

English Mastery Council English Proficiency & Academic Achievement Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, MAY 7, 2020
9:00 AM

Meeting Location: *Virtually via Lifesize*

Call to Order; Roll Call

Blakely Hume, Education Programs Professional with the Nevada Department of Education called the English Mastery English Proficiency and Academic Achievement Subcommittee Meeting to order at 9:04 AM on Thursday, May 7, 2020. A roll call was conducted and **quorum was established** (3 members present).

Members Present:

Lorna James-Cervantes
Bettye Haysbert
Karl Wilson (designee of Jonathan Moore)

Members Absent:

Antoinette Cavanaugh
Jonathan Moore

Others Present:

Blakely Hume
Mindy Montoya

Public Comments #1

There were no public comments via email at that time.

Approval of Flexible Agenda

Motion: Approve Flexible Agenda
By: Karl Wilson
Second: Bettye Haysbert
Vote: Passed unanimously

Approval of March 5, 2020 Minutes

Motion: Approve March 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes
By: Bettye Haysbert
Second: Karl Wilson
Vote: Passed unanimously

Presentation: Developing Content & Language Simultaneously for all Students

Chair Cervantes stated that Item Number 5 on the agenda was a presentation on developing content and language simultaneously for all students. She stated that it was supposed to be presented by Assistant Superintendent Ignacio Ruiz based on the English Language Mastery Plan for Clark County School District. She had attempted to get out the policy that school districts have created and how that policy may address the expectations set forth for this committee to look at. She stated that due to circumstances related to getting

approvals to present within the district, Mr. Ruiz was unable to attend the meeting but has asked to present at their June 11th meeting. She asked if there were any questions or concerns with moving the presentation date.

Mr. Wilson said he looks forward to having that presentation and moving it to June would be okay. He thought the importance of the presentation was to understand the effort that Clark County School District built into their EL Master Plan, related to developing language and academic achievement for students who aren't English learners through some of their professional learning opportunities and support for students.

Chair Cervantes thanked Mr. Wilson and noted that Mr. Ruiz was prepared to present that day, but they will look forward to hearing from him in the future. She agreed with Mr. Wilson on the intent for asking Mr. Ruiz to present.

Dr. Haysbert asked were there work already being done in the district with children who are coming to classrooms speaking another language who are trying to learn the standard English language.

Chair Cervantes stated yes, and that was the intent of asking Mr. Ruiz to make his presentation: to share some of the work that is underway to try to help address the needs of all students, especially those who may be native English speakers but aren't necessarily standard English speakers in the classroom.

Mr. Wilson stated he believes the importance of hearing information from Clark County School District's EL Master Plan was largely around efforts in the area of professional development for all teachers on strategies that are intended to build academic language for students starting with English learners that are also intended to build academic language for students who are not English learners. He further stated they were curious to learn more about that and thought that was part of what they were looking to hear in the presentation.

Mr. Hume reminded participants to mute their lines if they're not talking to avoid feedback.

The Chair thanked Mr. Hume for the reminder. She asked the committee if there were any other questions, and there were none. She noted again that she was looking forward to Mr. Ruiz's presentation in June.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students

The Chair moved to a discussion of some of the current research and resources regarding lowest performing students. She reminded the committee that at their last meeting, they discussed having the opportunity to review some research and bring back some of the information to the group at the following meeting.

The Chair opened the floor to committee members to discuss or bring attention to any of the research that they have been engaged in. She asked for a brief synopsis of the research and acknowledged receipt of an article from Dr. Haysbert and that there may be some other articles that others have taken a look at.

Dr. Haysbert offered to share her information. She explained that she looked at information that dealt almost specifically with English language proficiency and as it relates to African-American, Latinos, Native Americans and Hawaiian Americans. She provided a historical perspective around what happened with African-American learners and the studies that went on in the 60s, 70s and the 80s.

Dr. Haysbert stated that a lot of the research that was done at that time was to help people become aware of the fact that African-American learners were actually coming to school speaking Ebonics, a different language than the language they were expected to operate in and research found that there were commonalities between the needs of African-American learners and at that time, they were called foreign language learners. They began to document the structure of the language and the determination was made that it was indeed a language.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Dr. Haysbert said in California there were Oakland and Los Angeles working on the project. Milwaukee was another city that participated and others she knows these were very prominent in their participation. They developed a program called PEP, Proficiency in English Program, which was implemented in the districts to teach students about the language, the differences in the language that they were speaking, and the language that they were expected to speak in the schools.

