

English Mastery Council District Policy & Criteria Planning Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Wednesday, February 26, 2020
9:00 AM

Meeting Locations:

Video Conference

OFFICE	LOCATION	ROOM
Department of Education	2080 E. Flamingo Road Las Vegas Nevada	Bighorn Conference Room
Department of Education	700 East Fifth Street Carson City Nevada	Battle Born Conference Room

Call to Order; Roll Call; Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Blakely Hume, Education Programs Professional with the Nevada Department of Education called the English Mastery Council District Policy and Criteria Planning Subcommittee Meeting to order at 9:00 AM on Wednesday, February 26, 2020. A roll call was conducted and **quorum was established** (3 members present).

Subcommittee Members Present:

Laurel Crossman
Gladis Diaz
Paula Zona

Others Present:

Blakely Hume
Karl Wilson
Mindy Montoya

Mr. Hume led the group in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments #1

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

Approval of Flexible Agenda

Motion: Approve Flexible Agenda
By: Laurel Crossman
Second: Paula Zona
Vote: Passed unanimously

Mr. Hume said they would utilize the flexible agenda in order to have Mr. Wilson join them for Agenda Item 7. Mr. Wilson was participating in another meeting and would join them later.

Approval of April 4, 2019 Meeting Minutes

The members reviewed the Minutes, and there were no changes or corrections.

Motion: Approve April 4, 2019 Meeting Minutes
By: Paula Zona
Second: Laurel Crossman
Vote: Passed unanimously

Election of Subcommittee Chair 2019-2020

Mr. Hume explained that the Chair would be the person selected to run the subcommittee for the rest of the year. The Chair would attend subcommittee meetings as well as the full EMC meetings. This year's Chair would have a very short term – from March to July. Mr. Hume asked for volunteers, and Ms. Crossman volunteered.

Motion: Elect Laurel Crossman as Chair of District Policy & Criteria Planning Subcommittee
By: Gladis Diaz
Second: Paula Zona
Vote: Passed unanimously

Mr. Hume congratulated Chair Crossman, thanked her for her willingness to serve, and passed the baton over to her to run the rest of the meeting.

Spring 2019 District Policy Recommendations

Chair Crossman asked others for their recollections about previous recommendations.

Mr. Hume said their subcommittee got together and crafted recommendations a few different times. There was a plan to have a joint subcommittee meeting with the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee, but when they met to have that joint subcommittee meeting, only the District Policy was able to have quorum, so the Standards and Curriculum people were not able to vote. They were only there as a presence. They did discuss later in their own meeting the approval for the recommendations, but that was based off of what had been discussed.

Mr. Hume said the draft they had in hand is what their subcommittee came up with. He stated they could redraft and it could be presented to the full EMC. When they went to the EMC last May, there was no formal vote to approve the recommendations or put them forward.

Chair Crossman said the first English Learner Plan recommendations was that all school districts must submit a detailed EL plan to implement their EL policy, regardless of the number of ELs in the district and even if there are no ELs currently identified in the district.

Ms. Zona provided the changes that were recommended when they teleconferenced with Las Vegas as a whole EMC: 1) "submit" changed to "create"; 2) "districts" (plural) changed to "district" (singular); and 3) "Gate" changed to be in all caps because it's an acronym.

Mr. Hume said they could make the revisions and then vote to approval all.

Ms. Diaz asked if this would be a joint recommendation from the two subcommittees.

Chair Crossman asked if they changed the subcommittees' makeup.

Mr. Hume said yes, the Standards and Curriculum Subcommittee was no longer in existence, and given the new charge of English Proficiency and Academic Achievement Subcommittee and given the number of people in the committee, they thought it would be better to resume some work from Standards and Curriculum into other areas. When Standards and Curriculum last met, they didn't add anything new to the recommendations.

