

## English Mastery Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 18, 2021  
8:00 AM

### Call to Order; Roll Call; Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Lorna James-Cervantes called the meeting of the English Mastery Council to order at 8:03 AM on Thursday, March 18, 2021 via Lifesize videoconference.

Mindy Montoya conducted roll call. **Quorum was established** (six members present).

#### Committee Members Present:

Bettye Haysbert  
Lorna James-Cervantes  
Laurel Crossman  
Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola  
Karl Wilson (Jonathan Moore's designee)  
Paula Zona

#### Committee Members Absent:

Nancy Brune  
Diana Cantu  
Antoinette Cavanaugh  
Gladis Diaz  
Jonathan Moore

#### Others Present:

Blakely Hume  
Sophia Masewicz  
Mindy Montoya

Chair Cervantes led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Public Comments #1

Mindy Montoya stated there were no public comments via email at the time.

### Approval of Flexible Agenda

**Motion:** Approve Flexible Agenda

**By:** Laurel Crossman

**Second:** Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola

**Vote:** Passed unanimously

### Approval of January 21, 2020 Minutes

**Motion:** Approve January 21, 2020 EMC Meeting Minutes

**By:** Laurel Crossman

**Second:** Paula Zona

**Vote:** Passed unanimously

## **ELAD Proposal Updates by the Office of Educational Licensure**

Chair Cervantes explained that one of the first actions taken by the EMC was to review the TESL Endorsement for Teacher Licensure for teachers of English-as-a-second-language students. That endorsement was changed to the ELAD endorsement.

Mr. Karl Wilson informed the Council that the ELAD endorsement, as redefined for Nevada, is in place in terms of administrative code. The question for today's meeting is the proposal from the EMC regarding the requirement that Nevada's institutions of higher education include the ELAD endorsement for all future Nevada-trained education. The proposal was approved by the State Board of Education a few years prior, but the process needed to be completed through a regulatory process. Mr. Wilson explained that a public workshop was already held regarding the regulatory process with the Commission on Professional Standards, and a public hearing related to the proposed regulation is upcoming with the Commissioner of Professional Standards.

Mr. Michael Arakawa, EDLiFE, informed the Council that there are three affected regulations contained with LCB Document R026-20. Mr. Arakawa informed the Council that there are other regulations for amendment within that document that are not being reviewed by the EMC and explained that LCB has been combining multiple regulations into one document. Mr. Arakawa explained that after the document was drafted, he had a conversation with the LCB drafter to ensure that the language met the intent behind the regulations and is confident following that conversation that the verbiage does meet the intent.

Mr. Arakawa shared the document with the Council via screen-share. Mr. Arakawa first focused on Section 2 of the document, which amends NAC 391.237 and sets the dates for providers to implement the ELAD coursework within educator-preparation programs. This section further makes provision for an individual who either completed the program in Nevada prior to the implementation date or is coming from another state to be able to independently do the ELAD coursework and obtain an endorsement. Mr. Arakawa discussed Sub-paragraph 5, indicating that a person enrolled in a program for preparation, whether it be the Alternative Road to Licensure program or a traditional course of study, may still receive the ELAD endorsement with A and B setting out the implementation dates for these courses to be embedded within the coursework. Mr. Arakawa explained the language in 5, indicating that even if a person's role in a program does not offer the coursework, they may still receive the ELAD endorsement by completing the coursework on their own. Mr. Arakawa next discussed Section 4, which amends NAC 391.461. The amendment requires any ARL department-approved provider within the state to include the ELAD coursework within their courses of study and training. Section 5 indicates the same change for NAC 391.557, requiring traditional institutions to include the ELAD coursework within their courses of study and training. Mr. Arakawa explained to the Council that once the regulation is adopted and approved by the State Board and the Legislative Commission, institutions will have one year from the date of final approval to implement the changes, likely July of 2022. Mr. Arakawa indicated that most of the institutions likely affected are already either implementing these changes or in the process of this implementation.