Dr. Haysbert said that determining that it was a language is what took Oakland to the next point. She said if they were going to view this and respond to it as a language, then they would do what others were doing, which was teach the learners in their own language, as they are learning the standard English. She stated that people misunderstood it, but it was actually the right effort in '96.

Dr. Haysbert said in '97, the Linguistic Society announced that after their study, they determined it was indeed a language. From that point on, people who had already started, such as Los Angeles and Oakland, kept the work up while others stopped, such as San Francisco. 30 years later, they're beginning to look at this issue again and the program that's being sort of the star in all of this is Los Angeles. The Los Angeles program has a solid program. Oakland didn't when she looked into this initially, but they do a lot of dual language programming in their school district.

Dr. Haysbert noted that Mr. Hume had sent her a link and information on WestEd. She got in touch with them and they sent her some information. One of the pieces that they sent was the Oakland School System. They were doing a standard English program. She stated that the research that was done, several people were working on it for a very long time. She shared research that shows some gains with the students when they were participating in their own language, or a program that allows them to participate in their own language.

Dr. Haysbert stated that Rich Fort was taking a look at an awareness form of teaching. He said that he thought he was trying to prove whether students who spoke a vernacular or dialect different from the school would learn English better if they were actually made aware of the fact that they were speaking something very different from the schools language. They put together two groups of writers and the students who were taught the difference. They were shown or made aware that their language was different. When they did that with one group of writers and the other just ignored it altogether and had them to write, the group that wrote after they had it explained, showed a 59% gain in their writing and in the use of the language that they wanted them to be more proficient in. The ones that were ignored had an 8.5% increase in their writing of African-American language, which went up in the use of the language. His theory that awareness teaching could even be effective in all instances. Dr. Haysbert stated she doesn't know if she agrees but noted that's what happened with him.

Mr. Hume asked Dr. Haysbert to repeat the numbers. She confirmed that it was a 59% gain for group shown that their language was different and 8.5% for the group that was ignored.

Mr. Hume asked if it was the same group or a different group. Dr. Haysbert confirmed that it was two groups.

Dr. Haysbert explained that one group was told the difference between their language and the school language. They're the ones that had the 59% increase in the use of the standard English language, as opposed to their own language. And the ones who were ignored, had an 8.5% increase in the use of African-American language.

Dr. Haysbert stated there was another research piece that was done by this team, Simpkins [phonetic], and they documented some gains that had been made when they used the bridge readers. Those were transitional readers. She stated they found that those learners made a 6.2-month gain on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. She stated it was probably one of the techniques that would be used by all teachers in the program that they would've heard from today. It was a bridge reader that made a major difference, as opposed to the traditional way of teaching literacy instruction.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Mr. Wilson asked what period of time the 6.2-month gain was achieved in. Dr. Haysbert noted that she wasn't sure but was certain that the information could be found in the research.

Dr. Haysbert continued by mentioning Dr. Julie Washington's research. She noted that Dr. Washington has produced probably the most research in the shortest amount of time and the largest volume of research under using one group of people. She used 1,000 students over a four-year period to study the challenges that they were having with reading with standard English speakers and the difficulties they were having in learning to read and what they could do about it.

Dr. Haysbert stated that Dr. Washington worked with one of the elementary schools in Detroit and while they were working with the teachers there, she noticed that the curriculum and instruction for the ELL students had features that were addressing features that were similar to the African-American learners. She stated they designed a bilingual curriculum for the majority of the students who were actually African-American in the school. There was a 75% increase in the number of students who passed the State's reading test when they did this, but she was not sure how long they implemented the curriculum.

Dr. Haysbert stated that some of the research had shown that language acquisition skills with other learners could work for African-Americans. She stated that's where she wanted to do some research around on a more current basis. She stated her research was done more currently and that was something to note.

Dr. Haysbert stated that over the four years of her work, her conclusion was similar because that's what she set out to prove, which was that the language needs of African-American learners were the same as other learners and that the instruction strategies and methodologies which are instruction strategies in the curriculum and teacher training would be similar to those that are required for other learners.

