MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE TASK FORCE ON K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING
Senate Bill 500, 2013 Legislature
February 28, 2014

The second meeting of the Task Force on K-12 Public Education Funding was held at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, February 28, 2014, at the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Room 4412, Las Vegas, with videoconference to the Nevada Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Room 4100, Carson City, Nevada.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:
Senator Moises Denis, Chairman
Assemblywoman Lucy Flores, Vice Chair
Senator Michael Roberson
Assemblyman Pat Hickey
Bob Burnham
Denette Corrales
Marc Hechter
Pedro Martinez
James McIntosh
Stephanie Smith

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:
Dale Erquiaga
Andrew Fromdahl
Tom McCormack
Dawn Miller
Judy Osgood

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:
None

STAFF:
Mark Krmpotic, Senate Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Cindy Jones, Assembly Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Julie Waller, Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Wayne Thorley, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Eileen O'Grady, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel
Kristin Roberts, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel
Donna Thomas, Committee Secretary

EXHIBITS:

Exhibit A	American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada – Testimony for Task Force on K-12 Public Education Funding – Amanda Morgan, Attorney
Exhibit B	English Language Learner Funding – Michael Griffith, School Finance Consultant, Education Commission of the States
Exhibit C	Clark County School District – K-12 Funding Task Force Presentation
Exhibit D	English Language Learners – Washoe County School District
Exhibit E	Presentation from Jeff Zander, Superintendent, Elko County School District
Exhibit F	NASS Academic Support for ELL – Jeff Zander
Exhibit G	Testimony Provided by the Latino Leadership Council – Jose Solorio and Sylvia Lazos
Exhibit H	At-Risk Funding – Michael Griffith, School Finance Consultant, Education Commission of the States
Exhibit I	Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty – Clark County School District
Exhibit J	Support and Accountability to Address School and Student Risk in Washoe County School District – Washoe County School District
Exhibit K	NASS At-Risk Services Presentation – Paul Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, White Pine County School District
Exhibit L	Written Testimony Provided by Dr. Lori Navarrete, Professor, Nevada State College (distributed but not discussed)

I. ROLL CALL.

Chair Moises Denis called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. The secretary called roll; all members were present.

Chair Denis reviewed some housekeeping procedures for the meeting and asked committee members, and anyone testifying, to turn their microphones on to speak and off to listen. In addition, all witnesses should clearly state their name before speaking. Anyone appearing before the committee with a prepared text should furnish a copy of the material to the secretary for the record, in addition to a business card. He requested that everyone in attendance sign the attendance roster, even if they did not wish to testify. Lastly, he asked everyone to turn off or mute their cell phones during the meeting.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Amanda Morgan, Staff Attorney, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Nevada, thanked the committee for the opportunity to testify. She said that the ACLU of Nevada is deeply committed to ensuring that Nevada's constitutional guarantees regarding education are meaningful. She testified from Las Vegas and provided the following written testimony (Exhibit A).

As emphasized in the Nevada Supreme Court, in *Guinn v. Legislature of State of Nevada,*

"Nevada's Constitution clearly expressed the vital role that education plays in our state in Article 11," and **"[o]ur Constitution's framers strongly believed that each child should have the opportunity to receive a basic education** and their views resulted in a Constitution that places great importance on education. **Its provisions demonstrate that education is a basic constitutional right in Nevada."**

As the committee would likely explore at the meeting, Nevada's educational system is failing its students, especially those who are poor, at risk or English Language Learners (ELL). The state has the nation's highest high school drop-out rate and the worst graduation rate. The state of Nevada finds itself at the bottom of every good list and top of every bad list. The following measures of educational achievement (from prior year) demonstrate that the education system in Nevada has crumbled.

- Highest high school drop-out rate (6% annually) and the worst graduation rate (62%) in the nation.
- Nevada's fourth graders rank 43rd in math and 44th in reading proficiency on national standardized exams.
- Nevada's eighth graders rank 44th in math and 48th in reading proficiency on national standardized exams.
- Nevada ranked 49th in adults between the ages of 18 and 24 with a high school diploma and 50th in adults ages 25 and 34 with a bachelor's degree.
- Nevada's growing population of ELL, estimated 70,000, are graduating at a rate of 29 percent and are suffering from some of the worst achievement gaps in the country.

Ms. Morgan said that one must ask, how did this come to pass? The culprit is Nevada's antiquated funding scheme and the state's refusal to fund to the cost of providing an adequate education. Notably, Nevada just received an "F," the lowest rating in the United States for the fairness of its state funding system, as well as its abysmal funding effort, in the January 2014, "Is School Funding Fair? A National Report Card," publication from the Education Law Center.

Ms. Morgan said the that ACLU believed that Nevada should take a fundamentally new approach in addressing the educational needs of its students, and must reform. The *Nevada Plan* no longer meets the needs of the students or the state, and should be abandoned. The state must address the particular needs of students in poverty, those who are at risk, and those who are ELL. It must also fully commit to funding levels identified in the very research initiated at the Legislature's behest. Formulation based

on one study mandated that the Legislature increase education funding for ELL to $145 million and this does not include the needed additional funding for at-risk and poor students, and funding overall. Without this investment, the children of the state will be lost.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 31, 2014, MEETING.

MS. SMITH MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 31, 2014, MEETING OF THE TASK FORCE ON K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. HECHTER.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. OVERVIEW OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER (ELL) STUDENT POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE FUNDING MECHANISMS UTILIZED BY OTHER STATES TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR ELL STUDENTS.

Chair Denis introduced Mike Griffith, Senior Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States, who will testify via teleconference. He said that Mr. Griffith has worked in the field of school finance policy for 17 years with the Education Commission of the States, the Denver-based consulting firm of Augenblick and Myers, and the Michigan State Senate. His research focused on the condition of state budgets, the adequacy and equity of state finance formulas and promising practices in funding programs for high need students.

Mr. Griffith stated that his organization represented 49 states, 3 territories and the District of Columbia. The Education Commission of the States is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides policy advice and recommendations to states about education issues. The Commission is an unbiased contributor to the education policy discussion and does not advocate for certain education laws or policies. He added that his expertise was in school finance. Mr. Griffith referenced the handout, English Language Learner Funding, Exhibit B, and stated that the federal government provides some funding to ELL students. Public schools are mandated to provide the academic and fiscal resources to help ELL students overcome language barriers and gain English fluency. The Nevada federal Title III funding was $8.8 million in FY 2012; $8 million in FY 2013, and $7.2 million in FY 2014, which has decreased over the last few years partially due to budgetary decisions made at the federal level, and as a result of the sequestration, which was a 5 percent cut to almost all educational programs, except for the Title I funding for at-risk students. The federal government currently supplied a small amount of funding, which has decreased, and there was no plan in the future for the federal government to supply additional Title III funding. He said that any additional funding would have to be picked up by the states or local governments to help direct resources to ELL students.

Moving to page 3 of Exhibit B, Mr. Griffith said that the goal of state ELL programs is to provide sufficient funding to allow the state's ELL population to meet the state education goals through test scores, graduation rates, and promotion from one grade to the next. In addition, the goal is to have a quality program to move ELL students to the general roll of the school. He indicated that the ELL program should not be made a permanent program for students, which is different from special education funding where once a student designated as special education was not going to move, or at-risk students that would continue to be at risk through their entire education program.

Mr. Griffith said that the slide on Page 4, Exhibit B showed why it is important for Nevada and other states across the country to direct resources to ELL funding. The chart showed the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exam assessments of student's knowledge in various subject areas. The chart showed students in math and reading in the 4th through 8th grades and the difference in scores, and the educational gap between non-ELL students and ELL students. Mr. Griffith noted that the difference is particularity alarming when looking at 8th grade students in both math and reading in Nevada. He said that some states had less than 1 percent of students in 8th grade scoring at or above proficient on the NAEP exam. Mr. Griffith stated that the goal was to get every ELL student at or above proficient.

Mr. Griffith said that there was research that looked at the cost of educating ELL students to state standards. He said the general research showed that there was an additional cost to educating ELL students and there were some specific types of issues that could influence costs, including small districts with few ELL students. He noted that small schools did not have as many students on the roll and might not have a particular type of language taught in that school. For instance, a student could have a native language of Greek in a small school district and the school lacked the resources necessary to help that student move off the ELL roll. In addition, there was also a high cost per student in large districts with a high density of ELL students. The research showed that as the percentage of ELL students increased, the cost per student increased. Also, there were additional costs in educating multiple languages, and it was a much lower cost per student if every student was the same native language. Some of the larger districts had more than 50 different languages and additional support and personnel was needed to help students become proficient in the English language.

Continuing, Mr. Griffith stated that page 6 of Exhibit B, showed the actual cost of an ELL education. National studies recommended an additional 14 percent funding over what was spent on a general education student to an additional 100 percent per ELL student. The 2012 American Institutes for Research (AIR) study of Nevada's school funding system recommended additional ELL funding, but a specific amount per student was not identified. He said the amount per student was a policy decision at the state level, because the research available gave so many types of answers. Mr. Griffith said that Nevada could look at what other states were doing to find a necessary dollar amount. Referencing page 7 of Exhibit B, a study was done that looked at all 50 states and 42 states provided some form of additional funding for ELL students. The funding for ELL students ranged from 10 percent in the state of Texas to an additional 99 percent in

the state of Maryland. The average additional funding that states provided equated to 38.7 percent. Mr. Griffith cautioned that the amount each state provided to their general education students varied greatly and could be as low as $3,000 or as high as $8,000, so when two different states provide 10 percent – 10 percent from a $3,000 state is significantly less than 10 percent from a state that funds its average student at $8,000. He said one of the problems in the studies was in the earlier studies they talked about the research done and the question was 14 percent more of what and 100 percent more of what. He said that there was a need for additional ELL funding and other states have addressed the need in different ways by providing additional percentages of dollars in state programs. He noted that the other issue was time limits within ELL rolls. Mr. Griffith said that one of the goals was to move students off ELL rolls and some states have come up with time limits. For example, Arizona passed Proposition 203, which mandated that the state education system quickly move students off ELL rolls, and in most cases students were moved off in a year. Looking at the research regarding how long it should take to move a student off ELL rolls – the research indicated that it varied depending on the student's ability when they entered school. Therefore, if the student entered school with an educational experience in Spanish and could read and write in that language, they could be moved off the roll much quicker. However, if the student comes into the school without an educational background in their native language, it could take seven to ten years to move that student off the roll. He believed that coming up with a set number for all students was difficult and dependent on the particular student's education attainment level. He said that a voter initiative in the state of Arizona pushed ELL students through, in addition to other states that have goals in legislation to get students off ELL rolls in two to three years. He said that states wanted to get students off ELL rolls, which had to be done in the right way, and one way was to offer school districts a financial bonus when students moved off ELL designation. He said that in the past, California and Texas provided additional funding to districts based on how many students the district was able to move students off ELL designation, which encouraged the districts to move students off ELL rolls. However, both states have discontinued the program, but it could still be used in other states.

Mr. Griffith directed the committee to page 10 of Exhibit B, which addressed the ELL school funding issues. He said that Nevada should think about whether it should provide additional funding for ELL students, the research backed that up, and there seemed to be a lot of national support. Once the decision was made to provide additional funding, Nevada would have to decide how much funding the state wanted to provide and if it was done within the funding formula or in a separate grant program that existed outside the formula. He said that there was no research that showed it was better to provide additional funding inside or outside the existing funding formula. If the state provided funding within the formula, they tend to equalize the amount they were giving, so the amount that the state provided was going to be based on the relative wealth of the school district. The state should also think about the time limits for funding and if there would be hard-and-fast time limits, which research showed might not be the best option. Another option was the state could have a longer time limit to try to get districts to think about moving students off ELL designation. He said the state could

come up with a softer time limit, for example, four years, and after four years the amount of funding that the state supplied would decrease each year. He said that one of the comments made was once the state established a program there was a financial disincentive for districts to get students off ELL designation. If a school district received $1,500 per ELL student and that student was no longer on ELL rolls, then the district did not receive the $1,500, so the state had to try to come up with a system that phased down over a period of years instead of having a hard-and-fast time limit.

Assemblyman Hickey asked Mr. Griffith for the names of the states that had successful ELL programs and the reason those states were successful.

Mr. Griffith replied that Massachusetts has done a good job with their ELL population. The state had some of the highest achieving ELL students in the country when looking at 4th grade math and reading scores, in addition to graduation rates. He believed the success was from the amount of funding the state put into the program. In addition, Massachusetts continued to have high standards for ELL students and measured the progress of the students. Mr. Griffith said that he was not the best person to discuss the exact programs – how to teach students English and move them up a grade level on the funding, but believed the other presenters at the meeting could talk about the programs in their own districts and what has worked in Nevada. He added that the percentage of ELL students in most Massachusetts' schools was not nearly as high as in Nevada schools, which made a difference.

Mr. Burnham asked Mr. Griffith if he discovered that there was greater or lesser efficiency depending on the intensity of ELL and if there was a fixed amount of funding. He asked if it was it better to throw the funding to a given student population in a confined timeframe or better to spread the funding to different populations over a longer timeframe.

Mr. Griffith replied that research showed students get off ELL rolls at a quicker rate if states supplied resources to students at an early age, which was more difficult as the students get older. He said it was harder to move older students off ELL roles even with a large amount of resources in a short time period.

Ms. Corrales asked Mr. Griffith if the Nevada Federal Tittle III funding was formula driven and Mr. Griffith replied that was correct. He said that federal Title III funding was only a small amount of overall education spending in other states. Title I funding was over $1 million for Nevada, and Title III was a smaller program. Mr. Griffith said that many states were not aware of Title III funding – it was small and did not necessarily go to every district and often overlooked. He said that there was no plan at the federal level to increase the Title III funding to ramp up this program.

Ms. Corrales asked if the Title III funding formula followed through to the specific students in the districts. She asked how the Title III funding was allocated within the state.

Ms. Waller replied that federal Title III funding was considered outside The *Nevada Plan* formula funding, although she was not familiar with how the funding was allocated. She believed it may be formula-driven by the number of students in the district, but would confirm that with the Department of Education.

Mr. Martinez said it was stated that on average states fund between $3,000 and $8,000 for general education funding at the state level, which he assumed did not include local resources. For example, Massachusetts spent over $20,000 per student, which was a combination of state and local resources. He asked if the $3,000 to $8,000 range was only the state portion and districts had to add the local revenues for those specific districts within those states.

Mr. Griffith clarified that the $3,000 to $8,000 was the base funding within the funding formula for a general education student within a state and did not include the local resources. He said that Utah had the lowest amount and if the base funding in the formula was $3,000, and different cost adjustments were then added, it was not necessarily what each student received even though it was the base funding amount. Mr. Griffith said that he could provide the total funding amount for each state and how much was from state, local, and federal resources.

Mr. Martinez stated that he was aware the average spending in the country for students was over $10,000 per child, which was based on two-year old information, and could vary from $7,000 in Utah to over $20,000 in Massachusetts. He wanted to know what the amounts represented, because it was the information needed to add potential recommendations in the future.

Ms. Teska clarified that the Title III funding was allocated via a formula based on the ELL populations in the districts. She believed that there was a minimum threshold; however, she unsure of the threshold of ELL students to receive funding.

Ms. Osgood asked about the states that provided additional funding – some states provided funding inside their formula and others provided funding outside as part of a grant program to target a particular program. She was curious about the distribution of the different types of funding and if there was any correlation with regard to the effectiveness of the funding.

