

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE TASK FORCE ON K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING
Senate Bill 500, 2013 Legislature
May 22, 2014**

The fourth meeting of the Task Force on K-12 Public Education Funding was held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, May 22, 2014, at the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Room 4401, 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
Adrienne Lawrence
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](#): Public Comment – Victoria Carreon, Guinn Center for Policy Priorities
[Exhibit B](#): Public Comment – Sylvia Lazos, Latino Leadership Council
[Exhibit C](#): Public Comment – Yvette Williams, Clark County Black Caucus
[Exhibit D](#): Potential Recommendations Concerning ELL and At-Risk Students from the May 8, 2014, TAC Meeting
[Exhibit E](#): Potential Recommendations Concerning ELL and At-Risk Students from the May 21, 2014, TAC Meeting
[Exhibit F](#): Recommended Support for English Language Acquisition – Clark County School District
[Exhibit G](#): Recommended Support for Children in Poverty – Clark County School District
[Exhibit H](#): Public Comment – Victor Wakefield
[Exhibit I](#): Public Comment – Carrie Sampson

I. ROLL CALL.

Chair Denis called the meeting to order at 9:26 a.m. The secretary called roll; all members were present.

II. OPENING REMARKS.

Chair Denis said the Task Force would review recommendations provided by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) as a result of the TAC meeting on May 21, 2014. He noted that the TAC would meet again on June 5, 2014, to complete their work and provide the remaining recommendations to the Task Force. The TAC's final recommendations would be reviewed at the Task Force meeting on June 30, 2014.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Craig Stevens, Nevada State Education Association (NSEA), said the NSEA supported the idea of additional funds being included inside the funding formula. He said the purpose of having weighted enrollment was to make it part of the new plan. The NSEA thought the funds were vulnerable if they remained outside the formula. If the weighted enrollment was part of the formula the funds would go directly to the school districts to be spent appropriately.

Victoria Carreon, Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, said that the Guinn Center was a new bipartisan think-tank in Nevada that performed data-driven analysis.

Ms. Carreon said there were two key items she wanted to bring to the attention of the Task Force ([Exhibit A](#)). First, the Guinn Center thought Nevada should move to a base formula and then reexamine the base formula before adding new weights. However, before doing so it was important to know the cost of an adequate education. She said a study was performed by Augenblick, Palaich and Associates in 2006; however, she

thought there was time before the 2015 Legislative Session to update the study. Ms. Carreon said without knowing the universal base cost across districts to educate students adequately enough to meet performance standards, there was no way to really know the base amount. She said the current formula was based on historical expenditure and salary costs rather than the actual cost to educate students. Second, the Guinn Center suggested that when building the formula, the state should begin with the universal base for every student per-pupil amount. From there, items could be added that varied across districts such as district size and adjustments for grade spans. For example, class size reduction in K-3, and high school, which had more expensive costs overall. The Guinn Center thought the entire formula should be reviewed in a critical manner.

Ms. Carreon said the other thing the Guinn Center thought should be examined was moving the outside tax revenue back into the funding formula, because there was a substantial amount of tax revenue that was not currently taken into account in the formula.

Ms. Carreon directed the Committee's attention to several tables of significance ([Exhibit A](#)). The first table indicated the actual basic support revenue inside the funding formula, state funding versus local funding (page 2, [Exhibit A](#)). She said three school districts received no state funding because they were 100 percent locally funded just within the basic support guarantee itself. The range included a low of \$5,136 per pupil in Clark County and a high of \$30,837 per pupil in Eureka County. She noted that Eureka County was 100 percent locally funded. Ms. Carreon said the second table showed the actual tax revenue outside of the funding formula (page 3, [Exhibit A](#)). She noted that all of the figures were from 2012-2013. Ms. Carreon said the range included a low of \$925 per pupil in Lyon County and a high of \$45,118 per pupil in Eureka County. She said, added together, the statewide average was \$6,482 per pupil (page 4, [Exhibit A](#)). The range included a low of \$6,173 per pupil in Clark County and a high of \$75,595 per pupil in Eureka County. Ms. Carreon remarked that it was a large amount of funding and not all of it was included in the current formula. She said it was important to note that the wealth adjustment in the current formula did not take into account all outside tax revenue. The Guinn Center thought it would be more transparent to have all of the local funding considered as part of the formula. She recalled discussion at the May 21, 2014, TAC meeting about bringing some of the outside tax revenue into the calculation. Ms. Carreon said the TAC wanted local funding to be included in an effort to determine the base for purposes of calculating the weights, but she encouraged the Task Force to run some scenarios beforehand to determine the outcome of funding for each district.

Ms. Carreon said the Guinn Center encouraged the Task Force to consider a hold harmless provision. She said the TAC recommended having a strict hold harmless for the first biennium only, and a four-year phase-in after that. Ms. Carreon said that running scenarios would help determine whether that was actually feasible or if the hold harmless period should be extended.

Sylvia Lazos, Co-Chair, Latino Leadership Council (LLC) and Professor of Law, University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV), said the LLC agreed with the TAC's recommendation of an ELL weight of no less than 1.5. However, the LLC determined through its analysis that the weight should actually range between 1.7 and 1.9. She said Clark County School District (CCSD) indicated that the recalculation of their costs was in the range of 1.74 based on Zoom school expenditures, which was in line with LLC's recommended range.

Ms. Lazos said there were several reasons to give consideration only to the upper range of the American Institute for Research (AIR) weight recommendations (page 2, [Exhibit B](#)). First, Nevada was growing its infrastructure to serve English Language Learner (ELL) students. She said the achievement gap was one of the worst in the country and Nevada was second lowest in terms of graduation rates. Part of the reason for the poor achievement gaps was due to the low number of ELL-trained teachers (table 1, [Exhibit B](#)). Ms. Lazos said CCSD had the fifth largest ELL population in the nation, yet the ratio of certified staff was only 622 to 1. She said that indicated that there was a large gap in professional development in Nevada. Ms. Lazos said the quality of teaching was crucial in terms of bringing students up to level. ELL and other vulnerable students required specialized teaching and instruction; therefore, an investment was necessary to help with Nevada's professional development gap. Ms. Lazos said the data she was referencing was based on the time period after the establishment of Senate Bill 504. Senate Bill 504 was not just instrumental in the Zoom schools, but it also began important research into the needs of Nevada's infrastructure, which was part of the English Mastery Council's (EMC) work.

Ms. Lazos said the second reason to consider AIR's upper range of weights instead of the lower range was due to inadequate financing. Several states were found by the courts to have irrational, unfair and inadequate school financing systems (page 2, [Exhibit B](#)). She requested that the Committee remove from consideration any state that had been found inadequate by the courts. Ms. Lazos said that many of the comparables that were used in the AIR study had since been in litigation because of Common Core standards and budget cuts. The courts determined that these states were requiring higher standards, but not providing the appropriate supports. She said Common Core was another good reason to consider the upper range of weights recommended by AIR.

Ms. Lazos agreed that there was time for an updated study before the 2015 Legislative Session. She said the LLC determined that it would take approximately three months and the cost would be minimal. The updated study could be completed before the legislative session and would provide a range of recommendations. The weights could then be modified, if necessary, after the completion of a cost study.

Ms. Lazos said there were 11,000 long-term ELL students in CCSD alone. She said long-term ELL students were often promoted to the next grade; however, by the time they reached middle school they still lacked the language skills to tackle the more advanced curriculum. This made it difficult for long-term ELL students to learn and advance and those students were generally more difficult to instruct and motivate as a

result. Removing supports after six years in ELL status penalized the students for the mistakes of adults. Ms. Lazos said poor teaching and lack of instructional programs were not the fault of students. She said the LLC urged the Task Force to reject any proposal that would undermine the education of long-term ELL students.

Ms. Lazos said it seemed that the assumption was that all ELL students were also free and reduced-price Lunch (FRPL) students. According to data based on CCSD alone, 66 percent of 12th grade ELL students were FRPL, 72 percent of 11th grade ELL students were FRPL and 82 percent of 10th grade ELL students were FRPL; therefore, there was not a complete overlap. Based on the 80,000 ELL students statewide, she indicated that 15,000 to 20,000 students would lose funding.

Edith Fernandez, Associate Vice President, Nevada State College (NSC) and member of the EMC, said she supported those advocating for adequate ELL funding. She said NSC was at the forefront of preparing teachers to work with ELL students, because it was NSC's responsibility to serve the state and fulfill workforce demands. Ms. Fernandez agreed there was a dire need for prepared teachers and she noted that NSC was the only Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) institution to embed a Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) endorsement within the curriculum of education majors. She said NSC served as a model for all other institutions to fulfill the need to work with students who needed assistance. In turn, she thought student teachers should receive continued professional development through CCSD to become experts. She said it should be thought of as a pipeline for preparing teachers to teach one another and to meet the demands of working with ELL students. Ms. Fernandez said that at NSC, not only is the TESL endorsement embedded into the curriculum for elementary majors, but NSC also assisted in-service CCSD teachers in gaining their TESL endorsement. She noted that 14 teacher-students at Global High School received their TESL endorsement in the course of one year, as well as 24 students in NSC's virtual college.

Staci Pratt, Legal Director, American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Nevada, said that when the United States Supreme Court decided *Brown vs Board of Education* in 1954 it recognized that education was a cornerstone of a fair social structure. She said it was a right that must be made available to all individuals on equal terms. She said the national ACLU provided support for that litigation and it demonstrated the organization's deeply rooted commitment to ensuring meaningful opportunities for students to obtain open and equitable educational opportunities. Ms. Pratt suggested that the Committee be mindful of the Nevada constitution and the requirement of the state and Legislature to provide a uniform system of common schools and to adequately fund those schools. The ACLU believed that the constitutional mandate meant that funding must be adequate to ensure that all students in the State of Nevada were able to reach state performance standards as set forth by the Legislature.

