

Lincoln County School District Accountability Analysis

The Lincoln County School District Report was complete. There is clear evidence that this district utilizes accountability data for school improvement. There are some inconsistencies between district reports and the Statewide Data Tables, which is due to small numbers being tested. Of additional note is a remedy for Lincoln County's condemned educational facilities was been accomplished through a special legislative initiative that provided fiscal assistance for the building of two new facilities.

1. *A summary of the student performance and school characteristics deemed relevant to the evaluation of the district's school performance based on data submitted to the State Board of Education and LeBEAPE in Part I school reports and Part II district-wide reports.*

Number of Pupils.

The number of students enrolled in Lincoln County Schools in 1998-99 was 1,052. Though this enrollment was reported in both state data tables and the district's report, the state data tables showed this as a 2.7% decrease in enrollment from the previous year while the district accountability report reported it as a decrease of 5.6%.

Student Attendance Rate.

The attendance rate for students increased slightly, from 93.1% the previous year, to 94% during 1998-99.

Teacher Attendance Rate.

The teacher attendance rate during 1998-1999 was reported at 95%, essentially the same as in the previous year.

Dropout and Non-Promotion Rates.

The Lincoln County School District reported zero dropouts for 1998-99. Three had been reported the previous year. In general, less than 1% of students were retained in grade level, rather than being promoted to the next grade level. The only exceptions were the sixth and eighth grades where the non-promotion rate was 1%.

Truancy Rate.

One percent of students were reported as having been truant in 1998-1999, representing a .6% improvement over the previous year.

Transiency Rate.

Lincoln County School District's transiency rate increased to 18% in 1998-1999 from 11.1% the previous year.

Student/Teacher Ratios.

Elementary grade class size in Lincoln County was generally smaller than the state average with the highest ratio – 20 to 1 – in third grade. Average class sizes in secondary grade level core subjects were all below 20. English classes were the largest classes at 18 students.

Student/Counselor Ratio.

While the counselor to student ratio increased from 1:363 the previous year to 1:4060, it remained below the state average. Some schools did not have counselors, however, according to the state data tables.

Suspension/Expulsion rate.

Violence to students resulting in suspension/expulsion increased from zero to eight at the elementary level and decreased from 25 to 11 incidents at the secondary level. One case of weapon possession and two cases of drug possession in Lincoln County were reported during 1998-99.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova: Fourth Grade.

Terra Nova Results 4th Grade

SUBJECT	% BOTTOM QUARTER			% TOP QUARTER			AVERAGE PERCENTILE RANK		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Reading	24	16	12.3	15	16	20.0	48	52	54
Language	28	32	12.1	22	11	27.3	47	40	59
Math	20	23	10.8	18	20	27.7	50	49	63
Science	21	19	10.8	25	17	29.2	52	54	62

The fourth grade TerraNova test results were reported separately in the statewide data tables for all four content areas at Caliente and Pahrnagat Valley Elementary Schools and for math and science at Panaca Elementary. The district-wide report also included scores of students at Pioche. According to accountability regulations, when fewer than ten students are tested at a school, the school's scores are not reported separately. In small districts this factor can create district-wide averages that may not appear to be consistent with individual building scores.

Fourth grade achievement increased in every area tested at Caliente Elementary. The average reading achievement increased from the 37th percentile in 1997, to the 46th percentile in 1998, to the 58th percentile in 1999. In language, average percentile ranks at Caliente increased

from the 28th percentile in 1997 to the 52nd percentile in 1999. This improvement was also reflected in declining percentages of students in the bottom quarter on national norms in language achievement, dropping from 44% in 1997 to only 15% in 1999. Caliente's average percentile rank in math rose from the 49th percentile in 1997 to the 63rd percentile in 1999, when only 5% scored in the bottom quarter. Increased achievement was also evident in science scores at Caliente, which rose from the 39th percentile in 1997 to the 60th percentile in 1999.

Pahranagat Valley's average percentile rank in language increased from 48 to 61. In the area of mathematics, Pahranagat Valley Elementary School also increased their math performance from the 42nd to the 58th percentile. Panaca Elementary School reported in the math section the highest average percentile rank of 68 in 1999. Percentile ranks in science at Caliente, Pahranagat Valley and Panaca were all 60 or greater in 1999.

