

English Mastery Council

Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 23, 2019
9:00 AM

Meeting Locations:

Video Conference

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

Call to Order

Blakely Hume with the Nevada Department of Education called to order, from Las Vegas, the meeting of the NDE and English Mastery Council TESL subcommittee, at 9:02 AM on Wednesday, January 23, 2019.

Roll Call

Blakely Hume conducted a roll call. **Quorum was established.**

Committee Members present in Las Vegas: Lori Navarrete, Dr. Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola

Committee Members present in Carson City: Diane Barone, Barbara Harris

NDE Staff in attendance: Blakely Hume, Karl Wilson, Kathleen Collins, Kristen Withey, Valerie Seals

Mr. Hume announced that their fifth member, Melissa Esparza, is no longer with the Council, and they will be looking for a suitable nominee and hopefully procure one in the next month or so.

Pledge of Allegiance

Blakely Hume led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments #1

There were no public comments from Carson City or Las Vegas.

Approval of September 2, 2018 Minutes

Blakely Hume asked for a motion to approve the September 2, 2018 meeting minutes.

Motion: Dr. Barone moved to approve the September 2, 2018 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Duradola. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Hume stated that since Chair Navarrete had been elected as the Chair of this committee, he would turn the rest of the meeting over to her.

Approval of Flexible Agenda

Chair Navarrete asked for a motion to approve a flexible Agenda.

Motion: Diane Barone motioned to approve a flexible Agenda. Sharolyn Pollard-Duradola seconded the motion. Motion carried and a flexible Agenda was approved.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation

Chair Navarrete stated that the EMC and the TESL subcommittees both wanted to know what administrators needed to look for in terms of effective classroom practices in implementing the NEPF. Chair Navarrete introduced Dr. Kristen Withey.

Dr. Withey asked where in the NEPF does it address effective practices for teaching and assessment of EL's and what should school administrators look for to determine that teachers are using appropriate methods in class.

Dr. Withey gave an overview/background of the NEPF. The NEPF is a set of standards and indicators reflecting what educational personnel need to know and be able to do to foster student learning and growth. It also serves as that system of accountability that helps to inform human capital decisions, and it should serve as a system support and empower growth of educator's instructional practice through that continuous improvement cycle. Specifically, the goals are always to foster student learning and growth and to do that to improve educators' instructional practice. Two additional goals are informing that human capital decisions and to engage stakeholders in that continuous improvement and the monitoring of the professional growth system.

In 2011, AB 222 started this initiative towards building an NEPF or a statewide evaluation system. In AB 222, there were four performance levels indicated, highly effective, effective, minimally effective or ineffective and also indicated the use of statewide assessments to be used at no less than 50 percent of the evaluation. That also put forth the call to build Teachers and Leaders Council to guide the development. The Teachers and Leaders Council helps in the NEPF creation and guidance.

SB 407 during 2013 provided for a validation study and helped clarify the transition period between the old evaluation system the districts were using and the statewide NEPF. In 2015, there was the passage of AB 447 that clarified the timeline for implementation. In 2017, there was passage of AB 320, and that again worked on clarifying some of the language. It opted for a student learning goal or specifically removed the statewide performance measure, the statewide assessments, and built in the requirement that the Department of Education would build in a list of assessments that could be used for that student learning goal and how to measure progress towards that student learning goal.

Kat Collins added that it's the Department's responsibility to reach out to districts and get a list of assessments that are currently being used. There are criteria for assessments that are now in regulation. All of those things that go into a high-quality assessment are in that criteria for assessments to be used to measure progress towards the SLG. That just was recently put into regulation in the last few months. The criteria are in the NEPF protocols and can be accessed on the Department of Education website on the NEPF link.

Dr. Withey explained the Teachers and Leaders Council is a group of 16 multidisciplinary people, including policy people and other licensed personnel. They were charged with the development of the framework, and there are 10 frameworks that have now been implemented. The initial framework development occurred over a 15-month process with input from multiple stakeholders and experts. Optional implementation and piloting with validation study and professional development began in 2013 for the teachers' and administrators' framework.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation (continued)

Dr. Withey stated that they are in the fourth year of implementation for that building administrator and teacher protocol or framework. She stated they are in first year of implementation for most of our other licensed personnel groups. And they are in a pilot study year for principal, supervisor and educational audiologists. Currently, the Nevada Department of Education personnel are working with stakeholders to develop a toolkit and a rubric to support more local monitoring of the implementation of the NEPF.

