriate communication between all parties, from administrators to teachers, parents/guardians and other school personnel.
 - 2) Consistent with current case law, the proposal statutorily outlines the right of school staff to use ***reasonable physical intervention to safely manage the behavior of a student to protect the student, other students, and/or staff from physical injury***. The proposed legislation makes it clear that physical intervention shall **not** be used for the purpose of inflicting bodily pain as a penalty for disruptive behavior.
- We have heard from school personnel who have been kicked, hit, bitten, spit upon, slapped, punched or worse. Too many educators have been injured, too many students placed in danger, too much teaching and learning time has been lost.
- **All students deserve to have a safe and productive learning environment where they are free from the distractions and disruptions from students that become physically aggressive.**
- The bill protects teachers from legal action or administrative discipline for having a student removed from a class if the teacher was acting in a reasonable manner.
- **Our members do not want any child to miss the opportunity to learn, even those who are disruptive and need to be removed from the classroom. They do want to ensure all of their students are safe and that chronically disruptive or violent students receive the help they need.**