It might be well to note that state's reports indicate that, in 1999, Panaca Elementary School tested only 81.3% of eligible students, missing the state's target of 90%. The fourth grade enrollment at the school was only 16 students. One of these was not eligible for testing due to limited English ability and absences due to illness and a funeral resulted in testing a smaller percentage of the enrollment. Small rural schools suffer such statistical vulnerability and are more likely to experience fluctuations in average performance from year to year.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova: Eighth Grade

**Terra Nova Results
8th Grade**

SUBJECT	% BOTTOM QUARTER			% TOP QUARTER			AVERAGE PERCENTILE RANK		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Reading	31	28	18.2	20	16	32.7	44	44	61
Language	19	29	20.0	16	16	34.5	43	40	66
Math	43	38	14.5	15	17	41.8	34	38	66
Science	27	17	7.3	21	15	47.3	47	50	69

Comparisons of 1999 scores with those in 1998 showed that TerraNova test scores for eighth grade students improved in reading at both Meadow Valley Middle School and Pahranagat Valley Middle School. Meadow Valley's average score rose from the 43rd to the 66th percentile, and Pahranagat Valley's from the 47th to the 54th. Both schools also enjoyed significant improvements in the TerraNova language test when compared to the previous year. Meadow Valley Middle School reported a 30 percentile rank jump from the previous year, moving from the 38th to the 68th percentile. The math scores at both schools showed significant improvement. Percentages of students scoring in the bottom quarter reflected this change: Meadow Valley Middle School went from 47% of their students scoring in the bottom quarter to only 15%, resulting in an average percentile rank increase from the 34th to the 73rd. Pahranagat Valley Middle School reduced their bottom quarter percentage to 14 and increased their average percentile rank scores in math from 45 to 55. Consistent progress was also seen in eighth grade science scores. Meadow Valley School reported only 3% scoring in the bottom quarter, increasing the average score from the 50th to the 71st percentile rank, while Pahranagat Valley eighth graders improved from the 50th to the 66th percentile.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova: Tenth Grade

**Terra Nova Results
10th Grade**

SUBJECT	% BOTTOM QUARTER			% TOP QUARTER			AVERAGE PERCENTILE RANK		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Reading	18	9	17.2	26	47	21.9	56	69	57
Language	19	7	17.2	26	32	14.1	51	62	51
Math	36	16	25.0	19	23	35.9	42	56	54
Science	12	7	10.9	34	42	31.3	63	69	65

The reading, language, and math scores for tenth grade students on the TerraNova test showed declines between 1998 and 1999 at both Lincoln High School and Pahranaagat High School. Though still above national averages, reading scores fell from the 69th percentile to the 55th at Lincoln and from the 69th to the 59th at Pahranaagat. Language scores went from the 61st to the 42nd percentile at Lincoln and from the 65th to the 67th percentile at Pahranaagat. Math test scores for this group of tenth graders were also lower, falling from the 72nd to the 49th percentile at Pahranaagat and from the 48th to the 52nd percentile at Lincoln. Science test scores for tenth graders at Lincoln High School were consistently at the 66th percentile in 1998 and 1999, while at Pahranaagat High School the scores dropped from the 76th to the 64th percentile. However, math and science scores were well above national averages in both years. As in the lower grades, average achievement score variations need to be interpreted with awareness of the small student populations tested.

State Mandated Test Results: Writing Exam

**Writing Examination
4th and 8th Grade**

MEASURED TRAIT	PERCENT PROFICIENT					
	4 TH GRADE			8 TH GRADE		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Ideas	NA	NR	54.0	73.0	NR	79.0
Organization	NA	NR	57.0	83.0	NR	75.0
Voice	NA	NR	56.0	86.0	NR	65.0
Conventions	NA	NR	59.0	82.0	NR	62.0

The percentages of **fourth graders** demonstrating proficiency on the writing exam in Lincoln County for the 1999-2000 school year ranged from 59% to 54% over the four domains. Comparison data for previous years was not available. Percentages of Lincoln County eighth graders showing writing proficiency showed improvement only in the area of writing ideas which increased from 73% in 98 to 79.0 in 1999. **Eighth graders** proficient in measures of organization, voice, and convention were 75%, 65%, and 62%, respectively.

State Mandated Tests Results: High School Proficiency Exam

High School Proficiency Examination

PERCENT PASSING									% DENIED DIPLOMA		
READING			MATH			WRITING			96-97	97-98	98-99
96-97	97-98	98-99	96-97	97-98	98-99	96-97	97-98	98-99	96-97	97-98	98-99
100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	NA	NA	0.0

All of Lincoln County School District high school seniors demonstrated proficiency in all areas of the proficiency exam. During each of the three years reported, all students have passed the exams in reading, math, and writing proficiency.

ACT/SAT Results

ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
NR	63	71	21.8	21.8	21.5

SAT Results

% SENIORS TAKING SAT			SAT VERBAL AVERAGE			SAT MATH AVERAGE		
96-97	97-98	98-99	96-97	97-98	98-99	96-97	97-98	98-99
NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR

The percentage of seniors taking the ACT exam increased in Lincoln County from 63% the previous year to 71%. Their composite average score dropped very slightly from 21.8 to 21.5, which is also the state average for the current year. No seniors took the SAT examination during the three-year period reported.

Special Programs.

Pahrnagat Valley Elementary School had the highest percentage of special education students at 13%. Other elementary schools were fairly stable at a single digit level. The percentage of students receiving free- or reduced-price lunches was significant, with two of the four elementary schools having percentage participation rates that exceeded 50%. The percentages of secondary special education students were 13% at Pahrnagat Valley High School, 11% at Meadow Valley Middle School, and 12% at Pahrnagat Middle School. The only school to provide English as a Second Language is Meadow Valley Middle School where two percent of the students participated. No secondary students participated in migrant education, gifted program, or advanced placement in the Lincoln County School District.

