NEVADA Department of Education

APA CONSULTING | AUGENBLICK, PALAICH AND ASSOCIATES

WestEd

March 27, 2026

Recommendations for Weighted Student Count Approaches

Weighted Funding Workgroup

Dr. Amanda Brown

Michaela Tonking

Overview

Weighted Student Count Approaches

- Revisiting what we are trying to solve for
- Recap of how other states approach the issue
- Recap of scenarios explored
- Recommendations

Recap: How does Nevada currently count weighted students?

Nevada uses prior year, single day (October 1) student counts for weighted funding

- Differs from use of the most recent average quarterly Average Daily Enrollment (ADE) for base funding

Students currently in weighted funding categories only receive the highest funding/weight they are eligible for

- At the last meeting, the Commission recommended pursuing stacked weights in the future

Recap: What are we trying to solve for?

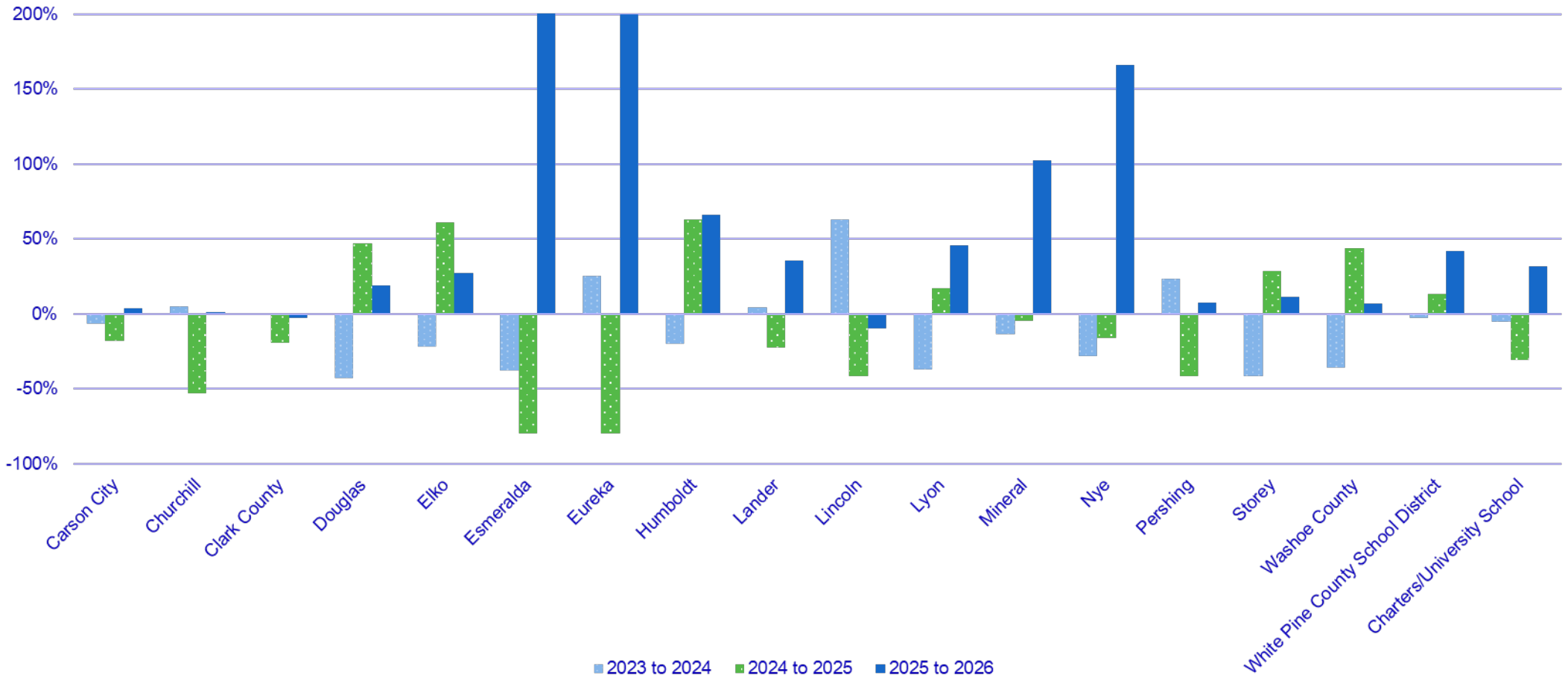
Address year-to-year volatility in student counts, particularly for at-risk

