

ENGLISH MASTERY COUNCIL

Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 1, 2018

9:00 A.M.

Meeting Locations:

Video Conference

OFFICE	LOCATION	ROOM
Department of Education	9890 South Maryland Parkway Las Vegas Nevada	Bristlecone Conference Room
Department of Education	700 East Fifth Street Carson City Nevada	Silver Ore Conference Room

Call to Order

Karl Wilson with the Nevada Department of Education called to order, from Las Vegas, the meeting of the English Mastery Council Standards and Curriculum Policy Subcommittee, at 9:05 AM on Thursday, November 1, 2018.

Roll Call

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

Committee Members present in Las Vegas: Diana Cantu, Lorna James-Cervantes, Nancy Brune (telephonically)

Committee Members present in Carson City: Maija Talso (telephonically)

NDE staff present in Las Vegas: Karl Wilson, Sophia Masewicz, Mindy Montoya

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Karl Wilson, Nevada Department of Education.

Public Comments #1

There were no public comments from either North or South.

Approval of March 9, 2018 Minutes

Karl Wilson asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from March 9, 2018.

Motion: Maija Talso motioned to approve the meeting minutes from March 9, 2018. Nancy Brune seconded the motion. Motion carried and the meeting minutes were approved.

Approval of Flexible Agenda

Karl Wilson asked for a motion to approve a flexible Agenda.

Motion: Lorna Cervantes made a motion to approve a flexible Agenda. Diana Cantu seconded the motion. Motion carried and a flexible Agenda was approved.

Election of the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee Chair for 2018-19

Karl Wilson thanked Maija Talso for her outstanding work while serving as the Chair for the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee during 2017-2018. He said her dedication and leadership were greatly appreciated. Mr. Wilson asked for a nomination for the 2018-2019 Chair position.

Nancy Brune suggested that Maija Talso continue as Chairperson of the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee.

Karl Wilson asked Ms. Talso if she would be willing to accept a nomination, and Ms. Talso responded yes. There were no other nominations, so a vote was taken to have Maija Talso continue as the Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee. All voted in favor. **Maija Talso was elected as Chair of the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee.**

Chair Maija Talso thanked everyone for their vote of confidence and stated this was an exciting time for the standards and curriculum process. She stated that the hard work of the subcommittee would be coming to fruition as they roll out the instructional documents and supporting materials that will really help teachers deliver the best instruction possible for their EL students.

Subcommittee Discussion: Work Items 2018-2019

Karl Wilson stated that in the full EMC meeting, in talking about the work of the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee, it was anticipated that there would continue to be updates regarding the ELD standards framework, such as the development, the piloting, the rollout, etc. He stated there was another conversation in the full English Mastery Council regarding the state's efforts to move to ensure that programs are implementing evidence-based programs that meet the needs of English learners in Nevada's schools.

Framework Discussion

Sophia Masewicz provided an update on the framework project. Ms. Masewicz thanked to the members of the EMC, Lorna James-Cervantes, Maija Talso, and Dr. Sharolyn Pollard-Duradola for their participation, along with 25 other participants, in developing sorely needed instructional documents that will help teachers in the state of Nevada.

Ms. Masewicz stated that the impetus of the framework design started in August 2017 when an EMC advisory group had a discussion in which they talked about what was needed in terms of the ELD standards. The starting point was framework, which evolved to be what was called "ELD standards framework instructional guidance documents". Through that beginning work and discussion about what was needed, it evolved and rolled into the development and some directive by NDE to really work on this as an initiative for the state.

Ms. Masewicz stated that the focus of the materials centers on teacher support in providing effective instruction for English learners in the four core content areas of science, math, social studies, and ELA, and connecting that to the ELD standards. Through many meetings and the work of the work groups, the template that was rolled out connected the disciplinary practices in each of those four contents to the ELD standards in looking at the key uses of academic language. There were 12 different work groups that worked on elementary and secondary documents on each of the four content areas. The documents were developed by some of the most experienced and knowledgeable practitioners and experts in the state.

Ms. Masewicz stated that those documents are completed. There are about 16 different documents in clusters in elementary and secondary. Up next is rolling out the documents and giving them to teachers so that they can give feedback on the usability of the documents and how they support development of high quality Tier 1 instructional lessons that are effective with EL students. The instructional guidance documents are ready to put before teachers.