Teachers.

More teachers in the Lincoln County School District have earned master's degrees. The percentage of teachers with a master's degree increased from 37% in 1998 to 43% in 1999. Ninety-seven percent of their teachers, taught within their area of licensure. Out-of-license placement was reported only in English where 8% of the classes were taught outside of license. Math, science and social studies all have 100% compliance with licensure requirements. Teachers with 10 years or more experience accounted for 57.3% of the faculty in Lincoln County. No new teachers were employed and only 9.4% had between one and three years of experience.

Technology/Computers.

Elementary schools had student-to- computer ratios that ranged from six students per computer to 33 students per computer. The 33:1 ratio at Panaca Elementary School was significantly higher than at the other elementary schools with one digit ratios. Internet access was not reported for any of the elementary schools. The student-to-computer ratios for secondary schools was significantly better and ranged from nine to three students per computer. Significant improvement was noted at Meadow Valley Middle School where the ratio improved from 41:1 to 6:1. Internet access was reported at all secondary schools.

Expenditures.

The Lincoln County Schools spend \$5,448 per pupil for instruction. This is an increase over the previous year's \$5,112. This amount was the third highest in the state and reflected the higher costs found in small rural school districts with smaller class sizes. Per-pupil expenditure for administration was \$1,460, compared to a state average of \$611. Per-pupil expenditure for support staff was the lowest in the state at \$6 compared to a state average of \$265.90. The district received support of \$161, 454 in Title I remedial education funds and \$60,955 in Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration funds.

Parent Involvement.

The percentage of parents at parent/teacher conferences increased from 67% to 74% in the 1998-99 school year in the Lincoln County schools.

- 2. Areas the School Districts' Part III Report identified as examples of exemplary achievement at the school site and/or areas of improvement in outcomes from those reported in the previous year and evidence that the areas were exemplary or improved.*

The Lincoln County School District cited specific examples of exemplary and/or improved achievement in its Part III Report. Caliente Elementary improved in all four areas on the TerraNova test. Pahrnagat Valley Elementary improved in three of four areas. Also, Meadow Valley Middle School improved in all four areas as did Pahrnagat Valley Middle School on the TerraNova Test. Increased ACT scores at Pahrnagat Valley High Schools were

cited with all students passing the proficiency exam. All seniors at the Lincoln County High School passed the reading and writing proficiency exam. State mandated achievement and proficiency exam results were presented in tabular form in Part III as evidence of the exemplary practices. The report stated that new reading and math programs initiated at Caliente and Pahranaagat Valley Elementary Schools, have helped focus on gaps or missed areas for students in the lowest 25% of their class. Extra time was also spent on reading and math. At Meadow Valley and Pahranaagat Valley Middle Schools, programs were implemented for students who failed classes. These remedial sessions were designed to prevent future failure and to re-teach missed concepts.

3. *Areas the School Districts' Part III Report identified as in need of improvement at the school site(s) and evidence for any deficiencies addressed.*

All four elementary schools have set goals to reduce the number of students scoring in the lowest quartile on the TerraNova test. Language scores have been specifically identified as in need of improvement at the elementary level. Meadow Valley Middle School has identified improvement of math scores and Pahranaagat Valley Middle School has identified reading and math scores. The high schools have identified better teaching of the writing process and mathematics instruction.

4. *Summary of the School Districts' plan for improvement at the school site.*

The elementary schools have begun to meet on a regular basis to formulate plans that address reducing the number of students in the lowest quartile in reading, math, language and science. Arranging extra teacher and aid time for those students seems to be an effective practice. Accelerated Math is being considered for all elementary schools and Accelerated Reader has been implemented at all four schools. The middle schools are arranging "extra time and extra help" for lower scoring or failing students. This also includes a district-wide emphasis on more one-on-one time with teachers. The high schools have established a "night school" for homework help and "recharge" (makeup for failed classes). Teachers are being provided inservice in "learning to learn" and "understanding by design."

5. *Sources of information to be used in determining effectiveness of the plan for improvement.*

The sources of information relied upon in this report are predominantly those required in the Nevada State Accountability Program. This assessment information has been supplemented by the district-wide CAT5 testing program. In Part III of the accountability report, data is displayed logically in a comparative fashion that is supportive of the district's conclusions and efforts.

6. *Missing or incomplete data.*

No missing data were noted.

7. Recommendations of Panel members for improving analysis and use of accountability findings at the school level and, if applicable, at the district level.

The Lincoln County School District has shown a good faith participation in the accountability process that demonstrates significant efforts and subsequent improvement in a small rural district. The only recommendation for improvement the reviewers would offer concerns the district-wide data table in the body of the main report. The format of the data table, which includes most of the required information, is somewhat difficult to manage by the reader because of its length. Groupings or sections could be included with headings that would make information easier to find for the reader.