Mr. Jeff Briske, EDLiFE, indicated that some public comments have already been submitted from NSHE institutions with concerns about implementation of this regulation, specifically the way the regulation is currently written in that to include the ELAD coursework in the preparation programs will actually penalize the traditional programs as opposed to the ARL programs. Mr. Briske explained the implantation of the ELAD coursework in both programs: ARL programs would incorporate the content of the ELAD endorsement throughout their program in different areas in the form of modules; traditional programs will implement this regulation as four separate three-credit courses, thus adding an entire additional semester to the prep program, which would in turn increase costs for students. Mr. Briske indicated that he has a possible solution in mind and would like the Council's input prior to the next meeting of the Commission on Professional Standards, currently scheduled for March 31.

Mr. Briske suggested giving institutions the option to either provide traditional three-credit courses or to incorporate the coursework throughout the program itself, which is common practice for several ARL programs already. Mr. Briske further discussed the language of the regulation and the updates he made to include either the word integrate or incorporate without limitation the content of an ELAD endorsement for both the ARL and traditional programs. Mr. Briske clarified that his proposal does not change the content of the courses but rather the option for the delivery method of that content.

### **ELAD Proposal Updates by the Office of Educational Licensure (continued)**

Dr. Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola asked how to monitor incorporation as well as for explanation of the plan for ensuring that the seat hours for each of the content areas will actually be provided within an embedded focus.

Mr. Jeff Briske indicated that the state would be monitoring through the state program approval process. Groups will be formed to look at the coursework for each program and experts will be consulted in going through the state approval process. Mr. Briske further shared with the Council that there is a program approval regulation coming through the process and once the new regulation comes through, the state approval process will begin again. That regulation, Mr. Briske explained, allows institutions to bypass the state approval process if they are already accredited by another body. Mr. Briske further explained that the state can additionally require to have the accrediting bodies look for specific items such as the ELAD content to ensure that students are receiving the necessary coursework throughout the program or as a separate course.

Dr. Sharolyn Durodola asked about the process that will be used to determine that students have actually internalized the knowledge related to the ELAD coursework and are able to apply it in the field. Dr. Durodola further questioned what plans the state has in place for evaluating the effectiveness of this integrated approach.

Mr. Jeff Briske indicated that there is not yet a plan in place regarding gauging student outcomes with the exception of the competency exams required for licensure. Mr. Briske indicated that ETS can be looked at to see what options are in place for this type of knowledge. Mr. Briske also indicated that institutions can be worked with to see what content is being taught outside of what's included in this regulation to see what's expected of students, which can then be studied on the backend of student outcomes as well as for licensure. Mr. Briske further indicated that he is unsure of what control the state could have over quality of instructors and that the issue was more under the jurisdictions of the institutions themselves than under the state.

Dr. Sharolyn Durodola commented that when discussing evaluation, the issue is less about factual knowledge than it is about the application of theory into practice in the field. Dr. Durodola indicated that in theory, this is all feasible, but fears that the reality will be a watered-down approach to providing the content to the pre-service teacher and wondered about the final outcome in terms of the pre service teachers' practice.

Chair Cervantes concurred with Dr. Durodola's concerns and opined that the language in the revision is actually a move backward rather than forward for the state with regard to the expectations on teachers for licensure. Chair Cervantes further commented that she can understand there being a difference between ARL and the traditional route to licensure and expressed concern regarding providing an equal set of expectations among the two routes, opining that more should be expected of teachers following the traditional route rather than the alternate route. Chair Cervantes reiterated Dr. Durodola's concern of educators understanding the actual application components of the coursework in a school setting. Dr. Cervantes asked Director Briske about his expectations of the presentation made to the EMC, clarifying as to whether it was to receive feedback or approval from the Council.

Mr. Jeff Briske indicated that the main purpose of coming to the Council was to gauge the overall support for the ELAD proposal prior to the COPS meeting scheduled for March 31. Mr. Briske further indicated that his hope was that working with the EMC on this proposal might make it more feasible in order to help additional stakeholders feel competent in supporting the proposal through the public hearing at COPS.