Dr. Haysbert stated that the research that came out of the 60s is the thing that sets people up for what was happening in Oakland. She wanted to make that clear. She said what they were doing was really following the research, and it wasn't until after the Linguistic Society in '96 into '97 that legitimized all of that prior research by stating that their research also revealed that the language that the students were speaking was a bonafide language. She stated that when they move from that point of understanding that it's a language, then it becomes less of an issue about what to do about it.

Dr. Haysbert stated that the Linguistic Society put out a language rights document and that's the document that she thinks was brought forth. She said the document spoke to the need to acknowledge and accept and use the language of minorities and preserving that language and diversity of language in the world. She said all of these things were included and presented to the United National Council, which was a way to guide them in how they dealt with people abroad, such as minorities, when they went into countries to teach or to set up businesses so that they would not degrade their language.

Dr. Haysbert stated in colonization, people came in and just eliminated people's culture and introduced their own. There was a need for an attempt to correct that. This is a really important piece of information to know that the effort is being made around the world to ensure that minority languages are being valued, accepted and used to teach official languages or the language that you want them to operate in. She said you could see where countries were actually using the languages of others and they talked about how they were using it and the results that they derived from it. She said the findings from the study was if you use the language to help learners bridge, it was more cost-effective, it reduced dropout and repetition rates, lead to noticeably better academic results especially in girls, improved levels of literacy and fluency both in both the mother tongue and their official or majority language, and lead to greater family and community involvement and support. She said that this was put forth to see how this effort to bring some dignity, liberty and inclusion to the minority language users was being done around the world.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Dr. Haysbert stated that the bottom line is language is part of culture, and language is associated with our identity. That's one of the reasons it's very important that it be acknowledged, valued and used. That is one of the reasons that when the Ebonics issue arose, there was such a backlash because of the language. Part of the backlash was that they never thought it was a language, and they didn't want to claim that because of the connotations that it had. It had been degraded and considered the language of the ignorant. It's such a part of who people are that these things need to be taken into consideration, things that are being done and have been done for 30 years or more. Los Angeles is still doing its program.

Dr. Haysbert stated that WestEd sent information on a school in the Oakland School District in California that was implementing the program, which used dual language programs. Other information that was sent included Austin, Texas and an example of them how they put together their standard English program and they used the Los Angeles program as a base. The third item received was a part of someone's dissertation that looked into strategies that would be used in working with second language learners and how different they would be from English language learners.

Dr. Haysbert asked for any questions about any of the research she just presented.

Chair Cervantes thanked Dr. Haysbert for her presentation. She asked if Mr. Wilson had anything to add from his work. She asked about dual language with other languages such as Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese programs which are all over the California schools. She also asked in the Texas schools, was it all of those languages or was it also dual language with the non-standard English and English classes.

Dr. Haysbert stated that she didn't actually study the dual languages program and was not making a recommendation for that. She stated that the part of the report that the dual language plays in her sharing is that it is being done in Oakland. She explained that she thought that was what they had decided to do in lieu of a standard English proficiency program and said they're still doing the standard English proficiency program. She stated that was the only reason the dual languages was mentioned and she did not have enough information to comment further.

Mr. Hume stated that Dr. Haysbert's research was wonderful. He was curious about some of the research done in the 1960s around English language proficiency. He asked were those articles in the information he had sent. He stated he has interest in the history of that and asked if the articles could be sent to him regarding the research beginning in terms of determining second languages.

Dr. Haysbert noted that that information was not in articles, but rather in the history that she read. She stated that she does have authors names that can be sent related to the research. Mr. Hume thanked her for the information.

Chair Cervantes asked Mr. Wilson if he had any questions for Dr. Haysbert or any research that he had completed that he would like to report on.

Mr. Wilson stated that he did not have any additional questions of Dr. Haysbert, except that he was interested in the conversation in terms of research and strategies that might come as recommendations from the group from Dr. Haysbert's perspective.

Mr. Wilson thanked Mr. Hume for gathering a number of research articles. He said there were three specifically that he looked at and will talk more about one. The first article had to do with using a strategy called Closed Reading in elementary schools to help promote reading comprehension for low performing students. The next article had more to do with writing strategies for students in grades K-6. The last one had a focus on the importance of developing academic language.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Mr. Wilson said it referred not only to English learners, but all students and how a strong focus on academic language, especially in the area of science, resulted in stronger lesson design, in terms of working with teachers to look at the language components as they were preparing their content lessons to address the academic language specific to the content and levels of discourse for students.