There are two domains in the teacher NEPF. One is called educational practice. The other is student performance. Within educational practice, there are two subdomains. Instructional practice gets weighted at 45 percent for a teacher and professional responsibilities at 15 percent weight. Instructional practice is all of those behaviors that happen during the facilitation of learning. Professional responsibilities are those behaviors that teachers engage in outside of instruction that influence and prepare student learning and promote school effectiveness, school community. Under student performance there is a student learning goal weighted at 40 percent of the overall evaluation.

Dr. Withey gave an overview of the teacher instructional practice and professional responsibility standards. She stated more detailed information about indicators and standards could be found online. She had everyone look at their handouts outlining the five different standards and indicators for each of those standards and noted the handouts had a link to a summary of the literature review and the research behind those standards.

Dr. Withey stated that since the presentation was essentially about building the capacity of school administrators to understand whether or not their teachers were effectively meeting the needs of all students, there were handouts detailing the NEPF framework of school administrators to see where they might have the opportunity to support their teachers. This framework is broken up into two subdomains of practice and student performance. Within that educational practice site, there's instructional leadership practice and professional responsibilities. Instructional leadership specifically being behaviors specifically related to the monitoring of teacher performance. And then professional responsibilities is supporting teaching improvements or improvements in teacher practice and providing the structures that will support teachers to ensure success.

Kat Collins added that monitoring teacher performance and the system is designed so that they're providing feedback to improve teacher performance. An instructional leader is one that provides feedback and coaching even to highly effective educators so that they can continue to improve and meet the needs of all students. That's what it's designed for.

Dr. Withey stated the school administrator standard includes instructional leadership and professional responsibilities. Each has four standards with a number of indicators under it. There are a few that focus on supporting building the capacity of teachers or engaging in discussion, creating an environment in which teachers are able to work to support the needs of all learners.

The NEPF Evaluation Cycle has each process that a teacher would move through and an administrator would move through together to have that continuous feedback and that continuous improvement cycle. The first step in the evaluation cycle is the Educator Self-Assessment. They're to use a self-assessment tool to help identify strengths and identify areas that maybe they want to focus on to improve their practice for the year as well as to help identify what support might be needed. The next phase is Goal Setting and Plan Development. Teachers will share the self-assessment with their administrator and use that to then set goals for the year.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation (continued)

They have one student learning goal and one professional practice goal. The student learning goal is built off of student data that they have and built around the content area that they want to focus on.

Dr. Withey stated that teachers need to identify the student population that they want to be working with, what assessments they might use to measure this progress as well as their end goal, where they want to move their children to, their target, as well as the rationale why they think this should be what they want to focus on for the year. Teachers set one professional practice goal that's related to improving the educator's own practice so that they can support the other students to meet their student learning goal. And this should align well with the standards that they have kept as well as the students' needs. Teachers create action steps so that they can then meet the goal as well as pre-think of ways that they can show evidence or what evidence can be used to show whether or not they are working towards that professional practice and student learning goals.

The next phase moves into the implementation of the school year. There is evidence review and observation. During this time, administrator and teachers review the evidence that will be used to show that growth, identifying corresponding NEPF standards and identifying which standards align with the piece of evidence that they're currently using. It's important to note that one piece of evidence can be used for multiple standards of indicators

The teacher and the evaluator or administrator discuss an upcoming observation using the pre-imposed observation conference tool. Then the evaluator comes in and conducts the observation, recording evidence on the observation and evidence review tool. After the observation has been completed, teacher and evaluator come together again to discuss and share in reflection and feedback. It's important to note that each observation is not scored. Instead it is meant to serve as that dialog and as a way to identify possible areas that administrators need to provide a little bit more support.

There's a differentiated observation cycle, so a teacher in their probationary period or who has been rated ineffective previously is required to have more scheduled observations than a teacher who is not probationary or who has been rated highly effective previously. The minimum observations scheduled is one scheduled ranging all the way up through three scheduled and should include unscheduled observations as well.