Dr. Sharolyn Durodola indicated to the Council that she does not see an integrated approach as making a difference in terms of instruction and indicated her concern that the goal will not be realized. Dr. Durodola indicated that if this is something that is integrated but doesn't really bring about a change in practice and teachers are merely given a certificate showing accomplishment of the courses, it will make no difference whatsoever in the field of education.

Ms. Laurel Crossman discussed staffing concerns and teacher shortages and expressed concern with the difficulty of hiring qualified staff now, even without the additional training required by this endorsement.

Ms. Paula Zona asked Mr. Briske to clarify the number of additional credits needed for students to graduate with the ELAD endorsement.

### **ELAD Proposal Updates by the Office of Educational Licensure (continued)**

Mr. Jeff Briske indicated that the ELAD endorsement will require an additional four courses, or 12 credits, added to the entire baccalaureate for graduation. Mr. Briske further indicated that the regulation mandates that institutions offer the coursework but is not mandating the coursework for licensure. Mr. Briske further clarified that it is not a license requirement but a program requirement for the programs that the state approves.

Ms. Paula Zona asked for clarification regarding the integration process: would the ELAD courses be incorporated into already existing courses or would the four courses be combined to make it abbreviated?

Mr. Jeff Briske indicated that this decision would be made at the institution level.

Chair Cervantes indicated that integrating some of the methods into other methods might be a more understandable part of the work and that trying to gain ELL endorsement in licensing is a big piece of what Nevada needs to be seeing. Chair Cervantes reiterated Ms. Crossman's concern with finding adequate teachers each year and coming up short and discussed the need to strike the balance between qualified teachers and indicated that teachers coming out of college should be well-qualified teachers. Chair Cervantes further indicated that the concerns being raised now are not new concerns; they are the same concerns that were shared when the ELAD endorsement was first proposed, yet the institutions seem to be finding a way to integrate the coursework into the curriculum, thus prompting the question why the change now.

Dr. Sharolyn Durodola explained that every NSHE institution is different. Dr. Durodola opined that the bigger concern contextually would be at the high-school level because students studying to be high-school teachers spend a great deal of time on not just methodology and theoretical framework, but on content knowledge, thus making it more challenging to incorporate additional coursework. Dr. Durodola explained that this is what fueled the establishment of two stages for moving institutions to incorporating the information: elementary education was a little bit easier because some of the courses already exist in the program of practice; secondary education is more challenging because of the specialties teachers are studying.

Dr. Bettye Haysbert suggested that perhaps the certification for ELL instruction should be a broader approach to teaching, specifically because research said that by 2020, the previous year, 60 percent of learners would not be native English speakers.

Dr. Sharolyn Durodola opined that what is not understood is that in a TESL program, when teaching methodology or assessment, these are being taught through the content area.

Mr. Karl Wilson thanked Mr. Briske and Mr. Arakawa for their time and explained to the Council that it was important to those speakers that the voice of the EMC be represented at the upcoming COPS meeting, thus the proposal for the discussion that took place today.

Chair Cervantes suggested that when the time comes for workgroups, it might be appropriate for the TESL workgroup to draft the position of the Council based on the conversation that took place, then bring it to the Council for approval prior to sending the recommendation to Mr. Beske and Mr. Arakawa to take to the COPS meeting. The members of the Council concurred.

### **Principal Presentation and Panel Discussion**

Chair Cervantes introduced the following two Clark County School District principals to the council who are “beating the odds” and succeeding with their African American populations. The two principals were asked to each present showing how their school demonstrates leadership, a successful school climate, the success of their students, educator preparation, and school expectations and educator preparedness. Chair Cervantes stated there will be a question and answer session for the whole council after their presentations.

- Lynn Walker, Principal, Judith D. Steele Elementary School
- Christina Miani, Principal, Helen Jydstrup Elementary School

## Principal Presentation and Panel Discussion (continued)

Chair Cervantes introduced the two principal guest speakers. Chair Cervantes reminded the Council of the guest speakers from a previous meeting, who shared many of the successes within their schools, but indicated that the majority of their students were English Language Learners but only a minority of students were African-American. Chair Cervantes informed the Council that today's principals, Ms. Miani and Ms. Walker, are finding success in working with their African-American students and their students in the lowest 25th percentile at a percentage higher than the district or the state.