Yvette Williams, Chair, Clark County Black Caucus (CCBC), said that during the 2013 Legislative Session, the CCBC strongly advocated for the passage of NRS 388.405 to address the historical problem of illiteracy in Nevada for all students.

On the 60th anniversary of Brown vs Board of Education, the CCBC was proud that Nevada had taken steps to ensure that all children with limited English proficiency had the tools and resources necessary to succeed. Ms. Williams said the CCBC believed that the language adopted in NRS 388.405 supported literacy for all children. She said CCSD recently demonstrated its commitment to literacy for all students by adopting English Language Acquisition (ELA) policy that was inclusive of all students who were not proficient in English, impacting approximately 88,699 students. She said that number included 32,371 black students identified as FRPL and 56,328 ELL students, of which 43,374 were also FRPL. Ms. Williams said both she and the CCBC strongly supported the greatest weight for both the lowest performing groups.

Ms. Williams said that in America's history black children once learned to read and write at the risk of death. To date, she thought the system had failed them. She said they were often forced to remain invisible under the cloak of FRPL when establishing policy for student achievement. Ms. Williams said the data charts indicated that black students identified as FRPL underperformed their FRPL peers ([Exhibit C](#)). Further demonstrating this failure, black students were removed from the classroom at disproportionate rates based on racial bias. She said that until Nevada funded limited English proficiency programs specific to the needs of this subgroup, 32,371 black students would continue to struggle. The intent of NRS 388.405 for high quality education would remain out of reach with little exception. Ms. Williams said black representation on committees such as the Task Force benefited the discussion and offered a black-life perspective when establishing policy that impacted the black electorate. She said that data indicated that students achieved when programs were in place that assessed student proficiency early on and provided regular monitoring, while at the same time focusing on four domains: speaking, listening, reading and writing. With the current success of Zoom schools, reading centers and ELL programs in CCSD, ELL students completing the programs outperformed their non-ELL peers consistently year-after-year in elementary school. Ms. Williams said black students did not receive the early proficiency assessment that was mandated for ELL and Individualized Education Program (IEP) students. Ms. Williams said, given these outcomes and the over representation of black students underachieving in Nevada schools, CCBC proposed that a weight of 1.7 be applied to the FRPL and ELL populations. She said the CCBC supported the TAC's recommended weight of 2.4 for IEP students. Ms. Williams said it was important to note that the FRPL population included all ethnicities and they were less likely to be limited in English proficiency than black students in the same subgroup. She added that black students identified as FRPL had lower proficiency rates statistically.

Key points for consideration:

- With early assessment and English Language Learning programs former ELL students are outperforming non-ELL peers in Elementary Math and Reading Proficiency;
- Additionally, former ELL students are performing comparably with non-ELL peers in Middle School Math and Reading Proficiency (with the exception of those identified as long-term ELL);

- FRPL black students are under performing in some cases below the ELL student (See elementary school charts);
- FRPL black students are not assessed until 3rd grade;
- FRPL black students do not have a comparable English Language Learning program to address English proficiency;
- NRS388.405 states *“that children who are limited English proficient be provided with services and instruction which is designed to address the academic needs of such children so that those children attain proficiency in the English language and improve their overall academic and linguistic achievement and proficiency.”*
- Without sufficient funding school districts will continue to struggle and unable to adhere to the law;
- African American (black) students overall proficiency in literacy for elementary 48%/45% (FRPL) middle school 38%/35% (FRPL) high school reading 36%/high school writing 46% and overall proficiency in math for elementary 51%/47% (FRPL) middle school 27%/23% (FRPL) high school 31%, all well below the average CCSD student;
- Funding weights for this subgroup should be included in the *Nevada Plan* for education if you intend for school districts to adhere to the law;
- We propose a weight of 1.7 for FRPL, 1.7 for IEP, 1.7 for ELL students, and 1.7 for a new designation for English Language Acquisition that equally funds and address the needs of black student proficiency.

Ms. Williams said the CCBC strongly believed that funding should be determined and allocated based on individual student needs and funding should follow the student.

Linda Young said she was speaking as a citizen of the community having lived in Clark County since 1976. She noted that her comments were based on experience living in the community, as well as her experience as an educator. Ms. Young said she had been a high school teacher, school psychologist, Coordinator of Special Education, Director of Special Education Programs, Dean of Students, high school assistant principal and principal, Director of Equity and Diversity, and she was currently on the Clark County school board.

Ms. Young said she came from a life of poverty; however, her parents focused on education, particularly reading, literacy and being respectful in the educational environment. She attended both parochial schools and public schools, including a university program at Marian Catholic University.

Ms. Young said there was a saying that those who did not know history were doomed to repeat it. She noted that May was Legal Education Month, which was meant to educate people about Brown vs Board of Education. Ms. Young then referenced Martin Luther King Jr.'s “I Have a Dream” speech, stating that one of the focuses of the speech was about education and his desire that his four young children would not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. She said those dreams had not yet been realized, but she remained hopeful. She thought CCSD was sensitive to the issues and was trying to gain focus. Ms. Young referenced the

expression, “a rising tide lifts all boats,” and said that raising the low end of the spectrum would lift the entire boat. In other words, ELL students, ELA black students and special education students were the “rising tide” that needed to happen to lift up the boat. She said she knew the Committee was there to help all students, but it was important to avoid segmenting and to remember that any child that needed support should receive support. Funding provided books, computers, opportunities and support for teachers. She stressed the importance of support for students, and noted that books were essential for children. Ms. Young recalled during her childhood that her mother would require her and her siblings to select and read a book from the library each week. She added that if reading did not take place before the 3rd grade, the foundation was laid for the “school-to-prison pipeline.” She said the demographics had shifted, particularly for children living in poverty. Typically children living in poverty did not have two parents in the home and they often did not live near a library. She said that while some children did live near a library, crossing the street meant entering into another gang’s territory. Ms. Young noted that she had been part of a group of educators who went to Gerson Park to help students get library books. However, the neighborhood was sectioned off by gang territory making it impossible for children to access the library. The group established a library van to help children checkout library books so they could continue to read. Ms. Young said that it was extremely important that the funding base take all demographics and needs for all children into consideration.

Ms. Young said it was important that the Committee give well-deserved consideration to a fair and adequate education for all students.

Rosemary Flores said she had the opportunity to serve on the ELL Task Force for the CCSD. She also helped implement the Parent Engagement program in Clark County through the Family Leadership Initiative between 2008-2012, graduating over 400 parents. Those 400 parents were at 14 schools and most of them were actively involved as parents. Some were also involved as volunteers within their schools and at the community level.

Ms. Flores said she and the parent volunteers witnessed how children struggled to learn and the importance of the role of parents. She said the parents in the Parent Engagement program knew how to help their children with reading, writing and arithmetic. The parents got their children involved in rigorous activities and the parents also learned how to confidently network with the frontline staff. Over the years she had seen literacy specialist positions and ELL support reduced and she saw the impact that had on learning. However, during this time she observed how the engaged parents maintained connections with outside resources. Even though the resources were not available in school, those parents had learned how to locate outside educational resources. Likewise, there were parents who were not engaged or did not know where to start, and it impacted the grades of their children. Ms. Flores encouraged the Committee to reconsider the value of the weight for ELL students and to increase it to 1.7. She believed a weight of 1.7 would especially support quality parent engagement programming. Parents needed helping learning how to navigate the new Common Core system and how to maintain their children’s learning environment to help them succeed

after they graduated from high school. She said another reason for the higher weight was the need for professional development. She said the state needed more TESL endorsed teachers and cultural awareness training. Ms. Flores said many teachers and frontline staff worked extra hours. The parents who graduated from the Family Leadership program understood that staff was overworked and often not at their best, so those parents continued to work for their children and supervise their education. However, some parents would not come back if they felt mistreated or misunderstood, which was why cultural awareness training and professional development for teachers was important.

Ofelia Esquivel, homemaker and mother of two children, said she was a graduate of the Family Leadership Institute. The program taught her how to work with her children and how to navigate the school system. Ultimately, she was able to help her children perform better in school because of the program. Ms. Esquivel said her oldest daughter was in college, and her son would be graduating with honors from high school in June 2014. She said he would be attending a university outside of Nevada with a full-ride scholarship.

Ms. Esquivel said her experience and involvement as a volunteer helped her to understand the necessity of programs for parents so they could learn to navigate the system. She said there was not much support for parents to learn how to help their children study. She saw that ELL students were struggling to learn due to a lack of tutoring and literacy specialists and the need for skilled ELL professional staff. Ms. Esquivel asked the Committee to consider increasing the ELL weight.

Magdalena Martinez, Director of Education Programs, The Lincy Institute and Chair, English Mastery Council (EMC), noted that she was also a member of the Latino Leadership Council and previously she had been a member of CCSD's ELL committee. She added that most importantly she was a former ELL student.

Ms. Martinez said the EMC was created during the 2013 Legislative Session, charged specifically to review issues related to ELL and, in particular, as they related to TESL endorsement programs, district policy and statewide policy. Under the leadership and guidance of the NDE and Superintendent Erquiaga, the EMC had convened a group of experts in the field, including researchers, practitioners and community members. The group had begun to develop some recommendations for the consideration of various state agencies and other stakeholders.

Ms. Martinez said she wanted to discuss why the work of the Task Force, the EMC and the leaders of the state was so important as it related to advancing the state's educational system. The EMC had recently convened meeting the subcommittee that was looking specifically at TESL endorsement programs. There was unanimous belief among the subcommittee that it was critical to have a strong teacher preparation program, particularly to serve the most underserved and vulnerable populations including ELL students. She said it was also a unanimous belief that all teachers and administrators who serve those populations should have TESL endorsements.