Mr. Griffith replied that there was no correlation between the success of students in ELL programs and whether it was funded within or outside of the formula. He said states that funded ELL students outside the formula tend to fund ELL as a flat grant program – the ELL student tends to get a certain dollar amount and it was not equalized, or it was a program that targets specific activities for ELL students. For instance, California previously used four different programs in their funding formula that existed outside the funding formula that provided grants – some were for summer school and afterschool programs for ELL students. Another program outside the funding formula targeted high-density neighborhoods and schools for ELL learning, and another program looked at supplying resources to essentially all school districts with ELL students. He said the

problem with funding outside the formula was it was another layer of paperwork and regulations for the school districts to track. Schools had a tendency to target the money toward certain programs – it was a judgment call that those programs really worked and the most effective way for schools to spend the money. Programs inside the funding formula had a tendency to be less targeted and specific, because the money had to go to ELL programs and the money tended to be equalized. When a student was identified there would be a dollar amount for the student, but the actual payment from the state would go up or down for the student based on the relative wealth of the district. He stated that there was no real correlation between one method being more effective for student achievement. He said that states were moving away from funding ELL outside the formula as a separate program and moving the funding into the formula and making it a weight or an additional funding amount per student. He said that most states were moving toward streamlined school funding formulas.

Mr. Fromdahl asked Mr. Griffin if he saw a distinction on funding levels for ELL students that would be considered in-program, compared to students that recently exited. He said that some districts would consider ELL students to be on a monitor status or still receiving services in the transition period following when they exit the program.

Mr. Griffin responded that research showed students that recently exited ELL programs had a tendency to perform better on standardized exams than students in ELL programs. However, the students also tend to underperform the general education students that have been never been in an ELL program or have been outside an ELL program for a long period of time. He said that Arizona tracked this and quickly moved students out of ELL programs. The state had a slightly different measure to qualify students for ELL, which was a lower threshold. Students were moved out of ELL programs quickly, and one to two years outside the program, those students tend to underperform the general education population. Mr. Griffith said there were studies that showed that ELL students tested lower, and once they were outside the program, those students tested a little better; however, still not as well as general education students.

Mr. Erquiaga asked about the mechanisms states used to ensure that the ELL population received the ELL funding. He asked Mr. Griffith for a summation of the mechanisms in place to track the dollars associated with a weight within a district so there was accountability. He wanted to ensure that the ELL funding was spent on the affected population and the money did not just go on top and then to the district to be bargained away or spent on something else.

Mr. Griffin replied that states had two different ways to track the ELL funding. One way was the lighter touch – school districts reported the money spent for students in ELL programs. The other way to track how ELL funding was spent, which was a little more robust – districts were required to report every dollar and where it was going, and the numbers were reviewed by the state. If necessary, the state would let the districts know if the way the funding was spent was not sufficient, because the district might have put money toward a program that was not qualified. Some states come up with a list of the acceptable areas that they could spend on ELL students and programs. Mr. Griffin

added that there were a few states that essentially had no mandates – ELL funding was received within the funding formula and there was no process to ensure the school was spending the funding on ELL programs. He said that tracking the ELL funding was important to ensure it was spent on ELL programs and went to the right students. However, he cautioned not get too detailed in the reporting requirements, because it would involve a lot of time at the school district level. In addition, the state might consider increasing the reporting requirements if school districts were not meeting their goals. Mr. Griffith indicated that the state could set up ELL goals for the districts and provide a benefit by reducing the reporting requirements if the district met their goals. If the districts were not meeting the goals set by the state, then the districts reporting requirements could be increased to ensure the funding was being spent correctly.

Chair Denis asked Mr. Griffin if there were different ways to determine whether a student should be on ELL programming and when to exit ELL status.

Mr. Griffin replied that some states used a national examination to determine whether students should be on ELL status. Other states used state-specific examinations designed for that particular state; some states determined their own cut scores; and some states used lower cut scores and their own definition for a student who no longer qualified for ELL services. Mr. Griffith indicated that some states do not have a definition for moving students off ELL status – there was a definition for students that scored below a certain score on a test to become designated as ELL, but there was no mechanism in place to move students off ELL status. Schools could determine when a student was ready to exit ELL services, but there was no mechanism to determine when the student was finished with ELL services. Mr. Griffin believed that if a mechanism was put in place for additional ELL funding then the state needed concise guidelines used from national standards to determine when a student was ready for ELL programing or ready to exit ELL services. In addition, states could use determined exam results to move students from full ELL participation, where the school received the full amount of funding, to a transition period where the school received half the funding. He noted that Nevada could consider that as an option, however, he was unaware of any state that currently utilized that option.

Chair Denis said that one of the factors depended on whether the student was literate in their native language to English, which made a difference in how well the student did. He said the state of Massachusetts had success with students that went through their ELL program and those students scored well on their tests. He asked if that played into how many students came into the program – either being literate or not, or were there other factors, such as the criteria, used to designate students as ELL and criteria to exit students.

Mr. Griffith replied that he was unsure and thought that would require a study. He said it was dependent on the type of student coming into ELL services and their educational background. He said that the at-risk program and students that were academically behind was a different type of program than teaching students English. Unfortunately, students without a good educational background impacted their English attainment

level. Therefore, if the state was going to provide ELL funding for at-risk students, the state could provide students with both funding amounts with the goal of getting students up to speed on their English and academic achievement even quicker. In some states, students designated as ELL were also designated at risk and the school just received at-risk funding. He clarified that at-risk services were very different from ELL services. Mr. Griffith suggested that ELL services and at-risk services be separate funding, and students that needed both services received the ELL support services and at-risk services.

Mr. Erquiaga said that they often think of the younger children coming in as ELL, but because Nevada was a high transient state, there were students that entered high school as ELL designation. He asked about differential rates in elementary, middle, and high school and how they were treated differently in other states.

Mr. Griffith responded that research showed there was a better chance of moving students off ELL rolls when students received services at a younger age. He stated that it was easier to move a 2nd grader off ELL rolls than a 9th grader with little or no educational background and no understanding of the English language. It could take more than seven years to move those students and there was not enough time to move students off ELL rolls if the student enrolled in the K-12 system in middle or high school. Mr. Griffith could not find research on older students that were behind in English language development and education, and new to a school, and how to get them to that point.

Mr. Fromdahl clarified that Nevada gave ELL students an English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA), which monitored student's progress and determined if the student should remain in the ELL program or exit the program. Currently, Nevada gave the WIDA ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) test for English Language Learners, which operated off a scale score of 1 to 6. He said the districts were looking for an overall score of 5 or above. In addition, there were some calculations done in the subcategories – listening, speaking, reading and writing, along with oral language, literacy, and comprehension. Mr. Fromdahl stated that the test was not tied to the Criterion Referenced Tests (CRT), which was more the academic content leveling. He indicated that this was Nevada's second year doing the ACCESS testing, which was a much more rigorous test than what was given in the past, and some of the context areas were embedded.

V. DISCUSSION OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR ELL STUDENTS.

Joyce Haldeman, Clark County School District (CCSD), introduced Dr. Mike Barton, Chief Academic Officer, Clark County School District. Ms. Haldeman stated that the state was fortunate to receive funding during the 2013 Legislative Session for the Zoom schools to recognize the needs of the ELL students. Although it was still early to discuss the results of the Zoom schools, she was aware the success of the program was moving in the right direction.

Dr. Barton said that the CCSD was concerned about their ELL students and the work that needed to be done. He said that time was critical in ensuring ELL students were set up for success, because the statistics for those students were alarming and concerning, specifically in the lower grade levels, which led to the concerning dropout rates. He referenced Page 1 of Exhibit C, which showed how the demographic groups in the CCSD compared in the state. He said that Nevada had 66,396 ELL students – CCSD had 77.17 percent of ELL students, which was above 50,000. In addition, the chart showed other demographics for how the CCSD compared to other state averages. He said that the CCSD was a large urban school district with a large concentration of ELL students. Page 2 of Exhibit C showed the ethnicity trends for the CCSD, and how the Hispanic population, which had the most ELL students, increased dramatically over the last ten years. Page 3 displayed a graph for active ELL students in Clark County for 2013-2014 and the levels of those students. He reiterated that the primary focus for the CCSD was exiting students from ELL. Currently, there were 56,315 students in ELL, which was approximately 73 percent of the state's population of active ELL students. In addition, there were the year 1 and year 2 students who were no longer non-language proficient, but still being monitored for academic success. In 2013, 6,408 students exited from ELL services, which was the number that CCSD tried to increase every year. Dr. Barton said that the reality with the exit rates for ELL students was that it was very high in the elementary grades and kindergarten through 5th grade students were exited at a higher proportion. The alarming issue was that the exit rates steadily declined in the middle school years with a huge drop-off from 8th through 9th grades. Many of the students not exiting ELL services in middle school dropped out, so 8th through 9th grades were critical for ELL students.

Directing the committee to Page 4 of Exhibit C, Dr. Barton stated that there were 85 official languages tracked in the CCSD – the top five languages were Spanish, Tagalog, Filipino, Vietnamese and Cantonese. He said that there was a higher cost for the school districts when there was a higher number of languages in the district. Dr. Barton stated that in 1966, James Samuel Coleman wrote a report on educational equality, "Coleman Report", which indicated that funding has little effect on student achievement. However, as time has gone on, money in fact does make a difference in student achievement. With this caveat, they were aware that money matters on how it was spent. Allan Odden, a researcher in school finance, said that resources had to be targeted and had to be essential allocations, which were related to time and personnel.

Dr. Barton said that Page 6 of Exhibit C showed the states that currently had a weighted funding formula for ELL students. The map on the page showed that Nevada did not have a weighted funding formula for ELL students; however, 42 states fund a weighted formula of between 14 percent and 100 percent. He said that a lot of work would have to be done to determine the amount of the weighted funding formula for ELL students in Nevada. In addition, he was aware that while the focus was on exiting ELL students with a weighted funding formula, it was critical to be proactive and monitor the exit rates in a district as large as the CCSD.

Miriam Benitez, ELL Director, CCSD, stated that currently the CCSD operated on a budget of approximately $15 million; approximately $9.5 million was allocated from the general budget providing administrative support, staff testers and testing materials. The Title III funding includes approximately $6 million – $1.3 million was allocated to provide additional support for the Zoom schools. Approximately 60 percent of that allocation went to personnel, which were instructional coaches for the performance zones. The other 40 percent was allocated to instructional resources, materials, services and support. Ms. Benitez estimated that the funding amounted to $219.92 per ELL student, and the question was if $219.92 was sufficient enough to support instruction for ELL students in Nevada.

Ms. Benitez said the services and support offered were funding for tutoring services, testing support, professional development regarding effective instructional strategies and analyzing student achievement data, and supplemental instructional material focused on language and literacy to help accelerate language acquisition. In addition, instructional coaching was available and coaches worked alongside teachers in classrooms to provide job-embedded coaching that focused on effective research-based ELL strategies. Ms. Benitez said that the funding was limited for instructional coaching, so the positions were limited and one coach was allocated per performance zone. For example, in performance zone 8 there were 21 schools – 3 high schools, 5 middle schools, and 13 elementary schools and one coach was allocated per each zone. Specifically, within performance zone 8, there were 6,000 ELL students spread across 21 schools with one instructional coach to provide support.

Concluding, Ms. Benitez stated that the CCSD also offered teachers the opportunity to earn their Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) endorsement and reimbursed the costs for the endorsement. However, the district served all 357 schools with 18,044 teachers, and to date, only 24 percent of CCSD teachers had a TESL endorsement. She ended her presentation by asking if one instructional coach per performance zone spread across 21 schools for 6,000 students was effective. In addition, she asked if there was enough funding to support the 76 percent of CCSD teachers that were not TESL endorsed.

Tracy Clarke, ELL Director, CCSD, directed the committee to page 10 of Exhibit C, which showed the ELL achievement. She said when the achievement data was reviewed for 3rd through 11th grade ELL students, there was almost 9,000 students considered English language proficient. However, 40 percent of these students were not proficient based upon the CRT or the high school proficiency exams; therefore, often there was a disconnect between the language and learning the subject area content. Ms. Clarke stated that a long-term learner in the CCSD was an ELL student who has not exited the program in five years. Currently, there were 13,403 long-term learners in the CCSD. For example, there was approximately 2,600 long-term learners in the 6th grade in the CCSD, which was a significant group of students that had difficulty being proficient in language and subject matter content. Additional services and supports were necessary to provide customized learning opportunities. In addition,

teachers needed professional development specific to meeting the needs of long-term learners.

Margarita Gamboa, Principal, Sunrise Acres Elementary School, explained that she attended Sunrise Acres Elementary School as a child and faced many of the same challenges, such as not being able to speak English. As she began to acquire the English language she was made fun of because of her accent. In addition, she faced the challenges of poverty and coming home to a single mom that worked hard incessantly to provide a home and food for the family. Currently, she is the Principal at Sunrise Acres Elementary School and is advocating for the ELL and at-risk students facing the same challenges as she did. She said that Sunrise Acres Elementary School is a turnaround school and received extra funding to support the ELL students. Referring to page 13 of Exhibit C, Ms. Gamboa said the graph showed that 535 students at Sunrise Acres Elementary School were classified as ELL. With the extra funding currently provided, those students would acquire English language with more time, but with the limited funding they were only able to service 139 ELL students.

Moving to page 14 of Exhibit C, Ms. Gamboa said that the graph on the page showed that 335 students of the 883 students enrolled at Sunrise Acres Elementary School were non-proficient students. The blue bar on the graph showed how many 1st grade through 5th grade students were able to receive the Zoom initiative instruction for the non-proficient students. For example, the school was able to provide extra intervention for 1st graders either before or after school – 34 out of the 109 students that were non-proficient were also facing the challenges of learning the English language and were at-risk students.

Dr. Pam Simone, Principal, Cambeiro Elementary School, stated that she was representing Cambeiro Elementary School, in addition to the other 13 schools receiving services from the Zoom initiatives (Senate Bill 504). Referencing page 16 of Exhibit C, Dr. Simone stated that Zoom initiative supported 28 Zoom pre-kindergarten classes with an 18:2 ratio – 18 students to 1 teacher and 1 teacher/family assistant. She said that there was open enrollment for all students zoned for Zoom schools. The second initiative was for kindergarten and there 90 kindergarten classes in the Zoom schools, which were full-day classes with a 21:1 ratio. Teachers were using programs that were aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards that meet the specific needs of students. Dr. Simone stated that the third initiative was the implementation of the Zoom reading centers in each Zoom school, which included the Zoom project facilitator, and three paraprofessional tutors in each center. Students received very structured and engaging lessons that focused on vocabulary, comprehension and writing skills. The centers began in October 2013 and students have access to over 4,000 titles. The fourth initiative was the summer academy, which will begin in June 2014 and added 17 days to the school year. She said that a curriculum has been designed by Performance Zone instructional coaches to maximize the impact of the extra days of instruction.

Continuing her presentation, Dr. Simone said that S.B. 504 provided $19 million for the 2013-2014 school year, which was $1,667.84 per student. Additional CCSD funds were $2 million, including funding from the ELL Department, Title I and the instructional unit, which was $184.343 per student for the 2013-2014 school year. Together S.B. 504 and CCSD funding for the 2013-2014 school year was over $21 million, which was $1,852 per student. Dr. Simone said that was based on enrollment of 11,392 students in the Zoom schools as of February 26, 2014. Referencing page 18 of Exhibit C, Dr. Simone stated that the district was just beginning to see the benefits of the Zoom initiatives, although, they still had a way to go. She said that the pre-kindergarten enrollment at Zoom schools was 500 more students than during the 2012-2013 school year. Kindergarten students took an essential skills test to test their knowledge of capital and lowercase letters, and letter sounds. Currently, 85 percent of the kindergarten students could identify 26 capital letters, 83 percent could identify 26 lower case letters; previously those students were not achieving that when they were leaving kindergarten. She said that the Zoom reading centers, which has been running for four months – 60 students have exited from the centers based on the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) that indicated that those students have reached grade level ability. Dr. Simone said that 913 students have increased their literacy and language levels that indicate grade level proficiency using the computer program Imagine Learning. The percent of 2nd grade students at the Meets or Exceed level on the AIMSweb Winter R-CBM assessment, which measured fluency, words per minute, a reading-based curriculum, increased from 55 percent in 2012-2013 to 60 percent in 2013-2014. She said that the Zoom schools were seeing benefits of the Zoom initiatives, which was a result of the funding.