Principal Lynn Walker, Steele Elementary School, indicated that Steele Elementary is one of the most diverse schools in both the State of Nevada and the country as a whole. Ms. Walker indicated that the mission statement and core belief of the school is that every child that comes to Steele Elementary is better off for having spent a year there and that all children who attend will grow while there. Ms. Walker indicated that no action is taken in her school unless there is a reason for doing so. Historical practice is not enough; the why should be data-driven, should match the core belief statement, and should be sustainable. Ms. Walker discussed how the school had increased its English proficiency rate from 2017 to 2018 but that the school's star rating had dropped by 12 points because despite the move to proficiency, students were not on track to make growth targets. For this reason, the school began to focus on changing practices to ensure that all students, not just the bottom ten percent or RTI students, were successful. Ms. Walker explained that especially for the African-American population in the school, the achievement gap exists across the entire range so it was important for the school to close the gap across the spectrum and not just for the lowest performing students. Ms. Walker presented the growth data and explained how the school focused on building relationships with children and implemented school-wide individual goal setting for each child, no matter their percentile. Ms. Walker indicated that there is no top; each child will continue to grow. Ms. Walker indicated that following the implementation of that system, the school is consistently above district and state averages by 30 percent.

Ms. Walker discussed that oftentimes pull out is the solution for closing the achievement gaps, but pulling out students from the high-quality, tier-1 instruction does not give those students access to the grade-level standards, thus making it impossible to close the gap. Ms. Walker further indicated that a global issue with RTI is that oftentimes the lowest qualified personnel are delivering instruction to students of highest need. Ms. Walker indicated that the instructional model focused on in her school was having the high-quality, standards-based instruction, giving every child access to tier 1, and making sure that for RTI, the intervention matches the deficit. Ms. Walker further discussed the importance of school-wide professional development. Ms. Walker explained that the master schedule for acceleration and remediation programs are often done before and after school, creating an equity issue for students unable to attend outside of school hours. For that reason, Ms. Walker explained, her school provides that during the school day to eliminate barriers. Ms. Walker explained to the Council that throughout the course of distance learning, use of some of the tech tools provided more capacity to go forward with matching student deficits with expert teachers for more targeted and precise instruction. Ms. Walker concluded her presentation by explaining that nothing done in her school is tied to Title I allocation, Read by 3, or ASF because money cannot always be depended upon and may not always be the solution.

Principal Christina Miani, Jydstrup Elementary School, indicated that her school has achieved four-star status, is a tier-1 and Title I school, fully funded, 100-percent free-and-reduced lunch. Ms. Miani discussed the three principles that, in her opinion, ensure African-American student success. The first principle is the mindset of students and staff. Ms. Miani reiterated Ms. Walker's statement that all students can learn and learn at high levels, and Jydstrup Elementary ascribes to meeting this goal by ensuring that classrooms are student-centered rather than educator-centered. Student-centered learning involves valuing student contributions as well as creating a community of learners, consisting of both student and staff, who support one another. This collaborative classroom, Ms. Miani explained, helps students to feel successful, to feel that they are in a safe learning environment, and allows for high levels of discourse. Ms. Miani discussed that over 23 spoken languages exist in her school, so although students come from different language backgrounds, they may still be language-impooverished because they lack academic language, thus necessitating the support of high levels of discourse for academic language.

### **Principal Presentation and Panel Discussion (continued)**

Ms. Miani discussed tier-1 reading instruction and Jydstrup's commitment to grounding itself in the standards. Jydstrup utilizes programs and professional learning communities where teachers come together to look at the standards and map out their standards for the year as well as gauge which standards can be clustered together, would work to support one another, and can be taught in conjunction with the RLs and the RI standards. Ms. Miani indicated that teachers are fluid with their plans because they come together to build common grade-level assessments for instruction for the standards. Ms. Miani indicated that it is powerful for students that teachers have created daily and weekly formative assessments to monitor where support may be needed with current learning of standards. Ms. Miani indicated that when students do not demonstrate mastery, those students continue to receive instruction to ensure mastery of the standards. Ms. Miani indicated that it is important for students to be engaged during tier 1 in rigorous and relevant reading material to which they can relate. For this reason, Jydstrup has a robust literacy lab to meet the needs of all students and to motivate them with readying. Ms. Miani emphasized the importance of small-group instruction for vocabulary and comprehension and for talking about and discussing text.