- Creates budget and delivery challenges for LEAs

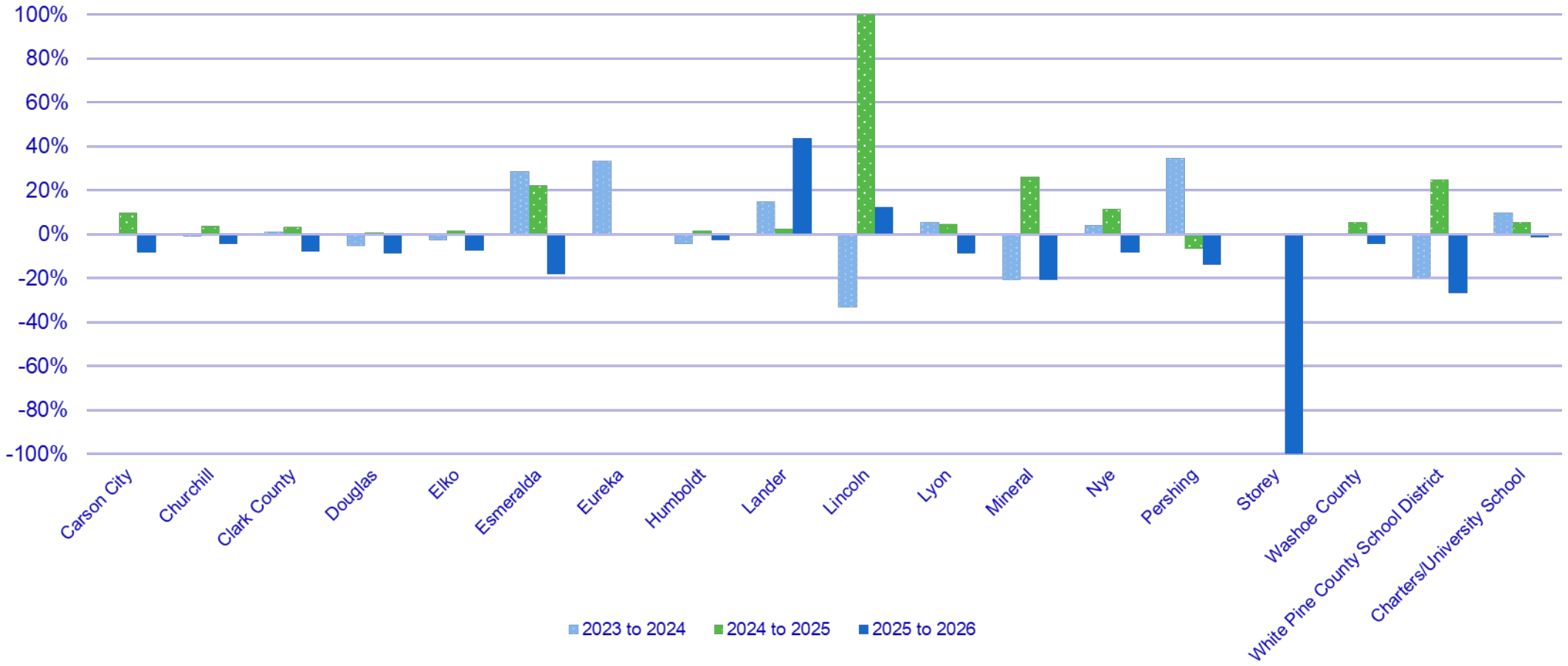
Ensure funding alignment with student needs

- Funding is intended to support the needs of currently enrolled students

Recap: Change in Year- to-Year Funded At-Risk Student Counts



Recap: Change in Year- to-Year Funded EL Student Counts



Recap: How do other states count weighted students?

- For base or foundation funding, states vary in whether they use current or prior year information or consider multiple years of data
- For weighted funding, states largely use single year student counts, as the intention is to target dollars to student need
  - Some states (Maryland, California) that provide at-risk concentration grant funding average multiple years of data to determine funding eligibility
  - No states that we could find use multiple years of data for special education, English Learner, or gifted students

Recap: Pros and Cons

- Using multiple years of data provides greater budget stability **but** funds more students than may be currently served and creates more misalignment with funding intended to target current student need
- Current year data are better aligned with the year the student is served **but** requires a true-up process with midyear adjustments to funding and program resourcing, creating less predictability and stability

Recap: What scenarios have been considered?

Approach considered	Goal: budget predictability	Goal: budget stability	Goal: alignment of funding with student needs
1. Maintain current approach using prior year count	X		
2. Move to current year count			X
3. Use a two-year average (current year and prior year)		X	
4. Use a “greater of” approach (current year or two-year average)		X	X
5. Use a predicted current year count			
6. Use a two-year average (prior year and two years prior)	X	X	
7. Use a “greater of” approach (prior year or two-year average)	X	X	

Study Team Recommendations

- Given the larger recommended change to pursue stacked weights in the future, recommend maintaining current approach using prior year student counts
- Since the greatest issue is with at-risk student counts:
  - Are there other ways of addressing volatility within the at-risk definition?
  - Is the year-to-year volatility a feature of having a highly targeted definition?
  - To sustain the progress made with students that move off at-risk status, do you need to maintain supports?

Recommend that the year-to-year volatility be considered as part of conversations about at-risk definition