Ms. Collins noted that the language on the rubrics is designed to be very broad because it needs to suit early childhood all the way through grade 12, everywhere from teaching in an autism classroom where there's nonverbal students to AP courses. It needs to suit the needs in multiple settings.

Dr. Withey stated after the observation component of that evaluation cycle, there's a mid-cycle goal review where they hold a conference mid-year to discuss progress towards attaining their performance goals, their professional practice goal as well as their student learning goal.

At this time, it should be discussed if a teacher might need some additional educational or educator assistance and there is a tool that then they can use to put them on an educational assistance pathway if the evaluator feels like maybe the teacher is going to be performing at an ineffective level. So, a way to engage in conversation and to strategize ways to support that educator. At the summative evaluation, administrators use the summative evaluation tool, where they gather all of their evidence over the course of time and they review that evidence to then determine performance levels at each indicator across all of the standards.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation (continued)

Dr. Withey stated that performance levels range from a 1 to a 4, and they input that, level 1 being ineffective up to level 4 being highly effective, into the summative evaluation tool.

Dr. Duradola asked about professional development opportunities for administrators. Ms. Collins explained the RPDE provides training sessions that dive into each standard – five sessions total, but these are not required trainings.

Ms. Collins added that there is an NEPF monitoring advisory group going on right now. Part of AB 320 that passed in the 17 Legislative Session gave the Department some additional authority in monitoring of the implementation of the NEPF. It required local school boards to present information on how the implementation is going in their districts, and it spelled out some responsibilities for the State Board of Education on monitoring that implementation. This group is working on developing the tool kit for districts to use in monitoring of the NEPF, but it's also developing the rubric by which the departments will be monitoring the monitoring. This rubric will be used by the Department to monitor how districts are implementing the NEPF.

Dr. Withey went into more detail about the summative evaluation tools. These tools are prescribed by the State Board of Education and are the required tools that are supposed to be used by districts in the implementation of the NEPF unless they've applied to use an alternate tool. Dr. Withey showed some examples of how to use the tool. After that summative evaluation score, teachers can check against the score ranges that are approved annually by the State Board to see what range they fall into, highly effective, effective, developing. There are also summaries of evidence that show which pieces of evidence were used to then build that final summative score for each standard indicator.

Ms. Collins added the protocols require two sources of evidence for each indicator and reminded everyone that one source of evidence can be used for multiple standards and indicators. An administrator goes through everything, goes through the evidence that they've written down, that they've observed at the pre-imposed observation conferences, from the post-observation review notes and they determine performance levels based on the content of that observation, the level of facilitation of learning that took place, and then they assign the score of a one through four based on that evidence.

Ms. Collins went on to say that currently the Department does not provide training on NEPF. They have absolutely no budget or any kind of training on any of this work. They have one person who supports all ten frameworks. They've invested some Title 2A funds to work in conjunction with the Standards and Instructional Support Office to try and develop out aligned learning tasks that would align with the foundational standards that would inform SLG's, but that's in the very beginning stages. They need to form a group that would be able to create a document that does some cross walking, but look forwards for EL's, things that would help administrators identify what they should and should not be doing, but there are no funds to do that.

Dr. Duradola stated she thought this sounded like a grant candidate. There are grants that look at English Learners specifically around teachers and professional development. She stated she would look into that.

Ms. Collins replied it's definitely something that they know is needed, but they just don't right now have the capacity to do that themselves. They would need Karl and his team and Blakely and his team to help.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation (continued)

Chair Navarrete wondered how higher education could help. She stated that she was envisioning a summer institute where the instructors of ELAD courses could get together and help develop this crosswalk, because they need to be teaching the crosswalk in their classes.

Chair Navarrete asked how is the NEPF evaluation being realized in the evaluation of student teachers, are para-educators and SPTA's also getting trained in what the NEPF is and their responsibilities.

Ms. Collins replied there is not much data on that. They are working on realigning the educator prep program approval process and making sure the alignment to the NEPF is included within that because it is the statewide system. Regarding the training for paraprofessionals and so forth, the burden is on the RPDE's in their districts.