Ms. Miani explained the importance of student goal setting, a principle in which the students are in charge of their own understanding of their current skill level and their expected future skill level. Ms. Miani discussed the student goal-setting form the school developed years ago and how it has evolved to work with maps instruction, and maps growth. Ms. Miani explained the usefulness of being able to sit down with students after each testing cycle and have them assess their own skill level so that teachers can better support them on their path to success. Ms. Miani informed the Council that for students still struggling with tier-1 instruction, the school offers tier-2 instruction which is more phonics-based, is personalized for individual students' needs, and has a heavy focus on writing.

Ms. Miani discussed the principle of collective teacher efficacy and the importance of teachers feeling that they can succeed in getting all students to learn as well as a supportive environment to help teachers who feel they may need it. Ms. Miani discussed the importance of job-embedded coaching and explained that Jydstrup has a Read by 3 coach, an instructional coach, and has required cycles of in-class coaching for teachers as part of the school's vision for continued professional development. Ms. Miani concluded her presentation with a discussion of RTI and MTSS structure and stressed the importance of teachers supporting one another when students aren't learning in tier 2 as well as providing students with behavioral supports.

Chair Cervantes thanked the speakers and asked them to describe specific things they've done to begin raising the achievement level of the African-American students in their schools.

Principal Christina Miani responded that working with the student having them self-reflect and self-monitor is important for achievement for all students. Ms. Miani indicated that she cannot speak to what teachers may do for one set of students but explained that the overall structure is what helps students to move forward academically.

Principal Lynn Walker reiterated Ms. Miani's remarks and added that in addition, the piece that worked best for Steele Elementary was to focus on access and ensure that everything was delivered during the school day rather than outside of the school day. Ms. Walker further indicated that the individual goal setting and students taking ownership is where the school began to see success.

Principal Christina Miani concurred with Ms. Walker's philosophy on offering all instruction during the school day rather than outside of school hours, indicating that transportation issues can complicate before and after school tutoring. For that reason, Jydstrup also offers all instruction during the school day.

Ms. Laurel Crossman asked Principal Christina Miani how weekly PLC meetings fit within the schedule.

Principal Christina Miani indicated that for PLC meetings, the grade levels choose the time that they will meet. Ms. Miani indicated that she allows teachers to choose the time that will work best for them and most teachers utilize their prep time for PLC meetings. Ms. Miani further indicated that she is present at all PLC meetings.

Chair Cervantes indicated that some schools in the district use a contract waiver for PLC meetings, which is an agreement of all teachers that they will use 40 minutes of one of their 50-minute prep times for PLC meetings.

### **Principal Presentation and Panel Discussion (continued)**

Chair Cervantes explained that having the principal present for PLC meetings has a big impact on the effectiveness because it helps to maintain the focus on student achievement and learning.

Ms. Paula Zona indicated her interest in seeing Principal Lynn Walker's master scheduling and requested a copy via email.

Chair Cervantes summed up the main points from the discussion with the principals for the Council: high expectations for students; student-centered decision making; relationship building; relativity of text being used to the students; having a collaborative culture; high levels of discourse; access during the school day for additional assistance for students; having PBIS or a behavior structure that is not exclusionary; and individual goal setting with students.

Dr. Bettye Haysbert commended the principals for their methodology of inclusion of African-American learners in their schools and explained that relationship is critical for these learners as they need to feel that they are seen, heard, and wanted. Dr. Haysbert further commended the principals for adjusting the school to the needs of the learners rather than trying to fit learners into a school environment that may not be the best fit for them. In addition, Dr. Haysbert commended the research-based methodology of putting the best teachers with the learners who need them most. Ms. Haysbert asked both principals about the opportunities African-American learners have to learn about their history and their culture in their schools.

