

English Mastery Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, June 25, 2020
1:00 PM

Call to Order; Roll Call; Pledge of Allegiance

Dr. Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola called the meeting of the English Mastery Council to order at 1:00 PM on Thursday, June 25, 2020 via Lifesize videoconference.

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

Committee Members Present:

Diane Barone
Diana Cantu
Lorna James-Cervantes
Laurel Crossman
Gladis Diaz
Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola
Bettye Haysbert
Karl Wilson (Jonathan Moore’s designee)
Paula Zona

Committee Members Absent:

Nancy Brune
Antoinette Cavanaugh
Jonathan Moore

Others Present:

Blakely Hume
Sophia Masewicz
Mindy Montoya

Blakely Hume 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: Diane Barone
Second: Diana Cantu
Vote: Passed unanimously

Approval of May 14, 2020 Minutes

Diana Cantu stated that she would like to make a correction to page 9, paragraph 7, to state that she would like to “focus on the underrepresentation of ELLs” instead of the “overrepresentation.”

Motion: Approve May 14, 2020 Minutes with edits from Diana Cantu
By: Diana Cantu
Second: Diane Barone
Vote: Passed unanimously

Chair Durodola stated that before they move to the next agenda item, she wanted to have a brief check-in with the members to see how they are doing and hear their thoughts on what they are experiencing in light of the protests that have taken place around the death of George Floyd. She said from the conversations she's been in, most people want to do more and are trying to figure out how to address some systemic issues that have impacted all of their social institutions, including education.

Bettye Haysbert shared that she is doing better than she has been and is likely about to address the issue that has plaguing them since its inception. She said she is feeling a little hopeful and better and thanked Chair Durodola for the opportunity to express that.

Chair Durodola shared that she's done a lot of reflecting and reminded the members they are all in unique positions where their voices are important and can be heard. She said in reading about previous civil rights leaders, the message that is always conveyed is while they look to leaders for direction, they each are leaders who can envision change and engage in conversations that can shift the needle in a more positive direction. She said she is writing about the impact to a nation if they don't teach social studies. She asked if anyone else wanted to share.

Diana Cantu shared that as a first grade teacher, her school integrates social justice throughout the year and teaches their first graders about black inventors as well as the freedom box that dealt with slavery. She said she was surprised to learn that a lot of their African-American students did not know about slavery. She said they start teaching the students at the level that she is at and hopes they can build better systems in the future. She thanked Dr. Durodola for letting her share.

Chair Durodola stated she's working with another colleague on looking at the early childhood years and socialization practices. She said it's great to recommend children's literature that parents can use that focus on different topics and encourage parents to take a look at the behaviors of a model.

Chair Durodola said that she knows everyone is busy and some could not reply to her email, but she wanted them to know she was thinking of them during this time and give them an opportunity to check-in.

Lorna James-Cervantes said she wanted to share a book she read recently called, "Our Kids," because it brought to light some of the work that they have been doing.

Karl Wilson shared the message from their Superintendent and Chairman of the Nevada Board of Education to the community that addressed the events that caused the death of George Floyd.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Wilson for sharing the message. She said it was thought-provoking and was glad to hear the message was sent out.

Blakely Hume shared that Dr. Diane Barone will be retiring from the NSHE system, so this will be her last meeting. He stated that Dr. Barone has been with the council for a few years and she will be missed.

Chair Durodola said ditto to Mr. Hume's statements. She said Dr. Barone has a careful eye and pays attention to things that some of them may not see, so they will miss that insight that she provided and they wish her the best in the retirement years.

Dr. Barone thanked the Chair and said she will miss all of them as well. She said she is still working in the state.

EDLiFE Update of the ELAD Endorsement

Mike Arakawa stated that he is with the Nevada Department of Education and will give a brief update of the ELAD implementation, which has two parts. He said the first part is to adopt the endorsement in lieu of the prior TESL endorsement, which was done in 2016 by the Commission on Professional Standards. As of last year, they have moved fully away from the old TESL model and are looking at using ELAD coursework moving forward. The second part of the implementation with ELAD was to invent the ELAD coursework for that endorsement into most of the educator preparation programs within the state, which includes all of the elementary, middle school and high school programs.

Mr. Arakawa stated that their recommendation was made before the State Board to invent the coursework as was discussed and the State Board agreed that this was an excellent idea and approved the recommendation. He said for whatever the reason, they did not go forward to enact the necessary regulation to give that a force of law, which they have been doing with a lot of help from Karl Wilson, Blakely Hume and their team. He thanked Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hume for their assistance.

Mr. Arakawa stated that in February an agency draft of the language enacting that as a regulation was heard at a public workshop for the Commission on Professional Standards and approved. He said it was sent to LCB for formal drafting prior to moving it to a public hearing. He said he just got the LCB draft and language back, and he is in the process of reviewing that to make sure that the intent is preserved and they didn't do anything that might cause any confusion in drafting or sometimes misconstruing the intent. He stated that he will be asking for the assistance of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Hume in reviewing the draft within the next couple of days.

Mr. Arakawa stated that once they establish that it is faithful to what was submitted to the LCB for drafting, they will be free to move it forward to a public hearing before COPS. He said he anticipates it will most likely happen in August or September, given the time constraints of public notices and the need to review. He said he was happy to entertain any questions they may have. Mr. Hume asked Mr. Arakawa to restate where it was going to be sent in August. Mr. Arakawa responded probably in August or September.