Ms. Martinez said those recommendations were one piece of the puzzle, and strengthening the teacher preparation program for ELL students through TESL curriculum was just one step. She said the Task Force's charge of making sure there was a strong infrastructure in the way of funding would be critically important. As Edith Fernandez had indicated, NSC was one of the many public institutions that was preparing teachers, but that was only the first step. Once the teachers entered the classroom it was imperative that they received the proper professional development necessary for providing continuous quality instruction and opportunities to students. She said, as such, it was important that the Committee consider those types of factors when determining ELL funding. She supported the weight recommendations of the LLC and she thought it was critically important to consider a long overdue adequacy study.

Ms. Martinez said she was very concerned about the treatment of long-term ELL students. She said it was important to recognize that long-term ELL students would continue to need support. As part of her role at The Lincy Institute, she examined critical transition points from high school to college, basically, educational issues from a K-20 perspective. She said the overall long-term goals of Nevada, and the nation's goal to be the leader in college completion, could not be accomplished without providing the appropriate weights and funding for ELL students. The future of Nevada would be reflected in how well its ELL students were supported. Ms. Martinez reiterated that she was a former ELL student and she was evidence of what could result with proper vestments, mentoring and parental engagement. She said her mother had been in the United States for 40 years and had a 2nd grade education and her father was a farm worker; however, they always emphasized the value of education. She urged the Committee to consider the appropriate weights for ELL students, FRPL students and an adequacy study for Nevada.

IV. STATUS REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE TASK FORCE ON K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING.

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), said that pursuant to Senate Bill 500 of the 2013 Legislative Session, the TAC consisted of members with knowledge, experience or expertise in K-12 public school finance. In total, there were 11 members of the TAC. Three of the members were required by S.B. 500 to represent CCSD, WCSD and one of the other 15 school districts, respectively. The remaining eight members were appointed by Task Force Chairman, Senator Moises Denis.

The members of the TAC included:

- Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chair;
- Jim McIntosh, Clark County School District Chief Financial Officer;
- Mike Schroeder, Washoe County School District Budget Director;
- Jeff Zander, Elko County School District Superintendent;
- Mike Alastuey, Education Finance Consultant;
- Dr. Jay Chambers, American Institutes for Research;

- Stephanie Day, Deputy Director, Department of Administration;
- Paul Johnson, White Pine County School District Chief Financial Officer;
- Dr. Jesse Levin, American Institutes for Research;
- Dr. Walt Rulffes, Former Superintendent, Clark County School District; and
- Julia Teska, Director, Department of Administration.

Senator Woodhouse said the TAC met four times during the 2013-2014 interim thus far, with the most recent meeting taking place on May 21, 2014. Senator Woodhouse said the final meeting of the TAC was scheduled for June 5, 2014. She said the following was a brief summary of the activities of the TAC at each of its four meetings to date:

March 31, 2014, Meeting

Senator Woodhouse said the first meeting of the TAC was held on March 31, 2014. The meeting began with committee Fiscal staff Julie Waller reviewing the duties and responsibilities of the TAC pursuant to S.B. 500. Committee staff Wayne Thorley then reviewed and discussed the recommendations of the 2012 American Institutes for Research (AIR) study as it related to the state's existing K-12 public school funding model.

Senator Woodhouse said that in response to this discussion, committee member Julia Teska indicated that the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) had delayed implementing any of AIR's base formula recommendations for NDE pending the outcome of this study. Because of the short timeframe to study this issue, Senator Woodhouse accepted a motion to ask the NDE to convene a working group to address and resolve the base formula issues and other NDE recommendations that were identified in Chapter 5 of the 2012 AIR report. The motion was approved unanimously by the TAC.

Senator Woodhouse said there was discussion of potential issues for consideration by the TAC in recommending funding for students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) and students at risk of low academic achievement. Issues discussed included:

- Identification of ELL students and students at risk of low academic achievement;
- Determination of weights to be used to allocate funding for ELL students and students at risk of low academic achievement;
- Differentiation of those weights to be used to allocate funding for ELL students and students at risk of low academic achievement by elementary, middle, or high school level;
- Allocation of funding based on density of ELL students and students at risk of low academic achievement;
- Funding for ELL students and students at risk of low academic achievement inside or outside the funding formula;
- Students who qualify for multiple weight categories; and
- Duration of funding for ELL students.

Senator Woodhouse said she asked for volunteers from the Committee to research the topics discussed related to funding for ELL and at-risk students and to present their findings at the next TAC meeting.

April 21, 2014, Meeting

Senator Woodhouse said the second meeting of the TAC was held on April 21, 2014. At this meeting, committee members who researched topics related to funding for ELL and at-risk students presented their findings. The presentations included information about current ELL and at-risk identification and funding practices in Nevada, as well as examples from other states about how ELL and at-risk are identified and funded.

After the presentations, she said the TAC discussed potential issues for consideration in recommending funding for students with disabilities, including:

- Alternative options for funding special education in Nevada, including: a fixed allocation per pupil model, a weighted student funding method based on a specific learning disability or services provided, a weighted student funding method using group averages, and a census-based approach;
- A contingency or catastrophic fund for students who require high-cost services;
- Implications for the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) provisions of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); and
- Funding for special education students inside or outside the funding formula.

Senator Woodhouse asked for volunteers from the Committee to research the topics discussed related to funding for students with disabilities and to present their findings at the next TAC meeting. At the end of the meeting, committee member Mike Alastuey presented an overview and discussion of a potential streamlined equity allocation model for Nevada's K-12 funding formula.

May 8, 2014, Meeting

Senator Woodhouse said the third meeting of the TAC was held on May 8, 2014. At this meeting, committee members who researched topics related to funding for students with disabilities presented their findings. The presentations included information about alternative options for funding special education in Nevada, examples of contingency funds used in other states to assist school districts in supporting high-cost special education students, and how changes to the state's approach to fund special education could impact the MOE requirements of the federal IDEA law.

The TAC then discussed and approved several policy matters in recommending modifications to the state's funding formula for students identified as ELL and students at risk of low academic achievement. The following is a brief overview of the recommendations the TAC approved for consideration by the Task Force ([Exhibit D](#)):

- With regard to the identification of ELL students, use the current data collected by the school districts and NDE on the number of ELL students within a particular school district. This data is collected and reported annually as part of the Title III requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

- With regard to the allocation of ELL funding based on density, do not provide any additional ELL funding based on the density of ELL students within a school district.
- With regard to the duration of weighted funding for ELL students, provide weighted funding for ELL students for up to six years or until the student reclassifies as non-ELL. After the sixth year, or the year in which the student reclassifies as non-ELL, (if the reclassification occurs before the end of year six) two additional years of reduced maintenance funding would be provided, with the value of the weight for maintenance funding to be considered at the May 21, 2014, meeting of the TAC.
- With regard to a weight(s) to be used to allocate funding to ELL students, use a single weight value with the value of the weight to be considered at the May 21, 2014, meeting of the TAC.
- With regard to the identification of students at risk of low academic achievement, use free and reduced-price lunch (FRPL) data to identify students at risk of low academic achievement, or when FRPL data is not available for a school or a charter school, an alternative measure approved by NDE may be used.
- With regard to a weight(s) to be used to allocate funding for at-risk students, use a single weight value with the value of the weight to be considered at the May 21, 2014, meeting of the TAC.
- With regard to the inclusion of the weight to allocate funding for ELL and at-risk students inside or outside the K-12 funding formula, initially provide weighted funding for these students as a categorical grant program outside the state funding formula and transfer into the funding formula at a date to be considered in the future.
- With regard to students who qualify for multiple weight categories, apply the highest single weight to a student who qualifies as both ELL and at-risk, based upon an unduplicated count of students.

Senator Woodhouse said to close the meeting, committee Fiscal staff summarized the discussion that took place earlier in the meeting about potential recommendations to the Task Force regarding modifications to the state's K-12 funding model for students with disabilities. Committee Fiscal staff also discussed possible implementation approaches for any changes made to funding for ELL students and students at risk of low academic achievement.

May 21, 2014, Meeting

Senator Woodhouse said the fourth meeting was a work session. During the work session, the Committee discussed and approved several policy matters in recommending modifications to the state's funding formula for students identified as ELL and students at risk of low academic achievement. The following is a brief

overview of the recommendations the TAC approved for consideration by the Task Force ([Exhibit E](#)):

- With regard to a weight to be used to allocate funding to ELL and at-risk students, set a weight of not less than 1.5 for ELL students and 1.5 for at-risk students until such time that a cost study may be conducted to determine the actual cost of providing educational services to these student populations in Nevada. The TAC also recommended that any ELL or at-risk weight be applied to a per-pupil funding amount that includes all state (excluding categorical) and local funding, but not federal funding.
- With regard to the value of the ELL weight for the two additional years of maintenance funding after the full funding has expired, the TAC briefly discussed the issue, but did not take any action. Instead, the issue will be further considered at the next meeting of the TAC on June 5, 2014.
- With regard to transitioning from providing funding for ELL and at-risk students outside the state funding formula as categorical grants to providing the funding inside the state's K-12 funding formula, recommend that NDE develop performance benchmarks and reporting requirements tied to ELL and at-risk funding and develop a plan to transition the funding to inside the state's funding formula. The TAC recommended that the phase-in plan developed by NDE be approved by the Nevada Legislature before it is implemented.
- With regard to the implementation of modifications to the state's K-12 funding model for ELL and at-risk students, hold districts harmless for the 2015-17 biennium by only distributing new funding approved by the Nevada Legislature and the Governor through the modified K-12 funding model for ELL and at-risk students. Beginning in FY 2018, the TAC recommends a full phase-in over a four-year period through FY 2021, with 10 percent of the total calculated funding change implemented in the first year, 30 percent in the second year, 60 percent in the third year, and 100 percent in the fourth year.