Concluding her presentation, Dr. Simone directed the committee to page 19 of Exhibit C, which showed pictures of Cambeiro Elementary School. She indicated that it was her first year at Cambeiro Elementary School and she was very proud of the school and the progress of the students. She said that being part of the Zoom initiatives and the support the students were receiving was phenomenal, and she has never experienced the level of need at Cambeiro Elementary School. Previously, she worked at an affluent school in Henderson, Nevada – the school was high-performing with ELL students, but lacked the support like Cambeiro Elementary School. She stressed that all students within the CCSD would benefit from the services provided to the Zoom schools.

Dr. Barton stated that the presentations from the CCSD showed examples of schools that were receiving additional federal funding from the school improvement grant; schools that have moved to a 3 star school; and preliminary data from the Zoom initiatives showing that the first year of implementation was successful. Dr. Barton stated that there were 14 Zoom schools and 14 turnaround zone schools and he worried about the other schools in the CCSD without the funding if the district went to the original $220 per student provided by the directors in ELL. Dr. Barton said that most states funded a weighted formula between 14 percent and 100 percent, and the $220 per student from the Title III funds with the general funding in Nevada, he thought it was under 2 percent. He said when looking at a future funding formula from the vantage point of principals and people working with principals on a daily basis, it was

about time and personnel – providing more instructional time for the students to become proficient, develop language acquisition, exit students rapidly, which required extra instructional time during the day. In addition, the Zoom initiative added 17 days of instruction for students in the summer, which prevented the summer lag.

Dr. Barton said that the future funding focus should be on early intervention, pre-kindergarten programs, resources and materials to support rigorous instruction, extended learning opportunities to prevent the loss of learning that can occur in summer, instructional coaches, and making sure schools had the best teachers in classrooms using best strategies with ELL learners and all students. In addition, the funding focus should be on staffing to reduce student/teacher ratios, newcomer centers within schools or stand-alone newcomer programs, and job-embedded professional development, such as TESL endorsements. Currently, only 24 percent of teachers in the CCSD were TESL endorsed and the real dilemma was how to keep the TESL endorsed teachers teaching ELL students in the CCSD. He said that there was no requirement for teachers to keep the TESL endorsement on their license, which was a worry because the district was losing teachers who could teach ELL students. Dr. Barton concluded that an overview was provided at the meeting from a principal's perspective, central office perspective, and Title III funding perspective, and the representatives agreed that additional funding was required to educate students that have at-risk obstacles. In addition, he worried about the graduation rate for ELL students that remained in the pipeline of ELL. Currently, there was a 25 percent graduation rate for ELL students in the CCSD, which should be an embarrassment to the state and the districts. The state needed a vision to make additional funding a reality so the district could provide services to all ELL students. The district was aware it was all about the teacher and having the best strategies to get the students language proficient, which required additional support and money to target resources and support for students.

Chair Denis commented that similar to Ms. Gamboa, he and Assemblywoman Flores were students that did not speak English when they started elementary school, and at that time, there were no ELL programs or services in schools. He said it took a long time to learn the English language, which was frustrating for a child that did not speak the native language.

Assemblywoman Flores commented that she believed that every school in Nevada should be a Zoom school, which was clearly demonstrated by the presenters.

Chair Denis stated that it was amazing to see the preliminary information on the Zoom schools. He added that he has visited many of the Zoom schools, which were located in his district.

Mr. Burnham asked if the instructional coaches were licensed teachers and Dr. Barton replied that was correct. Dr. Barton added that the coaches were usually teachers with specialty in ELL and strategies for sheltered instruction.

Mr. Burnham asked if having more coaches or TESL endorsed teachers were a better "bang for the buck." Dr. Barton replied that his preference was having more teachers in the classrooms with specialty TESL endorsements or strategies in working in ELL students.

Ms. Corrales asked how many other languages were no longer being tracked as official languages in the CCSD.

Ms. Clarke replied that the CCSD currently tracked 85 official languages. In addition, there were anecdotal reports from the schools that indicated there were over 144 languages within the CCSD. Ms. Clarke indicated that 9 percent of the students in the CCSD were considered other languages.

Ms. Corrales asked for a brief explanation of the Imagine Learning program and if it was only targeted for Zoom schools. In addition, she asked if any of the Zoom schools were going to a year round calendar, and if so, how that would affect the programing.

Dr. Barton responded that the Imagine Learning program was not targeted exclusively for the Zoom schools and mainly focused on language proficiency and increasing language skills. He stated that the district tried to expand the Imagine Learning program to all schools in the district to have a common tool to help with language proficiency; however, due to the cost of the program the district struggled with expanding the program to all schools.

Responding to the second question from Ms. Corrales about whether the Zoom schools were going to a year round calendar, Dr. Barton said that the district had to look at the zoning capacity of the elementary schools, which were currently over capacity. He indicated that two of the Zoom schools were converting to a Track 5 year-round calendar, Bertha Ronzone Elementary and Lois Craig Elementary School. Because of the 17 additional days of instruction in the Zoom schools, both Ronzone Elementary and Craig Elementary School would still receive the 17 additional days of support for the students in June. However, in school year 2015, the district was looking at offering the 17 days of additional support during the intersession when the track breaks occurred.

Ms. Simone clarified that the Imagine Learning program was throughout the CCSD and was absolutely helping ELL students. Every student in a Zoom school received an average of 30 minutes each day with the Imagine Learning program, which was based on language acquisition the students were not receiving elsewhere. Due to the program, the comprehension levels for the students were being raised.

Mr. Erquiaga thanked the presenters for the very helpful and insightful information. He asked about funding for Zoom schools shown on page 17 of Exhibit C. The slide showed that additional funds from the CCSD and S.B. 504 totaled $184.34 per student. The red box at the bottom of the page showed ELL funding recap of $219.92 per student, and the pink box showed that the total funding per student for S.B. 504 was $1,852.18 for the CCSD. He asked the range of the percentage for the weight; he

thought that the $219.92 per student was a 2 percent weight. He asked if the 2 percent weight was the basic state guarantee, state plus local funds, or the total spending including federal funding. In addition, he asked the percent for the total approximate amount per student of $1,852.18, which he assumed was the high-end of where they would like to be.

Dr. Barton said that he would have to get back to Mr. Erquiaga on the percent of the weight. He said doing a quick calculation using $6,000 per pupil and $219 per ELL student, the weight was a little over 2 percent. He would provide those numbers to the committee and how it translated with the $1,852 per student.

Ms. Osgood asked if the CCSD had the capability to comply with the accountability and reporting requirements, under their current system of tracking students, if additional funding was built into the formula.

Dr. Barton replied that he thought that tracking the exiting students would be a requirement of the district and accountability for the funding would be in-line with the exit rates on an annual basis for ELL. He thought the district could manage the accountability requirements of a weighted funding formula, and although a dollar amount in a weighted formula would be new to the district, the district could work internally to track the funding to ensure they were getting a great return on investment.

Mr. Martinez, Superintendent, Washoe County School District (WCSD), stated that even though the WCSD and CCSD were different in size, the two districts were almost exactly the same in terms of the ELL population. The total enrollment for the ELL population was just over 15 percent in both the CCSD and WCSD. Looking at the numbers for the WCSD – the number of kindergarten ELL students was growing, which was an indicator of the ELL population. Another area that the WCSD and CCSD were close was on achievement – Washoe County graduated approximately 21 percent of the students classified as ELL, and if a student stayed in ELL through 12th grade, the graduation rate was 6 percent. Sadly, the WCSD matched up to CCSD on the achievement results and when the two largest districts in the state represented over 90 percent of the ELL students, there were structural issues in play that the state needed to address. In addition, Mr. Martinez said that the presentations from the WCSD would include financial information on two specific districts – Houston School District in Texas, and the Saint Paul, Minnesota School District. He stated that the two districts recently presented at the Leadership Summit sponsored by the Public Education Foundation. The two districts were prominent in the discussions at the Leadership Summit – the Houston School District because it was a mega district similar to Clark County with over 200,000 students, and the Saint Paul Minnesota School District with just under 40,000 students. In addition, both districts were nationally known for success with ELL and students in poverty. Mr. Martinez stated that the Saint Paul Minnesota School District was the most prominent district of all large districts of 40,000 students and above, with graduation rates over 70 percent, which almost exceeded the state averages for ELL students. He said that the Saint Paul and Houston School Districts have provided more funding for ELL students for some time and it would be

good to see how those districts were successful and compared to districts outside of Nevada.

Janeen Kelly, Director, ELL, Washoe County School District (WCSD), stated that one of the issues that came out of S.B. 504 (2013) besides the Zoom Schools was creating the English Mastery Council to develop a policy for the instruction to teach English to pupils who were limited English proficient. The WCSD created a new philosophy, value and vision for ELL students because it was important to be the voice and advocate for the students. The district had to look at how they were funding ELL students and how to provide additional and appropriate supports that would help students achieve and exit ELL services and function as effective global citizens. She said it was not just about exiting the students, but ensuring the students were proficient, able to read, write and communicate effectively. Ms. Kelly said that the state needed to think about achieving excellence not only proficiency. She referenced page 2, English Language Learners, Washoe County School District (Exhibit D) and said that there are 46 languages spoken in the WCSD – 92 percent of ELL students are Latino, 2.2 percent were Pilipino, and approximately 5 percent represented other languages. Ms. Kelly said page 2 showed the large spectrum of native languages in the WCSD, which were identified on the chart. She said that the majority of kindergarteners were ELL students. The chart showed the kindergarten enrollment from 2011 to current, 28 percent of kindergarten students were designated as Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and 87 percent of kindergarten LEP students were in poverty, which went hand-and-hand with the gaps seen in student achievement. Ms. Kelly said that the WCSD wanted their kindergarten students to begin achieving, learning, and developing the language as quickly as possible, but they had to take into consideration that all kindergarteners were developing language, and second language learners had a double sword by having to develop in their native language at the same time as the new language. She said the district had to look at the supports they could provide to students in the classrooms for students to achieve.

Moving to page 3 of Exhibit D, Ms. Kelly said the top chart showed the Exiting ELL Status; Kindergarten Cohort Remaining Through 2012. The district followed one cohort of students through kindergarten to provide an example of how they see their students exiting. She said that there was not a timeline for when students exit, because students come in with different abilities. Some students come from a home with many books and read every day, or from a home where they had never held a book before. Therefore, as they looked at the differences in the students they needed to consider supports that could be put into the kindergarten classrooms to make the classrooms language rich. Research showed that students needed at least three to seven years to develop the language in order to be proficient. As the students that the district followed begin to exit around 3rd to 6th grades, those students began to increase as they learned the language and became more comfortable. Referencing the bottom chart on page 3 of Exhibit D, Total Number of Current ELL Students and Exited ELL Students by Grade, for 2012-2013, approximately 1,500 ELL students entered kindergarten in the WCSD. She said the blue bars displayed on the bottom chart showed the number of students that exited the end of 2013. The chart showed that the state was doing an adequate job of exiting students around 3rd through 5th grade and the number of ELL students were

decreasing. However, in the 6th through 9th grades and above, even with the students that have been in the district since kindergarten, many were struggling because they were not proficient. Ms. Kelly said that the districts needed to determine why students were not exiting at the appropriate time or at the time that most of their other colleagues and peers were exiting.

Ms. Kelly moved to page 4 of Exhibit D and stated that the district had over 10,000 current ELL students at any given time, in addition to 7,700 former ELL students to support. When thinking about adequate funding they had to think about how to monitor the students. Presently, the district lacked the staff to monitor students. Because the ratio of students to teachers was 60:1 across all proficiency levels, the district was unable to successfully monitor ELL students. She stated that ELL students should not be forgotten once they exited services, because the content of the work gets more difficult, the academic language becomes much more rigorous, and the students still needed the scaffolding and supports necessary for them to achieve, both linguistically and academically.

Continuing, Ms. Kelly said that the chart on the bottom of page 4 showed the elementary school reading proficiency levels and the gaps occurring in the WCSD. She said that WCSD had approximately 70 percent of students that were reading proficient and approximately 41 percent for ELL students – a gap of approximately 29 percent for ELL elementary school students. She said if students have not exited ELL services by 6th grade, the gap widened for the opportunity for those students to be successful in middle school. She said that the WCSD middle school reading proficiency gap was approximately 62 percent overall, but the ELL middle school achievement gap was 9 percent, which was because of the increase in reading that was occurring, the attempt to nonfiction and technical reading needed to happen, scaffolding and supports needed to be in place, and sufficient and trained staff was needed, resulting in gap widening for a 53 percent achievement gap.

Moving to the adequate growth to a higher level in reading, Ms. Kelly said that the district wanted to catch up ELL students with the general population, which was difficult when the district was already behind and most of the students were at 46 percent. The ELL students were at 30 percent, so there was a 16 percent gap for the students that were behind. Middle school ELL students were behind the general population, and as the students get further into the grades, that gap widened. In 9th grade, the district discovered that 71 percent of the ELL students were on the pathway to graduation, meaning they had approximately 5 credits, so the achievement gap was approximately 14 percent. However, there was only a 72 percent overall graduation rate in the WCSD, but out of that percent, only 21 percent of the ELL students actually graduate, which was a result of how the district was missing the long-term students that have been with the district since kindergarten, the factors that were keeping the students from exiting from ELL, and the interventions and services that could be provided, which also included the newcomer students that entered middle and high school. In 2014, there were three high school and two middle school newcomer centers with approximately 50 students across the five schools. Many of the students came to the United States

literate in their native language, but the district was expecting them to be proficient in English at the end of the first year of school and able to pass the CRT in a language that they still were not proficient in, even if they were proficient in their native language. She reiterated that 21 percent of the ELL students in the WCSD were not graduating from high school.

Moving to page 6, of Exhibit D, Ms. Kelly said that the graduation achievement for students not identified as ELL or ELP students was 76 percent. If the WCSD was able to exit students and the students were proficient before they entered high school, the graduation rate would be 75 percent. Former ELL students that were attending high school had a 45 percent graduation rate; however, the graduation rate was only 6 percent if the students entered high school as a Limited English Proficient (LEP) student. In addition, the WCSD looked at the national per pupil funding for ELL students and Nevada ranked seventh from the bottom for funding provided by the state for ELL students (2009, National Center for Education Statistics). Ms. Kelly said as the WCSD started its redesign and restructuring of ELL services for students they thought that just a pull-out system of 30 minutes a day for English language instruction was really a disservice to the students and the district needed to consider how to have language instruction simultaneous with content. The district needed to train more teachers so that students were in classrooms with teachers who had the strategies and knowledge of language acquisition. In addition, the district needed ELL teachers that not only served as teachers, but also as coaches and trainers within schools, so the general education teachers had a source to go to for the students struggling and to find a strategy to help students with their oral production or writing. Referencing the chart on page 7, Ms. Kelly said the top chart showed the ELL revenue per pupil for Washoe County compared to the Saint Paul and Houston School Districts. The Zoom funding for the WCSD averaged approximately $362 per student for six of the Zoom schools. The bottom chart showed the general education revenue per pupil compared the Saint Paul and Houston districts, which were benchmark districts for achievement and proficiency in ELL.

Mr. Martinez commented that the ELL funding shown on Page 7 of Exhibit D showed how much the districts were spending on a per pupil basis, specifically on ELL students, which were part of the resources that were mainly coming from the state. The Saint Paul School District was spending $4,206 per student; Houston was spending $2,322 per student, and Washoe County was spending $362 for just the Zoom funding. The funding was applied to all 10,000 students in ELL, which was why they only served six schools to get better use of those dollars. He said that Washoe County was seeing great success in the Zoom schools and the principals were anxiously waiting for the CRT results, because they believed the results would impress the entire state. Mr. Martinez said that the general education revenue per pupil reflected state basic support plus local funding, and excluded funding for ELL. The Saint Paul School District received $12,148 per student, which was separate from the ELL funding; Houston received $7,473 per student, the WCSD received $6,961 per student; and the CCSD funding was approximately $7,100. He stated that Clark County and Washoe County

were fairly close for general revenue per pupil spending, which was the basic support for regular education, not including the ELL funding.