Chair Durodola stated that she's a professor at UNLV, and they still get emails from graduate students working on their degree who are asking about the TESL endorsement.

Mr. Arakawa stated that the guidance that they have given to institutions has been that anyone completing the TESL coursework prior to the end of May of last year is still eligible for a modified ELAD endorsement, and it would note that there was no practicum required for them to attain that endorsement.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Arakawa for the clarification. She asked if there were any other questions.

Ms. Cervantes asked about teacher recertification for those, such as herself, who already hold the TESL or bilingual endorsement on their license. Mr. Arakawa stated that Ms. Cervantes' license will be updated so the TESL will show up as ELAD endorsement with a notation that there was no practicum. Ms. Cervantes thanked Mr. Arakawa for the clarification.

Chair Durodola asked if there were any other questions and there were none. She thanked Mr. Arakawa for providing them with the information.

Identification of English Learners

Blakely Hume stated that he will be assisting CJ Fields with the presentation. He thanked Mr. Fields for attending and providing them with information and knowledge about this important topic. Mr. Fields thanked them for having him and said he appreciated the invite.

Mr. Fields stated he works for the Office of Inclusive Education at the Department of Education on issues related to students with significant disabilities as well as post-secondary transition. He said he has been doing work with Karl Wilson related to exit criteria for certain subpopulations of students with disabilities who are also English language learners. He said he will start out with an overview of the eligibility and determination process for their students with disabilities.

Mr. Fields said before starting his presentation, he wanted to wish Dr. Barone a very happy retirement. He said he had the honor and privilege of being one of Dr. Barone's students in her qualitative research courses, and she is a phenomenal teacher. He said he loved those courses, and he hopes she enjoys her retirement.

Dr. Barone thanked Mr. Fields and said it was fun to have him because that's a hard class for those who have never taken it.

Mr. Fields stated the topic of over and underrepresentation of students who are English language learners in Special Education is problematic from a national environment. He read the definition of learning disability from IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) from 2004 that governs Special Education. He said IDEA 2004 was the last re-authorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act. He said prior to 2004, the language was exclusively around a comparative with a discrepancy analysis in which eligibility and determinations were made based on a pronounced discrepancy between a student's intellectual functioning and their academic achievement in certain areas.

Mr. Fields said they will see in the statute for Special Education determinations around specific learning disabilities their response to intervention and comparative analysis still within their eligibility allowed processes. He said the reason they included both is related specifically to the language around IDEA. He said while IDEA included RTI, it did not eliminate specific language around discrepancy analysis.

Mr. Fields spoke on his slide presentation on Intervention, Evaluation and Determination: Pre-Referral Intervention (or RTI) (NAC 388.325). He said it is a provision of targeted, scientific, research-based intervention for pupils with academic or behavioral difficulty but are not suspected of having a disability. It is also a notice to parents concerning the right to request evaluation. He said at any point in an RTI process, a parent can request that a student be evaluated for their eligibility for Special Education services, and the public agency can refuse their request in writing if they do not suspect the pupil has a disability, which is rare. He said if the parent disagrees with the decision, they can request mediation to resolve the dispute using one of the four formalized dispute resolution processes.

Mr. Fields stated that if the public agency determines that academic difficulty or behavior of the pupil is resistant to the RTI process, or they determine that ongoing substantial effort that requires the provision of Special Education services is going to be needed by the student, the public agency is obligated to conduct an initial evaluation of the pupil to determine whether the pupil is eligible for Special Education services.

Mr. Fields spoke on NAC 388.635, the assessment of proficiency in English and primary language of pupils with disabilities. He said person administering the assessment shall cooperate with the multidisciplinary team to determine classification of the pupil. Once an LEA receives written consent from the parent, the LEA has 45 school days to assess the student and make a determination of eligibility under one of the disability categories they recognize in IDEA. In emergency circumstances such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, an LEA can request a 15-day extension.

Mr. Fields shared, "A parent's guide to Response to Intervention (RtI)" and spoke on Instructional Consultation, Assessment and Teaming (ICAT), which represents a way for schools to organize and deliver services to support students and teachers. He said their office pays for districts to participate in the ICAT program, which is a way for consultation teams to be formed. He said he is not an expert in the ICAT but can provide a brief overview.

Identification of English Learners (continued)

Mr. Fields said the ICAT program is a very systematic way to setup a targeted intervention program within the school. He said they hire contractors to come in and provide ongoing professional development and technical assistance to administrators from the participating school districts throughout the school year. He stated that Elko and Carson City school districts tried ICAT and decided they weren't ready for that type of systematic change. He said Washoe and Clark have setup their own RTI process since that is allowable by statute.

Mr. Wilson said it's his understanding that the ICAT process is not intended to provide case-by-case intervention or support, but it's more about systems change and providing support to districts in developing their own response intervention models and training. He asked if he was correct in his understanding.

Mr. Fields stated that once their ICAT teams are formed, they are trained in evidence-based intervention, particularly in reading. He said when he worked in Lyon County, all of the schools had IC facilitators, and a student who was struggling would have an IC plan developed and that team would work together to ensure those interventions were put in place for the student. He said it's a systematic way to approach those evidence-based interventions, but students are rolled into that process on a case-by-case basis.