Mr. Wilson said in terms of the Closed Reading strategy in the elementary school, the article compared that strategy with another evidence-based reading strategy to build understanding and comprehension. He noted that he didn't feel the article could really be used to summarize valid research since the article was a very limited study, in a rural school. He said this would almost fit better under the category of a case study. He stated it was looking at 4th grade students in the area of science, in terms of trying different strategies. The end set size, in terms of sample of students was so small that any data that they might be reporting would have to be understood that it was with a very small group in a limited setting in how that was administered. It emphasized that as states have implemented the common core state standards, there is a much greater demand in terms of students being able to comprehend and turn around and express the content and information in ways that historically were less demanding. As it looked at that approach, in terms of really reviewing the same passages over multiple days and digging deeper into first being able to just read it and then second, to understand what it means. Then the third level, to really dig into the power of writing and reading to gather information and then to provide arguments or information in ways that are compelling.

Mr. Wilson said that was not limited to English learners but was for students who were struggling in the experimental group. The comparison they did was the Closed Reading where they read the same text multiple times during the week over a three-day period. In the first reading, they looked at what the text actually said. The second reading was to figure out how the text worked in providing information or convincing argument. The third reading was really to analyze the text and make connections to the science classroom and the relationship between the students' background knowledge and what was being learned. There was also a component that really focused on critical vocabulary.

Mr. Wilson said the comparison approach was a strategy called Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). It was a comprehension instruction strategy to intervene with students who are at risk. It was built in as part of the multi-tier system of support or response to intervention model that the school had developed. Because the sample size was so small with just a group of students in one classroom, there was no clear comparison in terms of which approach was better. This was based on an article authored by Boudreaux-Johnson, Mooney, and Lastrapes in 2017 from the Journal of At-Risk Issues.

Mr. Wilson said the third article that they looked at was related to academic language was from Yung and Brown. It really examined the effectiveness of an academic language planning organizer as a tool to help teachers in planning their instruction. What they found is with professional development that really helps teachers in their lesson design, it had a significant impact on how teachers delivered instructional activities that focused not solely on the content, but the language needs of the students and that the students who were in those settings performed significantly better in terms of their understanding the content and demonstrating proficiency in their annual assessments having been exposed to instructional setting that really focused on language goals as well as academic goals in the design of instruction.

Mr. Wilson said that their colleagues working with districts in the development of the English Language Development Standards Framework and the professional development will be rolling out with that. This research study really reinforces the importance of that kind of design that is a key part of the work that's being led in the State with the partnership of WestEd, in developing a roadmap for designing the implementation and support for teachers in that area.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Mr. Wilson finished his presentation by asking for questions and thanking Mr. Hume again for the gathering of the additional documents.

Chair Cervantes thanked Mr. Wilson for his presentation and stated she appreciates Mr. Wilson and Dr. Haysbert for sharing the work that you've done over the past few weeks to prepare for today. She noted Dr. Haysbert's talk reminded her of some work done with books called Cultures in Contact, which specifically talks about the importance and values that they place on languages within different groups and how when those cultures come into contact, they sometimes either value or don't value those languages and the difference between assimilating to that culture or acculturating within these different cultures.

Chair Cervantes stated it is important work that they're working on. She stated there is a strong connection with what they're working on and the English Language Development Framework project. Chair Cervantes asked Dr. Masewicz to confirm that. Dr. Masewicz confirmed the partnership with the EMC in terms of this work and reporting out the progress of the work as they move forward.

Chair Cervantes thanked Dr. Masewicz and stated that she had the opportunity to participate in that work and the thing excites her about it is, it really does not delineate any specific language of that English learner. No matter whether it is a student learning standard English or a student who comes from another country or who was born in the US but isn't living in a household where another language is spoken, it really just helps the teachers to understand how to meet the needs of students where they are in their standard English language development and instructionally in the classroom.

Chair Cervantes stated that based on the work that they have brought together as a team and the research they've done, it would be appropriate to talk about what are some next steps for the committee to take a look at. There has been a request from Mr. Hume that they hear from members of the State Department of Education on the work being done in the state because that work is very specific to meeting the needs of kids in the lowest 25th percentile. The way the guidelines for the state are written is that any child who is testing in the 40th percentile or below must have an individualized plan for how they are going to address their needs in reading and English Language Arts. The Chair noted that she already asked for that information to be brought forth to their next committee meeting in June. She stated they will hear from Mr. Ruiz from the English Language Department in CCSD about the work being done within the ELL Master Plan.