Responding to a question from Chair Denis regarding Title III funding for the WCSD, Mr. Martinez said that the CCSD received approximately $6 million, and the WCSD received approximately $1 million of the $7 million the state received for Title III funding. He stated that the general education revenue per pupil for the WCSD on page 7 only showed the state funding and did not include the Title III funding. He said the state money was included on the chart to show a comparison of apples-to-apples. In addition, the districts also received Title III funding, which was over and above the general education revenue.

Senator Roberson stated that the 72 percent weighted overall graduation rate in the WCSD was compelling. He asked how much the overall graduation rate would be raised if ELL students graduated at the same rate as the non-ELL population. He asked if there was anything that could be done that was more important for graduation rates before fully funding ELL education.

Mr. Martinez said that it was not only imperative to serve the current kindergarten population, which was a little over 15 percent for the WCSD and CCSD, but also look ahead and set a vision, because the reality was the state was going to hit ceilings in graduation rates very quickly, because the ELL population was growing so rapidly and the children were not adequately being served. He added that nearly 90 percent of the students were born in the United States, which he thought was consistent with Southern Nevada.

Senator Roberson asked a representative from the CCSD or WCSD to provide calculations to show that the overall graduation rate increases greatly if districts graduated ELL students at roughly the same rate as the rest of the student population.

Mr. Martinez replied that the WCSD had a goal of 80 percent graduation rate by 2016. He said the district could provide more specific numbers, especially considering the percentage of students entering the lower grades were growing so rapidly and it was critical to provide the supports.

Chair Denis commented that the school districts would see test scores and graduation rates increase for all grades if the districts invested in ELL students in the earlier years.

Assemblyman Hickey asked how long it took the Houston School District to get to $2,322 per pupil for ELL students and if they were using a weighted funding formula.

Mr. Martinez said the information provided on the weighting for the Houston and Saint Paul School Districts was from the states' budgets and Comprehensive Annual Financial Reports, which did not contain specific data on how the state actually provided the funding to the districts, but he could provide that information to the committee. He added that both the Houston and Saint Paul School Districts have been advocating for

funding for ELL students for the last decade. He said it did not happen over a year and the money was just part of it and the districts also had to have the right leadership and accountability structure. He said the Houston and Saint Paul school districts had the most cutting-edge programs, not only ELL, but also around culture competency. He said that Houston was the leader in the county in teacher evaluation systems, but had been tackling the issue for a long time, so there were many components to really make it work. Mr. Martinez said that the money really did matter, along with leadership and accountability to get results.

Assemblyman Hickey stated that the Houston and Saint Paul School Districts had very decentralized and numerous school districts and were independent districts with separate school boards, and Nevada only had one school board for the two very large counties. He asked if the fact that the district was more specialized with local control played a role in the governance structure in Houston.

Mr. Martinez said that leadership mattered at every level, whether at the board, superintendent or the principal level, so they could never minimize that. He noted that the Miami-Dade School District in Florida had 350,000 children and the message for the three large districts – Saint Paul, Houston, and Miami-Dade was that they had a lot more districts and were larger states in general than Nevada. However, Nevada could not use its size or density as an excuse, and although it does take money, it takes leadership, vision and forward way of thinking. He hoped that the Task Force was the start, along with building on the actions of the Legislature and the Governor during the 2013 Legislative Session, by adding ELL money for the first time, which was having amazing results with a small amount of funding starting in a few schools.

Senator Roberson asked Mr. Martinez if there was data on the percentage of TESL indorsed teachers in the Miami-Dade and Houston School Districts.

Mr. Martinez replied that all three states – Florida, Texas and Minnesota were far ahead of Nevada in terms of rigorous standards for TESL endorsements or training for teachers and the states have been working on it for the last decade. Mr. Martinez said that there were a lot of great lessons to be learned, but the current strategies that Nevada used were not very different. For example, the Miami-Dade School District had 25 or less students in every grade level, in addition to universal preschool, which the district had for years. He said that all three states could not imagine doing the work without having all the elements in place; the states had strong professional development for teachers and have been tackling this issue for many years with phenomenal success.

Ms. Kelly stated that part of the money the WCSD received in their general fund was put toward instruction in order to have a ratio of 1:60. In addition, the district had four program coordinators to coach and provide the professional learning for all WCSD schools. She added that the district graduated approximately 100 TESL endorsed teachers each year through the program. She said that many college degrees included courses in ELL or special education.

Concluding, Ms. Kelly said that moving forward the district has set up metric goals, including increased graduation rates for ELL students, increased proficiency rates for elementary and middle school as measured by Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), a focus on exiting students at grades three, six and eight, and increased hours focused instruction outside of regular school day, such as intersessions, extended day, and summer academies. However, to accomplish those goals the district needed adequate funding. Ms. Kelly said that the WCSD embraced the Zoom funding and was grateful for the funding, although it was only for six schools. She indicated that to address the achievement gap, the district needed additional intervention teachers trained in literacy and language acquisition of 30 students to 1 teacher. In addition, increasing the number and value of bilingual teachers and the Zoom model to 17 additional schools, which were below the poverty level. The district needed to focus on pre-K programs, full-day kindergarten, intersession/summer academy, and reading skill centers. Ms. Kelly stated that in addition, the district wanted to extend professional development for teachers and move to a collaborative model where teachers were taking ownership of students and had the strategies, knowledge and understanding of what it took for a second language learner to learn a new language simultaneously with the content.

Mr. Martinez said that the CCSD and WCSD faced many challenges, which would only increase as the population grew. He requested that the committee look at both sides, because the success the districts were seeing with ELL was after exit, and there was very little success if students did not exit. He said the data from the districts has been shared with the entire community in Northern Nevada – the district was not proud of the rates and needed to change before the results showed that the current system did not work. He added if the district was not thoughtful when making changes to the funding formula and how it would affect the general education students, they could be easily hurting themselves. Mr. Martinez said that the state was already below the basic level of funding and had to be thoughtful about how they looked at the changes. He believed the Zoom funding was the initial step, but the difficult question was how to get to scale quickly and match that with the training and talent for the schools.

Ms. Corrales asked how Houston and the Saint Paul School Districts were using its ELL funding. She asked if the WCSD and CCSD modeled its Zoom funding after that type of programing.

Mr. Martinez replied that the three districts cited – Houston, St. Paul and Miami-Dade were beyond what Nevada was doing with the Zoom funding. The Zoom funding in Nevada was for more interventions, pre-school, full-day kindergarten and extended classroom time for lower grades. The three districts actually had more bodies – coaches and teachers in the classrooms. He added that Saint Paul had a more diverse community than Clark County in terms of languages. The three school districts were moving to a ratio of 30:1 with additional licensed teachers to help with language acquisition, literacy, and interventions. He noted that Miami-Dade School District had a

ratio of 25 or less students for every teacher in every grade level, including ELL, which included universal preschool.

Mr. Burnham asked how long it took for a teacher to become TESL endorsed. In addition, he wondered if it was an efficient use of funds to have teachers TESL endorsed at the universities as part of their degree.

Mr. Martinez replied that the WCSD was currently working with the University of Nevada, Reno, to make it a requirement for teachers to has some type of endorsement, such as literacy, ELL or TESL, as well as special education.

Ms. Kelly added that currently teachers in the WCSD had to take 4 courses in order to have a TESL endorsement, and each course was 3 college credits. She said it took 12 college credits to receive the endorsement and approximately two years to complete. In addition, the district was in the process of aligning TESL endorsement with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), Sierra Nevada College, and other colleges to ensure the district was preparing the teachers in the classrooms with the best education in second language learning. In addition, the district believed that 12 credits was not enough for an endorsement and the district was working with UNR to develop two more courses that went beyond the TESL endorsement, which used part of the Title III funds to help pay for the courses. She said that the courses would go more in depth with the language learners, particularly to get cohorts of secondary teachers TESL endorsed. It was extremely important that the district begin campaigning to get secondary TESL endorsed teachers in content areas that would help the students.

Mr. Burnham asked about the ELL graduation rates and the students that come out of elementary school still ELL, in addition to the students that enter the school system in middle or high school as ELL. He asked how those two percentages make up the whole and how the district would suggest changing the graduation numbers for both populations.

Mr. Martinez replied that the WCSD realized that they had to exit the ELL students as early as possible. The district exited most ELL students by 5th or 6th grade, which was why there was a metric in the formula. When the district successfully graduated ELL students by 5th or 6th grade, those students were graduating at a higher average than the overall district average of 72 percent; however, it was literally the opposite if the district did not graduate ELL students. Referring to page 6 of Exhibit D, Mr. Martinez said the 6 percent graduation rate shown on the chart was the rate for students that remained as an ELL student through 12th grade, which was appalling. He said that part of the challenge was that the WCSD had new students that entered middle school as a ELL, and there were no newcomer schools in the district, which was identified as a struggle by the district. He stated that Clark County had the Global Studies program and Washoe County hoped to learn from their lessons and successes. From the kindergarten data in Washoe County, if the district invested in students in kindergarten or early grades and students exit ELL services by 3rd grade, not only would those students graduate, but graduate with an advanced diploma, attend a university, and

able to apply to colleges like Harvard and Stanford. If the students exit ELL services by 6th grade the graduation rates would be bumped up significantly. Mr. Martinez said that Saint Paul had some of the best newcomer programs in the country and the WCSD would look at those programs, but the heart of the problem in Nevada was getting services to students in the early grades and exiting those students early.

Responding to a question from Mr. McIntosh, Mr. Martinez stated that the $6,961 general education revenue per pupil in Washoe County was the state basic support plus any local resources that the district spent. He clarified that the number also included special education students because those children also had to be subsidized through the general fund. He said that page 7 of Exhibit D, showed the comparisons of ELL revenue per pupil between Washoe County, Houston and the St. Paul School Districts. He said if the district ignored the ELL issue, with the goal to exit students out of ELL services, if those children went into a world with a much lower funding level for general education students, those children were not going to do well, because the district would be sacrificing general education children, which included the exiting ELL students. The slide on page 7 showed the amount that St. Paul and Houston School Districts spent on ELL revenue per pupil.

Assemblywoman Flores asked Mr. Martinez to explain the $362 ELL revenue per pupil for the WCSD (page 7, Exhibit D).

Mr. Martinez replied that out of the $25 million that was provided for Zoom schools, the WCSD received about $4 million, which the district was able to use for six schools. In order to show apples-to-apples comparisons among the three districts, the graph on page 7 showed the $4 million spread among 10,000 ELL students to compute what was spent for each student. He stated that the WCSD just started ELL funding for only a few schools, which was a good start. In addition, he wanted to show what the Houston and St. Paul School Districts, which were high performing districts, were spending over just general education on ELL students. He clarified that the Zoom funding was only being used in six schools, which was why the district put in preschool and full-day kindergarten programs, and the graph on the page was an apples-to-apples comparison between the three districts.

Mr. Fromdahl stated that the three things that stood out from the presenters in terms on goals for ELL students – exiting students, academic proficiency, and graduation rates. He said that currently there were over 10,000 ELL students at any given time, and over 7,600 former ELL students (page 4 of Exhibit D) and when looking at a possible weighted average it was not just about the current ELL students, but also factoring in the exited ELL students. He said the Zoom funding was for early intervention and programs, and asked what the district would do if there was more targeted funding at the secondary level.

Ms. Kelly replied that the district would definitely want to create something for the middle to high school grades if additional Zoom funding was targeted at the secondary level. She said that there were different challenges with middle and high school

students – approximately 1,700 middle and high school students were long-term ELL students, meaning they have been in the district since kindergarten. She stated that part of the funding would be used to diagnose exactly where the holes were for the students and what the district needed to do to provide interventions that would begin to close the gaps for students. In addition, the district wanted to train content teachers with ELL strategies or TESL endorsement, so that language was happening within those content classes. Students do not learn a language if they cannot produce it, and most students in middle and high school were just taking the language in and not outputting the language that was needed. Ms. Kelly said if more Zoom funding was targeted at the secondary level there would be a restructure and redesign of instruction in a content class with ELL students. She said the district's plan was not to have students pulled out of class twice a week for 30 to 45 minutes, but for every teacher to have the necessary strategies and understanding of the needs of ELL students. Ms. Kelly said that she recently attended a data summit and a student from the student advisory council spoke and said that she unsure why the district was not supporting ELL students – she herself spoke English and was still struggling in high school and she could not imagine how it was for the ELL students in elementary grades. Ms. Kelly said the district wanted to advocate for students and look at what could be put in place to help students achieve.

Mr. Erquiaga commented that he appreciated the presentations from the representatives from the WCSD in outlining the programs that would help the district achieve specific outcomes. Having participated in the development of the Priorities and Performance Based Budget (PPBB) framework that the state was working to use, he thought that the weights as a categorical expenditure provided a great opportunity to put PPBB to good use. Mr. Erquiaga hoped that the TAC clearly delineated a General Fund expenditure added at the district level, Title III expenditures, and Zoom funding at the district level on a per pupil basis. He was trying to get a picture of the adequacy of what the districts were currently spending and a per pupil number, and the much enlarged spending per pupil for the Zoom schools and the rural districts to see the adequacy of the expenditures to the outcomes at those schools. Therefore, when the committee had to calculate what they thought the weight should be, it was not just on expenditures, but on what they were buying in results for students. Mr. Erquiaga said if the district wished to move the graduation rate in the ELL population to the general education population or the proficiency rate to general education, that was an outcome, and the TAC could advise the committee what was needed to have those outcomes. He asked the TAC to provide outcomes and programmatic direction – it was the charge of the Task Force to examine that and see where they were in the categoricals, and where they could go, but also what they were specifically buying with the funding, which was a great measure for success.

Jeff Zander, President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents (NASS), Superintendent, Elko County School District, said that he spent 25 years in finance for the Elko County School District. He said that he requested information from all the school districts from a finance standpoint; he did not request the specific details, percentages or criteria in regards to ELL success. However, if necessary he would be

happy to provide the Task Force with information on the leading indicators for the rural school districts. Mr. Zander believed that the graduation rates in the rural school districts were fairly indicative or relative to the Washoe County and Clark County school districts with a 20 percent graduation rate.

Mr. Zander referenced a spreadsheet of the services provided by the rural school districts, Exhibit E. He stated that his intent for the information he provided was to give the Task Force an idea of what the rural districts were doing in regards to the ELL populations. The spreadsheet provided the total number of schools, number of students, number of ELL students tested, in addition to breakdowns on the numbers of those students as identified in the Nevada Report Card, which could change based on students that have exited or come back into some of the ELL programs within those districts. The spreadsheet also contained the number of languages, other than English spoken in the districts, and the number of TESL endorsed teachers and aides. He said that the Carson City School District provided a footnote for the TESL endorsed teachers and aides, which stated that an ELL audit was conducted by the Department of Justice in 2011, and as part of the settlement, the district was required to increase the number of TESL endorsed teachers in the classrooms, which he believed was an important step in the process. He said the Carson City School District paid for teachers to obtain TESL endorsement, and for the endorsement to be put on the teacher's license, and the additional salary step if qualified. He said that the Elko County School District was in the process of placing incentives in place to encourage teachers to receive TESL endorsements.

Mr. Zander stated that the chart (Exhibit E) showed the number of ELL teachers and aides versus student ratios in the rural school districts, students proficient from 2012-13 ACCESS testing, support from General Fund, General Fund per pupil cost, which included the Title III and Senate Bill 504 allocations to the rural school districts. Mr. Zander pointed out that the per pupil costs were variable, especially in the rural districts based on the type of delivery and configuration that would take place in the rural areas. For example, he said that the Elko County School District could not hire a qualified ELL teacher for Owyhee, which was 96 miles north of Elko, so the coordinator of ELL at the Elko County School District provided services in Owyhee, which was a two-hour trip one way. He said the $1.5 million per year allocation to the Elko County School District was approximately 2 percent of the district's General Fund expenditures, and the district had approximately 1 percent of ELL qualified students. Mr. Zander said second page of Exhibit E showed the programming for all the rural districts that have been put in place from the Senate Bill 504 allocation, which included various models. He said that he could provide some statistics in regards to the success of the programs in the rural districts if desired by the committee.