Mr. Wilson asked if his understanding was correct in that each district would establish its own support team tools with its own individual student situations, and the state provides the training and support to develop the district processes. Mr. Fields stated that Mr. Wilson's understanding seemed right. Mr. Wilson thanked Mr. Fields for the clarification.

Mr. Fields spoke on the eligibility process and presented the Statement of Eligibility, Eligibility Team Report, Specific Learning Disabilities form. He said their multidisciplinary teams come together to assess, evaluate and make an eligibility determination based on the eligibility criteria established by the NAC. He spoke on the required members of the multidisciplinary teams based on NAC 388.420 and said those teams are not limited to those required members but must have the required members. He explained the MDT form, which stands for Multidisciplinary Team form and said they have the form for every disability category that they recognize in the NAC which parallels with the evaluated criteria from the NAC. He said they have legal consultants that look at everything to ensure that they are in compliance with IDEA and all federal laws.

Mr. Fields stated that their office believes that a robust pre-referral or RTI process is the best way to not only ensure that quality education practices are being used, it's made good determinations about students' achievement as it relates to the disability. He said their eligibility determination process is the most democratic process that exist within all of their processes and is a majority/minority vote based on criteria established by the NAC. He said their office does a lot of technical assistance and professional development, and they know there are good evidence-based practices for students who are English language learners within an RTI process.

Mr. Fields stated that he and Mr. Wilson have had preliminary discussions about the need to develop some professional development around the issue of under and overrepresentation. He asked if anyone had any questions and thanked the members for allowing him to come speak about their eligibility process.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Fields for reviewing the identification procedures and asked what the procedures are to prevent the overidentification of students at the state level. She said the issue is around awareness and understanding a child's language development might be misunderstood as a disability.

Mr. Fields stated their office has had discussions with directors of Special Education services across the state related to overrepresentation; however, he is not as privy to some of the specifics of ICAT. He said he and Mr. Wilson have had discussions about evidence-based practices, technical assistance and PD on that issue which is an opportunity for their offices to collaborate and move forward.

Identification of English Learners (continued)

Mr. Wilson stated they identified opportunities for building greater capacity in their English Language/Special Education work group. He said a good place to start is to establish a work group to look at the training and technical assistance issues to support a better understanding for classroom teachers around language development and disciplinary. He said another concern that came up is related to assessments themselves and ensuring that assessments are administered with minimize bias. He said he does not know how much work is going on in Special Education to ensure that the assessments administered do take into account individual student background, language, and culture.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Wilson and Mr. Fields for their update and said there's several places for conversations in building awareness, and one of them would be at the teacher level. She asked how they would begin to address the bilingual school psychologist shortage within the interdisciplinary teams.

Mr. Fields stated it's a process of providing professional development and technical assistance downward to districts and teachers to ensure members on those teams have the most current knowledge as it relates to best practices and processes for distinguishing between language challenges and disability.

Chair Durodola asked if there were other members who had questions.

Gladis Diaz stated one of the things that they are trying to screen for is when students come up for review by their team, they work really closely with their staff and teachers. She said if language is part of the discussion, it is brought upfront during their process. She said sometimes it's easy to get sidetracked by the data that's telling them the student isn't performing well. She said there is an education piece as far as ELs that needs to come to their teachers. She does not know if district-wide or state-wide there is that part of it, but sometimes they want to see the progress to be day and night. When it is a language, they have to give them the time to make that language growth. She agrees with Mr. Fields on the education piece where it needs to be for everyone to help their kids be better so there isn't an overrepresentation of students they're working with.

Mr. Fields said the only school psychology preparation program in Nevada is at UNLV, so they have a limited pool of individuals, and there's also a significant pay disparity between districts. He said that has been a part of their Special Ed Advisory Committee discussions.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Fields and said that is the current landscape. She said when the English Mastery Council provided an update to the Nevada State Board of Education, one of the members who is a school psychologist brought the issue up. She asked Mr. Wilson what decisions can be made to address this ongoing and complex issue.

Mr. Wilson stated that their team has not had conversations with their colleagues in the EDLiFE group around teacher licensure and teacher preparation concerning the shortage of bilingual psychologists. He said that could be a starting point in terms of incentives the state can make available that could specifically target universities or students willing to pursue education psychology with an added emphasis in bilingual psychology. He said in the last legislative session, there was a bill that steered specific scholarship funds to future educators that would commit to either the ELAD or a Special Ed endorsement.

Ms. Cervantes stated she thinks that's an excellent recommendation but asked that they consider looking for bilingual psychologists in multiple languages. She said prior to an English language learner being tested, they use an IPT test to gain an understanding of the student's language base. She said if they were stronger in their native language, they would recommend and refer them to a bilingual psychologist. If not, they would refer the student to their school psychologist who was an English language speaker. She asked if that was part of the process that she missed in the presentation or is that a step that is still being taken in Nevada.

Identification of English Learners (continued)

Mr. Fields stated to his knowledge, there's no specific assessment like Ms. Cervantes is talking about that is defined in statute. He said the districts have a lot of latitude in how they build those RTI processes, so what assessments and devices they can use are part of those RTI processes. He said his guess is that's probably a district decision to take that step.

Ms. Cervantes thanked Mr. Fields and stated that another recommendation the committee can consider is the idea of having districts review their RTI processes to see what steps they have in place to meet the specific needs of English language learners as work through the RTI process. She said if they are not using that type of a step to determine the strength of a student's language, that might be a step they can recommend as a possible best practice by schools or districts.