Spring 2019 District Policy Recommendations (continued)

Mr. Hume said since the District Policy only met that day and did not have voting procedures from Standards, the Chair could provide the recommendations to the EMC along with a little bit of history that said they met, they discussed, and these were the recommendations that were drafted as a subcommittee with support from Standards and Curriculum.

Chair Crossman asked did the Standards and Curriculum Committee approve the recommendations in a separate subcommittee meeting. Mr. Hume said they went forward, and their separate subcommittee agreed and approved.

Chair Crossman said their goal was to take the recommendations to the State Board of Education so that the districts that did not have English Learner plans could create them ASAP. She stated they could add in areas where the EMC felt they needed to improve or make changes. The Chair asked if they needed to take a motion to go forward with this. Mr. Hume thought that would be the prudent thing to do.

Motion: Approve the Current District Policy Recommendations with two minor changes and then bring the recommendations forward to the full English Mastery Council

By: Gladis Diaz

Second: Paula Zona

Vote: Passed unanimously

Mr. Hume said he would make those changes and send the updated document out to everyone. At the full EMC meeting on March 3, the District Policy can briefly go over their discussion and submit the recommendations. Part of their charge is to bring recommendations to the State Board. Since the subcommittees only exist in the universe of the English Mastery Council, it would be with English Mastery Council bringing it forward to the State Board.

2019-2020 District Policy Review Discussion

Mr. Hume said they should procure and review the recommendations they crafted last year.

Chair Crossman asked do they want to review the policies or the plans this year. The first year they reviewed the policies, and the second year they reviewed the plans, which were measuring how they were implementing the policies.

Mr. Wilson said in that initial review by NDE staff, feedback was provided if there were policies that were missing, and so the process that they used for submitting their plans was part of the monitoring process and there was feedback provided through that mechanism. They received feedback on their plans from NDE staff based on what was reviewed.

Mr. Wilson said the information that the subcommittee drafted still needs to have formal approval from the EMC to be forwarded to the state board and to the districts as feedback from the English Mastery Council.

Chair Crossman said their subcommittee wouldn't want to give direct feedback to each of the individual districts on their English Learner plans. The subcommittee came up with five recommendations, and their course of action should be to take that to the State Board of Education to say these are the recommendations based on their review. If that's adopted by the state, then NDE will then look at the plans to make sure that those are implemented.

Mr. Wilson shared a few major points from Assembly Bill 219 that have a direct impact on the English Mastery Council. He said Section 1.4 of AB 219 very specifically requires LEAs to develop a plan to ensure implementation of their district EL policy. There are components that detail how to implement those things.

Mr. Wilson said this section specifically requires that there be a plan that accompanies the policy. That really is in alignment with what was expected in the past, but now it's codified.

Mr. Wilson said Section 1.4 does refer to NRS 388.407, which establishes the requirement that each district develop a policy for the instruction to teach English Learners. When you go down to Subsection 3, there is a new provision added and it says, "The Board of Trustees of a school district shall adopt a plan to ensure that a policy adopted pursuant to this section achieves the objectives prescribed by paragraph (c)." And that paragraph (c) is referring to closing the achievement gap. Then Subsection 4 directs the Department to monitor the implementation of the policy and the plan, and those are the major provisions there.

Chair Crossman said it sounded like several of their recommendations are actually now statute, like the recommendation that they just approved that all districts should create a detailed EL plan. She said they can still make those recommendations and as they present to the State Board of Education, they can say this recommendation is consistent with this statute requirement.

Mr. Wilson said that was a sound idea. He stated they can say based on the reviews that have been done over the last few years and things that the subcommittee has identified, there are specific recommendations, and those are supported based on new statutory requirements as a result of AB 219.

Mr. Wilson said there are several other major provisions of AB 219. One of them is that school districts are to include in their annual accountability report the progress of English Learners compared to non-English Learners in academic achievement and also that that needs to be disaggregated across newcomers in terms of short-term English Learners and long-term English Learners.

