

# SB 504 Implementation Report 2013-2014

## Washoe County School District Zoom Schools

SB 504 funds were used in six Washoe County School District elementary schools during the 13-14 school year to implement the initiatives mandated in the legislation: Pre-K, Full Day Kindergarten with reduced class sizes, Zoom Reading Centers, and Intersession/Summer Academy. A seventh school will be added for the 2014 Summer Academy and the 14-15 school year. Below are descriptions of the program design, program costs, number of students receiving services, cost per student, program successes, and data sources being used for the ongoing program.

A detailed list of the schools receiving SB 504 funds is included in Figure 1, "WCSD Zoom Schools Receiving SB 504 Funds in 2013-2014."

### Zoom Pre-K

WCSD Pre-K students gain important school readiness skills through enriched high quality Pre-K programming that incorporates curricula based on the Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards. The Pre-K classrooms have learning centers that promote pre-reading and writing skills, math, movement, language, literacy, science, art, music, self-help skills and socialization. This type of environment and curriculum provides Pre-K children with the skills to be successful in kindergarten. The program is 2.5 hours per day, 4 days per week.

The program is evaluated on an ongoing basis with the WIDA-Model, ELLCO, and Kindergarten Readiness Portfolio.

The estimated cost of the Pre-K program is \$368,773, serving 165 students, at an approximate cost of \$2235 per student.

### Program Successes Funded By SB 504:

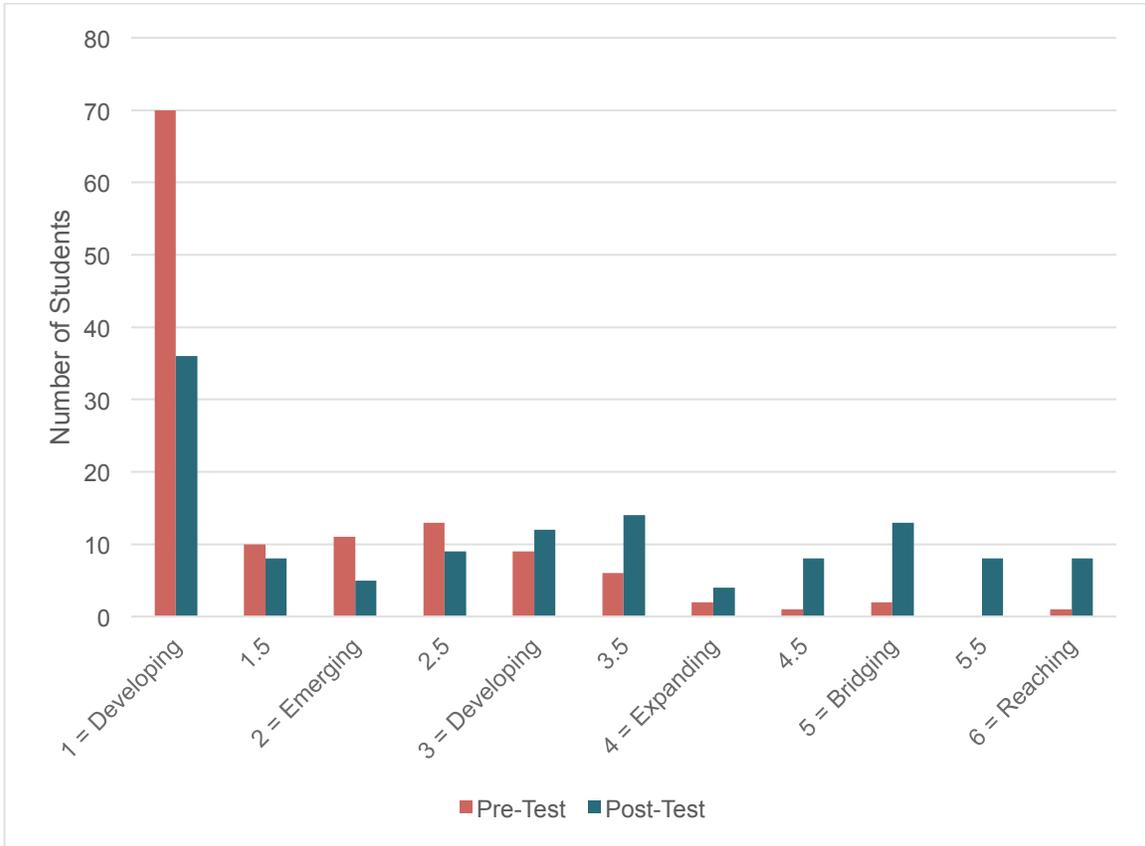
- Introduced a new Pre-K program at Mathews Elementary.
- 5 of the 6 Pre-K programs are operating at full capacity.
- The Language & Literacy average score on ELLCO, a measure of teacher effectiveness in the classroom, increased from 3.9 (pre-test) to 4.3 (post-test).