Chair Durodola thanked Ms. Cervantes for the excellent idea and wonders if there's a space where districts can reevaluate what the process looks like because that's part of a larger umbrella of instruction.

Mr. Wilson stated that his team will review the District EL Policy Plan to identify if there is a place where that should be outlined or is that a place where the EMC would recommend it be enhanced.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Wilson for the consideration and said she appreciates the discussion. She asked if there were any questions while Mr. Fields was still present and there were none. She thanked Mr. Fields for entertaining their questions and said she appreciates his effort to help them review the process.

Nevada Department of Education Update

Karl Wilson reminded the members of the decision made at the Nevada Department of Education regarding guidance to school districts and charter schools related to the timely identification of English learners based on the Home Language Survey. He said the completion of the survey provides an indication that an assessment is required to determine if the student qualifies as an English learner. He said the difficulty is the WIDA language screener has to be administered in person and that has been put on hold due to school closures. He explained the guidance to local education agencies suggested a provisional identification process, which allows the district or representative at the school to conduct an initial interview virtually or over the phone to determine whether the student might be an English learner. He said they are preparing an updated memorandum to their local directors to express they resume their contracts in the month of August.

Mr. Wilson stated the governor delivered a directive to allow schools to open up immediately as long as they had an approved reopening plan. He said as they develop a reopening plan, they could start to administer the WIDA language screener as appropriate. He said many school districts do not have a reopening plan in place and some schools may continue to do primarily distance learning and then phase into face-to-face learning which would continue to impact the ability to do the language screener. He said they acknowledge the situation and are trying to support districts and charter schools in that process.

Mr. Wilson stated the greatest concern at the local level is what will next year look like in terms of state budgets. He said the legislature and governor have called for a special session to find ways to address the state's budget shortages as they approach the new school year. He said their goal is to share with local school districts that information as soon as it is available.

Mr. Wilson said due to COVID-19, the assessment and accountability processes for the 2019-20 school year have been interrupted which will impact the state's ability to do school ratings with the NSPF along with many other factors. He said the governor's directives were supported by waivers from the U.S. Department of Education in that break in assessment and accountability. He said although there is an impact on SBAC and other assessments, the WIDA annual assessment of English language proficiency was administered in the spring and completed before school closures.

Nevada Department of Education Update (continued)

Mr. Wilson said under Assembly Bill 219 which passed in the 2019 session, there is a requirement for the Nevada Department of Education to annually look at the assessment results of English learner academic achievement and identify the schools that are in the lowest 30% to complete a corrective action plan. He said a guidance memo released a week ago, communicated to the public that because of the interruption in assessment and accountability, there will not be a new identification of new schools for AB 219 corrective action planning in the fall. He said the schools identified in the fall of 2019 based on the spring 2019 assessment will continue in their AB 219 corrective action plan designation for the 2020-21 school year.

Mr. Wilson stated another part to Assembly Bill 219 requires future district reports of accountability break out student results to further define English learner achievement. He said the law requires the Nevada Department of Education to establish three groups of English learners based on the amount of time they have been designated English learners: Newcomer English Learner, Short-term English Learner, and Long-term English Learner. He said in their state ESSA plan, English learners who have in the country for less than one year are assessed, but their results are not included for accountability purposes when it comes to English Language Arts and mathematics assessments. In the second year, they are again assessed, but their scores are not used in the proficiency determinations but are included for growth determinations. He said once an English learner has been in service for three years, then their achievement scores are included for all accountability purposes.

Mr. Wilson said they are proposing the following: Newcomer English Learner be defined as an English learner for less two years; a Short-term English Learner be defined as a student who has been an English learner for at least two years, but less than six years; and a Long-term English Learner as a pupil identified as an English learner for six years or more. He said that long-term English learner again aligns with what Nevada included in its State ESSA Plan and was approved by the U.S. Department of Education.

Mr. Wilson stated that they have been encouraged by their leadership at NDE to request feedback from the English Mastery Council around those definitions. He said that he would like to invite feedback from the English Mastery Council.

Lorna James-Cervantes stated she was not part of the group but remembers working on the state ESSA plan as they presented and discussed those definitions and fully agrees with them. She thinks the definitions should be aligned with the NAC and state ESSA plan.

Chair Durodola stated she would also agree, specifically on the definition for long-term as that is used nationally in policies. Mr. Wilson thanked Ms. Cervantes and Chair Durodola for their feedback and asked if there were any other feedback.

Paula Zona thanked Mr. Wilson for his work on the definitions. She stated it makes sense and she supports it. Mr. Wilson thanked Ms. Zona for her feedback.

Chair Durodola asked Mr. Wilson to refresh their memory on how the definitions will be used by the state in the future. Mr. Wilson stated as accountability reports are generated for school districts, the information on English learner academic achievement would continue to be a part of the reporting process. He said it's a deeper dive into the performance of English learners as was mandated by Assembly Bill 219. Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Wilson for the explanation and stated it will allow the state to disaggregate the data a little bit differently.

Mr. Wilson asked if there was anyone on the English Mastery Council who would feel that this way of defining newcomers, short-term or long-term English learners is not acceptable and needs to be revisited.