The Chair opened the floor to the committee members to see what other next steps they might see a need for from the Committee.

Dr. Haysbert asked the Chair to expand on the work group she was involved with that is using techniques to teach language to all learners no matter what their language is. She stated that she's a little unclear about that but it sounds interesting.

The Chair explained that for the last two or three years, she was a member of the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee for the English Mastery Council. Part of the work that came out of that committee was adopting standards for English Language Development for the State of Nevada. The first step was to adopt the WIDA, English Language Standards as the English Language Standards for the State of Nevada. Beyond that, they started the work of creating an English Language Development Framework that would be used across the State of Nevada in all schools. That work was done in conjunction with WestEd and a committee of educators from across the State. It included professional development from the group at WIDA, as well as opportunities for the groups to work together, taking each content area and then saying, within that content area, what are the things that teachers need to take into consideration within the teacher moves and expectations for teaching kids no matter what their level of English language development is.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Chair Cervantes stated that they know that it has to be differentiated, so within that framework, there are recommendations if a student is at a particular level, these are some strategies that you could use in order to make this happen, including some specific academic vocabulary that needs to be taken into consideration and some different teaching strategies that could be used. The group went through every grade level band and every subject area and completed that framework. Now the work that's coming next in that work is to start the teacher professional development and how to use that framework.

Dr. Masewicz confirmed that the Chair did not miss anything in giving the overview of the work that they are beginning to roll out and implement. She stated that their language diverse populations will really help to shift the focus in terms of language and content development with the academic language and content integrated. She added that going back to those lesson plans to include this academic language will benefit all students. At a later point, she could give a report in terms of this progress and the rollout moving forward. She stated that they are going to be aggressive in this first year, even in light of COVID-19, in terms of putting this in front of educators. She stated that this is a real shift. Connecting what's been presented today, this is in line with the whole work that needs to be moved forward in order for them to see these improvements among all of their diverse learners.

Dr. Haysbert thanked Dr. Masewicz and the Chair for the explanation. She added that it sounded interesting because in some reading, it was noticed that in year 2020, 60% of students in public schools will be members of a second language family. It seems like their teaching approaches need to change and teach language to learners by focusing on teaching the language. She stated that from what she understands from this effort is that the content and developing the language is going to be taught at the same time and that it would be done throughout. She asked if throughout the school district, in the different grade levels, this is happening.

Chair Cervantes confirmed and explained it has been the expectation in Clark County through the English Mastery Plan but also part of the development in the English Language Development Framework that they cannot teach English and then content. She stated that they have to teach the two simultaneously in order for students to be able to make the growth and learn the content that they're expected to learn. This is at every grade level, from pre-K through 12th grade, in the State of Nevada that this work is being done. They know that different districts across the state are at different levels of implementation. They were cognizant of that and understand that they have to continue that work, which is focused on teaching English and content simultaneously, planning for that work, making sure that teachers are receiving the training and professional development they need around that work, and that administrators are as well because they have to understand the difference in approach.

Chair Cervantes stated that when she was in her master's program, in the late 80s, the statistics were in the future, and by the year 2015, the whole southwest was going to be a minority majority area and they are going to have English language learners in almost every classroom and they see that. She said there is not a school in the Clark County School District that does not have at least a few students who are other language learners, or English language learners or students who do not speak standard English as their home language.

Dr. Haysbert asked if this is different from what they would've heard from Mr. Ruiz today or is this a different council/group.

Chair Cervantes explained there are two different groups of people but within those groups, sometimes similar people work across the two groups. Mr. Ignacio Ruiz is the Assistant Superintendent of the English Language Learner Division for the Clark County School District. He has led the creation and implementation of the English Mastery Plan for the Clark County School District and creation of the English Language Learner Policy for the Clark County School District. This was at the direction of the English Mastery Council, of which they are members.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Chair Cervantes stated that at the very inception of the English Mastery Council, they gave a directive and it was passed by the State Department of Education that all school districts would create a policy around English language learners and how they're going to do that work. That led to the creation of the English Master Plan for the Clark County School District, which is what Mr. Ruiz was going to talk about today and how that plan actually includes all students who do not speak standard English as their primary language and how language development is the important piece of that.