Mr. Zander thanked the Legislature for providing the Senate Bill 504 funding. The rural school districts were fortunate to have the funding and the district has refocused its efforts on ELL programming. He stated that the district received an Office for Civil Rights (OCR) complaint during the last fiscal year, and thankfully, the district had increased their resource allocations to ELL programing. He said as a result of the

economic recession, it was difficult to manage the resources and provide the services as required and necessary to all the school districts. As a result of the OCR complaint that the Elko County School District received based on the allocations that were put in place, the United States Supreme Court ruled that providing students the same desks, books, teachers, curriculum, etc., does not ensure that they receive an equal educational opportunity, particularly if the students do not speak English. If English was the language of instruction, measures must be taken to ensure that English was taught to students who do not speak English, or who were limited in English proficiency, in order to provide equal access to educational opportunities. Measures must be taken and usually entailed a monetary requirement on local districts to provide that. Specifically, the OCR complaint highlighted the language that ELL programs must ensure adequate staffing for the program implementation and the students decisions are based on student need and not the availability of staff. He stated that his presentation has been aligned directly with the Washoe County and Clark County presentations – it was about time and staff and putting highly qualified staff in place, recruiting, training and retaining the staff. He directed the committee to a graph from the Nevada Report Card (Exhibit F) that illustrates ELL populations for all the rural school districts during FY 2013. He stated that page 2 showed the resources for the ELL programing – General Fund contributions, and Title III contributions that come from the federal government, which were meant to supplement current ELL expenditures not supplant, so there were specific rules with regards to those federal funds. He added that the Senate Bill 504 allocation allowed the Elko County School District to put some preschool programming in place in non-served Title I schools, and as a result of the increase in ELL populations and the poverty in Nevada, there were currently four Title I schools in the Elko County School District and three non-served Title I schools. He noted that the Title I funding has not kept up with the need in the community, and as a result, the county had preschools and full-day kindergartens in all Title I schools. The district was phasing in full-day kindergarten in the non-Title I schools and non-served Title I schools. Senate Bill 504 allowed the Elko County School District to put preschool programs in non-served Title I schools, and no doubt the demography has changed so much, especially in Elko, that allowed the program to be put in place and opened that capacity. He was sure the county would see immediate results in regards to the availability of those resources. In addition, Senate Bill 504 provided resources for all other schools within Elko County in regards to ELL programming. Mr. Zander said that after discussions with the districts there were various service delivery models that take place in regards to ELL programming throughout the state.

- Pull-out models – Students were pulled out of a particular session to work with licensed staff members to pre-teach, teach or reteach English language skills or academic content covered by the general education classroom.
- Push-in models (sheltered English immersion programs) – ELL students were taught in the mainstream classroom with individual support, often from ELL teachers or bilingual instructional aides in the classroom setting.
- Team Teaching – ELL and classroom teachers collaborate to plan lessons that would reach all the students in the content area classes.

- Full-day Kindergarten – Full-day kindergarten was in many of the rural counties in all schools. Currently, four schools do not have full-day kindergarten. There was full-day kindergarten in conjunction with Great Basin College, communities and schools. The district has funded one full-day kindergarten center and Title I was funding the other centers. Pre-kindergarten programing was centered around language acquisition skills and getting children ready to attend school.
- Before and after school programs.
- Early intervention models.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Zander said that as everyone was aware, lack of resources was an issue for the district. He said if a new formula was built into the funding model it was important to have a mechanism in place so that the money could be "fenced" and restricted for ELL programing, not only from the standpoint of collective bargaining, but so the district would be accountable in tracking the funding to show the results. From a federal standpoint, whether Title I or Title III funding, issues with sequestration and maintenance of effort to produce those allocations over time and it was important to understand that the funding was there to supplement current general fund funding and was not something to replace. From the state standpoint, the district was aware where Nevada was per pupil allocation compared to other states and it was important to focus on building a comprehensive model over time, which he hoped was the first step of that process. He said that the unfunded mandates were related to the service delivery models, especially in the rural districts, and it was very difficult to maintain or provide some of the required service models for ELL students based on their level of language acquisition. He said that there was a Title I school in the Elko County School District that was more than 110 miles east of Elko, and another school that was 117 miles north of Elko, and Owyhee, which was 96 miles north, and there was no way to consolidate those schools. There were other languages in addition to Hispanic in the rural areas, and the issue was the difficulty finding qualified staff and full-time subcontractors to make the eight-hour trip to the rural areas to provide ELL programming. The costs were variable but the requirements were there so that needed to be built into the model. Mr. Zander stated that the district was dealing with the shortage of staff and trying to increase resources to encourage teachers to become TESL endorsed, because that would increase student achievement in the classrooms.

Mr. Zander stated that the Elko County School District was expanding preschool, WIDA training in all schools for teachers, all-day kindergarten to some elementary school sites, before and after-school tutoring, leveled readers, summer school programs at the Title I schools, hand-held technology in the classrooms and during the past year, an ELL coordinator position was established to bring a new level of focus and awareness of the ELL programming. In addition, the district was looking at specific grade levels to focus exit strategies to promote ELL students and move them through their career.

Assemblywoman Flores asked about the strategies the district was looking at for recruiting staff for the rural counties.

Mr. Zander replied that at this point the district was focusing on the Title II-A funds that were available. The district discussed incentives to increase compensation for individuals willing to go the Title I schools in the rural areas, in addition to ELL incentives to get teachers TESL endorsed, and to get individuals to move to the rural areas.

Ms. Corrales asked Mr. Zander if he had any thoughts on technology as a delivery method for programming to the rural schools.

Mr. Zander replied that he will be participating in a presentation regarding programing that allowed interactive lessons for ELL students. He thought the districts needed to look at interactive programing, which could save time and money in the long run.

Mr. Erquiaga requested that NASS provide proposals or ideas for the formula provision that speaks to distance education and pooling services so districts purchased services. Providing an example, Mr. Erquiaga said the state level would have the instructional coaches since they could not be in every district or purchase services from the Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP). He asked if NASS could help the committee think that through – the current model was built on conterminous county lines as they formed in 1956, and existed in 1967, and the population was not dispersed that way. He thought they had to look at purchasing regional services, not changing districts, but services.

Mr. Zander said that could be put on the agenda at the next NASS meeting. A task force could be established to come up with ideas. He thought that the RPDP was a good example and has been very successful in Northeastern Nevada and a great resource for services.

Mr. Burnham said that he believed a problem that has become more severe was the requirements for licensure of teachers. He said that a few years ago, Eureka County lost a seasoned teacher who was also very economically efficient – she thought social studies, English, Spanish, American Government, band, and chorus, and it was virtually impossible to find another teacher with that type of certification given the current licensure requirements. Eureka County had to hire more people to replace one teacher, because in this day and age, it was impossible to find someone with that kind of licensure. He thought the committee should look at alternatives for the rural districts, because it added a great expense as older teachers were replaced and there was no one to teach a broad spectrum of courses.

Mr. Burnham stated that looking at the rural districts – there were a lot factors that went into graduation rates – Eureka County and Storey County had the highest graduation rates in the state in FY 2013, and Mineral County had the lowest graduation rate in the state. He said the makeup of the state was extremely unique and all the districts were unique in of themselves, so as they move down the road to alternative funding, he hoped they recognized that each district had its own set of challenges and its own

demographics that were unique. He thought that Nevada was a little unique because there was so much variation in both size and demographics within the state.

Chair Denis called for a lunch break at 12:00 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 1:07 p.m.

Assemblywoman Flores stated that the committee received written public testimony from Jose Solorio and Sylvia Lazos on behalf of the Latino Leadership Council (Exhibit G).

VI. OVERVIEW OF THE STUDENT POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES AT RISK OF LOW ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND THE FUNDING MECHANISMS UTILIZED BY OTHER STATES TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR THOSE STUDENTS.

Mr. Griffith referenced the handout – At-Risk Funding (Exhibit H) and stated that at-risk funding was intended to provide resources to school/districts so that they could help low-achieving and/or low-income students meet state standards. He stated that sometimes at risk defined students who come from low-income families and in other cases, at risk defined students who were not achieving to state levels. He said that there was a lot of overlap between the two groups, but not perfect overlap. Moving to page 2 of Exhibit H, Mr. Griffith said that the federal government provides Title I funding to low-income schools and districts. Title I funding was actually four different programs (basic grants, concentration grants, targeted grants and education finance incentive grants) each with their own distribution funding formula. All four of the formulas were based off free and reduced priced student lunch count to some extent and there were other measures like density or previous years' funding or another different variation. He said that there was more money in Title I funding than the federal government made available for Title III funding. Nevada federal Title I funding was $106.5 million in FY 2012, $101.4 million in FY 2013, and $115.8 million in FY 2014. He said that there was a decline in the FY 2013 funding, which had to do with sequestration; however, the funding has be adjusted upward for the FY 2014 school year. He noted that approximately 75 percent of all federal spending for K-12 education comes through Title I funding or Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funding. The IDEA and special education funding were the two big players in the federal government's budget and all other programs combined only account for 25 percent. Referencing page 3 of Exhibit H, Mr. Griffith stated that there was large gap in the test scores on the percent of students who score proficient or above on the 2013 NAEP exams between the students that qualify for FRL and those students that do not qualify. He said that the gap for at-risk students was not a great as the gap between ELL and non-ELL students, but still a big gap existed. The gap that existed in Nevada was approximately the same size as seen in other states – in some cases 20 point plus difference between the percent of students who score at or above proficient or non-free and reduced priced lunch students versus those who are.

Continuing, Mr. Griffith said that families applied for the FRL program and had to meet the income qualifications of a family income of 185 percent of the federal poverty level ($35,131 for a family of 3). The income qualifications for FRL was a family income that is 130 percent of the federal poverty rate ($24,389 for a family of 3). He said it was important to note that the federal guidelines do not differentiate between if the three family members were two parents and one child, or one parent and two children, and the number varied based on family size, so the larger the family the higher the dollar amount to qualify for FRL. He said that there was a gap for the students and most of the students were defined by if they qualified for FRL. He said that the Education Commission of the States (ECS) looked at-risk funding in 41 states and how the states defined FRL students and what additional funding the states supplied for the students. He said that ECS found that of the 41 states they reviewed, 35 states provided some form of at-risk funding; 6 states do not provide funding; 25 states provided funding inside of the state funding formula; and, 10 states provided funding outside of the state funding formula. Funding outside of the formula had a tendency to take the form of grants, for example, in Montana, the Legislature allocated funds each year that were distributed based on each districts Title I student count, and in the West Virginia School District, the state received $18 for each student counted in net enrollment. Moving to page 7 of Exhibit H, of the states that provide funding inside of the state formula, 24 states provided at-risk students with an additional weight and the weights varied from 1.8 percent (Georgia) to .0915 percent (New Mexico). He said that the only state that did not provide a weight was Massachusetts – at-risk funds were provided on a per student basis ($2,702 for elementary and $3,341 for secondary students). He said that the funding formula in Massachusetts functioned using a dollar amount instead of weights and the state provided an extra $2,700 for elementary school students, qualified for being at risk, and an extra $3,300 for secondary students who qualified for being at risk.

Mr. Griffith stated that of the 35 states that provided at-risk funding – 23 used some form of FRL to identify at-risk students. He said that 15 states used FRL as their sole identifier for at-risk funding, 3 states used only FRL as an identifier, and 5 states used FRL as one of the measures for identifying at-risk students. A majority of the states used FRL to identify at-risk students because it was the best single marker for identifying the students at risk of dropping out and accounted for more that 57 percent of the variations in student achievement across schools. The FRL number was easy to collect and was already collected by every school district across the country and by the federal government. The FRL number was readily available and was a marker that was consistent over time even though the amount of income varied from year-to-year. Mr. Griffith noted that the issues with using FRL as a measurement was that it did not identify all students who are at risk of failing. Even though they were aware that there was a good amount of overlap between FRL and the students who do not make progress in education, it was not a perfect overlap. In addition, the number of FRL students decreases in each grade once the student gets past middle school for many different reasons. Some reasons were economic as students' parents grow older and have a higher income and the student moves off the FRL roles, but they were also aware that there were a number of students in high school who refuse to apply for FRL

because they did not want the stigma attached, so there was an artificial drop in numbers as students move to high school, which may mean that the districts were not sufficiently identifying those students in high school. He said that more states were identifying clear measures of student achievement, and states could think of using those as opposed to using general guide like FRL.

Mr. Griffith said that some states provide at-risk funding to districts based on total enrollment, as opposed to FRL. The states assumed at a certain percentage of their total enrollment qualified for at-risk funding and in need of additional assistance. For instance, the low dollar amount of $18.00 of at-risk funding per student in West Virginia, but the state counted 100 percent of their students as essentially at risk – so 100 percent of their students receive that $18.00, which was a smaller amount for a larger number of students in the school district. He said that Florida provided at-risk funding to districts based more on a census-based approach, with the understanding that there were a certain percentage of students in each school district that were going to be at risk of dropping out, so the state provided funding based on a total count for students.

Mr. Griffith said that some states used student achievement measures as an identifier for at-risk students – Georgia and Utah used low performing students. He said that Georgia had a generous system of funding, but was targeted to a much smaller group of students and not targeted to all FRL students. The funding was only targeted to students that were not meeting educational attainment levels and needed targeted assistance. Some states used income measures other than FRL – some states used the number of students from low-income families and census data to determine that within each school district, and some districts, such as Montana and New Mexico, used students that qualified for Title I services as opposed to just FRL counts.

Mr. Griffith indicated that there were a couple of measures that Nevada should consider before changing the funding formula – four states looked at ELL students and qualified those students as at risk and some looked at mobile or migrant students. Mr. Griffith argued that those were different types of programs and services than at-risk services. He said there was discussion from the school districts about the services that were provided specifically to help students get up to pace on ELL and there was another set of services to help students get up to their learning achievement levels to move them off at-risk roles. He suggested the committee look at funding ELL in migrant students separately and not lump them with the general at-risk population.

Moving to page 13 of Exhibit H, Mr. Griffith stated that there were states that used unique student identifiers, for example, any pregnant student in Texas was automatically qualified for at-risk funding, in addition to children of military families. He stated that North Carolina looked at students in single-parent families or families with at least one parent without a high school degree. Students in foster homes or in facilities for neglected and delinquent children were identified in Oregon for at-risk funding. Mr. Griffith was aware that one of the best markers was looking at a students' mothers education attainment level and the better that was tracked, then they could have an

understanding before the student entered school and the kind of help and support the student might require. He said it was difficult because federal and certain state laws prevent the districts from asking these types of questions, which was why they did not see states delve into that. He said that Ohio looked at going district-by-district and trying to get a sense of understanding by using census data for where parents were on their education attainment level and having money flow through the school funding system to address that issue, which has never really gotten off the ground. States would have to use either FRL or some other types of markers to help get to the at-risk funding answer. Research has shown that as the at-risk population increased, the cost of educating each at-risk student increased. Six states currently have funding systems that take the density of at-risk students populations into account – Arkansas, Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota, Nebraska and Virginia, to increase the funding amounts they provide for at-risk school districts.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Griffith said that the committee needed to think about whether the state needed additional funding for at-risk students, and if so, the appropriate funding level per pupil and which students needed additional resources. The 2012 AIR report showed that the state needed to provide additional funding for at-risk students but did not identify the amount. The state needed to know how to identify at-risk students and if they should fund ELL and at-risk students separately or together. He thought the committee might want to discuss tracking the spending provided to school districts and ensuring that the money was spent for the at-risk students. He stated that some of the comments he heard from other states was that additional funding was provided for at-risk students in the state formula, but then was blended with the general education formula and may not be used to help those students. He said it would make sense to have some guidelines for school districts and require some reporting to ensure that the additional funding was going to help at-risk students with their educational standards.

Assemblywoman Flores asked which six states did not fund at-risk students. Mr. Griffith stated that Nevada was one of the six states that did not provide funding for at-risk students. He did not have information on the other states that did not fund at-risk students but would provide it to the committee members.