Ms. Masewicz stated that a small EMC working group has generated an ELD standards framework focus group pilot survey so that those that are participating in the review and the focus group can give feedback on the document. The group has also generated a PowerPoint that will help the facilitators of these groups really standardize the presentation to participants. There are a number of individuals in various districts who have agreed to put these documents before teachers for all four content areas. The principal participants putting the documents out are in Washoe, Clark, Elko, and eventually Nye. There's a sizable focus group to give feedback regarding the usability and the support that these documents provide in lesson plans.

Subcommittee Discussion: Work Items 2018-2019 (continued)

Ms. Masewicz stated that the timeline is starting November 1. Documents will be on Google Docs so that they are available to the facilitators. The pilot focus group period for them to give feedback will be starting November 1 until winter break, which is December 21. Feedback will be collected through an electronic survey. Results will be shared with the EMC working group in January. The feedback might help EMC understand how documents could be adjusted or what might be additional supports that will help teachers use them.

Lorna James-Cervantes asked who would be doing the professional development and rollout sessions in each of those four counties, and Ms. Masewicz stated that this would fall on district staff in the four content areas. For Lyon, Churchill, and Lincoln, they will rely on Dr. Diana Walker with RDPD. In Clark County, Maria Sisolak and Michelle Hannigan will blanket the whole district in various contexts in putting the documents in their areas in which they interact with teachers. In Nye, Ms. Masewicz will work with Lisa Ford, who was on one of the work groups to roll out the documents to a small focus group in Nye. And in Elko, Barbara Hasting, the EL Coordinator in that district, will roll it out.

Ms. Masewicz continued with her overview. She stated that after review and refinement, the next step would be to do an orientation across the state, within regions. That planning has not yet been done in terms of developing the PowerPoint and the process for the orientation to the documents, which they anticipate will happen between April and June. The hope is to have the documents go before the State Board of Education in June.

Ms. Masewicz stated that orientation will run from January to March and include webinars that will introduce the documents across Nevada. They are asking those that are participating on the committee and the work groups to help support the orientation efforts. The documents are “quite complex” and need to be presented by experienced staff.

Chair Talso asked if the schedule for orientation might conflict with the testing window for the Access tests, and Ms. Masewicz replied that they will have to work through and negotiate around times and the particular audiences that this would be presented to.

Ms. Cervantes voiced several opinions about the roll out and orientation. She stated that she thought it was important to have the leadership at the top in the same place as those on the ground doing the work, because if the leadership isn't in support of the work, then success will not be achieved. Districts need to be looking at it at the cabinet level as well as within the buildings. And because ELAD endorsement is a key piece to teacher preparation, Nevada's university systems should teach the pre-service teachers about the use of this instrument as well. That would be an important component so that they're better prepared to come into Nevada schools ready to use this information in their classrooms.

Ms. Masewicz stated there's quite a bit of work that needs to be done around other resources in order to craft a teacher toolkit, including the ICMEE e-workshops and the e-workshops from the WIDA Professional Learning Subcommittee.

Mr. Wilson stated that he wanted to clarify his understanding that between now and June when they hope to present the framework to the State Board, there will be some orientation and some webinars to introduce it, but there won't be professional development occurring between now and the end of the school year. It really is to get people familiar with it. And then as they work with the State Board, then the next step is looking at how do they build the professional learning activities to build teacher capacity around that. Was that correct?

Ms. Masewicz affirmed that this year would be a familiarizing effort. Before the actual rollout the following year they will need to enlist and train facilitators who are knowledgeable with using the framework. It is then that professional development can happen. It is in the following year that they need to develop an implementation plan.

Ms. Cervantes stated that she agreed with the proposed timeline because if they rushed through, all their work might be for naught.

Subcommittee Discussion: Work Items 2018-2019 (continued)

Diana Cantu also agreed with the plan. She said in order for this to be successful, all the teacher supports and resources need to be in place first. She thinks it will be a “phenomenal” program that will benefit teachers and students.

The Chair thanked Ms. Masewicz and her team for their arduous work crafting such a comprehensive framework. Others in attendance also voiced their thanks.

Criteria for the Selection of Evidence-based Curriculum and Practices Discussion

Karl Wilson stated that NDE has been visiting schools and districts over the last year and a half and reviewing their plans of service for students, especially targeting the schools that have been identified as lower performing. They were observing the design of language instruction education programs and found a need to further enhance high-quality Tier 1 instruction with evidence-based models that are going to meet the needs of the students.