Diana Cantu thanked Mr. Wilson for the work on the definitions. She said she likes the breakdown of the three levels and asked if it included the students who have been exited out and still being monitored.

Nevada Department of Education Update (continued)

Mr. Wilson stated that in the state of Nevada, for accountability purposes, they include both current and former English learners. However, for this part of the accountability reporting, it is only for current English learners, so they are not included. Ms. Cantu thanked Mr. Wilson for answering her question.

Mr. Wilson asked if there were any other questions and there were none.

Mr. Wilson stated one of the things they are really excited about for English learners is the English Language Development Standards Framework implementation initiative of which the Council has received updates along the way from Drs. Sophia Masewicz and Kulwadee Axtell. He said as mentioned in the last meeting, they have partnered with WestEd bringing to the initiative additional support opportunities for another set of eyes to help them in defining the roadmap implementation. He said their team is working to have WestEd help identify additional resources that could complement the initiative. He said they wanted to let the English Mastery Council know that that work is in progress, and they anticipate rolling out additional information in terms of the roadmap within the next few months.

Mr. Wilson asked Dr. Sophia Masewicz if she had anything that she would like to add.

Dr. Masewicz stated there's excitement around the alignment of the ELD Standards Framework with the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) and working with the Office of Educator Effectiveness. She said WestEd will assist them in providing vignettes or videos to complement and show what it looks like for each of the five standards that are in the NEPF. She said the alignment started with the ELD Standards Framework work group. She said they are going push it out early in the fall.

Mr. Wilson thanked Dr. Masewicz and asked if there were any questions from the EMC that Dr. Masewicz might be able to answer. He said they wanted to let the Council know that it continues to move forward, and they believe it is accelerating in timing and intensity, so they are really excited about that.

Chair Durodola stated she is happy that WestEd will provide support with instructional vignettes of best practices. She said it could be very important that teachers be able to see practices that are in the framework. She thanked Dr. Masewicz for calling on everyone to make this work.

Mr. Wilson stated that through a branch of WestEd called REL West, they have offered to assist Nevada in doing an impact study of the Zoom and Victory programs, which is still in the design stage. He said that will be an additional resource that they look forward to partnering up with WestEd in terms of that initiative.

Mr. Wilson said the final update that he wanted to note is that on June 16, the Legislative Committee on Education met and the Nevada Department of Education provided updates on the Zoom and Victory programs and Assembly Bill 219. He said part of what they shared was that those schools participating with funding on the Zoom initiatives appear to be having stronger results in terms of English learners achieving adequate growth percentile compared to schools that are not participating in Zoom initiatives. He said part of that information came from the Annual Zoom Report their EL team compiled and submitted at the beginning of the month. He thanked Blakely Hume and Sophia Masewicz for helping to facilitate the submission of the Annual Zoom Report.

Mr. Wilson stated there were no further updates from NDE. Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Wilson for the comprehensive update of good news. She said it's great to receive some good news even with school closures. She thanked NDE for all their hard work.

Update on EMC Subcommittee Progress

TESL Subcommittee: Dr. Diane Barone stated the TESL subcommittee has been working remotely, and she's worked with Mr. Hume and Dr. Durodola to do the foundation for a study that would be carried out. She said the question is with undergraduates being expected to take four classes focused on English learners, will it make

a difference when they become practicing teachers. She said it's an intervention that they've given to their undergraduate students in the State of Nevada. She said it looks good and the content makes sense, but does it really make a difference.

Dr. Barone said they've started working on the idea for the study, and it's really rough and has to be flushed out quite a bit. She said looking at first year teachers who have had the four courses in comparison to other first year teachers that have been hired in the districts, it's more than fifty percent of the teachers from someplace else and not an NSHE teacher preparation in Clark County. She said she's not sure what Washoe is, but it's equally as high. She said this came from the accreditation hoops that they have to go through at UNR, and one of the things that they have to do is show that their program makes a difference to first year teachers.

Dr. Barone said they've had an agreement with Washoe County School District where they can look at first year teachers that have graduated from UNR in comparison to other first year teachers that have been hired. She said they've looked at teacher evaluations, and in factoring the first three years, they outperformed other teachers that were hired. She said that all washes out after three years and that's a whole different conversation, but they were thinking about something like that that they would want to add on. She said they are trying to create a more formal way of looking at the courses to see if they can make a difference.

Dr. Barone stated that Mr. Hume has a rough draft of their work that he can send out to the entire Council. She said they want to make sure that their teachers are making a difference to English learners which is the goal. She said universities all teach preparation programs that have put in four courses into their curriculum, and she thinks they are going to want to know if those four courses make a difference.

Chair Durodola thanked Dr. Barone, Mr. Hume, and the TESL subcommittee members for their work. She asked in looking at student outcomes, what is it that they're going to control because there are other factors that are also going to contribute to that. She said she asks because that's something that's really hard to get at.

Dr. Barone stated if they just look at Title schools, that would be complementary and tend to have higher proportions of English learners in them. She said they don't want to say five years from now that was interesting they made all their students take those courses and ask what do they know about it, which is not a good place to be with all of the work that the TESL subcommittee has done and all the adjustments the universities in teacher prep programs had to make. She said it would seem they would want an answer to the question, did this brand experiment really work.