Assemblywoman Flores said that it was not a surprise that 90 percent of the LEP students were also low-income students. Given the different ways that at-risk students were identified, she asked how the factors were chosen to determine at-risk and LEP students given that there was such a high percentage of poverty-related issues in both of the subgroups.

Mr. Griffith replied that there was a lot of overlap in services, but there could be a separate funding stream for at-risk and LEP programs and services and school districts would have accountability on how they were using each of those funding streams for different individual students. He said there was going to be overlap because some of the ELL services provided would also be helping the at-risk students, and some of the at-risk services would be helping ELL students. He thought that the districts could try to

target at best – ELL services and funding could be used to help students get up to speed on their English language acquisition, whereas the at-risk funding was being used to get those students up to state standards for reading, math, science and some of the other programs. He said that in some cases, the districts would see a tremendous amount of overlap and the funding might get blended at a point for students.

In response to a question from Ms. Corrales, Mr. Griffith replied that the trend in the states that recently revised their models or components was to move the funding from outside of the formula to inside the formula and away from funding different programs. For instance, California recently revised its school funding system and used a lot of research studies done by private foundations for the state. The previous at-risk funding was done outside the funding formula in multiple pots and required specific types of services. As an example, funding for at-risk students could only be used for summer school or after school programs. The money was now moved inside the funding formula and it was up to the school districts on how they would deliver those services. Mr. Griffith stated that years ago the trend was the opposite – move money outside of the formula and target the funding to things like summer and after school programs. He said in the last few years it was noted that it was not a "one-size fits all" and sometimes those work and sometimes they do not. Certain programs that people thought would be effective for at-risk students, such as smaller class sizes, have not necessarily proven to be cost effective, so states have decided to move money back into the formula and leave it up to the school districts to make those decisions.

Mr. Martinez said the Massachusetts public schools spent more than $20,000 per student and received about $35 million in Title I funds for 50,000 students. Washoe County received about $12 million in Title I funds and had 63,000 students. He was aware the poverty rates were a little higher, but not that high as in Massachusetts to receive triple the funding that Washoe County received. He said there was a variety of Title I funds and a difference across the country of how much states received on a per-student basis, even when poverty students were counted. He asked Mr. Griffith if he had a sense of what drives some of that and why Massachusetts received so much more funding on a per-student basis. Mr. Martinez added that the state of Illinois received more federal funding than Nevada has ever received.

Mr. Griffith stated that he recently wrote a paper on this subject and there was a tremendous amount of difference in the amount of funding each state received from Title I funding for at-risk students. Over the years, the formulas were written in such a way that really "stacked the deck" in favor of the East Coast and the Midwest large urban areas. When looking at each formula individually under Title I it made sense; however, when put together it turned out numbers that were hard to understand and disproportional. In addition, Mr. Griffith said that there was nothing that could be done about it other than legislative action at the federal level, because it was something that was currently in rules and regulations. He has not heard of any talk on changing the way Title I funds were distributed. He said that he received zero feedback when he wrote the paper outlining the innate and fairness of the current funding system. He said it was a real issue and unfortunately needed to be dealt with at the federal level.

Mr. Martinez said that he thought that the East Coast and Midwest states received more Title I funding because when the original formulas were set up years ago those states provided a state poverty match that was part of the federal formula.

Mr. Griffith replied that there was a time when the Title I funding could be adjusted based on a greater commitment from the state, which was no longer true. However, states have essentially grandfathered in dollar amounts, and if the state did that in the past, and bumped up their money, they were locked in with the larger dollar amounts. He said that there many provisions within each formula that the state would at least receive what they received the previous year, plus an inflation amount. Therefore, if a state was already ahead of another state in the formula, the state would probably always be ahead.

Mr. Martinez commented that most of the $115 million in Title I funding went to Clark County and Washoe County because they had the vast majority of poverty students. Mr. Martinez stated that the Chicago school district, which was the size of both Washoe County and Clark County, received almost $300 million, which was triple what Nevada received. He said that the Title I funding was large and he thought Nevada needed to advocate the legislators at the federal level, because the state also had the fastest growing poverty rates.

Assemblywoman Flores stated that unfortunately the committee recognized that there was plenty of lost opportunities for the state in the level of funding received, which was the reason to change the funding formula and build urgency around this issue.

Mr. Erquiaga said that Mr. Griffith mentioned the FRL was a commonly used and good measure for identifying at-risk students. He asked if the community eligibility option would take away FRL as a tracking mechanism for the state if districts started using that option and not the paper applications.

Mr. Griffith stated that currently there was a pilot program in Kentucky dealing with that issue. School districts that qualified could use census data for their state funding formula and not the individual FRL counts. As the program started to expand more across the country, he thought some states might move away from the FRL count to census data collections.

Mr. Fromdahl asked Mr. Griffith to speak on the qualifications for FRL. He asked if there were automatic qualifiers, such as students in transition programs, so it might not necessarily be an income-based need, but more of a structure within the household.

Mr. Griffith asked Mr. Fromdahl if he was talking about qualifications for the FRL program when students did not meet the income qualifications.

Mr. Fromdahl clarified that there has been an expansion of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act in Nevada for students that were considered in

transition based on their housing needs, and therefore qualifications were not based so much on income, but more on the family situation.

Mr. Griffith stated that he was aware there were some states that had those types of qualifications, but thought if Nevada was looking at a measure they should go beyond FRL counts and look at other qualifications. In the state of Texas, students qualified if FRL or not meeting current educational standards, and he believed that the state would be better off if they focused more on that. In addition, if the state believed that they had good census data, because the districts were county wide and it was easier to collect that information, then he thought the state should use that as a marker as opposed to FRL counts. Mr. Griffith believed that there were enough issues around the edges of FRL and that the state should be able to find something better to use in Nevada.

VII. DISCUSSION OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO PROVIDE ACADEMIC SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AT RISK OF LOW ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.

Chair Denis acknowledged Assemblywoman Marilyn Dondero Loop and Senator Joyce Woodhouse attending the meeting in the audience.

Joyce Haldeman, Clark County School District, introduced Kim Wooden, Deputy Superintendent, Clark County School District.

Ms. Wooden stated that she spent the last 13 years involved in funding for FRL students and was now looking at those programs for effectiveness and holding programs accountable for getting results. She noted that students who live in poverty come to school with great need and it takes the talent of teachers to address those needs. However, but even being an at-risk teacher when she started at Sunrise Acres Elementary School, she saw students enter the school building whose needs were not addressed and even with great teaching and lots of support at the school, without additional time on focused and targeted interventions, the students' needs could not be met. Ms. Wooden said that Nevada was one of the 14 states out of 35 surveyed that did not adjust funding to account for the needs of low-income students (page 1, Exhibit I). State and local funds flow to districts in Nevada without regard to the number of at-risk or poverty students in each district. She said that the aim was a funding plan that was equitable with respect to the challenges students faced regardless of the students' circumstances.

Continuing, Ms. Wooden stated that the system for funding public education was in need of attention in Nevada, particularly when looking at the students in poverty and the power to direct and apply resources towards need depended on the clarity about the diverse range of needs, such as ELL and FRL students – how, why and how much funding should account for students in poverty. In a study summited to the Legislative Counsel Bureau in August 2012, there were three recommendations worth noting; 1) low-income students were associated with higher educational costs, 2) funding adjustments should be incorporated into current funding models, and, 3) the top states

in the country were anywhere from 13 percent to 34 percent more to state and local revenue for every low-income students over and above what was provided for a student that was not low-income. She said that Nevada could join the ranks of the leading states if it chooses and adjust the low-income weights to match the top ten states. Ms. Wooden stated that these recommendations were at the heart of the need for a funding formula that considers poverty. She said there was a saying, "needs drive plans and plans drive resources."

Moving to page 3 of Exhibit I, Ms. Wooden stated that a significant portion of the variation in student achievement on state assessment was associated with poverty – upwards of 50 percent. Students that come from high-wealth communities tend to score higher than students who come from low-income communities. A report from the Education Law Center, Rutgers University, Is School Funding Fair?, showed that decades of research has demonstrated that poverty was a significant barrier to the educational progress. The report indicated that not only is the finance system necessary to include varying levels of funding, but also an increase relative to the student's poverty rate.

Ms. Wooden referred to page 5 of Exhibit I and stated that there were significant risk factors affecting children in poverty, such as stress, emotional and social challenges, academic delays and health needs. Many poverty students did not know where they were going to sleep at night due to increased homelessness, nor if there was enough food to eat demonstrated by the FRL count students in the district, which often led to social and emotional challenges and academic delays. She indicated that the teachers and the schools were committed to serving all children and teachers and schools were the constant in the students' lives.

Susan Steaffens, Title I Director, CCSD, directed the committee to page 6 of Exhibit I and stated that the district served 75 percent of all the students in the state with FRL status, which was 166,000 students. To put that in perspective, she said if that was taken as a separate group it would be the second largest school district in the state. Moving to the chart on page 7 (Exhibit I) CCSD Ethnicity Trends, the trend in the Hispanic population has dramatically increased over the last ten years. Although ethnicity was not an indicator of poverty, most of the Hispanic population was also classified as FRL. Ms. Steaffens stated that the annual median household income in Clark County has decreased over the last three years, which also corresponds with other trends seen in the CCSD. Page 9 showed the CCSD homeless population, which increased over seven years. At the end of January 2014, there was 7,527 students identified as homeless, up from 6,293 students in 2013, and the district was unsure how many students were unidentified as homeless. Putting that into perspective, Ms. Steaffens said that the homeless population was more than the combined number of students in 12 out of the 17 counties in the state and was about equal to the 7,545 students in the Carson City School District. The slide on page 10 (Exhibit I) showed the percentage of students receiving FRL over the last seven years. She was aware that at-risk and poverty children were often defined as FRL students, which was determined through federal guidelines through the Department of Agriculture. She said that it was

no surprise that poverty, at-risk and FRL students were having an effect on the achievement gap, which was a state and national concern. The slide on page 11 showed the reading achievement gap, and the slide on page 12 showed the math achievement gap for FRL students in the CCSD.

Ms. Steaffens stated that the CCSD received supplemental federal funding and many avenues for at-risk students, however, it was not enough to make a large enough impact. Most of the funding was targeted toward specific activities or had very specific requirements, and typically supported class-size reduction, early childhood education, professional development to improve teacher quality, extended day and year, wraparound support, intervention programs, parent involvement, technology/21st Century Learning, career development and parent engagement.

Concluding her presentation, Mr. Steaffens said that schools did the best with what they had, but were trying to create a better base funding for the schools. She said when the floor was low it was hard to get to the ceiling, and she was excited with the potential of increasing funding for at-risk students.

Wendy Roselinsky, Principal, Jay. W. Jeffers Elementary School (Jeffers) stated the she opened Jeffers Elementary School nine years ago and was aware of the demographics and that the school was low supplemental educational services (SES). She said that Jeffers had 93 percent FRL students, 75.6 percent ELL students, and 11 percent gifted and talented students. Jeffers has had some success, but the school still had an achievement gap that needed to continue to shrink. She said that there were many ongoing "what if" conversations with teachers and staff at Jeffers - what if they had more money to spend, what effective strategies would increase the students level of achievement the most, what if the school had more time in a school day and year, and what if the school could provide students more time with academically focused environments to increase their exposure to vocabulary and conceptual development, as well as to the world at large. She said that there were students that have never left their neighborhoods and riding on a bus on the I-15 freeway to school or for new clothes was a huge adventure. She said what if all grade levels had additional teachers, schools with high percentages of FRL lunch students could attain increased achievement with students and strategic support in both pedagogy and societal issues. Ms. Roselinsky shared a story of 4th grade student named Stephanie, who was late to school every day. There were 32 students in her class and she was behind in all academic areas. Stephanie suffered from chronic stress and told her teacher she was late because she had to help her mother with the younger children at home before she could leave the house. Ms. Roselinsky said that Stephanie needed emotional and academic support from her teacher if she was going to make progress, but the teacher had 31 other low SES students that needed special attention as well. She asked what if schools had instructional coaches like at Jeffers. The instructional coachers at Jeffers provided onsite continual professional development, including implementation of best practices in literacy, mathematics and science. Instructional coaches improved the quality of the teachers at Jeffers and the students reflect the quality of the work. Schools with low SES students should have instructional coaches. What if there was a social worker to

assist Jeffers with parents. Mr. Roselinsky stated that recently two boys, one in 1st grade and one in 2nd grade, entered the school office with their mother who proceeded to inform the school that the boys had not been in school for five months even though the family still lived in Clark County. When the school found the boys in the system, it appeared that had been out of school for several months the year before as well. Ms. Roselinsky stated that the number of students and families that require wraparound services constantly increased and low SES schools needed assistance so teachers can teach and administrators could spend time being instructional leaders.

Ms. Roselinsky shared one last story about a student named Steven, who was a 3rd grade student from a very large family. When all the 2nd graders were screened, the school found that Steven was gifted. Steven's parents had no idea and were confused when the school said he was gifted, although he was a struggling reader. Steven's spacial and mathematical abilities got him into the gifted and talented (GATE) program, but his vocabulary development and progress in language made reading a challenge. The school explained to Steven and his parents that he had to practice everything his 3rd grade teacher and the interventionist taught him. Steven stayed after school for the tutoring program; he went to GATE and the reading interventionist. Recently, Steven was progress-monitored at grade level in reading and would continue to receive the support he needed from his classroom, GATE teacher, and his parents. Steven will be a positive statistic in the CCSD and will have what he needs to graduate from high school and beyond. Ms. Roselinsky said that this can be done – social-economic status does not have to create the destiny for children, however, increased funding was needed.

Mr. Burnham said that low-income and at-risk students tend to correlate, but were not necessarily synonymous. He asked if other criteria should be used in determining funding, or was FRL designation adequate for making those determinations.

Ms. Wooden replied that at risk was defined as FRL count, in addition to the household median income, which was something that was done each year in the CCSD, so the district had good information for families that fill out applications. However, students that enter high school tend to not want to self-identify and the FRL applications do not return to schools, therefore, the district could look at other indicators at the secondary level. She said that one of those indicators might be non-proficiency.

Mr. Burnham noted that Mr. Martinez mentioned that nationally, the state of Nevada was low priority as far as Title I funding. He asked if anyone was aware of the timeframe for reauthorization of the funding so that Nevada's congressional representatives could advocate for Nevada.

Mr. Martinez replied that the funding could be changed at any time by Congress. He thought the state needed to advocate their federal legislators and push the issue, which was long overdue. He said the East Coast states were grandfathered in for funding, and, at a minimum, were receiving three times as much funding as Nevada.

Mr. Burnham stated that he thought it was a good time to push the issue since Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader, was a Nevadan.

Mr. Martinez stated that the WCSD took a different approach and tried to understand their students, because the demographics in Washoe County almost mirrored Clark County. For example, poverty rates were just under 50 percent, but the earlier rates were close to 60 percent, which was where Clark County was. The presentation would show the density of poverty and ELL together and how they played a hand. Unfortunately, one of the things seen in the low-performing schools was commonality of children who live in poverty and are ELL, in addition to children identified with learning disabilities. The density in many ways mirrored Clark County and although they had more schools, the schools with the same attributes had the exact results and poverty rates. Mr. Martinez stated that because the WCSD did not have a lot of resources the district was trying non-monetary things to create greater accountability among the district. In addition, the district would discuss the Acceleration Zone, which was implemented in 2013 to ensure that all students find academic success. The district identified 11 lowest performing schools to receive targeted support and leadership as part of the Acceleration Zone. He added that all the Zoom schools were in the Acceleration Zone, which was before Zoom Schools were created and provided a sense of how these overlapped.