She said the remaining policy aspects related to students with disabilities would be considered at the June 5, 2014, meeting of the TAC.

Stephanie Smith asked why there was no consideration for density, especially when evidence indicated that it had impact. She also asked if students in multiple categories would only receive the highest weight, rather than multiple funding, even though that would likely result in less funding.

Ms. Waller replied that the TAC briefly discussed the density issue, but there was no inclination to consider an additional density component. She said staff members shared information regarding California's new Local Control Funding Model. The model provided a density component when the ELL or low income population exceeded

55 percent, adding an additional amount of base formula for density. She said the Task Force could direct the TAC to reconsider or review the density recommendation.

Ms. Waller said the TAC voted to recommend that a student who qualified for both ELL and at risk would receive the highest weight, based on an unduplicated count. There had been testimony from several members, the public and CCSD indicating that approximately 90 percent of ELL students also qualified for the at-risk category. That being the case, she said the student would receive services as an ELL student, and if they were exited from that program then they would receive the at-risk supplemental funding. Ms. Waller said information was also provided that indicated that many of the ELL and at-risk services were similar, but targeted in a different direction for ELL; however, many of the wraparound services were of the same nature.

Assemblywoman Flores asked what remained to be completed at the June 5, 2014, TAC meeting. Ms. Waller replied that the TAC still needed to discuss the alternative funding options for students with disabilities, the implementation of that plan, as well as a few technical issues that need to be resolved in terms of ELL and at-risk funding recommendations. Additionally, the TAC would revisit the discussion of ELL funding duration. Ms. Waller said several members of the TAC thought that perhaps there was no need to have a time limit on the duration of ELL funding based on public testimony and learning some additional information, as well as the recommendation to set the minimum weight at 1.5 for both ELL and at-risk students.

Assemblywoman Flores said that the six-year timeframe for ELL funding sounded like an arbitrary number, so she was glad the TAC would be discussing it further. Ms. Waller replied that the six-year timeframe was derived from information provided from the NDE on how long it took ELL students to become proficient in English and gain academic proficiency, which was a higher level. She said English proficiency was typically attained between three to five years and academic proficiency was a five to seven-year timeframe. Based on that information, the TAC thought that six years was justified in providing sufficient funding for ELL students. However, some of the members were reconsidering the duration of funding after public testimony was provided that included data on long-term ELL students.

In response to a question from Assemblywoman Flores, Ms. Waller replied that reclassification was based on testing.

Assemblywoman Flores said she was glad to hear that, because she thought that was part of the problem with the public education system. She said many students did not fit into the averages, or boxes, that were established; therefore, an advanced student could become proficient in two years while another student might need ten years. Assemblywoman Flores said that to base funding on an average, where students would be removed after six years, did not seem fair to students who might require a longer duration.

Assemblywoman Flores said she was wary about funding that remained outside the funding formula, because people had a tendency to get creative with it and use it for different reasons. She asked for the TAC's reasoning for their decision

Ms. Waller replied that there were several reasons for categorical funding. She said the funding was targeted for specific use and one of the reasons for categorical funding was to ensure that the funding reached the intended populations. As for the funding formula, that was an unrestricted funding source, so it was subject to collective bargaining offering no assurance that the funding would reach the intended students. Ms. Waller said that as part of an implementation plan, categorical funding allowed for fine tuning and provided districts time to transition to the changes in their funding scenarios that would occur should it be fully implemented inside the funding formula.

Assemblywoman Flores asked if the TAC would have further discussion on whether to include funding inside or outside the formula. Ms. Waller replied that the Task Force could request further discussion by the TAC or provide additional information for any of the recommendations.

Assemblywoman Flores indicated that the State of Nevada did not have a good record of ensuring that educational dollars actually reached education. She said over the last several years education had been cut by \$500 million. She was not confident that the categorical grant method was the appropriate choice in terms of ensuring that funds would reach the intended target and that they were earmarked for that particular purpose as the budgeting process took place. Assemblywoman Flores said previous cuts had been detrimental to Nevada's students. She preferred to have a guaranteed amount of money within the formula.

Ms. Waller said the calculation of the funding would be through the weighted formula and then based on the initial implementation plan that was discussed at the May 21, 2014, TAC meeting. The funding would then be calculated by the number of students using the weight. She said for the first two years the amount would be based on any new funding that was appropriated and approved by the Governor and transferred to the categorical funding amount. She said the amount was not based purely on policy decision, it would be formula driven and placed in a holding account. Ms. Waller said the process was similar to the implementation of the S.B. 504 program. Funding would be provided to target a specific group of students to see how the programs would work. She said it was also a transitional period to help the districts implement the changes of a full funding formula change. Ms. Waller said the calculation was based on the weight and the particular student populations within those classifications in each school district, rather than an appropriated amount split multiple ways. She said there would be a calculation based on the funding available for the first two years and then the funding would be transferred to the categorical account. The NDE would then develop a plan to bring the funding into the funding formula.

Mr. Martinez asked if class size reduction, Zoom school funding, full-day kindergarten and pre-K money was included as part of the local and state funding in the TAC's recommendation. Ms. Waller replied that the consensus was to include just the funding that was in the funding formula as part of the per pupil calculation, which was all state and local funding. Therefore, class size reduction, Zoom school funding, full-day kindergarten and pre-K would not be part of the base.

Mr. Martinez suggested considering the different options of including class size reduction, Zoom school funding, full-day kindergarten and pre-K, because the Committee would likely find that there was an overlap in regard to performance measures and strategies. For example, the Zoom schools program included funding for full-day kindergarten, expanded preschool programs, interventions and extended instructional time.

Mr. Martinez applauded Senator Woodhouse for her leadership and all the members of the TAC for what was accomplished in a short time period. He thought their recommendations were more thoughtful than the AIR report and other things he had seen in the past. He said it was important that the school districts were held accountable and that they could clearly show results. After five years in Nevada, Mr. Martinez could see the school districts' lack of accountability reflected in the students, so it was important for the vision and performance measures to be clear.

Mr. Martinez said he respected the National Education Association and teachers, but a natural conflict was often created any time money was added to the DSA. There was usually conflict about whether the money should be used for raises or instructional strategies. If the Task Force looked at the history within the last five years, they would see the struggles that Clark and Washoe Counties had faced. Mr. Martinez said his fear was that the funds would not reach the targeted programs or populations if the funds were placed inside the formula.

Mr. Martinez said it could be too complex to apply a funding formula to children with multiple classifications. For example, in Washoe County there were students who were ELL and special education, 92 percent of whom were also living in poverty. In addition, the schools were in close proximity to one another, so density was a factor as well. He said it would be difficult to apply a funding formula to those types of students and it might be difficult to sustain as a state because of the complexity. Mr. Martinez was not sure if a higher weight was the better solution, but he thought multiple weights would be too difficult to manage. He asked how the districts would be held accountable for ensuring that the money was used in the proper way.

Mr. Thorley said one of the issues that the TAC looked at when considering density and unduplicated counts was creating a model that was simple and easy to understand, particularly since it would be the first time the state would attempt such an endeavor. He said the current data system also created limitations. As mentioned, there were many students that would qualify for multiple weights, but it was not entirely clear if the data systems would be able to handle some of the complexities of having a duplicated

count, density considerations and differentiated weights by grade level. Mr. Thorley said those were all things that other states had done and the TAC had considered, but in the end, the recommendation was to initially keep the funding model simple and easy to understand. In the future, a cost study could be performed and the state could move toward a more complex model that would address some of the individualized needs.

Ms. Waller clarified that the recommendation for the multiple weights applied to students identified as ELL and at-risk only, it did not include students with disabilities.

Mr. Hechter asked if wage cost differentials had been considered in the initial distribution of the formulas.

Mr. Thorley replied that the TAC determined at its first meeting that there would not be enough time to touch on all of the issues. Therefore, as mentioned by Senator Woodhouse, the TAC voted to have the NDE study and provide recommendations on certain aspects of the base funding formula that were addressed in the AIR report, such as some of the scale and density questions that were included in the equity allocation model.

Mr. Hechter asked if the Legislature, rather than the Committee, was going to address whether the same wage base calculations were maintained in the geographic variance.

Ms. Waller confirmed that was correct. She explained that the TAC voted to recommend that the NDE update those tables with more current costs, as well as review the other relationships that AIR recommended such as groupings, teacher allocation tables, density and wage differentials. The direction was that the NDE would convene a stakeholder group of educational professionals to provide input and feedback and to assist in those conversations. Ms. Waller said time was of the essence to get the changes underway so it was anticipated that the updated expenditures, at least, would be implemented prior to the 2015 Legislative Session. She said that would provide more current data for the calculation in the base.

Ms. Waller asked Mr. Martinez if he meant that the categorical funding should be included for purposes of considering the weighted-student funding, and not necessarily that all of the categorical items should just be placed within the funding formula in general.

Mr. Martinez replied that he thought the Committee should consider multiple options because data could be manipulated for a variety of outcomes. For example, he could provide data indicating that Washoe County School District (WCSD) was the lowest funded district as well as data indicating CCSD was the lowest funded district. There was also data for the rural districts that indicated they were not funded correctly. Ms. Martinez said he respected the work of the TAC, but wanted to avoid repeating mistakes from the past. He added that more should be expected from the school districts. He said it was not an issue of money, because all of the districts spent a lot of money, yet the results were lacking. Mr. Martinez said it was important to consider all of

the different funding streams and not separate them or choose which ones to consider because there would be overlap. He said the strategies that would be found would be very consistent: preschool, full-day kindergarten and reading interventions. He said, in terms of children exiting the ELL program, WCSD knew that if a student exited ELL by 8th grade they would match the district's graduation average, but it did not mean they would attend college. If the goal was to attend college, the student needed to exit the ELL program earlier. Mr. Martinez agreed with Assemblywoman Flores that it was difficult to set an average, but the districts also had to be held accountable to ensure that students did not remain in ELL through 12th grade with only a 20 percent probability of graduation, which was the current statewide average.

