



English Learner Advisory Council Policy Prospectus

The English Learner Advisory Council has identified the following policies for further investigation in support of developing formal report recommendations and a bill draft request (BDR) for the 2027 Legislative Session.

1. Transitioning to Assets-Based Statutory Language

Summary

Introduce assets-based language—such as “Multilingual Learner” or “Emergent Bilingual”—as statutory synonyms for existing terminology. This measure will authorize the Department and Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to adopt these terms for programmatic use, including pedagogical frameworks, parent communications, and program titles. This legislation will update the three student groups established in Assembly Bill 335 to their assets-based equivalents: “Short-Term Multilingual Learner,” “Long-Term Multilingual Learner,” and “Newcomer Multilingual Learner.” The federal “English Learner” designation will be retained for administration and accountability purposes.

Relevant Models

- California and New Jersey use a hybrid approach, retaining “English Learner” strictly for funding and legal compliance while deploying “Multilingual Learner” in pedagogical frameworks and community outreach.
- Texas successfully passed legislation replacing “limited English proficiency” with “emergent bilingual students” across its education code.
- Massachusetts explicitly uses “Multilingual Learner” and “Bilingual Education” terminology to frame its program standards.
- New York uses the assets-based term “English as a New Language” for its programs.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: Statute Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either Fiscal Impact: No
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2. District-Level Parental Advisory Councils

Summary

Mandate the formation of District English Learner Advisory Committees (DELACs) with the statutory authority to review and advise on the district’s plan for services and funding allocations. Family engagement impacts student grades, test scores, and dropout rates. Enabling two-way communication builds partnerships with parents and families, giving them a voice in district-level decisions and ensuring they have opportunities to inform decision-making.

- NDE: Consider how efforts with the Advisory Council on Family Engagement could align
- Further research on existing councils, what’s required / what the crossover would be.
- Not looking to be a major contender

Relevant Models

- California mandates district and school-level advisory committees when EL populations reach specific thresholds (50+ students in a district; 20+ in a school), with parents electing members.
- Illinois requires a parent advisory committee where the majority of members are parents of

- children in transitional bilingual programs.
- Massachusetts mandates an English learner parent advisory council for districts with 100+ ELs or a 5% EL population.
- Texas mandates a language proficiency assessment committee that must include a parent of an emergent bilingual student.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: Statute or Regulation
Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either
Fiscal Impact: No

3. Individualized Support and Tracking for All English Learners

Summary

Establish a framework that supports districts in identifying and creating success plans for multilingual learner subgroups: Newcomers, Short Term Multilingual Learners, and Long-Term Multilingual Learners. Without intervention, ELs face a bottleneck in their secondary education: EL 9th graders face a 26.7% credit deficiency rate, compared to 15.4% in the general student population. The state's 22,264 Long-Term Multilingual Learners need success plans to prevent warehousing in remedial courses. Concurrently, the state's 9,139 Newcomers require foundational language support, while the 36,530 Short-Term Multilingual Learners must be tracked to ensure they progress. Establishing success plans ensures a continuum of support from a student's first day in a U.S. school through graduation.

- NDE: Consider existing plans required for homeless/foster students, academic planning, etc.
- Presentations re: what this looks like
- Elementary school SLPP (alignment into academic plans?)
- English learner scheduling in secondary school (good elementary school supports, less so in secondary)

Relevant Models

- California legislation requires the tracking of Long-Term English Learners (LTELs) and those at risk of becoming LTELs to ensure they receive targeted interventions.
- Massachusetts requires districts to establish "personalized goals" and use an "English learning success template" for ELs not meeting proficiency benchmarks.
- New York mandates the tracking and reporting of outcomes by highly specific subpopulations, including students with interrupted formal education, newcomers, developing ELs, and long-term ELs.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: Statute or Regulation
Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either
Fiscal Impact: No

4. Grow-Your-Own Programs for Bilingual Educators

Summary

Establish a Bilingual Educator Pipeline Grant to provide tuition assistance and support to bilingual paraprofessionals, school aides, and high school students transitioning into licensure as classroom teachers. Schools face a shortage of teachers capable of delivering instruction in languages other than English, resulting in approximately 69% of EL students being served through models that require less

specialized certification. Supporting these candidates—who already possess the linguistic assets our schools need—will help address this critical shortage.

- NDE: Consider aligning with the Teacher Pathways Program, existing Teach Nevada Scholarships, etc.
- Relevant Models
- Washington State has pursued legislative models that establish bilingual educator initiatives.
- Hawaii introduced pay differentials specifically to attract and retain qualified English language learner educators.
- Florida law allows for the utilization and training of native-speaking aides as an interim measure to ensure students’ language barriers are addressed soundly while staff are recruited.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: Statute
Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either
Fiscal Impact: Depends

5. Support for Mandatory English Learner Professional Development

Summary

Provide districts with state funding to fulfill mandatory professional development requirements regarding English language acquisition. Because state-mandated professional development is a statutory requirement, federal “supplement, not supplant” rules prohibit districts from using federal Title II or Title III funds to pay for the training. Therefore, the state must provide a funding mechanism—such as an increase to the PCFP English Learner weight or a categorical appropriation through the Fund for School Improvement—to ensure Local Education Agencies possess the fiscal capacity to execute training without supplanting general funds.