Ms. Christina Miani indicated that Jydstrup is constantly updating the literacy lab and book room. The literacy coach constantly looks for books that student can relate to and can help students learn more about their cultural background.

Ms. Lynn Walker indicated that Steele also is strategic about the books in the library and making sure that students have access to books that celebrate the joy of their own culture. Ms. Walker further indicated that a spot of growth for Steele is to be more strategic about inclusion of different cultures' celebrations.

Dr. Bettye Haysbert recommended that the principals ask learners about their interests and allow them to pursue the areas of interest in their own cultures individually in subject-matter areas.

Principal Lynn Walker indicated that is a part of the goal sheet used in Steele.

Dr. Bettye Haysbert indicated that the Council will be looking for recommendations to put forth to the state for inclusion in a program to support African-American learners and asked the principals to share the points they felt were the most important to include in such a program.

Principal Lynn Walker indicated that the most important thing is building with relationships with the students and letting them know that they are loved, that they are believed in, and that they are supported in working toward improvement. Ms. Walker further indicated the necessity of on-grade-level, high-quality, tier-1 instruction and spoke against pulling students out of class for remediation. Ms. Walker also stressed the importance of goal setting so that students are taking ownership of their own learning.

Principal Christina Miani concurred with all of Ms. Walker's suggestions and added the importance of oral and written discourse, indicating that students write the way they talk and it is therefore critical that students have the necessary academic language to adequately express their knowledge and learning.

Chair Cervantes thanked the principals for their presentations, their time, and their dedication. Chair Cervantes further indicated her appreciation that the Council was able to hear from these principals as well as the ones at the last meeting, indicating her belief that these presentations have helped to see some of the overlap between schools that serve high EL populations and schools that serve high African-American populations.

## Work Group Breakout Discussion

Prior to breaking out in workgroups, Chair Cervantes asked for confirmation from Mr. Karl Wilson that it would be acceptable to wait until fall to review district policies.

Mr. Karl Wilson indicated that the statute mandates an annual review but does not specifically outline the timing of the review. Because of the year of COVID and the addressing of reopening of schools, Mr. Wilson explained, waiting until fall to review district policies would be acceptable.

The meeting recessed at 9:45 so EMC members could join their work groups. The meeting reconvened at 10:50 a.m.

## Share-out on EMC Work Group Updates

Chair Cervantes confirmed all members were present and asked the workgroups to discuss their work during the breakout sessions.

Chair Cervantes explained that she worked with Blakely Hume and Sophia Masewicz on crafting recommendations to the EDLiFE group regarding the ELAD endorsement. Chair Cervantes read the following statement into the record: The English Mastery Council created the endorsements requirements to ensure all students in Nevada receive a fair, equitable, and appropriate education. The endorsement requirement was written to ensure -- actually it should be requirements were written to ensure that all classroom teachers are prepared to meet the needs of English language learners who make up the largest and fastest growing student group in the state of Nevada. A change in the language of the regulation will result in watering down of teacher preparedness, expectations, and the continued product of teachers graduating Nevada institutions of higher education ill-prepared to meet all students' growing and fundamental needs. Although we can support ARL students' integrated support, we cannot support traditional students' integrated approach. The English Mastery Council will support moving forward with the language initially proposed by the EMC and presented to and approved by the State Board of Education on July 16th, 2019.

Ms. Laurel Crossman commended the good work done on the statement in the short amount of time given.

Mr. Karl Wilson commented that the statement provided a clear connection to the EMC's priority of ensuring equity and indicated that the statement was supportable.

Dr. Sharolyn Durodola indicated that the statement is appropriate and highlights the original intent of the ELAD endorsement.

Both Dr. Bettye Haysbert and Ms. Paula Zona indicated their support for the statement as written.

Ms. Laurel Crossman asked for an explanation of COPS and the division under which it falls.

Mr. Karl Wilson explained that COPS, an acronym for Commission on Professional Standards, is a statutorily established advisory group that provides recommendations to the State Board of Education regarding programs and licensing in terms of educator preparation. The group includes representatives from higher education, local school districts, from the community, and from teachers. Mr. Karl Wilson also recommended that the language should include the words integrated ELAD coursework content.