Mr. Burnham asked if the TAC had applied a price tag on the recommendations. Senator Woodhouse replied that a price was not placed on the weights or any of the discussion so far. She said the TAC was considering what could be done to make changes in the funding formula to better deliver education to students, particularly ELL, at-risk and special education students.

Mr. Burnham explained the he represented the Nevada Association of School Boards and those were the bodies that had to determine how to pay for all the things that the state and the federal government compelled upon districts. He said the districts had not yet returned to the pre-recession level of base funding, let alone, taking into account six years of inflation. Nevada's overall educational results were among the lowest in the nation and the levels of educational funding were also among the lowest in the nation. Mr. Burnham did not think that was a coincidence. Nevada's base funding was already inadequate; therefore, it was imperative that it be maintained and even increased. He thought general education and the general operation of public education in the state would be gutted if additional requirements were added to the school districts without providing the funds to pay for it.

Mr. Burnham said he looked at the non-hold harmless recommendation for various districts. Mineral County already had the lowest graduation rate in the state, but AIR recommended cutting the county by another 30 percent. He agreed that keeping the funding outside the formula, at least initially, somewhat protected it from collective bargaining. This would ensure that the funds reached their intended target, provided a clear cost and acted as a reminder of the funding's purpose. Mr. Burnham said the state was not going to see top-level educational results with "bargain-basement" funding levels. He recognized that adequacy was not at the core of the discussion, but he did not think equity could be separated from adequacy. Reallocating an inadequate resource was still inadequate.

Mr. Burnham asked if there was unity among the TAC members on the phase-in times for implementing the funding formula. Senator Woodhouse said there was agreement concerning the transition period. She said there had been some disagreement concerning the motion for a weight of 1.5 for ELL and 1.25 for at-risk students. She stated that the motion passed when the weights were set at 1.5.

Ms. Corrales asked for research concerning lawsuits where a state was found to be adequate instead of inadequate. She also agreed that the funding should remain outside the formula for the sake of accountability. She said she had higher expectations and remarked that there had been dismal results even at the pre-recession funding levels. She said this was the state's opportunity to be thoughtful and expect higher results from the programs that were being funded.

Ms. Corrales said she shared Mr. Hechter's concern on the density issue. She understood there were a lot of topics to address, but she had been in schools in the CCSD where density did matter. She said it likely mattered in the WCSD as well. She desired defensible rationale on the weight recommendations, because she was concerned that the 1.5 weight might be low.

Senator Woodhouse stated that the 1.5 weight recommended by the TAC was a floor, or base, amount. She said the TAC carefully considered the information that was provided in public testimony about the need for a higher weight; however, the TAC thought that it was best to set the floor weight at 1.5. She said, certainly a greater number should be considered, but a cost study would help provide the correct number. Senator Woodhouse said everyone needed to work together to make sure the money for educational funding was available. The Task Force and TAC were trying to build a better funding formula to address the needs of Nevada's students.

Mr. McIntosh said he was in a unique position because he served on the TAC as well as the Task Force. He thought he had a very thorough understanding of why some of the decisions were made by the TAC.

Mr. McIntosh said that theoretically he thought most things should be included within the formula because it seemed to work best. However, he was concerned that the money may not reach ELL and at-risk students. The CCSD received funding as a result of the 2013 Legislative Session for the Zoom schools, which targeted the ELL population. The money was required to be spent specifically for ELL students, making it clear and transparent. The revenues were matched to the expenditures: how the money came in, how it was expected to be spent and how it was actually spent. Mr. McIntosh said while there was good cause for making the funds categorical, it required additional time and he wanted to avoid special revenue funds for every type of student. He said that was why the recommendation was made to determine the correct amount of funding, set it up as a separate categorical fund, establish a strong program and then transition the funding into the funding formula. Mr. McIntosh said that was the hope and goal of the TAC for addressing it that way, and he still supported it as a member of the Task Force.

Ms. Smith said, with all due respect to superintendents, school board members and others, it was no shock to her that there had been dismal results, because the state had been paying "bargain-basement" rates long before the recession. She said she was offended by the insinuation that if the money went into the general formula that teachers might request some of the funds. She said that most of the items being required involved a teacher to a certain extent. Ms. Smith could not remember the last time she

had a pay increase, but she had spent a lot of out-of-pocket funds in spite of working at a school with a lower number of struggling students. She said teachers had been on the front line for a long time accomplishing a lot with few resources, and she thought it was amazing that Nevada saw the results it did despite the funding provided. Therefore, Ms. Smith was hopeful that the Committee's decisions would be based on what was best for education in the state. She thought it was offensive to somehow imply that if teachers received those funds it would have a negative effect on education. Teachers were being asked to obtain TESL endorsements and other similar requirements, some of which had already taken place without compensation. She was hopeful that decisions would be made in the best interest of the students and that teachers would be part of the equation.

Mr. Martinez agreed with Ms. Smith. He said nothing would change without supporting teachers. As a superintendent, he had 4,200 teachers who were working hard and deserved more pay. The challenge was making sure that the weightings held people accountable, while at the same time taking into account rising costs. Mr. Martinez said WCSD was hiring hundreds of teachers and CCSD was hiring thousands. The rural districts could testify how difficult it was to replace good teachers. He said that was an issue that could not be ignored, but he was torn about how to do it in a way that was in line with the Task Force's charge to understand the additional cost of supporting ELL, at-risk and special education students.

Mr. Martinez agreed that an adequacy study should take place. He suggested examining the issue of compensation and removing that conflict from the school districts. He thought the past five years were a reflection of what happens to the state as a result of conflict.

Mr. Burnham said he would never imply that teachers were paid too much in Nevada. In most cases they were paid less than they were worth. He said Nevada needed to recognize that accomplishing certain things would require additional money. Mr. Burnham said his son-in-law would be starting as a full-time teacher in CCSD in the fall of 2014 and would be making much less money than his wife, even though they had the same amount of schooling. He said the conflict was that Nevada needed to take responsibility for adequately funding all aspects of education in the state, not merely shuffling money around that would solve one problem while creating another.

Mr. Fromdahl, an ELL teacher, said that although the state would suggest that he had 77 ELL students, he counted 92 because some students were still in "monitoring" status. In other words, Mr. Fromdahl still provided support and translation services for those students and their families. He was glad the TAC recognized at least two years of reduced maintenance, but he noted that maintenance could continue for the remainder of a student's K-12 education. Elementary schools had a tendency to have higher ELL enrollment and lower exit rates, because students were generally in middle or high school when they exited the program. He said another example of ongoing support was an ELL study skills class offered in the middle schools to address the needs of students who had exited the program.

Mr. Fromdahl said students were not necessarily academically proficient upon passing the language proficiency. He said there was a distinction between the two and the ultimate goal was to be academically proficient.

Mr. Fromdahl asked if financial models had been run to project the dollar impact on districts, how many districts would increase or decrease and by how much.

Ms. Waller replied that the TAC decided it was important to arrive at the policy decision of the weight and develop a preliminary implementation plan. The TAC anticipated that at the June 5, 2014, meeting scenarios could be performed based on the 1.5 weight recommendation for ELL and at-risk students. That would provide an indication whether the implementation plan appeared reasonable and possible, or if it needed to be modified. She said that in the 2012 AIR report the consultants provided an Excel spreadsheet called a “funding adjustment simulator” which allowed different weighting scenarios to be run to see the changes that would result in terms of funding among all the districts, under a fiscally neutral simulation. Ms. Waller said that might assist the TAC in determining whether the implementation plan that was initially recommended was viable or if it needed to be adjusted.

Mr. Erquiaga thanked the TAC for their thoughtful work. He appreciated the emphasis on the categorical method and thought it was the right strategy. He added that the phase-in approach was also appreciated. Mr. Erquiaga said he was particularly pleased with the introduction of performance measures for the categorical funds. He said that when California reconstructed its local control formula all districts were required to provide a management plan specific to the funding. He asked if there had been discussion about a similar requirement for Nevada districts.

Ms. Waller replied that there had been discussion about the eligible uses of funding. She indicated that there had also been discussion about allowing enough flexibility for districts to tailor the services to their specific student populations. She said the eligible use component had not been part of the motion, so it would need to be clarified at the final meeting. She added that the Task Force could recommend that the TAC discuss a potential requirement that the districts submit a plan for specific use of the funding.

Mr. Erquiaga said that on behalf of the NDE, he thought there should be some conversation around eligible services. He thought the Zoom schools were overprescribed, the door was too narrow and some things had been left off the list. He liked the idea of some direction or requiring a plan from the districts.

Mr. Erquiaga said he supported the notion of a distinct fund for special education. He had received feedback from the Special Education Advisory Council and the Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents organization. He requested that the TAC focus on using the word “contingency” rather than “catastrophic.” Mr. Erquiaga said it was pointed out to him that parents and students may misunderstand the state’s use of the word “catastrophic”; therefore, it might be best to use the term “contingency” instead.

Mr. Erquiaga said he had been advised about a fund that had been used for a similar purpose in prior years. He thought it might be helpful to review the history of that fund, particularly if districts would be reimbursed for students who were placed out-of-state. Mr. Thorley later noted that the fund was outlined in NRS 395.

Mr. Erquiaga said the NDE would convene the working group at the request of the TAC. He said it was the intention of the NDE to convene the working group in June 2014, so that recommendations would be available for the Governor in the construction of his budget and for the Legislature. The NDE would review the cost ratio and wealth index pieces specifically, in the interest of transparency and in an effort to condense the current 15 volumes. He said the NDE could provide an update at the Task Force meeting on June 30, 2014.