Dr. Withey went on to give an overview of the Nevada English Language Development Standards. These were developed by Dr. Sophia Masewicz and her team. The ELD standards are meant to be used in conjunction with the academic content standards to help articulate the practices, knowledge and skills that students will need with the understanding that language and academic content developed simultaneously versus one before the other; it's meant to build the skills in both areas at the same time.

So, the ELD standards are structured as five standards altogether. Dr. Masewicz and her team are also building instructional guidance documents that provide clarity for the utilization of these standards alongside the academic content standards meant to really highlight and reveal that connection between those ELD standards and the content standards. There is an alignment with NEPF.

Mr. Wilson reminded everyone the English Language Development Standards that Nevada uses are the WIDA standards, and so the project that Dr. Masewicz and her group of colleagues is working on isn't to redevelop or to change those standards, but to make those standards more accessible to classroom teachers.

Dr. Withey stated the ELD standards are meant to crosscut and be that connection between the academic content standards and the disciplinary practices that support the needs of the English learners. Practices specifically refer to those behaviors that are essential to developing skills in each of these areas so that the behaviors that they can use to then engage in mathematics or engage in science, social studies and English Language Arts. They have created a visual of the way that these pieces correspond with the ELD standards and the content practices. They also have provided common terms that they use when looking at the ELD framework, the supporting documents that will be coming out this upcoming year. The next phase of this document moves into looking at teacher practices. It provides what language and supports a teacher would provide for students at the entering emerging level or the developing expanding level or the bridging reaching level, and gives some actual examples of things that could be included in instruction. She asked if the language demand was such that we were in English Language Arts analyzing a range of grade level complex tasks, then what would they want to see a teacher doing and including. An example of an ELD standard and the way it was structured was displayed and discussed.

Dr. Withey showed how on the document they break down the different language demands and what language supports will be provided to process and produce language. Included is how will students be able to use language to collaborate or how will students be able to use language to interpret and make meaning and they show differentiated ways to meet the needs of all learners at their different levels of language acquisition.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation (continued)

Dr. Withey stated that there's an NEPF alignment part that shows teachers what parts of lessons would align with NEPF standards. Right now, this is only part of the ELA disciplinary practices, but there are plans to include the other three content areas in the future.

Dr. Duradola expressed her concern that because of funding that maybe some people might attend trainings and maybe other administrators may not attend trainings. And that's a red flag. If these opportunities and tools are not utilized to fidelity purposes you're not making progress.

Ms. Collins stated the Department is trying to address that without mandating training because the whole financial issue. It's a multi-pronged approach, looking at ed prep programs, making sure educators are coming out prepared in common language of what the expectations are for administrators and for teachers. This is common language with which to build talent, and these are the expectations of where they want our talent to get to. One of the possible next steps would be looking at these ELD standards, doing that cross up with NEPF, but then adding an appendix to the protocols or to the rubric.

Dr. Duradola suggested the use of state exemplar videos that can be used for multiple purposes. Multimedia platforms can accelerate the experience of learning or acquiring knowledge and putting it into practice.

Chair Navarrete stated the EMC can consider grants like the great teacher leaders grant that is coming up. There is a need for this training in higher ed. Not just for those four classes that are required, but also for student teachers getting ready to go out. This is the only way they're going to make big change, starting off with new teachers and then also those at practice. Another avenue is the new TESL organization with this being the focus of a conference, the NEPF with a crosswalk for ELL's and just training that could happen at a conference. Institutions could put in money to support this, too.

Ms. Collins stated they could look at possibly using some of their Title 2A state activities funds to help support the professional development. She stated she would definitely talk to their interim deputy about it.

There was a discussion about different grants available, expanding training, working with different stakeholders across the state, and possible conference presentations.

Dr. Duradola emphasized the importance of developing a "tool kit" and making a list of stakeholders and prioritizing where to begin. She stated this work is energizing in that they've got a start for something that could impact quality of instruction in the state.

Mr. Wilson stated one of the real milestones of the English Mastery Council was to make recommendations both to the Commission on Professional Standards and to the State Board of Education related to teacher licensure and that that is a big chunk of who is going to be working with students, future teachers coming through Nevada's systems of higher education. Should the EMC be thinking about making recommendations for future administrators coming through Nevada's systems of higher education to include in their course work essentials about what do you look for in terms of serving English learners from an instructional perspective?