### Students' Linguistic Achievement:

- For the first time ever in the District, the Speaking and Listening portions of the Kindergarten WIDA-MODEL test were administered to Pre-K students to assess their

oral proficiency level on a scale of 1 (Entering) through 6 (Reaching). Among students who the District was able to record a Fall 2013 pre-test and May 2014 post-test (n=125), oral proficiency increased from an average of 1.7 (between Entering and Emerging) to 3.0 (Developing).

### WIDA-MODEL Oral Proficiency Scores among Pre-K Students (n=125)



- The average Standard score on the Expressive One Word assessment has increased over 8 points (among Pre-K students who have pre-test scores during the Fall and post-test scores in the Spring), suggesting that many students' development has *accelerated* during their Pre-K year.
- The average Standard scores on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (among Pre-K students who have recorded pre-test scores during the Fall and post-test scores in the Spring) has increased over 7 points, suggesting that many students' development has *accelerated* during their Pre-K experience.

### **Program Successes Not Funded By SB 504:**

In addition to classroom instruction for Pre-K students, the Pre-K program provides ongoing parenting education that includes family literacy events, parent-child activities, and a variety of parent workshops. Parents set literacy goals, attend Family workshops and agree to increase Parent and Child Time (PACT) and reading time.

- Total attendance across a variety of Pre-K Zoom family workshops during the 13-14 school year was over 300.
- Based upon feedback received so far, 96% of Zoom families highly agree that the workshops provided them with activities, materials, and age-appropriate resources that support their child's preparedness for Kindergarten.

### **Zoom Full Day Kindergarten**

The WCSD Kindergarten Program uses developmentally appropriate practices based on the Nevada Academic Content Standards in conjunction with the aligned WIDA Standards (which are standards that focus on academic language development and academic achievement for linguistically diverse students). Kindergarten instruction includes teacher directed small group activities, whole group experiences, one-on-one intervention, and explorations in center based environments. Daily curriculum integrates academic instruction with the creative arts, social emotional and physical development in order to support learning for the whole child.

29 Kindergarten teachers are serving 551 full-day kindergarten students at Zoom schools with an average 19:1 student-to-teacher ratio.

The program is evaluated on an ongoing basis with W-APT or WIDA-Model, ACCESS, and DRA assessments.

The estimated cost of the Kindergarten program was \$1,706,974 at a cost of \$3,098 per student.

### **Program Successes Funded By SB 504:**

The DRA and ACCESS scores, which will serve as the primary metrics to measure Zoom program effectiveness in Kindergarten, are not yet available. However, an informal audit was conducted in mid-May to assess progress to date on three key measures: letter names, letter sounds, and high frequency words. These results show evidence of student progress. Specifically, within this data set:

#### Letter names

- 28% of Zoom students entered kindergarten not knowing the names of any letters. On average, entering kindergarten students knew 14 out of 54 letter names.

- Among students whose last recorded data point was during the third term, the average jumped to 47.
- Among students who were already tested in the Spring, the average was 52 out of 54.