Chair Cervantes stated that the second group is the group that worked on English language development framework. That work also came out of the English Mastery Council from one of its subcommittees. She stated that the member of the subcommittee were herself, Maija Talso and Nancy Brune. They worked alongside Dr. Sophia Masewicz and Dr. Kul Axtell from the Department of Education as well as WestEd to start some of that work. Then they spread it out to a larger group that included teachers and district members from across the State of Nevada to make sure that they worked with content area experts and language development experts on each of the subject areas. That was a large group of people who did that work just to create the English language development framework. They're two different things but the two areas are working together to try to meet the same goal, which is to meet the needs of our English language learners across the State of Nevada.

Mr. Wilson clarified that it was the English Mastery Council that recommended to the State Board that an English language development standards framework be developed by the Nevada Department of Education. When the English Mastery Council made that recommendation, the State Board accepted the recommendation and it has actually been staff at the Nevada Department of Education under the leadership of Dr. Masewicz that has been developing the English language development framework. He stated that the partnership that Madam Chair spoke of from the English Mastery Council, was kind of in an advisory role and at times, in a very deep participatory role in the development of the framework. It has really been under the charge of the Nevada Department of Education and they provide regular updates to the English Mastery Council on the progress of that initiative and they've been very grateful to members of the English Mastery Council who provided the advisory role and those who also were in a participant role in the development of that work.

Mr. Wilson stated that the partnership with WestEd really is one that they've focused on most recently where their resources are helping them in the development of a roadmap, in terms of developing a plan for communication and implementation. He stated that to roll the framework out to all teachers in the State over the next three years, that they would have the capacity to look at how they design instruction in ways that account for content standards and language standards as they design their daily instructions.

Chair Cervantes thanked Mr. Wilson for the clarification and added that he's correct, it is the staff at Nevada Department of Education who have really led this work at the direction of the English Mastery Council.

Dr. Haysbert noted that there seems to be some things that are being developed that could address the needs of these learners. If information about standard English learners was made more pronounced, she would think that there's not much awareness about the needs of these learners who are coming with these second language needs, who grew up in our country. She's not certain that people are aware that there are needs that these learners have that are similar to the needs of other language learners.

Dr. Haysbert stated that an awareness of this knowledge and how it can interface with what teachers are to be aware of and that kind of thing, probably needs to be thought through and be brought into the discussion of the framework or some of these things that are going on right now. This research, the awareness that it exists should be infused into this. There's a language out there among these learners that could use the same strategy, and students could benefit from the same strategy, techniques, etc., by giving them this awareness.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Dr. Haysbert stated she certainly sees that as a part of what could happen to strengthen the focus that is taking place, that is already being done. She stated that it sounds like what they're doing is certainly going to be very helpful and this would be a way of strengthening the focus of the work to make sure that they're addressing the needs of those learners as well and then teachers and administrators and whomever else, become much more intentional about the direction that they take when they're doing their lesson plans and thinking now about this group of people over here that they didn't even know about before. She suggested having a very strong affective focus in this work and said when they talk about people valuing the language, that's really critical, especially African-American language. She said having some opportunity making sure that there is an acceptance and appreciation of the language that the students learn, a strong affective piece needs to be brought into the mix. She's not sure how they would measure whether people are appreciating the language or not but believes there's got to be some way of knowing that out there already. She said they would also need to know whether it's really happening. If it isn't, then students are not going to participate to their max, and if the affective is not right, they're not going to participate.

Mr. Wilson stated that based on some of the suggestions this morning, as he thinks about the great work of the English language development framework and the roll out, it gives him pause to think about the comment that Dr. Haysbert shared around the strong affective focus in the work and trying to think about as they design the instruction for educators, how do they ensure that there is the conversation around respecting language and culture as teachers look to build student proficiency, not just in content but in language. He said it's an intriguing thought, and he's not sure where to go with that but appreciates those reminders of the importance of whatever they design that they are impacting people and what they hold in their value structure as important to them, that they need to honor.

The Chair agreed with Mr. Wilson and stated that as they were reviewing the research today as a fact that almost all of the research that was cited talked about the links between what can be effective for non-standard English learners and English language learners. The more they can just make that point stronger in the work that they're doing, it will be important.