Ms. Osgood said, in regard to the six-year timeframe and two-year maintenance period, she understood the need to minimize disincentives with transitioning ELL students, but she was concerned about the data. It appeared that about half of the students who entered ELL in kindergarten may never exit ELL status; therefore, she thought the TAC should revisit the issue again. Ms. Osgood said she was interested in hearing additional information about whether there was a way to have some type of continued transition policy for long-term ELL students. She thought many of those students were among those who would not graduate. Students who remained in ELL status could have multiple barriers preventing them from transitioning, and she was concerned that upon reaching high school there would be additional factors that would inhibit their transition out of ELL status.

Ms. Osgood asked, with regard to ELL duration, if all students would start at base year one. For example, if an 8th grade student had been in the ELL program since kindergarten, would that student continue to receive funding or would they be disqualified because the 6-year timeframe had been exceeded?

Ms. Waller thought that any ELL student would qualify at their current grade level, regardless of prior ELL status.

Senator Woodhouse said she had similar concerns as Ms. Osgood; therefore, the issue of maintenance funding had been moved to the June 5, 2014, TAC meeting for further discussion. She said, as an educator, she wanted to ensure that no students were lost. She said it was difficult to put a number on how many years a student may need additional help. It was important to make sure the needs of ELL and at-risk students were being addressed.

Chair Denis agreed that even though a student may exit the ELL program, there may still be costs associated with that student for services such as translation for a parent. He said it was important to ensure that all of that was taken into consideration.

In regard to Mr. Burnham's question concerning the vote on the implementation plan, Ms. Waller clarified that Jeff Zander, Mike Schroeder and Paul Johnson had voted against the motion.

Ms. Osgood wondered how services would reach students in the first years of the implementation of the ELL weighted funding. If ELL students in all grades were supported equally, then the funding would support services across the broad range of grades. Over the subsequent 6-8 years of the program, however, long-term ELL students would no longer receive some of those services. Ms. Osgood thought there should be careful thought about some of the results that might be seen in the beginning versus in later years, because it would be serving different sets of students. From a more practical standpoint, consideration should be given about how to explain the process to parents. For example, it might be difficult for the parents of both a kindergarten and 8th grade student to understand why the 8th grade student would have ultimately received support longer than the kindergarten student.

Mr. Fromdahl said school districts had to follow what was called the annual measurable objectives (AMO) for the ELL program. He said ELL should be thought of as a growth model, with the idea being not to keep the student there forever, just until they reached proficiency. He said the state looked at the percentage of students growing in performance by a certain set amount and the percentage of students exiting the program. Mr. Fromdahl said that if there was concern about school districts keeping students within the ELL program longer in an effort to maintain funding, the AMO policy may prevent such an incident.

Mr. Fromdahl asked if the TAC would be addressing the allocation of special education units that was already in the formula. Ms. Waller replied that there had been some discussion about replacing the unit formula with an alternate option, which would require a statutory change. She said the TAC had not arrived at a motion, therefore, further discussion would take place on June 5, 2014.

Mr. Fromdahl replied that it would not necessarily be new funding then, just funding removed from the formula, recalculated and then reapplied with the weight. Ms. Waller replied that the funding was already separated out of the formula as an add on. She said there were also maintenance of effort (MOE) considerations, so that the state and local school districts would not be penalized for any change in the funding formula. Those were all considerations that would be discussed at the June 5, 2014, TAC meeting. She said the TAC would have further discussion and explore other options before arriving at a motion.

Adrienne Lawrence asked if there had been consideration about what type of system would be used to collect the data, because the numbers would be necessary to pay into the DSA. She asked if the school districts or the NDE would handle the weighting.

Ms. Waller replied that the information used to identify ELL and at-risk students was already being collected. The FRPL data would be used to identify at-risk students, and schools without a lunch program would use an alternate means of collecting data as approved by the NDE. She said ELL students would be counted by a method that was also already in place. Nevada Report Card identifies all the various student populations, so she did not think there had been discussion by the TAC about the need for additional information systems at the state or local level.

Ms. Lawrence said the DSA payments were based on count-day numbers, therefore, she wondered if the ELL and at-risk data would be combined so that the count-day numbers would reflect the weighted students. Ms. Waller replied that she would include it for discussion at the next TAC meeting.

Mr. Burnham asked for clarification about whether the TAC had addressed the price level and scale density multipliers included in the AIR report. Mr. Thorley replied that the TAC recommended that the NDE research those issues that were identified in the AIR report related to the base funding formula for the *Nevada Plan*, teacher allotment tables, etc.

Mr. Burnham recalled there had been a question about whether numbers had been run on the impacts to base funding and what would happen if funding was not provided. Although he did not have data on how the TAC's recommendations would work, he noted the following cuts recommended in the AIR report: Esmeralda County, 25 percent, Eureka County, 49 percent, Storey County, 39 percent, Mineral County, 30 percent, Lincoln County, 41 percent, Lander County, 20 percent, White Pine County, 25 percent, Nye County, 31 percent, and Elko County, 33 percent. He reminded the Committee that Mineral and Nye Counties had the lowest graduation rates in the state. He noted that White Pine County was transporting their students in buses that were 20 years old and some school buildings were over 100 years old. Mr. Burnham said if additional funding was not provided for ELL, at risk and special education, the funding would be taken from the general education program, ultimately gutting it.

Mr. Martinez said he thought the reason that some of the TAC members voted against the phase-in period was because of the cost involved after 2018. He said in the beginning of the phase-in period there would be new resources, but afterwards it was likely that there would not be enough funding. He thought that was why it was important to have performance metrics in place to hold districts accountable.

Mr. Martinez said that if weighted-student funding was used for at-risk, ELL or other categories, it was important to look at the current funding to avoid doubling up. For example, currently the state funding formula targeted funding for full-day kindergarten, preschool, etc. toward high poverty schools based on ranking order. Therefore, it was important to consider possible overlaps.

Assemblywoman Flores understood there was the potential for an adequacy study, and although there was not enough money in the budget, she thought private funding might be available. She thought much of the discussion had been based on guesswork, because there was minimal up-to-date information about what was adequate in Nevada. She agreed with the weights being set at a minimum of 1.5; however, an adequacy study would be an opportunity to update that figure. Assemblywoman Flores thought a higher minimum weight would send a different message about what was acceptable and necessary.

Assemblywoman Flores thanked the TAC for their work and Senator Woodhouse for her leadership. She said the information was well informed and provided the Task Force with a solid foundation for discussion and debates about what was best for the students.

V. REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF THE STATUS REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE TASK FORCE ON K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION FUNDING, INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE.

Ms. Waller said the first issue that the TAC addressed was the identification of ELL students. It was reported by Senator Woodhouse that the recommendation was to utilize the data that was already collected by the school districts and NDE to identify ELL students. She said the data was collected and reported annually as part of the Title III requirements.

Mr. Thorley added that presentations made to the TAC showed that the identification of ELL students was uniform statewide and all of the districts were following the same entry/exit protocols.

Mr. Fromdahl said identifying the status of in-program ELL students was very clear, because the students took an annual language proficiency test. He said that he and Mr. Erquiaga had discussed how to track and report ELL students who had exited the program. In previous years, students who exited after years one and two would count as part of the statistics for academic proficiency and NCLA, so there was a lot of emphasis on those years. After years one and two the count did not really take place. Mr. Fromdahl said his district used Power School, because the data was there to track students who had exited the ELL program. He said it was a matter of collecting the information and how to tabulate the years in groups.

Ms. Waller said the second issue was the determination of ELL funding based on density. As Senator Woodhouse reported, the TAC voted not to recommend a density weight for ELL students within a school district. Ms. Waller recalled comments from Task Force members indicating that the TAC might need to revisit the issue.

Ms. Smith said it might be helpful if the TAC could provide a more thorough explanation of their reasoning process concerning the density issue.

Ms. Waller replied that that information could be provided at the final meeting. However, the Task Force may also wish to request that the TAC revisit and reconsider the density issue and resubmit their recommendation to the Task Force.

Mr. Martinez suggested leaning toward a higher weight. He indicated that in most districts the ELL and at-risk populations had a tendency to be very dense by definition. If there was concern about the level of funding, a simpler way to implement it might be a higher weight. He favored a less complex method that would be easier to explain to taxpayers.

Ms. Smith thought enough Committee members had raised issues about density to warrant further discussion by the TAC. She thought more options, as well as an explanation behind the TAC's recommendation, would help the Task Force make a sound decision.

Chair Denis asked staff how the workload would be impacted at the June 5, 2014, TAC meeting if the TAC was asked to revisit the density issue.

Ms. Waller replied that the final meeting was the TAC's last opportunity to fine tune any of the prior recommendations and solidify the recommendations that would be presented to the Task Force at the June 30, 2014, meeting. She said there would be discussion about the remaining issues pertaining to special education, and then the plan was to address any direction from the Task Force; therefore, it was feasible to revisit the density issue.

Based on Ms. Waller's response, Chair Denis confirmed that the Task Force would ask the TAC to revisit the density issue and discuss the possibility of adjusting the weight versus utilizing another method.

Ms. Waller said the next item was duration of weighted funding for ELL students. She said the TAC planned to revisit that topic at the June 5, 2014, meeting.

Mr. Burnham said there appeared to be a number of long-term ELL students. He was concerned that efforts were not being front loaded enough. In other words, if a student reached middle or high school without achieving English proficiency, they would have lost out on a great deal of education. He said the school districts needed to improve methods of identifying students who were not responding adequately to ELL efforts. Timelier intervention for struggling ELL students could prevent future damage to a student's potential.

Chair Denis remarked that some students did not enter the ELL program until middle or high school.