Chair Durodola said did it work and how. Dr. Barone said that may be the qualitative part, but just getting some quantitative to begin with and then going back at that point. She said if it didn't make a difference, then she doesn't know if they need to know any more, but if it did make a difference, then they would want to know from teachers how did it make a difference. She said then maybe they could do focus groups through interviews to find out how teachers used that knowledge in their classrooms, but she thinks that would be the second tier study.

Chair Durodola thanked Dr. Barone was putting this forward. She said when she and Mr. Hume were making road trips to different NSHE institutions to talk about this, one of the former deans at UNR brought up how do you discuss quality control across all of the different programs.

Dr. Barone stated the good thing is that eighty percent of the content has to be the same, so she thinks they just do that as a limitation. She said when she does these studies in elementary school, not all teachers teach the content the same and that's a good thing. Chair Durodola thanked Dr. Barone and stated she has more questions from this, but she is not going to get into the weeds. Dr. Barone stated whoever takes over this will have to get into the weeds because they're talking about getting a grant to fund this, so all of the details need to be brought forth. She said there's a little bit of time because the courses are just in place and undergraduates are just taking them.

Update on EMC Subcommittee Progress (continued)

Mr. Hume stated that he and Dr. Barone had discussed about potential work and setting up all of the logistics over the next coming year, similar in format to Project E3, which he helped to support over the last few years.

Dr. Barone said all the districts and universities or teacher prep institutions need to be talked to about allowing information about teachers coming out of their institutions. She said the nice thing about it is they're not looking at names. She said they could look at grade levels if they wanted to, but they really don't need to know grades or the kids' names because they're just looking at an aggregate to see if the kids did better. She said they could look at that compared to the district or state data. She said they didn't need a control group and could look at the kids in the teachers classes compared to the average scores in the schools compared to the average scores in the district.

Chair Durodola thanked Dr. Barone and the committee members and said that was substantial to move forward and she is very excited. She stated that Dr. Barone can always stay. Dr. Barone stated she is always willing to be in the background and is not going anywhere. She is still working on writing articles and doing research. She said that part of her life has not changed at all and has picked up.

DP&CP Subcommittee: Ms. Laurel Crossman stated the District Policy and Criteria Planning subcommittee has not met since May 14, and they are not planning on meeting again until the fall when they begin a review of the district policies and English learner plans that they will be submitting. She said she does not have anything different than the previous update and asked if Mr. Hume had anything he wanted to add.

Mr. Hume stated they wanted to make note that they do have a request to go forward to the State Board of Education at some point in the near future and present the District Policy recommendations that they hammered out last spring along with some other information.

Dr. Barone asked will the plans have to be adjusted based on whatever is determined appropriate to come back to school in the fall because she thinks English learners are going to bear the brunt of it.

Mr. Wilson stated they will have to take a look at the districts' reopening plans and see how they identify and address the needs of special populations. He said it could be that it would be a supplement and they wouldn't ask them to go back and redo their district policy plans for English learners. He said they all share her concern of what is the impact on their English learners during this extended time away from in-person support services.

Ms. Crossman stated that Paula Zona is also serving on the Reopening Committee for their district with her and they're concern about all of the kids. She said distance learning is very difficult. She said she has five kids who were in the distance learning program, and it is not the best learning environment for all children. She said what weighs heavy on all persons involved in education is how can they serve these kids and give them the educational benefits that they need given the circumstances.

Ms. Cervantes stated she would echo what Ms. Crossman said in Clark County. She said they're having those same discussions around equity for all of their students, specifically those who might not have access to the technology in their homes, but also those who may be in the lowest 25th percentile who are EL learners and have been struggling to stay up or reach grade level standards. She said it's going to be delicate work moving forward for all of their students.

Chair Durodola thanked Ms. Crossman for her work this year.

EP&AA Subcommittee: Ms. Cervantes stated they have reviewed recent research regarding language acquisition and strategies for English language proficiency and have discovered the connection between the strategies used for English language learners and those for students who are struggling standard English learners.

Update on EMC Subcommittee Progress (continued)

Ms. Cervantes said they've keyed in on the needs of teachers to operate with an asset orientation to understand their students' affective filters and how that affects their ability to take in new information and making sure that teachers understand ways that they can work with students in order to help them to be ready to learn in addition to strategies for helping students to learn. She said they're reminded of implicit biases and institutional racism as they affect student learning as well.

Ms. Cervantes stated the subcommittee received information through presentations from the Nevada Department of Education Read by Grade 3 team regarding meeting the needs of all students through the Read by Grade 3 recommendations and legislation that have come into their state in the last few years. She said students are not excluded based on their English language learner status or any other areas, and all schools are expected to create a specific plan and communicate with parents what that plan is for any students who are following below level in their literacy skills at the primary level from Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Ms. Cervantes stated they also received a presentation from CCSD's Assistant Superintendent, Ignacio Ruiz, who works with the ELL Division. She said he presented the data and strategies that are in the English Mastery Plan for Clark County that could be leveraged to meet the needs of non-standard English speakers who are falling within the lowest 25th percentile. She said he also shared the effectiveness of some of the work within the Zoom schools that have shown an impact for English language learners as well as non-standard English learners. She said that it reflects the report that Mr. Wilson gave earlier in the state's Department of Education information about specific tests in some of their Zoom schools.