#### Letter sounds

- 76% of Zoom students enter kindergarten not knowing the letter sounds. On average, entering kindergarten students knew 2 out of 26 letter sounds.
- Among students whose last recorded data point was during the third term, the average jumped to 22.
- Among students who were already tested in the Spring, the average was 25 out of 26.

#### High frequency words

- 79% of Zoom students enter kindergarten not knowing any high frequency words. On average, entering kindergarten students knew 1 out of 30 of these words.
- Among students whose last recorded data point was during the third term, the average jumped to 19.
- Among students who were already tested in the Spring, the average was 25 out of 30 words.

## **Zoom Reading Centers**

The WCSD Zoom Reading Skills program provides extra staff to push into classrooms and assist with guided reading. During guided reading, students receive rigorous and personalized instruction tailored to their reading level and focused upon the specific reading skills each student must master in order to access more challenging texts. Guided reading also serves as an excellent diagnostic exercise to ensure that students are making steady progress towards proficiency.

One certified teacher coordinates the reading skills program across all Zoom schools, and 2-3 site-based teaching assistants are assigned to each school.

The program will be evaluated on an ongoing basis with the DRA assessment for K-2, MAP for Grades 3-6, CRT/SBAC for Grades 3-6, and ACCESS for K-6.

The approximate cost of the Reading Centers was \$354,594, serving 1712 students, at an estimated cost of \$207 per student.

#### **Program Successes Funded By SB 504:**

- Hired the Zoom Reading Skills Facilitator and 13 Zoom Reading Skills Teaching Assistants. The new Reading Centers were up and running at all six Zoom schools by the end of January.

- Developed very detailed Zoom budgets for each school. Upon approval of these budgets, schools have begun ordering materials (e.g. Rigby readers, spelling cards, electronic book subscriptions, etc.) with Zoom funds.
- Schools are working with families to reinforce the importance of student attendance. The K-6 attendance rate at Zoom schools is 96.2% (as of 5/20/14).

Given that the Reading Centers were only operational for a portion of the year and that schools have not yet reported end-of-year metrics, reliable measures of success are pending. However, all Zoom schools participated in a Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Data Summit on March 12 to review winter MAP scores as an interim benchmark of progress. While it is impossible to use MAP scores to predict CRT performance with 100% accuracy, they can be used as a directional indicator of whether schools are on a positive path. Relative to the elementary school average in WCSD, five out of six Zoom schools are making better-than-average projected improvement in Reading proficiency. These trends are also true among ELL students at Zoom schools.

#### **Program Successes Not Funded By SB 504:**

- The WCSD Zoom administrative team traveled to Las Vegas on Sept 20 to meet with the Clark County Zoom team. Our objectives were to understand Clark's previous experience with reading skills centers, discuss the approach they are using for Zoom schools moving forward, and to visit a reading skills center in person. Following this meeting, our team designed a strategy for Reading Skills Centers in Washoe County.
- Conducted a formal Guided Reading training for school staff and the new teaching assistants.
- All schools have robust family engagement plans that include home visits; some schools have also adopted Academic Parent-Teacher Teams (APTT). As part of APTTs, families visit the school for data nights to review students' progress in literacy and math and to set future growth goals.

## **Zoom Summer Academy and Intersessions**

The Summer Academy will run 5 days/week from June 23 - July 25 (except July 4<sup>th</sup>). Students will receive breakfast and lunch and 3 hours of instruction/day. Schools are targeting 20 students per grade level who are below proficiency in reading and math.

The Summer Academy program will be evaluated on an ongoing basis with the Qualitative Spelling Inventory and Pre- and Post- Writing Samples.

The total Summer Academy costs across seven schools is projected to be \$470,100. (Note that a portion of this spending will occur in 13-14 and a portion will occur in 14-15.) Assuming ~90 students attend per school, the cost per student will be \$746. At full capacity of 120 students per site, the estimated cost per student would decrease to \$560.