Mr. Wilson stated that they are at a crossroads with the passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that puts a heavy emphasis on investing federal funds in evidence-based models that are going to make an impact on student learning. In 2017, the state legislature reaffirmed that commitment with Assembly Bill 7. ZOOM funding, Victory funding, and Senate Bill 178 funding are to be using evidence-based instructional models to ramp up how services are provided to students. The English Mastery Council is in a position to say this is one strategy to further focus attention on quality services for students.

Sophia Masewicz stated there are two paradigms going on in education. The first is a deficit model, the second an asset model. Unfortunately, there are too many schools using the deficit model.

Ms. Masewicz stated that in the deficit model, the materials, the curriculum, and the approaches reflect a belief that interventions are the way to best serve EL students. The interventions are not necessarily evidence-based or connected to the standard core content, and in the extreme, there is lack of effective Tier 1 instruction altogether.

Ms. Masewicz stated that in the asset model, the belief is that students come in with skills and gifts in terms of their language and experiences. Some of the work that West Ed is doing in terms of English language development and quality instruction builds on the assets of students. With the asset model will come a whole different means of behaving and acting in terms of instruction and school organization. Those schools that focus on Tier 1 instruction for English learners building the capacity of teachers using materials and curriculum that are aligned to standards-based-to standards in their Tier 1 instruction tend to do better. They have higher growth for language development. It’s not that English learners don’t need interventions, specifically around English language development using appropriate curriculum. But interventions can’t be used instead of quality Tier 1 instruction.

Ms. Masewicz stated that the old paradigm is fixated on the interventions; the new paradigm is fixated on Tier 1 and providing the appropriate intervention in addition to the Tier 1 instruction. Tier 1 curriculum that provides support for teachers is critical to building capacity of all teachers across the state.

The Chair added that curriculum may be even less important than changing teacher practices and teacher attitudes.

Lorna James-Cervantes stated the curriculum has been adopted. It’s the appropriate curriculum for meeting the needs of EL students because they adopted the WIDA English Language Development Standards, which is tied to state curriculum, the Nevada Academic Content Standards. She stated it’s how they approach their work with ELs that’s the key to improving education for the students in the state of Nevada. She, too, is a proponent of the asset, or “additive” model.

Subcommittee Discussion: Work Items 2018-2019 (continued)

Lorna James-Cervantes stated that some schools in her district are starting to move in that direction, with the addition of AP courses (including AP Spanish) and a focus on academic language and literacy. Using an evidence-based tiered system is right for all students, as outlined in the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Diana Cantu asked do ZOOM schools have a particular curriculum that they're using and are those standards-based.

Ms. Cervantes replied that all teachers have access at any school to the newcomer and the long-term EL toolkit that are on the EL Department's website. Many materials in the curriculum that are being used in ZOOM schools for Tier 1 curriculum are in that toolkit. At the middle school level, there's a framework for schools to use with how teachers work with students throughout the school day, taking in mind how you might want to adjust class work, coursework, and scheduling for students with different needs. At the elementary level there are a few things that are available for any school in the district. There are some ZOOM novel units that have been created by district staff that you can actually get through Graphix. Those novel units are a way of embedding excellent EL strategies and models into instruction in a unit-based learning type of approach. There are even pre-K units of study that are very effective for students who are native speakers but just don't have that language background.

Ms. Cervantes stated that the focus is the Nevada Academic Content Standards and how teachers are making those standards accessible to kids through scaffolding. All students have to have opportunity and access to Tier 1 grade level instruction. And so, then how do we make that happen and how do we scaffold that? It's an expectation across all schools that teachers have to put children into that Tier 1 instruction at grade level and then figure out how, in a small group, to give them a text that would help them to meet that grade level standard and expectation or use other scaffolding techniques. It's more of a mindset and it's more of an approach to meeting the needs of those kids than it is having common curriculum materials that have been purchased for the students. It's helping kids in small groups with Tier 1 instruction. It's ensuring that kids are getting that full 120 minutes of English language arts that's in the literacy framework. It's researching and studying the materials available to all teachers on the NDE website. The focus should be the standards, and how to make them accessible.