Mr. Martinez thought it might be helpful to make a distinction between the two groups of ELL students: those who entered the ELL program at an early age and those who entered at an older age. He said the goal for all districts nationwide was to exit students

out of ELL status as soon as possible. He noted that the strategies were different for students who entered the program at a higher grade level. Mr. Martinez agreed with the idea of not placing a duration on funding, but instead focusing on performance metrics and strategies. He said separating the funding would make that possible.

Ms. Waller said the next item was the weight to be used for ELL students. She said the TAC voted to recommend a weight of not less than 1.5 until such time as a cost study could be conducted.

Assemblywoman Flores reiterated her suggestion of discussing a higher weight for ELL students. She said that although there was less discussion about the at-risk weight, her argument was the same for that weight as well. She thought it was important to discuss the appropriate weight as opposed to a minimum weight.

Chair Denis recalled that one of the public comments mentioned a 1.7 weight based on other information. He said the issue was whether the Task Force wanted to request that the TAC revisit the ELL weight. He asked staff if there was any additional information that could be provided to assist the TAC in discussing whether 1.5 was an adequate enough weight.

Ms. Waller replied that there had been discussion about having the data available to base a weight upon. She said the TAC discussed getting information from the school districts on what had been expended, but the expenditures did not necessarily reflect the services required to help students achieve better performance. She said the discussion then turned to the need for a cost study, but to avoid postponing a decision the TAC arrived at a consensus. She explained that the thought was to provide a floor weight with the ability to raise it based on the results of a cost study, but the initial weight would at least provide something concrete to work with for the upcoming biennium. Ms. Waller said there was no discussion about the length of time to complete a cost study or the funding mechanism. She said the Task Force's concerns could be communicated to the TAC. Staff could determine if there was additional information available based on public testimony and information provided by other educational advocates.

Assemblywoman Flores noted that, based on public testimony and the materials that were submitted, there seemed to be a consensus recommending a weight of at least 1.7 to 1.9. She said somehow all of those organizations reached a similar number; therefore, it seemed as though the 1.5 weight was almost a negotiation, which arrived at a general consensus by the TAC. Assemblywoman Flores thought the TAC should revisit the issue using additional research, resources and expertise to arrive at a more adequate weight.

Chair Denis recalled from public comment that the AIR study took into account some states that were in litigation due to inadequate funding; therefore, the numbers used for comparison may be low.

Ms. Waller said the 1.7-1.9 range was based on the higher echelon of weights in the AIR study. She said one of the cautions that the education consultants provided was that weights varied based on the base funding level. The higher the base funding level the lower the weight, the lower the base funding level the higher the weight. Additionally, the costs varied based on region. All of those contributing factors were very personalized, so it was difficult to extrapolate a weight from another state onto the State of Nevada. She thought TAC members were not comfortable relying on the weights of another state. The TAC members wanted to know what the weights should be in Nevada based on its unique characteristics, such as the very small rural districts, the very large districts, and the fact that there were only 17 districts overall. Ms. Waller said the TAC thought there was insufficient basis to arrive at a Nevada-specific weight, as opposed to adopting a weight that had been tailored to suit the needs and performance standards of other states. She indicated that the consensus was to provide a recommendation rather than no recommendation. Looking at some of the data that Clark County had provided, the TAC thought 1.5 seemed to be a reasonable weight. Ms. Waller noted that the discussion could be revisited by the TAC based on any additional information that had been provided through public testimony and Task Force members.

Ms. Smith said everything might be a moot point, because the base funding formula amount was unknown. All the recommendations could be approved but then the entire base could be reduced to cut from everywhere, resulting in a complete wash. She said if the chosen weight was already based on compromise then it was likely to be compromised even more during the legislative process. She thought it might be better to provide the “best and final” offer. For example, suggest a weight of 3.4 and when all was said and done the weight might end up at 1.7. Ms. Smith said the risk was that the higher weight could ultimately end up being reduced to nothing if the entire base rate was reduced.

Mr. McIntosh said as a member of the TAC, one of the main goals in the process was to continue to move forward. He thought it would be ideal if a study could be completed before the 2015 Legislative Session, but in the meantime, the TAC wanted to present something to the Legislature. Mr. McIntosh said the 1.5 weight was not random, nor was it a compromise. The goal was to set a floor, an absolute minimum, and then perform an adequacy study specific to Nevada instead of mimicking another state. He said when a weight was applied to a state’s per pupil funding, the end amount would vary. For example, Maryland was one of the highest providers of ELL funding. If their per-pupil amount was \$16,000 that was triple the amount of CCSD’s basic support. That would provide a lot more money than Nevada would receive at the same level weight. In the absence of a Nevada-specific adequacy study, he had to rely on CCSD staff, who worked very hard with what they thought was an adequate program for the CCSD. Mr. McIntosh said he was the one who made the motion at 1.5, because he thought that weight, including state and local funding, would come very close to the total amount of funding that CCSD staff indicated would be adequate for the program.

Assemblyman Hickey said the TAC, by all accounts, had performed their due diligence. Although it might have been the minimum amount given the time frame, they reached a consensus and made a recommendation and he supported their findings. He said the Task Force or the Legislature may ultimately decide on a weight higher than 1.5. Assemblyman Hickey thought that the TAC had been presented with the same public testimony heard by the Task Force, so it had probably been taken into account during the decision-making process. He said he did not know the correct weight and was not against a higher weight, but he did not think the Committee should spend additional time on the discussion. Assemblyman Hickey said the Task Force should produce something that was historic, because changing the *Nevada Plan* after more than 50 years was a significant recommendation and it would be a major step to see it implemented in one form or another in the next legislative session. However, Assemblyman Hickey did not think the Task Force should require the TAC to accomplish things that could not be completed in the given time frame.

Chair Denis noted that the TAC's recommendation was a minimum, which meant that the Task Force could recommend a higher weight in its final recommendation.

Ms. Waller said the next issue was the identification of students at risk of low academic achievement. The TAC had discussion about whether to use one or more identifiers and the consensus was to use the FRPL data to identify those students. When the FRPL data was not available, such as schools without a lunch program or secondary schools and high schools where many students did not enroll in the FRPL program, an alternative measure approved by the NDE may be used to count those students.

Mr. Martinez thought it was important to acknowledge that there were significant achievement gaps for at-risk students among all ethnicities. There were challenges specifically in the African-American, Latino and American-Indian communities, but the reality was it crossed over into the entire community. Mr. Martinez noted that in the 2012 census data Nevada had one of the fastest poverty growths in the country. He said, similar to ELL and the implications of the future of Nevada, poverty would be a larger indicator of the implications of the future, and sadly there was usually an overlap. He thought it was important that the Task Force was just as dedicated to increasing funding for at-risk students as ELL students.

Ms. Waller said the next item was the TAC's recommendation to use a single weight value to allocate funding for at-risk students. The weight was suggested at no less than 1.5 until such time as a cost study could be conducted which may indicate a change in that weight.

Ms. Waller said the consensus of the TAC was to initially provide the weighted funding as a categorical program with direction to the NDE to develop performance metrics, reporting requirements and a plan to transition the funding inside the funding formula, and then present the plan for approval to the 2015 Legislature.

Ms. Smith said that because there seemed to be some mixed feelings about whether to include the funding inside or outside the formula and with the implementation time, perhaps something to consider would be a recommended date for when the transition should take place to provide an idea of the timeframe.

Chair Denis was unsure about leaving the transition date open-ended, but indicated that it was difficult to simply end something one day and begin something new the next.

Ms. Waller said the recommendation of the TAC was to recommend that the NDE, working with the performance metrics and so forth, develop the transition plan. The Legislature would then determine whether to approve the suggested timeframe.

Ms. Waller said the next item that was approved at the TAC's May 8, 2014, meeting was regarding ELL or at-risk students who might qualify for multiple weight categories. The consensus of the TAC was to recommend that the highest single weight to a student who qualified for both ELL and at-risk be applied based on an unduplicated count of students.

Chair Denis thought that if the recommendation was for the highest weight based on an unduplicated count then it was critical to arrive at an acceptable weight in each category, because students often qualified for multiple categories.

Mr. Hechter asked if the presumption was that the highest weight would prevail if there was a differential in weights. Ms. Waller confirmed that was correct.

Ms. Waller said, with regard to the implementation plan, the recommendation was to hold districts harmless for the 2015-17 biennium by distributing only new funding approved by the Legislature and the Governor through the modified funding model for ELL and at-risk students, then begin a four-year phase-in period through 2021 with a 10 percent total calculated funding change implemented in the first year, 30 percent in the second year, 60 percent in the third year and 100 percent in the fourth year.

Mr. Burnham said he was concerned about the implementation plan. As mentioned, there was already inadequate funding of the existing base. If the state did not provide more overall education funding, then money could only be added one place by cutting from somewhere else. He reiterated that some of the suggested cuts in the AIR report were large and he was unsure how some of the districts would even maintain accreditation. Mr. Burnham said if equity was not tied to adequacy then the State of Nevada would not be held accountable to adequately fund education.

Ms. Smith thought the main problem was the fact that education was not being funded adequately to begin with.

Mr. Martinez was concerned that the NDE might make adjustments to the DSA formula that created cuts, thereby undermining efforts to tackle adequacy and determine the

actual costs associated with serving ELL and at-risk students. He said if there was consideration to institute a hold harmless and build in new funding then it should be consistent overall, not just for specific weightings.

Chair Denis said the *Nevada Plan* was implemented the year he began first grade and it had not changed much since then. He said it was important to get things right, but at the same time it should be done as quickly as possible without creating havoc.

Mr. Martinez thought that the Committee should acknowledge that adequacy was a long-term issue that needed to be corrected. He said without additional funding districts would have to choose where to spend and where to cut. For example, a district might have to choose to increase class size in lower poverty schools to afford services in higher poverty schools. He said that would always be a challenge, especially if funding was not increased to account for the inevitability of increased costs.