Ms. Cervantes stated they don't have any recommendations for the full EMC to consider at this time, but in their next meeting in the fall, their plan is to watch some of the instructional videos of English language classes from Stanford research that Dr. Masewicz had spoken of earlier in order to make the learning of the committee more concrete in really understanding what some of the strategies are that can be used in the classrooms to serve the needs of all students who are struggling with their English language development.

Ms. Cervantes stated that they are also going to go back and review some of the work that they have already done and look for implications for English language learner development for all students, possible root causes for the lack of instructional progress by those students in the lowest 25th percentile and bring any recommendations for the full English Mastery Council to consider presenting to the State Board of Education.

Dr. Barone stated she's done a lot of work with English learners and primary kids and most of the instruction in literacy is based on language. She said in thinking of COVID and how using turn and talk to your partner in small groups can't happen, she asked how instruction can be adjusted.

Ms. Cervantes said they can definitely take a look at that. She said she's been trying to consider ways they could still provide opportunities for discourse between students. She provided an example of a recent online class she took where there were small group conversations. She said as a tutor working with a small group of students, she could have them use their assigned desk and interact with their mask during their small group instructional time.

Ms. Cervantes said it might make it a little bit harder to turn to the partner, but at least they could still do some of that small group instruction with students. She said it still is a work in progress, and if anyone has any insights, she would be happy to hear them because that is definitely a concern that they have right now. She said they know the importance of those strategies with kids, but there are other strategies within QTEL, which has been a major part of some of the work they've been doing. She said they would need to make some focuses in those areas within their lessons. She thanked Dr. Barone for the suggestion.

Dr. Barone said if they look at those Stanford videos, they are going to see lots of small groups talking. She said those are going to be the models that are really going to be effective, and teachers are going to tell you right back that they can't do those models at this time, so it's really helpful to hear Ms. Cervantes' ideas.

Update on EMC Subcommittee Progress (continued)

Dr. Haysbert stated one of the things she's been thinking about recently is the need for them to take a look at what's happening in Los Angeles because their English proficiency program has existed for so long, and they've developed lots of strategies. She said she's sure they must be planning for what they will need to be able to do in this new time. She said it would be interesting for them to have some conversations with Los Angeles before they do their recommendation because she does not know if they know anybody else who is doing this and have been doing this for that long. She said for them to struggle with it, might not be to their best advantage when they can get ideas and resources from someone else.

Dr. Masewicz stated she'd like to comment on Dr. Haysbert's suggestion and also follow-up with Ms. Cervantes in terms of that really is a concern around the discourse in the classroom. She said that one of the consultants that they have with WestEd actually developed the roadmap for California, and they are piggybacking on the work that they are continuing with the SEA in California in terms of their resources that they are developing, so they are hoping to be benefactors. She said if they could get one of their WestEd consultants to the table to talk about what work is going on in that area and how do they bridge that discourse given the social distancing and the reopening different strategies of hybrids, face-to-face and blended to really get a better understanding of what might be possible. She said she can propose that because it's going to be something that their ELD Standards Framework would need to consider as they move their current documents to a distance learning format.

Chair Durodola thanked Ms. Cervantes, Dr. Masewicz and all of the committee members on the EPAA. She said they really accomplished a lot given the scenario that they have. She said when the committee started, they initially had talked about the importance of understanding what environments are like where children are educated and with schools closed, that was absolutely impossible. She said they've made a lot of headway into understanding issues that impact learning for these children. She said she commends them for doing a great job in terms of moving forward. She said there are some next steps that are inherent within what they've already accomplished.

Next Steps and Progress of the Council

Chair Durodola asked what are some big priorities that they need to really make a goal for the next year. She said in thinking about the impact study with the TESL subcommittee, that's going to be big.

Dr. Barone stated she concurs with Chair Durodola and said there needs to be planning for that study if it's going to happen. She said looking at grants would be part of it and then hopefully being successful. She said getting the roadmap to the study would be a good plan for the next year. Chair Durodola thanked Dr. Barone and said she agrees with her. She asked if the other subcommittees had any input.

Ms. Cervantes stated to continue to look at the research and make recommendations as to how to support English language learners as well as non-standard English speakers is going to be an important role of their committee moving forward. She said they need to take a little more time to mull over some of their ideas to bring forward to the group. She said she thinks they have a plan for where the committee should be moving forward.

Chair Durodola thanked Ms. Cervantes and said the bigger thought was how do their plans reflect the current status of instruction in terms of are teachers going to be expected again to provide some type of remote instruction. She said she's not sure if this might be part of their discussion, but it is an idea that arose in discussion.

Ms. Cervantes said she agrees with that and she did add it to her notes to take back to their committee in their next meeting. She said anytime they can learn from others for ways to improve their work, she thinks it's important.

Chair Durodola stated that Dr. Masewicz also had potential contacts, so maybe that is something that could contribute to the work that the committee is doing.

Next Steps and Progress of the Council (continued)

Chair Durodola asked what they see as the next steps when they look at the District Policy and Criteria Planning subcommittee.

Ms. Crossman stated the first next steps would be the presentation to the State Board of Education on their recommendations. She said usually in the fall they review the EL district policies and the EL plans because it's a statutory charge, but she's wondering if part of that review wouldn't include the reopening plans as they relate to ELs and lower proficiency students. She asked if Ms. Zona or Ms. Diaz had any thoughts.

Ms. Zona stated that she totally agrees with Ms. Crossman and thinks it makes sense and would be wise to have that be a spotlight that they can look at in addition to the other things that they were identifying in the plans that were submitted this past year.