Mr. Wilson said there are provisions within AB 219 that specifically talk about the public reporting of data related to English Learners. The section that has probably been the most widely publicized is that under Section 1.2 of AB 219, the principals of schools who are identified in the lowest 30 percent of achievement for English Learners are required to develop a corrective action plan and to post that on their website. The Superintendent's office at the Nevada Department of Education distributed a guidance document that outlines the requirements related to the corrective action plans and identified which schools were required to develop that corrective action plan.

Mr. Wilson said the statute under Section 1.2 of AB 219 doesn't specifically talk about English language proficiency and growth. It talks about the academic performance of English Learners. NDE is looking at how well students did in English Language Arts and Math assessments. It is not tied directly to STAR ratings, but it looks at the percent of English Learners who are proficient on the English Language Arts assessment for elementary and middle school. That's SBAC, for both English Language Arts and Math, and then for high school, looking at scores on the ACT just for English Learners.

Mr. Wilson said what the Office of Assessment and Accountability did was identify a pool of proficiency which looked at English Language Arts and Math and then rank ordered all of the schools from high to low that had a minimum of 10 EL students in the school to look at the performance of all schools. The schools that were at the 30th percentile and below were notified that they needed to do a corrective action plan, which would be to look at the root causes for low English Learner performance and then to develop specific goals and strategies to address the academic needs of English Learners.

Mr. Wilson said there are some schools that have been developing corrective action plans based on growth and English language proficiency. This is a different lens. It's looking at academic performance for English Learners. But if a school had been developing a corrective action plan based on lack of progress in English language development, they could incorporate the corrective action plan requirements into an existing corrective action plan. It does not have to be a separate document, and that's a school choice.

2019-2020 District Policy Review Discussion (continued)

Mr. Wilson said those were developed in the fall and submitted the third week in December, and staff has been reviewing those to provide feedback to the districts and schools.

Mr. Wilson said an additional NDE resource for AB 219 is Guidance Memorandum number 19-07 from the State Superintendent.

Chair Crossman asked do they still need to figure out what are they reviewing this year for the annual review. Mr. Hume replied no, the NDE team is doing the reviews. Moving forward with the recommendations to the EMC will complete their charge for last year. As far as this year's charge, between now and the next district policy meeting they will determine what those next steps will be in providing the information to districts and then asking for implementation and how that might move forward. They can't move forward until they get that information back from the districts. He said since they are in the middle of the year, they would need time to implement that. It might very well be that they receive their plans with the pertinent information at the end of the year and this might be a fall review process for this past year.

Chair Crossman said they need to get their recommendations approved and that information will go back out to all the districts and the committee will do a review in the fall of the plans based on implementation.

Mr. Hume said they will be presenting the recommendations at the next EMC meeting and those will move forward to the State Board. He said there will be feedback with the districts and plans received in the summer and then their review will commence in the fall.

Discussion & Next Steps Regarding Lowest Performing Students

Chair Crossman said they needed to discuss how to address the new charge that the English Mastery Council has been given. The English Mastery Council is charged not only to make recommendations for improvement of education for English Learners, but also for those students who perform in the lowest 25th percent of academic achievement in the English Language Arts. She asked should there be a policy that says here are the best practices the districts should implement and is this something where they need to dig in and do extra research.

Mr. Hume said they should examine the recommendation that moved forward and then they could discuss how this specific recommendation would fit in with the kind of recommendation that they just went over and made changes to. He asked would the lowest performing fit into those categories and how might it do that in terms of policy.

Mr. Hume said the recommendation that came forward was to make recommendations to the State Board to improve the English proficiency and academic achievement of pupils who are not English Learners who have scored at or below the 25th percentile in the subject area of English Language Arts in examination pursuant to NRS 390.105. He said this is only ELA and does not have to do with math, and it doesn't necessarily apply to ELs.

Chair Crossman asked did this mean every district was required to have a policy on ELs. There is no requirement to have a policy on lowest quartile in English Language Arts.