Assemblywoman Flores reiterated that the Committee was tasked with updating the formula, and doing so in a way that was appropriate for the schools. Also, it was ultimately the responsibility of the Legislature and Governor to implement the recommendations. The main challenge was how to adequately service all students with various needs. She thought it was important to stay focused on getting the funding formula right and leave the rest to the Legislature and the Governor, because the unanswered questions would be answered by virtue of the budgeting and legislative process.

In response to a question from Ms. Miller, Ms. Waller confirmed that because a weight had been decided upon, scenarios could be run using AIR's funding adjustment simulator, which would show how the hold harmless might affect each district. She said the hold harmless would work in terms of the first two years. There was no data that would support what the level of increased funding might look like for districts that would experience a gain under the formula, as opposed to those that would experience a loss. Ms. Waller said an estimate of what the 10 percent change would look like could be provided for the 4-year phase-in period. She reiterated that data was still isolated because the level of increased funding was unknown. She said that while it would provide some information, it would not paint the complete picture because it was difficult to foresee the future.

Mr. Martinez thought the weight should be applied to any student in need, regardless of district, rather than basing the weight on a particular base-funding amount. He was hopeful the adequacy issue would be addressed and there would not be a question of reallocation in the future.

Ms. Smith said that the funding would be based on the statewide count day. She asked if there would be any recommendations concerning count day, because there had been issues with it statewide.

Ms. Waller replied that the count day was a recommendation in the AIR report and something that could be moved forward through the Legislature or through the NDE's updates to the DSA. She thought it was outside the scope of the Committee's timeframe, so it was not something the Task Force could accomplish; however, the Task Force could note in its plan that the count day was an area that needed to be examined further.

Ms. Waller said staff would definitely review the data and determine whether to use the current year or prior year count based on when that data was available.

Mr. Hechter reiterated his concerns about cost and wealth factors, because of the effect on the basic support calculation. After an adjustment for cost and wealth, that number was the basis that all other adequacy was amended into; therefore, if the basic support calculation was wrong it impacted everything else.

Mr. Burnham noted that when the *Nevada Plan* was implemented 50 years ago, Nevada was 5th in the nation in per pupil funding instead of approaching rock bottom.

Mr. Burnham said that he was concerned that the Committee would go through the process in a manner that allowed the State of Nevada to hide from its responsibility to adequately fund education, trading one crisis for another. He thought the Task Force should include a recommendation for the state to adequately fund education rather than taking from one area to manage another.

Chair Denis said the Committee could note the inadequacy of education funding in its final report and stress the importance of increasing the overall funding rather than reallocating the current funding.

Mr. Martinez said the national graduation rate was about 80 percent, and urban districts were still striving to reach that percentage. He said the goal was to reach a 90 percent national graduation rate by 2020. As changes were considered in the funding formula, it was important to include strict metrics and a bold vision for Nevada. He said if the state increased funding but failed to implement performance standards and a vision, then it would be likely that mistakes would be repeated and the same discussions taking place currently would occur again in the future.

Ms. Corrales asked if the TAC would be reviewing special education units. Ms. Waller replied that the TAC was reviewing alternative options for funding special education.

Mr. Erquiaga reminded the Committee that the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), as an additional local education agency in the state, should be considered when performing computations.

Ms. Lawrence added that the SPCSA was also currently the third largest district in the state.

Mr. Fromdahl appreciated that the TAC recognized the undercounting in middle and high school and he thought with improved detection and tracking of FRPL students the percentage would likely increase statewide.

Mr. Fromdahl said there was concern about possible cuts to various counties. He said Clark and Washoe Counties received the majority of the funds during the implementation of Senate Bill 504; however, the rural counties also received a certain amount of funds thereby allowing all districts the ability to implement additional programs for ELL students. He thought S.B. 504 was an effective model to use with the addition of funds for new programs.

Chair Denis said he recently had the opportunity to tour four of the Zoom schools. He said one thing that he noticed was that the atmosphere in the school was different from non-Zoom schools. Teachers were excited to come to work every day. He said the schools were not forewarned about his visit and at two of the schools the principals had printed charts to evaluate the status of students within the program. He was impressed that principals were taking the initiative to review the status of students on a regular basis. He said over 200 students had exited the program and those same students were not at grade level a year ago. Chair Denis said one student purposely tried to fail the final test because he wanted to continue coming back to the literacy piece. Chair Denis said it was a good environment for students and they did not feel as though it was a punishment. Many Zoom students were assisting other students with reading in the mainstream classrooms. He was impressed with what had been accomplished with a small amount and he looked forward to what could be accomplished for all students.

Senator Roberson thanked the TAC for their thoughtful work and recommendations.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Joyce Haldeman, CCSD, thanked Senator Woodhouse, TAC members and staff. She said the TAC was an impressive group who knew what to look for and the right questions to ask.

Ms. Haldeman said the CCSD was in full support of the recommendations from the TAC. The CCSD was especially appreciative of the recommended weight of no less than 1.5. The CCSD provided the Committee with a list of services and the associated costs ([Exhibit F](#) and [Exhibit G](#)). She explained that the costs were broken down by grade level because the needs varied by grade. For example, the needs at a Zoom school were different from the needs at a high school.

Ms. Haldeman thanked the legislators for the Zoom school funding. The CCSD was awaiting the data that would prove the success of the Zoom schools; however, the anecdotal information thus far pointed to success. She indicated that the Zoom school funding limited use in some ways such as professional development, parent engagement and the purchase of certain materials. She said those items were paid for with district general funds, because the CCSD wanted to ensure that the Zoom schools

had everything necessary for success. She said those things were included on the list provided by the CCSD, as well as other recommended programs that were not included in Zoom schools ([Exhibit F](#)). She explained that the list was based on the assumption that two of the elements, full-day kindergarten and smaller class size, were included for all schools universally, not just Zoom schools. She said both were equally important for both at-risk and ELL students.

Ms. Haldeman recalled several discussions about the overlap of services for ELL and at-risk students. She said many of the interventions were the same for ELL and at-risk students. As of December 1, 2013, there were 43,497 of 53,580 ELL students who were also FRPL, which meant that 81 percent of ELL students were also at-risk students. Ms. Haldeman explained that if dual category students made up a separate category, that category would be the third largest school district in Nevada. It fell closely behind Washoe County's entire student population. She said until the Zoom school funding was instituted, funding had not been present despite the magnitude of the issue and it was no wonder ELL and at-risk students struggled to achieve. Ms. Haldeman said interventions would certainly help struggling students if funding was provided.

Ms. Haldeman said the CCSD supported the implementation schedule recommended by the TAC. The CCSD thought the hold harmless provision was extremely important in the first two years. The CCSD also thought the phase-in approach would provide an incentive for legislators to recognize that a long-term resource solution was critical. She agreed with Mr. McIntosh in that a study was important, but it was equally important to move forward. Ms. Haldeman said if there was reluctance for people to identify methods to adequately fund students, then let the cuts begin. She indicated that everyone felt the cuts and CCSD had been bearing the burden of a large group of students who had not received much needed services for quite some time. She was hopeful that the 2015 Legislative Session would produce stellar results as it was determined how to provide adequate funding for students.

Ms. Haldeman said that in 2003, when the superintendents created the very first iNVEST document, the most important fundamental request was for the base to be adequately funded. The CCSD thought it was time to change the funding formula and add weights to an adequate base. She said everything needed to be done in conjunction, but taking care of the base was definitely important.

Yvette Williams echoed Ms. Haldeman's comments regarding the 43,374 ELL students who were also at-risk students. She said she did not hear mention of the 32,371 black students who were also at risk, a subgroup that was underperforming their at-risk peers. She said that particular subgroup did not have early assessment, so it was unknown where they fit into the structure. Ms. Williams indicated that the subgroup of black, at-risk students seemed to be invisible and she found it insulting. She encouraged the Committee to review and understand the struggle for that particular subgroup. Proficiencies were as low as 23 percent in math and 35 percent in literacy. She clarified that the 32,371 black students she was referring to was in CCSD alone. Ms. Williams

indicated that there was an absence of discussion around those students' needs at today's meeting. She said there had been little discussion concerning at-risk students overall.

Assemblywoman Flores said all students were important. They all had various needs whether it was associated with language or poverty. She said it was her understanding that if the highest applicable weight was applied to a specific child, then needs would be met one way or the other. She wanted to be sure that people did not feel as though the various needs of all students in all districts were not being addressed.

Ms. Waller confirmed that the recommendation was for students who were in multiple categories to receive the highest weight. If the weights for ELL and at-risk were identical, a weight of no less than the minimum of 1.5 would be applied. She said if a student no longer qualified as ELL then the at-risk weight would be applied if the student met the criteria for that category.

Assemblywoman Flores said she wanted to be clear that one community was not being pitted against another; urban and rural areas alike had distinct needs. ELL and at-risk students, as well as students with learning disabilities, were all equally worthy. The focus was about their various needs and how to address those levels of need within all the communities in the most appropriate way. She said that was why it was important to concentrate on what was adequate as opposed to the absolute minimum.

Mr. Martinez said he was just as concerned about African-American students as ELL students. He noted that in the WCSD African-American students fell below Latino and at-risk students overall and he thought that was unacceptable. He said that was why it was important to hold the districts accountable to ensure that services and strategies were being provided, but that achievement gaps were being reduced as well.

Ms. Smith said that lack of discussion on the at-risk category did not mean it was not being addressed. The needs and services of ELL and at-risk students were almost parallel, so while the bulk of the discussion was on the ELL category, it was inclusive of the at-risk category. She thought the issue of density was because it was a secondary issue in communities of need and, in particular, the black community.

VII. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Ulrych, Transcribing Secretary

APPROVED:

Senator Moises Denis, Chairman

Date: _____