

**Churchill County School District
Accountability Analysis
1999-2000**

The Churchill County School District Accountability Report for School year 1999-2000 was in compliance with both the spirit and letter of the law. There is congruency between data and those areas reported as exemplary and well as those areas reported to be in need of improvement. Suggestions are made for improving the content and process of future reports and complying with new federal laws.

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

Number of Pupils

The Churchill County School District enrollment increased slightly in 1999-2000 from 4,834 students the previous year to 4,860, a 0.5% increase. The district includes five elementary schools, a junior high school, a high school, and a charter high school.

Student Attendance Rate

The district-wide attendance rate was 94.2%, a slight increase over the prior year's 93.7%. Attendance at the individual elementary and secondary schools increased from 93% to 95%.

Teacher Attendance Rate

The district-wide teacher attendance rate increased slightly from the previous year – from 92.9% to 94.2%. The only school where the average decreased was E.C. Best Elementary School with an average of 86%.

Dropout and Non-promotion Rates

The high school dropout rate declined from 4% in the previous year to 2% in 1999-2000. This figure indicated continued progress in this effort over the last three years. Ten percent of ninth graders accumulated too few credits to be promoted to tenth grade.

Retention in Kindergarten was 2% and in grade 1, it was 4%. Grades 2 through 7 all indicated a 1% retention rate with no one being retained in grade 8. Lahontan Elementary School had the highest rate of retention among the district's five elementary schools.

Student Completion Indices

The number of students receiving a standard diploma was 273, about 91%. Six students were awarded an adjusted diploma; 12 students received a certificate of attendance. At the new Gateways to Success Charter School, 83% earned a standard diploma while none received an adjusted diploma and 5% received a certificate of attendance.

Transiency Rate

The transiency rate for the district dropped slightly from 25% the previous year to 23%. Lahontan Elementary School had the highest rate among the elementary schools at 39%.

Student/Teacher Ratios

Average class sizes at the elementary level were 17 at grade 1, 14 at grade 2, 20 at grade 3, 25 at grade 4, 26 at grade 5, and 29 at grade 6. Class sizes for the core high school subjects averaged 24 pupils per class and were lower at the charter school where the range was 16 to 20 students per teacher.

Student/Counselor Ratios

District-wide, the student/counselor ratio increased from 482:1 in the previous year to 527:1 in 1999-2000. Numa Elementary School reported a 703:1 ratio, the highest among the elementary schools. A similar high ratio was found at Churchill County Junior High School.

Suspension/Expulsion Rate

The district's elementary schools reported a much lower rate of suspensions or expulsions due to violence to students from the previous year (24 compared to 69). The only instances were 24 cases of violence to other students and one suspension/expulsion was for possession of a weapon. The secondary schools reported one instance of threat or extortion and one instance of violence to staff. In addition, secondary schools reported 80 instances of violence to students, 6 cases of alcohol possession, and 11 instances of weapon possession.

Numbers of Habitual Disciplinary Problems

No students were expelled for being a habitual disciplinary problem.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Fourth Grade

TerraNova Results 4th Grade

SUBJECT	% BOTTOM QUARTER			% TOP QUARTER			AVERAGE PERCENTILE RANK		
	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01
Reading	21	18.9	24.0	15	22.6	1819	49	54	48
Language	28	23.8	20.7	19	28.6	30.1	44	53	55
Math	22	17.4	19.0	23	29.5	26.5	52	59	54
Science	13	14.9	19.9	22	24.1	21.9	56	57	52

District-wide, the average fourth grade percentile rank in reading decreased from 54% to 48%. The state average was at the 48th percentile. Fourth grade language scores in Churchill County improved from the 53rd to the 55th percentile, though this was below the state average at the 56th percentile. Math achievement also decreased from the 59th to the 54th percentile, below the state average of the 56th percentile. Science achievement among fourth graders in Churchill County decreased from the 57th to the 52nd percentile, but this was well above the state average of the 47th percentile. The percentage of eligible students tested ranged from 95.7% to 100%.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, 8th Grade

TerraNova Results 8th Grade

SUBJECT	% BOTTOM QUARTER			% TOP QUARTER			AVERAGE PERCENTILE RANK		
	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01
Reading	16	18.4	16.5	27	34.4	27.5	56	59	58
Language	24	20.7	18.7	23	26.6	23.4	51	55	54
Math	27	21.8	21.3	26	31.1	22.8	51	56	52
Science	12	17.4	14.4	20	27.1	28.2	54	57	59

Eighth grade reading scores decreased slightly, from the 59th to the 58th percentile, but were above the state average of the 51st percentile. Language performance reflected a similar decline from 55th to the 54th percentile. The state average was at the 51st percentile. Though math performance also dropped, from the 56th to the 52nd percentile, the district's eighth graders scored higher than the state average at the 49th percentile. Science scores increased from the 57th to the 59th percentile and were above the state

average of the 48th percentile. At Churchill Junior High School, 97% of the eligible students were tested.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, 10th Grade