Ben Hayes, Chief Accountability Officer, Washoe County School District, stated that the WCSD was trying to buy strategic supports for students, schools, and systemically. Referring to Support and Accountability to Address School and Student Risk in Washoe County School District, Exhibit J, Mr. Hayes stated that globally, 59 percent of WCSD students were either ELL, IEP, FRL, or former IEP students. He said the 55 percent of students were on non-acceleration category and 94 percent of students were in the Acceleration Zone. He said that the FRL students or students not meeting standards was approximately 65 percent in the WCSD, so there was certainly a need for strategic supports and funding. In addition, WCSD had a growing homeless population, which was 3.4 percent or approximately 2,500 students. He indicated that one in four students, or 24 percent were in transiency, and 48 percent of students were FRL status. Mr. Hayes said the WCSD was trying to “skate to where the buck was going to be” and wanted to be conservative on how they supported the schools. The WCSD wanted subjects like science moving up to higher standards and the Nevada Academic Content Standards to be more rigorous than the CRT. The WCSD built a system of support coupling the Nevada School Performance framework with the WCSD Performance framework. He said the WCSD was being more conservative because they wanted to get intense supports to those schools that have a majority of students that were either non-proficient or not growing at the rate they needed to be. In addition, the WCSD wanted to be accountable and transparent, but the district’s role for accountability was not accountability as a label like it has been for years, but move into accountability for a support model for at-risk students and schools.

Mr. Hayes referenced page 3 of Exhibit J and said that moving into accountability for a support model meant the ability to account for strengths and challenges. If that

approach was taken, the district could be smarter about the ability to target support and resources to schools and populations that were most in need. He stated that with accountability as support, the district had the ability to tell a richer "data story" of the students and school and how to strategically invest in different things to support the students.

Continuing, Mr. Hayes said that page 4 of Exhibit J showed the dashboard elements used in the WCSD to find students that were less than 80 percent – demographics, attendance, behavior events, and academic performance, which were drillable. Additional dashboard elements include CRT scores for reading, math and science to see if the students were growing to proficiency, and if proficient, were they being challenged to get to the exceed standard or the college ready level. Mr. Hayes said a lot of work was done going from the system level always to the child level, because the district wanted this to be conversations about the child with the educators and parents. He said it was one example of graduation on-track monitoring, so they could see if every student in high school could be challenged to get into more advanced placement classes or college ready classes. If a student was not on track, the district could laser in to see if the student was just missing one high school proficiency exam, and provide targeted support. The district would have a conversation with the student, teacher and parent to see how much the student was invested in course work and what was engaging that student to get them through the pathway to graduation. Mr. Hayes said that the district looked at this data each year for at-risk students. The data has not changed as much as he would like, and they were doing a lot of work to focus farther down the pathway.

Continuing, Mr. Hayes said that approximately 57 percent of students entering their senior year were on track to graduate, page 10 (Exhibit J). He said there were various risk categories, from just missing one high school proficiency or short a few credits, to the need for severe credit recovery and missing multiple high school proficiencies. The chart on the page showed the WCSD as a whole. If the ELL students were represented in the pie on the chart it would be approximately 6 percent each year, and if the FRL students were represented in the pie on the chart it would be approximately 31 percent each year. He said the chart provided an idea of how much the district was looking at each year and how much support was needed at the end of the pathway and why the district was trying to build it down. The chart on page 11, student profile page, showed the data story and how much the student was invested, how close they were to passing their reading or mathematics exam and the progress the student was making. He said the student profile page was a communication tool and data was useless without the supports, people and students behind the data. Page 13 (Exhibit J) displayed the school and district data profiles so when the school was doing their school performance planning they could recognize the students and populations at risk in order to narrow the achievement gaps. The district provided the schools a large book containing the schools data story, which really helped the school performance planning. He said the WCSD framework profile, page 14 (Exhibit J) was a quick performance summary showing students that were proficient, on track to graduation, growing to where they

needed to be, the climate in the school, school and family engagement, and the achievement gaps.

Concluding his presentation, Mr. Hayes said there were many at-risk students and the end goal was to get those students to the minimum bar of proficiency – the district wanted a better set of options for students when they crossed the graduation stage. Page 15 (Exhibit J) showed the advanced placement potential identification tools to identify students with the potential to take advanced placement courses, starting with honors courses and building up to advanced placement courses. He said the district needed to look at the system and student populations that were accessing the actual pathway to graduation and at the options after graduation – college and postsecondary education. He said that often there was not a proportional representation of students that were at risk, for example, FRL students were often overrepresented in suspension, and underrepresented in advanced placement courses. The district needed to look at what they were doing systemically to address those issues, which led into the learning environment. Mr. Hayes indicated that the district took school climate very seriously to round out the data story, so it was not just safety, but engagement and trusting relationships in the building – how families were welcome, and how teachers felt about their teaching and learning environment. He stated that an early warning system helped the district identify at-risk students and not label every child as at risk if they were just FRL or non-proficient, which was not risk to be confused with FRL and ELL, but a way to identify students that needed support and intervention. Therefore, a system was built based on local and national research and factors that predict absent interventions and deleterious outcomes for students. He said that the early warning system was used to put in differentiated intensive support for students as much as possible. The early warning system predicted negative academic outcomes based on prior year of retention, transiency, attendance, suspension, CRT or HSPE and credit attainment. He said this early warning system was meant to send some flags that it was a movable metric that they could put interventions in place and take some risks away so the students had a greater chance on the pathway to graduation. Mr. Hayes said when the risks were identified – no risk, low risk, moderate risk or high risk in the early warning system, the one year outcomes correlate with many bad indicators such as dropping out of school, suspension, being absent too much, and negatively correlates with the outcomes wanted, like proficiency in reading, math, grade point averages, credit earned and advanced placement warning. Mr. Hayes stated that the point of the data systems was what could be done better and more strategically for students at risk.

Mr. Hayes stated that if the Acceleration Zone was counted as its own school district there would be approximately 6,500 students, which would be the sixth largest district in the state. The Acceleration Zone students had an 89 percent poverty rate versus the rest of the WCSD at 44 percent. He said the proportion of ELL students in the Acceleration Zone were 42 percent versus 14 percent in the rest of the WCSD. Referencing page 26 of Exhibit J, Mr. Hayes stated that the chart show the proportionality among the 1 and 2 star schools and the 4 and 5 star schools. The dashes on the chart represented proportionality, which was intensely out of whack. Free and reduced lunch students make up approximately 48 percent of the WCSD,

nearly 90 percent in the Acceleration Zone, and about 27 percent, or 1 in 4, in 4 and 5 star schools. The ELL students made up approximately 16 percent of the population, but 42 percent of the Acceleration Zone and only 7 percent of non-1 and 2 star schools. He pointed out that there was a lot in determining the students at-risk, which were not just FRL or proficiency students, but identifying all students that were at-risk.

Debra Biersdorff, Area Superintendent, Acceleration Zone, WCSD, stated that the Acceleration Zone was comprised of 11 schools – 10 elementary and 1 high school. The Acceleration Zone schools have been in effect for almost one full year as a result of the vision of Superintendent Pedro Martinez. She stated that using both quantitative and qualitative data, the district looked at what they were going to do differently in some of the lowest performing schools, which resulted in the Acceleration Zone schools. Ms. Biersdorff said that previously she served as an area superintendent and as a principal at Earl Wooster High School in Reno. She had a lot of experience working with at-risk or at-promise youth and jumped on the opportunity to become the area superintendent for the Acceleration Zone schools. She said that a lot of work was done trying to understand the challenges for the schools, which resulted in a lot of common challenges and outliers. The chart on page 27, Exhibit J, showed the higher expectations of accelerated improvement across the performance framework. The chart showed the gains that needed to be made around student proficiency and growth. She said that one of the first things done in conjunction with the district leadership team was to identify principals that would come to the schools to start making changes from the onset. Truly looking at leaders who were visionaries and not afraid to have the tough conversations – to walk their talk and follow through what they believed was best for the school. Ms. Biersdorff said with chronically low performing schools there was a great need for urgency around better support and outcomes for students. The Acceleration Zone is a special circumstance in which tight management is balanced with innovation with a goal of affecting immediate substantial and sustainable change. She indicated that the first major change was the instructional improvements that needed to happen in the classrooms. Ms. Biersdorff stated that she had 11 principals that believed succeeding was about the teacher in the classroom – the silver bullet to change, not necessarily about programs. She said that the focus the first year for the principals was to understand the students and teachers, and strengthening the instructional capacity of the teachers.

Continuing, Ms. Biersdorff stated that chronically low performing schools were identified for the Acceleration Zone that were 1 or 2 star schools based on 2011-12 state and local accountability framework results. Currently, there were 10 elementary schools and 1 high school for the 2014-15 school year, which may change given data from other school districts. The 10 elementary schools received Title I funding; however, the high school did not, which presented challenges. In addition, other funding was found through the Washoe Education Foundation to try to augment budgets for the schools and bring in more support. Each of the 11 schools were provided an instructional coach or implementation specialist out of their general fund, which has been an amazing asset for the schools, because not only can they provide professional development to teachers, and also ensured that support was implemented with fidelity and that teachers

received ongoing support. Ms. Biersdorff said that the school expectations include rigorous academic performance expectations and she expected to see twice as much improvement with the Acceleration Zone schools as compared to the rest of the schools in the WCSD. Data was continually monitored including school specific tools, especially common assessments at the various grade levels. In addition, principals know their students and the teachers know the families of the students. Each school has set high expectations around school climate and culture, including social emotional learning, anti-bullying, family engagement, including home visitation and parent/teacher academic teams. She said that currently they were nearing approximately 700 home visits amongst the 11 schools.

Ms. Biersdorff stated that throughout the school year data was collected, including stories about the changes that occurred at the school and a report was produced at the end of the school year that pinpointed the changes that have been made and how the district was able to tie those changes to improve student achievement data. She noted that 59 percent of WCSD students were either RLL, IEP, FRL or former IEP; 94 percent of students in the Acceleration Zone fit into one or more of those categories. She said that there were challenges in the schools and the district was working hard to overcome them.

Concluding, Ms. Biersdorff stated the Acceleration Zone schools have gone above and beyond trying to find resources outside what the WCSD has been able to provide. The district was partnering with the University of Nevada, Reno, for tutoring services and worked with the Boys and Girls Clubs, Team Up, and 21st Century Learning. In addition, there were a lot of before and after school programs for the students, and the district was looking forward to the five-week summer academy for the Zoom schools. Ms. Biersdorff was aware that all students could learn and deserved an equal opportunity to achieve success, regardless of their challenges.

Mr. Martinez stated that the WCSD was going deep into the data to understand where the students were. The district built a data warehouse and hired programmers that were working with the teachers to customize everything to the school and teacher. The district was talking to the teachers to find out what was needed to help kindergarten through 12th students improve. Although the WCSD was half the size of the CCSD, if they did not look at the enrollment numbers, the counties were almost exactly the same in terms of the density of poverty and ELL students, and more sadly even on performance. He said that the district took the states framework and ramped up the criteria at the low-performing schools to identify the schools in the Acceleration Zone. The district was aware the issues existed and there were a lot of issues underneath in terms of belief systems and resource allocations, which resulted in replacing 7 of the 11 principals. He added that the other 4 principals had to make their case to stay in the school. He said that the WCSD was seeing a huge amount of synergies among the 11 leaders because they were transforming the schools, and the existing leaders were benefiting from the new leaders. Mr. Martinez believed that the assessment results would show the progress made in the Acceleration Zone schools and the schools would out-perform the rest of the district. He stated that the district developed an early

warning system that applied to all 63,000 children. The district looked at the most successful students who were going into advanced placement classes versus the students that were dropping out and the results indicated that sadly, ELL, high poverty and disability students, along with transiency rates and children with multiple issues, played a large role for children dropping out of school. He added that the homeless student population was at a record level of 2,500 in the WCSD. Concluding, Mr. Martinez said that the district was trying to be smarter with their resources. Every low-performing student had to be in general education, which is where the student received main support, so the committee had to be careful when looking at changing the funding formula. He said that the challenge with poverty funding was something they had to look at as a state, but they could not ignore the federal component because it was such a large part of the funding. He said that other districts in the country that were the size of the WCSD and CCSD received almost $200 million more than both counties, which could not be ignored. There were issues at the federal level that could not be ignored and went hand-and-hand with the state level.

Senator Roberson asked if the percentage of homeless students was higher in Washoe County than in Clark County, and Mr. Martinez replied that was currently true, and the homeless population was one of the fastest growing populations.

Mr. Burnham said that Mr. Martinez discussed the Acceleration Zone and particularity stressed the management and innovation aspects of that beyond just funding. He asked Mr. Martinez, in his opinion, if the strategies used in the Acceleration Zone program were more fiscally efficient in improving results more than other methods used within Washoe County and the state.

Mr. Martinez replied that the district found that in the low-performing schools, thousands could be spent per student, which was true across the nation, but if the belief systems that the students could achieve were not changed, and capacity was not built within the building, the resources would not be effective. He did not say the Acceleration Zone program was more efficient, but it was part of the work that had to be done, because funding by itself would not do it; however, it still could not be done without the funding. He said that the district had to go to their foundations and try to get creative within their own resources. Each Acceleration Zone school had a dedicated coach from the district's general fund funding, which left no money for the other schools. In addition, they had to find the talent, and currently, the district was working with the local universities to build up capacity for future leaders, because it was a huge need for the low performing schools.

Mr. Burnham said that looking at nationwide performance it was clear that the state could not get to where they needed to be from where they were. He said that Massachusetts had the best overall student performance of any state in the nation and were funded much better than Nevada. Although Massachusetts was not the highest funded state in the nation, there was a very rigorous culture of high expectations and management in the state. He was convinced for Nevada to get from where they were to

where they needed to be would require a great deal more funding, but if the state exclusively relied on the funding, the state would still be disappointed.

Ms. Corrales stated that from a funding formula standpoint, the stated needed to put a formula in place to provide resources where there was extra needs, but preserve the ability to reward performance. She stated that a five-star school should be rewarded for performance at the same time drive resources where needed, which had to be done from a state funding model understanding there were consequences for change. She asked Mr. Martinez how the district intended to balance that out with the Acceleration Zone.

Mr. Martinez replied that the district had those conversations and one of the things they were doing was recognizing the high performing schools, for example, Alice Maxwell Elementary School, Sparks, was one of the top three high-poverty schools in the state and a 5 star school. He said that there were not many 5 star high-poverty schools in the state. In addition, the district also recognized the high performing non-poverty schools. He said that part of it was recognizing those and part was giving the schools more freedom and spending less time and oversight of the schools. In addition, the district talked about the values – who were the students that were struggling, where those students were located, and what their attributes were. He said the district focused on the kindergarteners, which many were coming in below grade level, poverty children, or ELL and the district tried to bring a human face to it, which was done community-wide and an ongoing process. He said the district tried not to make excuses and problem solve and more students were dropping out as each year passed, so the district had to keep trying to change things and problem solve. He said that the district changed leadership and added more resources where they could, and partnered with the outside community for resources, which was as simple as closets in schools for students that did not have coats, or working with the food bank so students could take home food. He said the schools had to consider the healthcare for the students and if they had access to a clinic when they had challenges with health.

Ms. Smith commented that she has lived in Nevada for approximately three decades and it seemed clear to her that Nevada has never met its obligation for funding public education and the funding has never matched what its words have been. She was concerned with not rewarding the schools that were doing well, because she thought the miracle was that everybody has succeeded when there was never the opportunity to be successful. She said it was amazing that all students have not completely failed, because there was never an even playing field. Ms. Smith stated that her concern was how to make the playing field even, getting people to where they needed to be, and deciding how to reward those people who went above and beyond. She said that until there was equity to the issue and students were provided an even chance at succeeding, there was no sense in deciding a reward. She added that it was frustrating to say that money was not the solution when it was always the solution – why do students struggle if it was not about money, and why was the state not willing to give up more if it was not about money. Ms. Smith said if the state believed it was about

children and the future they needed to do what was right. In addition, there were some legal and moral obligations, which have not been met and needed to be addressed.

Ms. Smith reiterated that she did not think the state needed to worry so much about rewarding the superstars that continued to be the stars, because they were passionate and care about what they do, but the state needed to help every school that had the potential to become 5 star school.