Ms. Diaz stated that she also agrees with continuing that work that had been started.

Chair Durodola thanked Ms. Crossman and the subcommittee members for those thoughts. She said they just reviewed the identification process in state for Special Education because it's come up several times within their committee about what do they do about overidentification. She said she's brought up some suggestions for the Nevada Department of Education and she's not sure if there's a place in the TESL subcommittee to focus on this. She asked the members what their thoughts were and what smaller steps can they take next year to address this issue. She said it's really unacceptable if they're concerned about something, even if it is complex, there are smaller things that they can do to help them get to the core of the issue.

Ms. Diaz stated she agrees that even a small step is definitely a giant step for their students. She said one of the things that she can start right away is something along the path of education for all. She said she heard Ms. Cervantes talk about what she does at her district. She said her district does something similar, but she's not sure it's something that is done statewide. She said some of the things they can do to provide help and support starts with educating and providing professional development that they can offer statewide. She said in her district, they have some education, but it's really not targeted to the specific subjects regarding their EL students. She said it's either for Special Education or for ELs and not addressing the bigger issue that they're all facing.

Chair Durodola thanked Ms. Diaz on her reflection on this and stated she agrees with her. She said Mr. Wilson mentioned the possibility of some type of incentive for potential students who might consider the field of psychology. She asked is that something they can act on and explore.

Mr. Wilson stated their team can explore that right away. He said one of the possibilities in working with their colleagues in Education Licensure and teacher prep is, are there pieces in place that can be leverage. He said if the answer is there is nothing currently there, then they come back and say what can they recommend that might move them in that direction.

Chair Durodola stated that Ms. Cervantes and Ms. Diaz mentioned that in their own districts, there were some assessment/procedure/process that they used that helped those to make decisions to understand what ELs are able to do. She asked is there something that can be done in terms of understanding what districts are doing.

Chair Durodola said she is really concerned and asked if they see that there are increasing numbers of high school ELs who are identified in Special Education programs.

Ms. Cervantes stated she likes the recommendation that Mr. Wilson gave earlier about looking at their EL plans and possibly a reopening plan to see how they are already meeting the needs of the students they're worried about. She said as they're identifying the needs for Special Education, they could look at what are some best practices that are in place in districts across the state. She said if they are not there, then they need to make a recommendation that they include that in their policies. She said if they start there, then maybe they can see what the need is for having districts readjust or add a component to their plans, rather than saying what's your Special Ed plan for the district. She said if they get too many plans, then the work isn't done and it's not done well.

Next Steps and Progress of the Council (continued)

Ms. Cervantes said it just becomes something they did as a hoop to jump through for the Department of Education, rather than it being meaningful work that's ongoing by either the districts or schools.

Chair Durodola stated that she agrees with Ms. Cervantes. She said if they are going to look at a more integrated approach, that is the ideal as opposed to something that is separate and apart. She said CJ Fields mentioned the need for educator awareness and asked the members where they begin to focus on that as an initial step.

Ms. Cervantes stated that one thought that she has is you always want to start with a pre-test or getting an understanding of where they are, so maybe they need find out where people are and what their awareness level is. She said similar to students and working with the Asset Orientation, who are the assets that they have in the state that could assist others with developing stronger work plans or professional development or can it be done through the RDPD, the Regional Development Centers across the state. She said they should also focus on the rural areas that might not have some of the benefit of a larger staff that that they might see.

Chair Durodola stated that she likes the idea of examining what RDPD could do, but she agrees with being able to look at what teachers are knowledgeable about or what is their awareness around language proficiency as it is considered in the context of the Special Education identification process.

Chair Durodola asked if there were any other suggestions for how they move forward for the next upcoming uncertain year and there were none. She said she wanted to say thank you for a job well done for another year. She said she thinks what was most important was that even with the pandemic, they didn't stop and kept moving forward, so that is thanks to their efforts and hard work. She apologized for not being able to be as involved in the subcommittee work. She thanked the members for also being able to make it to the last meeting because they don't normally meet in June.

Public Comments #2

Chair Durodola stated that she's looking forward to next year; however, it will be the last year in which she can serve as Chair with the English Mastery Council. She said she will still be a member of the committee, but she has some extended responsibilities and believes it's the responsible thing to do is say that she will not be able to be considered for Chair in the future. She said this has been an opportunity of a lifetime and she thanked them for the opportunity.

Ms. Cervantes thanked Chair Durodola for her leadership. Dr. Haysbert concurred with Ms. Cervantes comment. Chair Durodola stated they're all leaders.

Mr. Hume stated Dr. Durodola very graciously agreed to stay on this year last summer, and they very much appreciate that. He said he recognized the strictures of being a professor and the many commitments that she has and how committed and dedicated she is to every one of those commitments. He thanked Dr. Durodola for her commitment to English learners in the state and for her continued excellence in terms of guidance and leadership.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Hume and stated they work together as a team and they've done this together for five years, so she's very appreciative for being able to work with each of them.

Mr. Wilson stated that because he hasn't submitted a public comment, he's going to take advantage of this opportunity before moving on to say thank you for her leadership.

Chair Durodola thanked Mr. Wilson for his comment and asked if there were any other public comments. There were none.

Adjournment

After thanking everyone, Chair Durodola adjourned the meeting at 3:48 PM.