Diana Cantu shared that in her school, the asset model is the main focus, but teachers are still struggling. They need help resourcing "concrete" lesson materials and best practices to deliver that Tier 1 instruction. Ms. Cantu thinks the new framework, with the accompanying toolkit and teacher support, will fill that gap and promote Tier 1 instruction.

Sophia Masewicz asked the Chair what was happening in Washoe County in regard to resources. The Chair stated that at the secondary level, teachers have complete autonomy in their classrooms as well as access to the Elevation data management program that aligns the students' proficiency levels to strategies and support and provides a way to monitor students.

Chair Talso stated that she would love to see a statewide focus on an asset-based model that really focuses on administrators first. She said the administrators must have buy-in for the program to work. Some secondary administrators do not understand the asset based model and instead they're focusing on SARs and graduation rates. They'll say, "Let's put all these kids in AP classes," whether they're ready for them or not, which is not in the students' best interests.

Ms. Masewicz shared a comment/observation – even 5 Star schools do not necessarily have equity. Some students are not given opportunities for advanced coursework. There are not opening opportunities for kids that might require scaffolding and support. And the data across the state shows over-identification of EL students in special education and under-identification of students in advanced programming.

Ms. Cervantes was in complete agreement with Ms. Masewicz. She stated they have to focus on all students and what all students need all of the time. She asked how they can best serve every single child in every single school in the state. Unless that's the mindset, then their job's not done. Ms. Cervantes agreed that asset orientation and an adaptive model has to be their focus. And maybe as a group the EMC should continue to support the planning and implementation of an equity model for students' success.

Subcommittee Discussion: Work Items 2018-2019 (continued)

Lorna James-Cervantes stated that it's not necessarily finding a list of instructional materials and saying, "This is what you should be using," but rather, "This is the approach that you should be taking to serve students across the state of Nevada." Teachers need to work with students from an asset and an equity lens rather than from a deficit model.

Karl Wilson stated that sometimes educators feel that good instructional strategies will meet the needs of all students, not understanding that there might need to be something additional to ensure that English learners accelerate. Strategies that help teachers design instruction that builds academic language, that's designed to benefit all students. It will especially help the English learners as it builds the opportunities for discourse and so forth. Of the twenty ZOOM schools that were identified last year in need of improvement (because their average growth percentile in the English language development was so low) 18 of the 20 showed at least double-digit improvement in the percent of English learners that were accelerating their English language development to be on track for English language development. The successful schools used high-quality Tier 1 instruction that ensured that students who were English learners had opportunities to develop language and interact with academic language. It did take some changes in terms of teacher understanding, expectation, and focus. Bottom line: effective schools focus on that asset perspective and ensuring that teachers understand and build on those assets by providing opportunities for academic language discourse.

Chair Talso asked if anyone had suggestions for the steps they could/should take at this juncture.

Ms. Cervantes had some ideas for next steps. She stated they should continue their work on the rollout of the ELL curriculum framework, which would include getting feedback and input from the teachers up through winter break. Then they would pilot the framework within schools, continuing to receive that information, then create a specific plan for professional development and rollout of that framework on a larger level while including administrators at the district level, including district level leaders in that work. And while they are doing that, they will encourage and help schools to use the ESSA framework for research-based strategies in selection of instructional materials for their students.

Chair Talso asked if they should craft some language emphasizing the asset-based model focusing on the evidence-based practices and add the language to the framework.

Ms. Cervantes stated maybe the place for that language would be the professional development material that will accompany the rollout of the framework in the state. It would be very explicit and explain the reasoning behind the work.

Ms. Masewicz stated she sees a connection with some of the work that the District Policy and Plans Subcommittee is doing. Maybe they should have deeper and extended conversation with the other subgroups about the equity piece.

Chair Talso wrapped up Agenda Item 6 by summarizing: they do want to continue to focus on the equity piece of it, potentially through either additional language in the framework and/or the professional development that goes along with that. And then secondly, to collaborate with one or both of the other subcommittees of the English Mastery Council to see how to move forward in unified language and unified intent.

Proposed Future District Policy Subcommittee Dates for 2018-2019

Members discussed various options for meeting dates. It was determined that February 28, 2019 will be the first meeting and April 30, 2019 the second. Chair Talso will announce this at the next full meeting and if other subcommittees want to join them, they are welcome to do so.

Public Comments #2

There were no public comments from either North or South.

Adjournment

After thanking everyone for their participation, Maija Talso, Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 10:27 AM.