Washoe County School District's new balanced calendar also affords the opportunity to provide incremental instruction and enrichment during designated breaks throughout the year. Intersession activities occurred for one week during each of the winter and spring breaks. 356 students participated in winter intersession and 481 students participated in spring intersession.

The total projected Summer Academy and Intersession Zoom spending for the 13-14 fiscal year is \$128,385.

#### **Program Successes Funded By SB 504:**

- WCS D created plans and secured staffing for a five-week Summer Academy at all Zoom schools (including the new addition of Sun Valley Elementary School). Additionally, WCS D developed strategies for managing all of the logistics for this new program (e.g. transportation, food service, enrollment, etc.)
- On May 30<sup>th</sup>, a curriculum planning day was held where summer academy teachers from all sites assembled at one location to design the lesson themes and share best practices.
- WCS D planned two field trips for summer academy students, which will serve as an incentive for 90+% attendance.

#### **Program Successes Not Funded By SB 504:**

- All Zoom schools offered intersession activities during the weeks of Jan 6 and April 7. Across sites, these activities ranged from classroom ELA and math instruction, small group instruction, enrichment activities, camps led by external partners, open libraries, etc. Echo Loder Elementary School also hosted October intersession activities, including KNPB classes and open library. The majority of these activities at 5 out of the 6 schools were paid for by different grants.
- One school leveraged intersession time to simultaneously teach students and provide teachers with professional development in GLAD instructional strategies.
- Survey data indicates that 81% of students thought winter intersession was very helpful and 16% thought it was somewhat helpful. [n=329 students] Similarly, 81% of students thought spring intersession was very helpful and 17% thought it was somewhat helpful. [n=335 students]
- Increased enrollment 35% from winter to spring intersession.

## **Recommendations for Legislation**

The following items are presented as recommendations for future legislation:

- Due to the school calendar in Washoe County District, it is anticipated that summer academies will always cut across two budget years. For example, the 2014 Summer Academy will have a portion in June (6 days will be funded out of the 13-14 budget) and a portion in July (18 days will be funded out of the 14-15 budget). WCS D's

ability to offer a summer academy in 2015 will be dependent upon the legislators' decision to renew Zoom funds for the 15-16 school year.

- Permit SB 504 funds to be used for professional development, as providing training and support to teachers is critical to implementing any new program. Allowing Zoom schools to fund professional development will further support teachers in using effective strategies to provide high quality Tier 1 instruction for all students at Zoom schools.
- Family engagement is an important part of success at Zoom schools, and WCSD recommends that SB 504 funds should support this important work. Increasing the presence and involvement of parents at the Zoom schools will create a sense of community that will be beneficial to the students, the parents, and the schools.
- In the future, ideally deadlines for reports will take into account the availability of academic achievement data. Many of the key metrics, such as DRA, MAP, CRT and ACCESS data, were not yet available to include in our Year 1 report. Similarly, it will be impossible to include end-of-year data in the Year 2 report due on February 2015.

**Figure 1: WCSD Zoom Schools  
Receiving SB 504 Funds in 2013-2014**

<b>School</b>	<b>11-12 Nevada SPF Rating</b>	<b>12-13 Nevada SPF Rating</b>	<b>Approximate SB 504 Funds Used by School in 13-14</b>	<b>Student Enrollment on 13-14 Count Day (Pre-K not included)</b>	<b>% ELL in 12-13* (Pre-K not included)</b>
Anderson Elementary School	2	3	\$413,892	441	50
Roger Corbett Elementary School	2	2	\$403,159	480	70
Glenn Duncan STEM Academy	2	2	\$368,061	439	63
Echo Loder Elementary School	3	3	\$478,567	567	71
Bernice Mathews Elementary School	2	2	\$503,452	651	59
Veterans Memorial STEM Academy	3	3	\$376,095	404	57
Sun Valley Elementary School <i>(added in June 2014)</i>	2	3	\$15,500	648	53

\* Note: the official 13-14 data has not yet been released.