Ms. Collins stated this should be a topic to highlight as revisions are being made to program approval requirements. It doesn't need to be a specific course, but something that's embedded throughout the program itself and part of the program's approval process.

NEPF Standards and Indicators Presentation (continued)

Chair Navarrete stated that it makes sense to add that as one of the evaluation criteria in the evaluation criteria programming.

Dr. Barone invited everyone to come to UNR and see their revamped principal program. It's a cohort program and it's collaborative with the school district, so it meets all the current standards including diversity and looking at language, and all of their students take courses taught by a professor at UNR and also a principal in the district. Students are mentored by principals in the district to see how those standards play out. It's a working model of how you can take the theoretical knowledge of the standards and then see them in practice.

Chair Navarrete stated that they've got some next steps outlined that will be shared at the EMC meeting coming up in a week, and then from there they'll determine how to prioritize and operationalize those next steps. She thanked Ms. Collins and Dr. Withey for their presentation, their resources, their guidance, and for their hard work.

Presentation: Debunking TESL Myths

Chair Navarrete stated the EMC and TESL Subcommittee had suggested creating a document that addresses myths about educating ELL's. She and Mr. Hume have been working on it and she shared some of the general aspects of this work in progress. There are myths that are factual that had no follow-up recommendations, i.e. all ELL's are born outside of the United States are immigrants. And then you have myths with recommendations of what should happen, i.e. teacher should model or use visual aids.

The general view was that each myth should have information that actually dispels the myth in the form of a fact with some resources to back up the facts that are presented. The myths should be limited to 10-15. The myths should be separated into fact-only verses those with recommendations. The myths should share common terminology. The cited research should be current.

Dr. Duradola asked if a document could be prepared for the next EMC meeting that would list the myths so that the EMC could discuss and prioritize the myths in order of importance. The EMC may have suggestions about how the content should be organized based upon the use of the tools, based up on how they would like to use the tool, and it may vary by subcommittee.

ELAD Implementation in NSHE Institutions

Chair Navarrete stated NDE conducted a seminar for the NSHE institutions in the fall with guidance as to how to embed the 12 credits of TESL into the elementary programs. Dr. Duradola presented facts with questions and answers that institutions might have about how to embed the TESL courses and the curriculum. The question came up do they need to do this again? Is there a need to conduct a webinar for embedding the TESL courses into secondary education programs? Is there a need for another webinar with other information for NSHE institutions?

Dr. Duradola stated it might be helpful for those who are at the different institutions to have a discussion about secondary ed. All of their discussions have revolved around pre-K through fifth or sixth grade to date. It may be easier to start with their own institutions around secondary education programs in terms of what are their needs and their obstacles.

Chair Navarrete stated she would like to have a set of questions so that they're all collecting the same information. She stated she can start by drafting a few questions in terms of what they want to find out about institutions and then she'd be happy to run it by a few people on the TESL Subcommittee to get input. Dr. Duradola stated Chair Navarrete might want to start with the questions that they initially prepared a few years ago. They were systematic questions with a matrix of accompanying tables.

Dr. Barone asked Is this just an NSHE requirement for the ELAD or will those other teacher prep programs have to also bring in the ELAD courses? Is it a licensing issue?

Mr. Hume stated yes, it is a licensing requirement. The Department of Education doesn't have the authority to go to each NSHE institution and state you have to have these classes, but as part of the licensing requirements, it would behoove the institutions to be able to apply and prepare programs.

Chair Navarrete stated the takeaway from the last two agenda items is that she and Blakely have two big things to meet about, the debunking TESL myths document for immediate presentation at EMC and then also the review of the questions that they want to solicit to the four institutions. She wondered about preparing a survey to send to all the higher ed institutions.

Dr. Duradola wondered about a webinar that specifically focuses on the issues that are present at secondary education programs. Chair Navarrete stated the presentation they heard today could be a webinar that is also offered to NSHE institutions around the intersection of the ELD standards and the NEPF.

Public Comments #2

There were no public comments from Las Vegas or Carson City.

Adjournment

Chair Lori Navarrete asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Diane Barone motioned to adjourn the meeting and Barbara Harris seconded the motion. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.