Mr. Fromdahl asked Mr. Martinez to share the utilization with the balanced calendar and how that was funded, and how the student populations have been addressed.

Mr. Martinez replied that the WCSD decided to shorten the summer and students would start school in the second week of August, because the district found that children that lived in poverty were not involved in academics during the summer. In addition, during the school year, there were intersessions, and the district encouraged non-negotiables around additional instructional time during the school year. He said that the district could put all of the low-performing students in the intersession, but the issue was the funding.

Ms. Biersdorff added that the six Zoom schools resided in the Acceleration Zone, and due to Zoom funding, there will be a five-week summer academy that went through the end of July. For the remaining four elementary schools and for all the Zoom schools, time with students and extra instructional time during intersession was a requirement, and while the instructional time focused on English language arts and mathematics, it was also gave students an opportunity for enrichment activities, such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). In addition, the district partnered with the outside community, for example, Echo Loder Elementary School brought in the local PBS community, KNPB, and did work around healthy eating and lifestyles, and physical education for the students attending the summer academies. In addition, students had the opportunity for field trips to the Children's Museum and the Nevada State Museum, so schools were working hard and wanted the students to be in class and practice working on their math skills, but also to have fun and realize that education could be positive. Mr. Biersdorff said it was wonderful opportunity for the schools to have the intersession, as well as the summer academies.

Mr. Fromdahl commented that the students were picking up approximately 25 to 40 additional days of learning with the summer academies and intersessions. He said that there were discussions about more experience and time and he applauded what the WCSD was doing to address that.

Ms. Biersdorff replied that the intersession was currently scheduled for 23 days and one full week. She said there was a full week of intersession during the districts three-week winter break, and there would a week during the upcoming spring break. She stated that on average the programs run five hours and included breakfast and lunch.

Paul Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, White Pine County School District, thanked the members for volunteering their time to be on the committee, because it was truly an epic endeavor that could change the face of education and the future for children. Mr. Johnson said that in his opinion, the funding in Nevada was completely backwards, and at the state level, the state figured out their resources and whether it was relative based on demand, and then distributed the funding. It was similar to when he was in college and received his monthly paycheck and then figured out the bills he wanted to pay. He stated that the education funding sources have never been tied to program costs. With respect to funding formulas, Mr. Johnson said that formulas had three measures of equity; horizontal equity, which was treating similar districts similarly; fiscal neutrality, which talked about the inverse relationship between state funding and local wealth of a school district; and vertical equity, which was funding programs based on their costs and differentiated needs. He said that was what they were talking about when funding things such as ELL, at-risk students or any other programs needs in Nevada.

Mr. Johnson referred to Exhibit K, NASS At-Risk Services Presentation, which showed the FRL percentages, which ranged from 5 percent in Storey County to 60 percent in Nye and Pershing Counties. He added that he did not know if the statistics were completely accurate if used as a basis of measure for poverty or at-risk students. For example, in White Pine County there were two service areas that did not receive nutrition program services; therefore, the statistics were not included in the total student population simply because it was cost prohibitive to expand those services to the outlining smaller and isolated areas, such as Baker and Lund. In addition, there was a higher FRL count in the elementary schools than the middle and high school. Students attended the same middle and high school and the same percentages should follow through; however, students in middle and high school become more aware of their social-economic status and become less inclined to turn in their FRL application because of the negative stigma. He said that even though the student might qualify for FRL, those students were not getting the services or turning in their paperwork, which was a challenge for the FRL counts.

Continuing, Mr. Johnson stated that the resources in the rural districts were varied and not conducive to a systematic year-by-year implementation and consistent level of services. He said that there was some general fund resources, which he believed was the same for most rural areas, and the counties did what they could with the general fund resources. However, most often the educational needs and services for these special classes of students was funded through federal programs, primarily Title I funding, and without the federal funding, those students would not receive as much educational services as needed. Primarily, the rural counties relied on what little federal funds were available and for years, the counties have talked about the insufficient share of federal sources that Nevada received, not just Title I, but in other programs as well. Mr. Johnson stated that the district tried to provide professional development for staff with the resources, which was haphazard and not a consistent means to educate staff, because those professional development opportunities were provided through grant funds and if that grant fund went away, so does the opportunity for professional

development. He indicated that it cost more to educate students who are at-risk, regardless of the risk, and the students needed more time and resources. He did not think any school district would argue that Nevada had adequate funding and anybody would discount the fact that the state needed more services for those students who learn differently. Mr. Johnson stated that the bigger problem was what the state was going to do about it. If the pool of money the state already had been redistributed based on the demands, he did not think it would be economically feasible nor sufficient to fund the demands. Once the costs were identified, the district had to figure out how to fund programs and services. Mr. Johnson stated that the current funding mechanism in Nevada was inelastic, which meant it expands and contracts without regard to demand, and it was almost independent of demand. He stressed that the state had to come up with a way to identify, not only the cost, but also sources of revenue that would expand and contract with the cost of education. In the 2006, Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc. study, there was four approaches to identify the cost of "model schools", which identified a uniform system of funding for all of Nevada's schools, which varied depending on the size of the school and identified staffing levels, educational service levels, and concluded that a cost of a typical school. If they took the cost of a typical school and multiplied that by the number of schools, that was the amount of money the state should have for education, and that direct correlation was lacking in Nevada and something that needed to be addressed.

Concluding, Mr. Johnson stated that the challenges in the rural counties were the same as every school district and it was a matter of adequate resources. He said without the federal resources currently received, those students that were at risk would not have the level of services they currently had. During the economic downturn, Mr. Johnson stated that through their general fund the rural counties had to reduce staffing levels by 10 percent, which they have not regained. In addition to the local reductions due to state sources, there was a 20 percent reduction in the Title I funds, which he believed were similar statistics throughout the state.

Assemblywoman Flores commented that having to reevaluate the way the school funds were distributed in the state would logically start the conversation of funding and whether funding was adequate in the state. She reminded the committee that the task was to come up with a formula that was equitable, fair, and made sense for the needs of the various populations of students. She said that discussion was going to happen when the budget was formulated and debated during the legislative process. She stated that the committee was tasked with looking at a formula that worked for students, and whatever happened after was something that was inevitable and would happen during the legislative session. Clearly, she said there were problems with the funding of education. She stated that 90 percent of the students were in the CCSD, which left 10 percent of students, and they did not want to get the equitable funding needed by taking from the 10 percent and giving it to the 90 percent of students.

Mr. Burnham commented that he was familiar with Mr. Johnson's extensive background in finance and asked if he had any suggestions to make funding more stable in Nevada.

He stated that currently there was an adequacy issue, but also a stability issue for education funding in the state.

Mr. Johnson replied that the question was the sources of revenue the state would implement, tax, or invest in Nevada, that more adequately and accurately depicts the picture of education in Nevada. He believed that another study was required to determine not only which types of revenues to tap into, but also the political sensitivity of each revenue as well, which was a difficult issue to address. He added that from the studies that he has read, Nevada was ranked lowest in the nation as far as funding education, but ranked very high in its ability to afford education. In addition, the state had one of the lowest tax burdens in the United States and was in the top six for the lowest tax burden.

Mr. Burnham stated that tangential with the issue of stability was the issue of educational reserve. He noted that when there was any degree of instability and no operational reserve, the state would always be on the cutting edge of a knife of being insolvent. He was aware that Clark County's year-ending fund balance would run the district for about three days, which was true for other districts in the state. In addition, the state has several disincentives for districts to maintain any kind of an adequate reserve, and if that was not addressed, he thought it was incumbent on the state to maintain some sort of a reserve, because fluctuations in funding, particularly with the current tax structure, were inevitable even in relatively prosperous times. If the issue of stability and operational reserve was not addressed, the state would be in a constant state of adding and subtracting when funding changed. Mr. Burnham said that recognizing the major challenges in the two urban districts in the state, it was fiscally impossible to meet those challenges in revenue-neutral manner, because they could not extract that kind of money out of the 10 percent of the remaining students in the state and have any kind of a functioning educational program. He did not see how the state could possibly adequately address equity without addressing adequacy.

Chair Denis stated that unfortunately, the adequacy issue was a much bigger discussion and the Task Force was not required to address that issue at this time. He said with the discussion of equity was the adequacy issue that would have to be discussed in the future, because once the answer to equity was determined, the discussion about adequacy would be easier because there would be a true picture of the needs.

Mr. Martinez commented that the goal was not to try to rearrange the "pie" because the committee was not empowered to enlarge the pie. However, he thought it was important for the committee to make a statement about the fact that; overall, the general education formula was insufficient to fund poverty and ELL students. He said they had to give credit to the fact that there was now leadership in the Legislature and the Governor's Office willing to tackle the issues and there was a desire to look at the issues, and if everyone worked together, they could set the right vision. Mr. Martinez stated that his worry was that if they started tinkering with just moving money around from the rural districts to Clark County or Washoe County that would allow the state to

say they were done with whatever shift of money. He said they could move $30 million to Clark County and then expect the county to get 90 percent graduation rates, because the county had what they needed. He thought it was important for the committee to make a statement and along with leadership, vision and accountability, more support and funding was needed because there were more challenges in the community than ever before, which seemed to be getting worse.

VIII. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF TOPICS AND TASKS TO BE ASSIGNED TO THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Chair Denis said that staff has provided a list of possible topics for the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) He stated that as the Chair of the Task Force on K-12 Public Education Funding he would appoint the members to the TAC, which would consist of persons who have knowledge, experience or expertise in K-12 public school finance. He added that he hoped that others with expertise in K-12 public school finance, that might not fit the criteria, would still participate in the meetings with the TAC. Following is the list of potential issues for discussion at the first TAC meeting:

1. How enrollment was calculated in the DSA single-count day versus average day attendance.
2. How school districts were grouped in the equity allocation model.
3. How implicit wage differentials between districts were calculated.
4. How teacher allotment tables and attendance areas were calculated in the equity allocation model.
5. What the weights should be for certain demographic populations, including students from low-income families, students with disabilities and students with limited English proficiency.
6. How changes in the funding formula should be implemented – phase-in period.
7. How special education was funded – unit funding versus other models.
8. Whether to continue to hold districts harmless when enrollment decreases.
9. What funding was provided through the formula versus the funding that was provided categorically.
10. Should assessed valuation or property tax collections be utilized in the equity allocation model and was the attempt to capture from actual affluence of a community or wealth from revenue collections.
11. Examine why basic support pro rata adjustments were still being utilized. Update expenditure data used in equity allocation models.
12. Examine disconnect of methodology used to prepare budget, which was based on revenue projections versus allocation of funding based on actual revenue figures.

Mr. Burnham requested that the TAC provide a broad critique of the AIR study, including revenue recommendations, quantify impacts and changes, especially revenue neutral changes and analyze impacts and reallocations statewide. In addition, he asked if the TAC could review the correlation of adequacy and equity issues, because he did not believe they could be addressed in isolation. He said that he disagreed with some

of the statistical assumptions in the AIR study and wanted to see a review of the assumptions to determine if they were actually realistic within Nevada.

Chair Denis asked Mr. Burnham if he was suggesting that the TAC review how the state funded education. Mr. Burnham replied that the TAC should look at the impact of some of the changes in the allocation of funding, particularly in a revenue-neutral situation, but also revenue necessary to address concerns if revenue could be enhanced. He clarified that they were two separate issues and he suggested the TAC looked at both issues.

Assemblywoman Flores asked about the K-12 to higher education issues and how to address the associated costs for students who took advanced placement (AP) classes. She thought that there were additional costs associated with students on a path to higher education in terms of the amount of AP classes that they were taking in order to be competitive for college. In addition, she was aware that there was a way to track high schools that had more college bound students than other schools and she thought it was important to also recognize that maybe there should be some funding associated with the students on a college track. She thought it was vital for the committee to recognize that there should be additional funding or possibly a weight for that, although she was uncertain it was realistic.

Mr. Hechter clarified that there were added costs for most AP classes – classes tended to have less students, and costs for testing material were a factor.

Mr. Burnham added that gifted and talented students were one of the statistical factors that varied hugely between districts, so he thought if money was going to be allocated there, they had to look at how students were counted in addition to AP students. It was clear from the individual school districts' statistics that those attributes were not measured in the same way and he thought there needed to be discussion about how those were measured so they were all talking about the same thing when they addressed the issue.

Chair Denis said that there was discussion during the 2011-12 interim committee on The New Method for Funding Public Schools on the gifted and talented students and he thought it would be appropriate to discuss that issue again.

Mr. Martinez said that he did not want go get into the adequacy concerns but he hoped that the TAC would look at basic question of what was required for the general education student. He suggested looking at the baselines for other states as a frame of reference for the committee.

Ms. Osgood asked if it was appropriate for the TAC to look at whether it made sense to build a reporting or accountability mechanism into the formula, and Chair Denis replied that he would make note of that for the TAC.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Jose Solorio, Co-Chair, Latino Leadership Council (LLC), stated that it was the first time he has heard so much discussion on funding education. He believed that there were good people in the state leading the educational programs; however, he added that there was an equity issue in Nevada. He said that the Latino Leadership Council was a new organization that lobbied during the 2013 Legislative Session and was comprised of different organizations in Clark County, other professionals in education, and representatives from other areas. He said that the LLC hoped to continue to make an influence on the legislative process. Mr. Solorio said that he attended Sunrise Acres Elementary School, graduated from Rancho High School, and from the University of Nevada, Reno, and has lived in Nevada for four decades. He noted there was no discussion of this type when he was a school board trustee approximately 20 years ago; however, it was a much different world since the funding formula for the state was first developed. He said that Nevada has changed and there were a lot of at-risk students and he was glad the committee was reviewing the funding process, which was very important for the entire state. Mr. Solorio hoped there would be good results and wanted to see that the needs of the ELL and at-risk students were in the forefront.

Continuing, Mr. Solorio said that many professionals have spoken at the meeting and provided a lot of good information. He said that between looking at percentages and numbers, the committee had to be careful to look at both; for example, Clark County was spending $1,800 per student in their Zoom schools, which was a starting number for adequately funding education for an ELL student at the elementary level. Looking at the percentages – it was 31 percent of the current allocation to Clark County, so he thought the committee needed to look at both when making a decision that was ultimately going to the next level. Mr. Solorio said that there was discussion about adequacy, which had to lead to a discussion of if the pie was big enough, and if not, should it be made larger; if the pie was made larger, did it then address the needs of students. He said when a government was run, sometimes it needed to be looked at as a business to see if the needs of the business were being met. In this case, he asked if the state was meeting the needs of the students – were the students ready by entry and by exit. He added that when students turn 18 they were entering the adult world – what type of students was the state going to produce out of the school system – were there a lot of dropouts or students that were unable to read or write, and what kind of society did the state have. Looking at economic development and bringing industry to the state – students needed to mesh the needs of industry, so the state had to think in terms of if the students were ready to produce when they exited the school system. Mr. Solorio said that all the factors discussed at the meeting were important and they needed to advance to each level. He appreciated the comments made at the meeting and hoped that the process led to something at the end, because the issue of equity, as well as adequacy, needed to be addressed in Nevada.

Mike Alastuey said that he has been privileged to serve the legislative process at the state and local levels, and more recently as an education consultant. He stressed that the TAC would not be effective unless they had complete access to staff support,

materials, legal counsel in terms of posting public meetings if necessary, access to past consultants, and existing equity allocation models, etc. He stated from experience, the TAC would not be able to function well without a close working relationship with the Task Force and staff.

Chair Denis thanked the committee for providing dates that would work for future meetings.

Senator Roberson stated that he and Assemblyman Hickey were members of the Governor's Behavioral Health and Wellness Council, which meets on March 24, and March 25, 2014.

Chair Denis said that possibly March 31, 2014, would be good for the next meeting of the Task Force on K-12 Public Education Funding. He said that date was the beginning of spring break for Washoe County schools. He said that staff would poll the members for the March 31, 2014, meeting date, and in addition, find dates that would work for future meetings.

X. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
Donna Thomas, Secretary

APPROVED:

_____
Senator Moises Denis, Chairman

Date:_____