Mr. Hume read what their original charge was for how it affects policy from NRS 388.407: "The Board of Trustees of each school district shall develop a policy for the instruction to teach English to pupils who are limited English proficient. The policy must be designed to provide pupils in rurals and each public school located in the school district who are English Learners with instruction that enables those pupils to attain English proficiency in English language, improve their overall academic achievement."

Discussion & Next Steps Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

“The policy developed should a) provide for the identification of pupils who are English Learners through the use of appropriate assessment, b) provide for the periodic reassessment of pupils who are classified as English Learners, c) be designed to eliminate any gaps in achievement including, without limitation, in the core academic subjects in the high school graduation rate between those pupils who are English Learners and those who are English proficient, d) provide opportunities for parents or guardians of English Learners, and e) provide parents and legal guardians of pupils who are English Learners with information regarding other programs designed to improve language acquisition, academic achievement, proficiency of pupils or limited English who are English Learners.”

Mr. Hume said added to the recommendations was to improve the English proficiency and academic achievement of pupils who are not English Learners and have scored in the lowest 25 percent with regard to ELA, English Language Arts.

Chair Crossman asked does that require a separate policy or can that be put under the same EL policies and plans already there. She said everyone wants all students to be proficient in English, but they’re talking about two different types of students and two different types of instruction.

Ms. Zona said she thought for districts to be able to come up with a policy to focus solely on their bottom quartile students, it necessarily wouldn’t always be the same students, and so she thinks it should be separate.

Ms. Diaz said the districts already have a set curriculum, and they’re going to be asking for something special just for those students. She asked SPED students mentioned at all. Mr. Hume said SPED students were not mentioned.

Mr. Hume said the first six charges for the English Mastery Council were specifically geared for English Learners. This new recommendation has been added in and the new recommendation is not saying they need to incorporate number 7 into each of the six original charges. It seems like each category would have English Learners and perhaps lowest quartile.

Chair Crossman said it was not clear if the statute was requiring them to make a policy for academic achievement, or just make recommendations to improve it. She asked what the criteria is and what are the best practices that should be included in a district’s plan to address the educational needs of these students. She said maybe it’s an individualized language class that they do with Read by 3.

Ms. Diaz said students can be put on ILPs, or Individualized Language Plans, part of Individualized Language English Proficiency Plans.

Ms. Zona said the problem with quartiles was that there’s always going to be a bottom quartile. She said if the intent of the law is to reduce the number of students in the bottom quartile, what is the most practical way to get that done. She asked is that focusing on the curriculum that they’re exposed to and is it focusing on length of day or exposure to English Language Arts.

Chair Crossman said maybe they don’t need yet another policy on that.

Ms. Diaz said she would like to take this question back to her staff. She said as a Council they are supposed to make a recommendation to the State Board on what to do to improve academic achievement. She would like to hear from those that do it every day.

Mr. Hume said what he was hearing was that to add a new policy or a new separate set of recommendations to each one of the big recommendations based on lowest performing might not be ideal.

Discussion & Next Steps Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Mr. Hume said maybe they're not trying to do that. Maybe they don't add a full other recommendation. Maybe just add small components to what already exists if that's appropriate.

Chair Crossman asked if there had been any guidance on the interpretation of the statute number 7. She said they don't list "and" plus it's not that you do all of those things, so maybe 7 is separate from all of the preceding six.

Mr. Hume said those were excellent points. He asked should they take number 7 by itself as its own recommendation, which would be the academic. He said you could call it the EP & AA. He asked would the EP & AA Subcommittee create their own recommendations. If they're creating their recommendations, he asked how they are doing that and are they doing it based on information from the other six.

Mr. Hume asked should they take that crafted number 7 recommendation about lowest performing and slot it into the other requirements where it's appropriate.

Chair Crossman said she wasn't sure that it would need to be slotted into the areas but may just be that those are separate recommendations. She said maybe they don't need to have a district policy that says you need to make an individualized learning plan for all students in the lowest quartile.