- NDE: Any changes to weights or the PCFP would require assignment/referral to the Commission on School Funding

Relevant Models

- Colorado’s “Professional Development and Student Support Program” provides targeted state funding to local education providers specifically for professional development activities related to teaching English language learners.
- New Mexico law explicitly requires and funds professional development for teachers, principals, and financial officers on research-based bilingual multicultural education, ESL best practices, and language development.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: N/A
Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either
Fiscal Impact: Yes

6. Bilingual Education Expansion Recommended Pathway

Summary

Establish a Dual Language Allotment to provide an additional weight in the PCFP for every student enrolled in a state-certified dual language program. Dual language and bilingual programs lead to higher long-term academic achievement and stronger English outcomes than English-only programs. Currently, 23.8% of EL students in Nevada are enrolled in these models. This allotment transforms

bilingual education into a sustainable model for school districts.

- NDE: Any changes to weights or the PCFP would require assignment/referral to the Commission on School Funding

Relevant Models

- California’s “Pathways to Success Grant Program” allocates funding specifically to develop and expand dual language immersion and developmental bilingual programs.
- Vermont incorporates an additional, substantial pupil weight (2.49) for EL pupils in its school funding formula to ensure resources meet the cost of educating students with targeted language services. Oregon law authorizes specific grants for dual language and two-way bilingual programs.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: N/A
Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either
Fiscal Impact: Yes

7. Comprehensive Student Data Dashboard and PCFP Transparency Recommended Pathway

Summary

Create a public-facing Comprehensive Student Data Dashboard that tracks Multilingual Learner metrics and correlates Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP) expenditures with academic gains. Educational and financial data are currently siloed, masking systemic inequities. For example, in the 2024-25 school year, 19.62% of Nevada’s EL population is dually identified with a disability (higher than the 14.2% statewide average), while representing only 1.85% of students enrolled in Gifted and Talented programs. A comprehensive dashboard will explicitly track these metrics alongside WIDA Adequate Growth Percentiles (AGP) and credit deficiency rates. By tracking local PCFP expenditures on a public dashboard and correlating them with academic gains, the state can identify which interventions yield the highest return on investment.

- NDE: Consider alignment with Department efforts with the Data Management System, data dashboards, and expanded systems support

Relevant Models

- The Texas School Accountability Dashboard publicly compares performance information disaggregated by bilingual and special language programs.
- The California dashboard publicly reports graduation data and college/career readiness explicitly disaggregated by English Learner status and other pupil categories.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: Policy
Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Recommendation
Fiscal Impact: Yes

8. Universal Language Acquisition and/or Bilingual Endorsements

Summary

Explore incorporating ELAD or Bilingual Education endorsement requirements into standard degree pathways. English Learners spend the majority of their instructional time with general education teachers who often lack training in language acquisition. Currently, 3,378 licensed teachers in

Nevada hold an ELAD or Bilingual endorsement to serve the state's 69,010 ELs.

- NDE: Consider how science of reading mandates were incorporated into statutory requirements; consider various pathways to this process.

Relevant Models

- Connecticut, Delaware, and Florida legally require that all state-approved educator preparation programs include instruction in second language acquisition and strategies for instructing ELLs.
- Rhode Island mandates that approved educator preparation programs include EL proficiency and awareness requirements as a strict condition for program completion by 2030.

Statute, Regulation, or Policy: Statute Recommendation or Bill Draft Request: Either Fiscal Impact: No
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9. Review and Recommendation of English Learner Exit Criteria

Summary

Review Nevada's current English Learner exit criteria—including the standard WIDA ACCESS overall composite cut score of 4.5, the alternative pathway requiring academic proficiency (SBAC/ACT) for scores 4.0–4.4, and the Alternate ACCESS framework. The Council will compare Nevada's framework against models established by other states within the WIDA consortium. Specifically, the Council will analyze how other SEAs use specific literacy domain minimums, lower overall cut scores, or holistic, committee-based portfolio reviews (rather than standardized academic testing) for their alternative pathways. Following this review, the Council will formulate a formal recommendation to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) regarding whether adjustments to the state's EL exit thresholds or reclassification procedures are warranted.

Relevant Models

- Indiana & Georgia (Holistic Alternative Pathways): The U.S. Department of Education discourages requiring academic test scores for language reclassification. Instead, Indiana and Georgia use committee-led portfolio reviews (classroom rubrics, observations) for students scoring marginally below standard thresholds (4.3–4.9).
- North Dakota (Domain Minimums): Requires a 4.5 Overall score plus a 3.5 minimum in all four domains, ensuring high receptive skills do not mask expressive deficiencies.
- South Carolina (Lowered Standard Threshold): Recently lowered its automatic exit score to a 4.4 Overall Composite, eliminating domain requirements entirely to reduce Long-Term English Learner (LTEL) proliferation.
- Colorado (Standardized Body of Evidence): Uses a lower threshold (4.0 Overall and 4.0 Literacy) but requires two additional pieces of local evidence (e.g., writing rubrics) to confirm students can access grade-level content.