Chair Cervantes indicated her willingness to changing that language prior to voting on the statement.

Mr. Karl Wilson indicated that the approval in May of 2019 came not from the State Board of Education but from the Commission on Professional Standards.

**Motion:** Approve the EMC's Statement Regarding ELAD Endorsement with Confirmation of the Correct Date and Location of Approval

**By:** Laurel Crossman

**Second:** Paula Zona

**Vote:** Passed unanimously



## **Nevada Department of Education Update**

### **Share-out on EMC Work Group Updates (continued)**

#### **TESL Work Group:**

Chair Cervantes indicated that action has already been taken on the TESL subcommittee group in lieu of the group being present.

#### **District Policy and Criteria Planning Work Group:**

Laurel Crossman indicated that not much has changed in district policy. The group is continuing with the recommendation to meet the statutory review of the English Learner Policies and Plans and recommending that the group work with NDE to submit the feedback to the districts in the fall of 2021. The group will review their changes and adaptations in the spring of 2022.

#### **English Proficiency and Academic Achievement Work Group:**

Mr. Karl Wilson explained that the workgroup discussed the principal presentations given at today's meeting and then honed in on some of the attributes that align with the needs in the schools and the research around effective instruction and success for African-American students, including the importance of relationships, school, culture, high expectations, student-focused learning versus teacher focus, the importance of adjusting school schedules, and the values of student goals and choice. Mr. Wilson indicated that the principles regarding these subjects still need to be further developed before resulting in specific recommendations. Mr. Wilson further explained that the workgroup did a connection with the conversation around rapid turnaround of low-performing schools, the importance of leadership in school, the development of talent, a focus on strong instruction, and culture in schools. Mr. Wilson discussed Dr. Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola's suggestion of a small-scale study to gather specific data around African-American student learning experiences and literacy that would include interview and focus groups, that would require the formal study process. Mr. Wilson informed the Council that Dr. Durodola reflected on a similar study of which she's been a part that looks at student perceptions of their experiences in math. Mr. Wilson indicated that the conversation included the idea that for a study to be most beneficial, it should include student learning experiences and perceptions across elementary, middle, and high school. Mr. Wilson explained that in the development of the CCSD EL Master Plan, there was a process for following students and observing their experiences, interviewing students, parents, and teachers, and that the observations of student interactions and the interview provided valuable data that helped CCSD in the development of the specific strategies that were incorporated into their master plan for English Learners. Mr. Wilson explained that Chair Cervantes had indicated an existing initiative in CCSD and partner, UNLV, related to innovative middle schools that may provide opportunity to further that relationship and/or incorporate a study to look at student perceptions of learning experiences. Mr. Wilson indicated that the group does not yet have specific recommendations for the full EMC as there is still a need to dig deeper into these specific areas in order to generate recommendations. Mr. Wilson further indicated that the workgroup felt that there is enough information around what works for schools and students that recommendations could be developed as the possibility of the small-scale study addressing African-American student learning experiences in literacy suggested by Dr. Durodola is considered.

Dr. Bettye Haysbert added that it's important for educators to be aware of the kinds of approaches they take, their beliefs, their attitudes about learners, and the way these might impact planning in a way that will not allow for as much transformation in the recommendations as there could be. Dr. Haysbert informed the Council that it is important to be aware of the cultural things that operate within schools and the awareness of operating unconsciously with these practices in a way that may actually be working against the learners most in need of the best results. Dr. Haysbert indicated that this may stem from schools being built for white learners and the practices in which educators engage benefitting European-Americans more than African-Americans. Dr. Haysbert indicated that it is important to be aware of this so that when making recommendations, the African-American learners' needs can be addressed.

Chair Cervantes stressed the understanding that there is still much work to be done and indicated her hope that the English Proficiency and Academic Achievement workgroup will have recommendations by the next school year for the EMC to consider and present to other districts.