Dr. Haysbert stated it made her think about the fact that the whole first unit that's taught to the teachers within the English Mastery Plan for the Clark County School District is around asset orientation. That is such a key piece of the work they do is thinking about, no matter who the kids are or where they come from, they all come with background knowledge and strengths that they could share with the class and bring as a part of the learning.

Chair Cervantes stated it's important that they continue to stress that point with their teachers, administrators and trainers as they're doing this work is to really think about, what are the strengths and the assets that their learners are bringing to the work that they do every day. The Chair stated she could be wrong, but what they have as their next steps are really for some recommendations coming forward and to see the presentations that are being brought at their next meeting and then keep the recommendations that were brought today at the forefront of their thinking as they hear those presentations and then really, think about are there other next steps they should add to that and bring back as recommendations to the full English Mastery Council or add to the work being done by either districts or the state department in the roll out of their work.

Dr. Haysbert confirmed that this made sense to her.

Mr. Wilson agreed that it made sense and added that from a perspective of continuous improvement and trying to build systems that are going to be enduring and have an impact. He suggested that as they prepare for their next meeting that they might also try to dig deeper into identifying root causes. They've talked a little bit about some approaches that they see around the country, or internationally around helping students in the bottom quartile achieve success.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Mr. Wilson stated that as they develop specific recommendations for the Full EMC that would go forward to the State Board, if they can connect proposed recommendations and strategies that very specifically address root causes, they will build stronger recommendations.

Chair Cervantes thanked Mr. Wilson for that recommendation and added there's a strategy that they might consider called the 5Y Strategy as they're trying to determine those root causes. You think about the first root cause you think it is and then you say, okay but why is that the strategy and keep kind of building down until you've asked that same question five times and then that really helps us get to the true root cause of the matter. They could not necessarily have to use that but really think about those root causes and why are they seeing what they're seeing in our schools is important as well. She said those were great recommendations.

Chair Cervantes stated they have reviewed some current research and resources regarding the lowest performing students and set some steps for our next meeting moving forward. She asked for other discussion around the next steps moving forward.

Dr. Haysbert asked shouldn't a teacher expectation and student achievement be discussed or is a part of any of the Council's work.

Mr. Hume stated that the recommendation that came forward last spring from AB 92 was a general recommendation about English proficiency and academic achievement of the students who are in the lowest quartile. The recommendation didn't state those words that were just suggested, but others could chime in as to whether those thoughts would be incorporated into that or not, but the specific recommendation was more general than that.

Mr. Wilson asked Dr. Masewicz to share her thoughts about educator expectations and how that impacts the design of instruction and how they serve students and how it impacts their learning.

Dr. Masewicz thanked Mr. Wilson for the question and stated she had addressed the whole issue around race and culture in terms of equity in terms of root causes. They can certainly push out effective practices, research best approaches, but connecting to the expectations, without some dive into race and culture in terms of equity, the role that race plays within the context of expectation. She said this is a subject matter that the Equity Group is really looking at this particular issue and developing a Request for Proposal around the training, in terms of these standards for equity. The issue is more than just professional development. It is around perceptions, attitudes, biases, that when you think about root causes, they will have to do a little bit of work there.

Dr. Haysbert thanked Dr. Masewicz and said one of the things that they know is there's volumes of research out there that shows the lack of teacher's expectation and that they have a lot to do with student achievement. A lot of teachers are not aware of the level of expectation that they have for their students. They don't know how they are differentiating in behaviors that's being directed towards their learners. One strategy with teacher expectations and student achievement is a training module that was used and it still exists although probably different now. It's an opportunity for teachers to be trained in becoming aware of how they're treating their students and what their expectations are for those learners and how does that show up in what they do and how they operate with their students. Since that is very important and can have an impact on student learning, that would certainly be something at the forefront for discussing and making recommendations around. She stated that the research shows that if teachers are made aware of that and then given a tool to use to become aware of their behaviors and then to change their behaviors, that would take us a long way. The content is important, but if you don't have that affect right, it doesn't matter how much content skills you have. If you're not treating that learner right, they know it and they're going to respond to it. Their learning is impacted based on the teacher's attitude and sometimes the teachers are not aware of what they're sending to their learners and what their learners are receiving. It happens at the very lowest level all the way up.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Dr. Haysbert asked the committee to concentrate on looking at that and she would follow up on teacher's expectations, which is called TESA for Teacher Expectation and Student Achievement Process, which could be a part of professional development for teachers.