Ms. Zona said they already have that because of the Read by Grade 3 requirement. She said it is required for every student already functioning in English Language Arts at 40 percent or below. That is the ILP, the Individualized Learning Plan. It already exists for the students in the bottom of the 40th percentile and below.

Mr. Hume said this sounded like the literacy component of an IEP.

Ms. Diaz said they use MAPs (Measurement of Academic Progress) Assessments to identify students who score 40 percent or lower. She said they found a correlation that students that perform in the 41st percentile or above should be proficient on statewide MAPs. The ILP is what they're doing for those students to help them become proficient for statewide testing.

Chair Crossman said she didn't think the bottom quartile students needed a second plan but asked should there be additional consideration in that plan for those that are lower and are there best practices in place. She asked is it afterschool programs or more small group tutoring. She asked what is it that is working with the individualized learning plan. She said it seems like that would be the kind of recommendations that they could make.

Mr. Hume asked if the ILPs were reviewed on any kind of annual basis. He said if the charge of their subcommittee was to review the English Learner policies and now there's the recommendation to determine the lowest 25th percentile, he asked is there anybody that reviews that ILP plan in the same kind of way. He asked if they are reviewing those English Learner policies and they have that recommendation of working with the lowest quartile, is there any kind of way to either subsume them in review or do they not need to be reviewed? He said maybe they don't because whoever is developing the ILP, it's not the EMC. He said maybe the recommendation should be that those are reviewed by another group or maybe they don't need to be reviewed.

Ms. Zona detailed how the annual ILPs are created: a plan is crafted for a student based on their fall MAP scores. The teacher has 30-45 days to meet with the parents and craft what the plan will be. The teacher, parent and administrator sign it, then the student takes a winter MAP and they see how they're doing. The goals can change if the student is meeting the goals of the plan, and other goals can be added. She said some can come off and anything that is changed, the parent then resigns the new copy with the teacher.

Discussion & Next Steps Regarding Lowest Performing Students (continued)

Ms. Zona said the administration at the school progress monitors it monthly.

Chair Crossman said that legislation requires that each school has a learning strategist for language support, and with Read by 3, the districts were required to do these ILPs even if the districts received no grant money, they were still required to implement the learning strategist and the ILPs.

Mr. Hume asked if there was a structure in the same kind of way that their subcommittee reviews EL plans, is that process being done, and does it need to be done for the ILPs. He asked is there criteria for what an ILP should have in it and who sets that criteria.

Ms. Diaz said their literacy specialist helps with weekly monitoring.

Ms. Zona said at her school the administrators review the ILPs for the individual students.

Mr. Hume said it sounded like Members were thinking it's probably not the purview of their subcommittee to say let's create a new policy. The members all said that was correct.

Mr. Hume said if that is set by Read by Grade 3 in law, then so be it. He said the question would be how the EMC could support that and is there room for the English Proficiency and Academic Achievement Subcommittee to make recommendations to whoever is doing the ILP. He said that might be an opportunity for their subcommittee and English Proficiency and Academic Achievement Subcommittee to get together and perhaps convey that information, see if there's agreement there and say okay, this subcommittee can continue in district policy as being a separate issue. He said those are questions they should be asking.

Chair Crossman said they should look and compare what ILPs look like across the state and see if they are consistent with what the statute intended.

Ms. Zona asked does there need to be something extra for those kids that are stuck in the 1 to 25 percent and is the current ILP helping.

Mr. Hume suggested they distill their discussion into key points to bring to the EMC.

Public Comments #2

There were no public comments from either North or South.

Adjournment

Chair Crossman asked if the subcommittee needed to meet before the full EMC meeting.

Mr. Hume said probably not, but they should keep April 7 open just in case. He said could keep in touch via email.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending the meeting and adjourned the meeting at 10:50 AM.