## **Nevada Department of Education Update (continued)**

Karl Wilson explained to the Council that one of the issues shared by the EMC to the State Board of Education was related to the perception that there is an over-representation of English learners identified as having disabilities. In response, NDOE's English Learner Department and the Office of Special Education have established an English Learner Special Education workgroup with a primary focus on development of resources for educators to more effectively distinguish factors related to English language acquisition versus disability. Mr. Wilson explained that this is partially to ensure the accurate identification of students who qualify as English learners and/or students with disabilities, as well as to provide those resources and training to local school districts. Mr. Wilson indicated that this workgroup will be facilitated by West Ed (phonetic) and is intended to remain in place for approximately 12 to 18 months.

Mr. Karl Wilson revisited the topic of AB195, the English Learner Bill of Rights, and indicated that it would be to the advantage of the EMC members to familiarize themselves with that bill. Mr. Wilson explained that the bill introduces nothing new but rather pulls together things that are already in place upon either federal education law or civil rights and helps to communicate to students, parents, and the education system the rights of English learners and their families. Mr. Wilson further informed the Council that there is a section related to specific reporting required of the districts relating to English learners and their participation in different programs and services.

Mr. Wilson next discussed the funding for Title III, which is the federal funding under the Every Student Succeeds Act for supporting English learners in Nevada. This funding has historically been tied to the count of English learners who were assessed the previous spring. Mr. Wilson raised two specific concerns with following this pattern going forward: some schools are still in distance-learning or hybrid mode, which presents a challenge to get in all English learners for the WIDA Assessment; the US Department of Education has extended the assessment window for the annual English Language Proficiency Assessment out to September 7. For these reasons, using spring data for the following year's funding will not work. For this reason, NDOE is looking at a new dataset which would tie to the October 1 validation day count of English learners from last fall, this year's count, to the number of English learners who were provisionally identified based on the home language survey. Mr. Wilson explained that this is in harmony with the guidance from US DOE, which indicates that the count for funding next year should include all English learners: those already identified and those provisionally identified.

Ms. Laurel Crossman asked if the fact that public school enrollment had decreased significantly during 2020 had been considered in this guidance, citing the concern that there could be a significant increase in the 2021-22 school year as the students who had not enrolled in the past year due to the pandemic could return.

Mr. Karl Wilson indicated that this point has been considered and that are options are continuing to be studied. This option that he explained to the Council regarding the plan for the count is the one that is currently on the table.

Ms. Laurel Crossman suggested thinking on solutions for adjustment of funding if the percentage of ELs in the fall of 2021 exceeds the percentage from the previous year.

Mr. Karl Wilson indicated that flexibility is important as well as consistency so it is important to think through the potential impacts flexibilities may offer, such as putting some districts at an advantage while putting other ones at a disadvantage. Mr. Wilson indicated that information will be provided to school districts within the coming weeks to allow them to look at preliminary allocations for next year. The federal preliminary allocation for Nevada is approximately \$7.3 million for Title III purposes for the 2021-22 school year. Mr. Wilson further indicated that the amount of funding received under the Every Student Succeeds Act for Title III is approximately only 1/7th of the total funding available in Nevada, largely because of the Zoom program, which has historically provided \$50 million to support English learners in the state.

Mr. Karl Wilson indicated that under the English Language Development Standards Framework Implementation, webinars will be presented this spring that are targeted to specific content areas such as English language arts, science, math, and social studies. These webinars look at how teachers can design and deliver instruction in ways

### **Nevada Department of Education Update (continued)**

that provide greater access to content and academic language using the resources in the ELD Standards Framework.

Mr. Karl Wilson reminded the Council of the additional funding received in the past year under CARES, CRRSA, and ARPA. ARPA will provide millions of dollars above the first two, part of which is to be used to address learning loss. Mr. Wilson indicated that NDOE will provide additional support to LEAs as they identify and support students who may have been negatively impacted as a result of COVID-19, school closures, and lost opportunities.

### **Public Comments #2**

Mindy Montoya stated there were no public comments via email at the time.

### **Adjournment**

Chair Cervantes adjourned the meeting at 11:50 AM.