Chair Cervantes thanked Dr. Haysbert for the recommendation and added that in the Clark County School District, every teacher, administrator and support staff member is actually attending equity and diversity training by the National Equity Project. It's high-quality teaching and it's around this work. She thinks the need for that work to be done statewide is definitely apparent and it could be one of the recommendations they give: that districts really consider equity and diversity and teacher expectations as part of their work in creating their policies and rolling out their professional development for their schools. It's a recommendation they could give; however, it is the State Department of Education who would have to direct and lead that work for the State.

Chair Cervantes further added that Dr. Haysbert had connected in her mind some of the work right around language development which is called the affective filter. They understand in some of the work from Steven Krashinsky [phonetic] that if a student is in a highly stressful situation or is in a situation where they do not feel comfortable to learn, they will not learn very well. If they are in a very comfortable setting, the students will learn at a much higher level. They know that there's a very lot of research around that work, so it definitely should be a part of the work they do going forward.

Chair Cervantes stated that she appreciated the discussion and the recommendations that have been set forth. She asked if there was additional comments or questions from the committee members. There was not.

Mr. Wilson stated as they contemplate the agenda for their next meeting and think about root causes, one of the things that might surface is that educators don't currently have the knowledge or the capacity to design instruction in such a way that they really address language as well as content. Something like that might surface as a root cause. Another is that educator expectation might be a root cause and that there may need for some recommendations around that. He stated that as they think about the agenda for June and Dr. Haysbert's offer to share some research and information around teacher expectation, in addition to the conversation around the Clark County School District EL Master Plan and the information from Read By Grade 3, is that something that they would like to recommend be on the agenda for next time.

The Chair thanked Mr. Wilson for the recommendation and agreed that would be excellent. She asked Dr. Haysbert if she was willing to share that research that she could give a synopsis of that research at their next meeting. Dr. Haysbert agreed.

The Chair asked if it would be too much on the agenda to have two presentations plus the research or would it be better to have the presentation from Mr. Ruiz on the CCSD English Language Mastery Plan and then have Dr. Haysbert present the teacher expectation research and then move to the 3x3 presentation to their next meeting. She asked if they felt the time would permit for them to have all three of those presentations or all three of those discussions at their next meeting. She added that she feels it's better to have fewer things on the agenda for wider discussion. She asked the members for their opinions.

Mr. Wilson stated that when they have this kind of meeting, the opportunity to talk through what it is that they learned from the presentations, what are the implications and so forth is more important than having an agenda that's full, where they would actually not have time to discuss issues and implications. He trusts the Chair's leadership on that but if he had a choice, it would be fewer items on the agenda with more discussion.

Dr. Haysbert stated that she prefers being able to have more time to discuss. She's interested in understanding how to connect with what they're already doing and strengthen those pieces that are already out there. She asked for information on Mr. Ruiz's work.

Discussion: Research and Resources Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Dr. Haysbert stated that she needs do research to see what's out there that could strengthen, connect, and bring some clarity to or infuse something into.

Chair Cervantes stated that the work of the English Mastery Plan itself can be found on the CCSD.net website. It is under the English Language Learner Department. The whole plan has been turned into the State Department of Education. The Chair asked if either Dr. Masewicz or Mr. Hume could send her a copy. Mr. Hume stated he would forward to her what he just received.

Dr. Masewicz stated that the plan is roughly 400 pages, including the opinions. However, this is kind of a top level overview. She confirmed that she would also send out the information. She further added, in terms of the ELD standards framework, they have an overview narrative that would give the overarching concepts around the ELD standards framework, the work that's going forward. They can also get that available to everyone.

Dr. Haysbert asked for the shorter version of the plan, not the 400-page plan. It was confirmed that Dr. Masewicz would forward that to Dr. Haysbert.

Chair Cervantes thanked Dr. Haysbert for asking for the document and apologized for not getting that to her sooner. She explained that sometimes when you've been involved in the work and have the history of the work, you know in your head what it is and where it is. She said when somebody's new to the group, you forget sometimes that they need to be able to build their background knowledge around that work to help them to better understand what has been happening. She agreed that strengthening the work that's happening is a big part of what they as a committee should be thinking about.

Chair Cervantes asked for any other comments or questions. There were none.

Public Comments #2

There were no public comments via email at that time.

Adjournment

Chair Cervantes thanked everyone and adjourned the meeting at 10:40 AM.