**TerraNova Results
10th Grade**

SUBJECT	% BOTTOM QUARTER			% TOP QUARTER			AVERAGE PERCENTILE RANK		
	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01
Reading	17	17.7	21.4	32	31.1	32.4	61	60	59
Language	16	16.8	16.1	30	28.6	30.7	58	58	58
Math	25	22.6	17.8	30	26.9	34.2	53	55	59
Science	7	12.5	11.7	30	38.6	32.8	64	66	62

Tenth grade reading achievement declined slightly at Churchill County High School from the 60th to the 59th percentile, topping the state average of the 53rd percentile. Language achievement remained at the 52nd percentile, below the state average at the 54th percentile. Math achievement increased from the 55th to the 59th percentile, well above the state average at the 53rd percentile. Though the average science achievement of Churchill County tenth graders dropped from the 66th to the 62nd percentile, this was still well above the state average of the 53rd percentile. At Churchill County High School, 96.2% of the eligible students were tested.

Charter Schools

Achievement scores at the Gateways to Success Charter School were significantly lower than those at other schools in the district. Charter school tenth graders achieved as follows: Reading – average percentile rank was 21, with 45.7% in the bottom quarter on national norms and none in the top quarter; Language – average percentile rank of 25, with 57.1 in the bottom quarter and none in the top quarter; Math – average percentile rank of 13, with 78.6 in the bottom quarter and 7.1% in the top quarter; and Science – average percentile rank of 21 with 57.1 in the bottom quarter and none in the top quarter. In every test category the average performance was significantly lower in 2000-2001 than in the previous year.

State Mandated Test Results: Writing Exams

**Writing Examination
4th and 8th Grades**

MEASURED TRAIT	PERCENT PROFICIENT					
	4 TH GRADE			8 TH GRADE		
	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01
Ideas	NR	62.1	60.2	83	80.4	80.7
Organization	NR	58.9	57.1	81	76.1	72.3
Voice	NR	59.7	56.5	75.9	76.4	79
Convention	NR	57	60.5	72.3	66.5	76.4

The performance of fourth graders on the writing exam was well above the state average in the four areas tested and in the percent proficient in all four writing traits. More than 41% of Churchill County fourth graders demonstrated writing proficiency in all four traits, compared with 33.1% statewide.

More eighth grade students also demonstrated writing proficiency in the traits of ideas, voice, and conventions than did their peers across the state. More were also proficient in all four writing traits – 65.1% compared to the state average of 56%. Only in the writing trait of organization was the percent of Churchill eighth graders demonstrating proficiency at the state average.

State Mandated Test Results: High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE)

High School Proficiency Examination

PERCENT PASSING									% DID NOT EARN DIPLOMA		
READING			MATH			WRITING					
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
92.8	99.1	98.1	96.0	98.3	95.4	96.2	99.1	100	NA	2	4.8

Students taking the HSPE in 1999-00 averaged a passing score of 98.1 in reading, 95.4 in math, and 100% in writing. Ninety-one percent of seniors at Churchill High School received a standard diploma, two percent, an adjusted diploma and four percent, a certificate of attendance. Five percent were denied a diploma due to failing the proficiency exams.

Charter Schools

Eighty-three percent of seniors at the Gateways to Success Charter School earned a standard diploma in 1999-2000, and five percent a certificate of attendance. Six percent were denied a diploma for failing proficiency exams.

ACT/SAT Results

ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
40	53	39	21.9	21.9	21.9

Thirty-nine percent of the seniors in the district took the ACT compared with the previous year's rate of 53%. The ACT composite average score has remained at 21.9 for the last three years. The state average on the ACT was 21.5.

SAT Results

% SENIORS TAKING SAT			SAT VERBAL AVERAGE			SAT MATH AVERAGE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
14	16	20	508	578	512	496	560	498

Twenty percent of Churchill County seniors took the SAT, compared with 16% the previous year. Statewide, 34% of seniors took the SAT. The Churchill County seniors' SAT verbal average dropped from 578 to 512, and the SAT math average also declined from 560 to 498. The averages for the State of Nevada were 510 on the verbal tests and 517 on the math tests.

Charter Schools

No students from the Gateways to Success Charter School were reported to have taken either exam in 1999-2000.

Special Programs

District-wide, 15% of students participated in special education programs. At the elementary level, the range of participation in special education was from 12 to 20%, while in secondary schools, the range was from 9% to 15%. Two percent of students in the district received instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL), with the highest participation rate – 8% at Numa Elementary School. This school also had the highest level of participation in Migrant education -- 5%. Gifted and talented programming was provided to 3% of students district-wide, but such programming was reported only at

elementary schools. Participation ranged from 3% to 7% at the various elementary schools.

An average of 30% of students in Churchill County Schools received free or reduced-price meals. This ranged from 29% to 39% in the various elementary schools. All elementary students received instruction in music, art, computer use, and physical education. Six percent of the students at Churchill County High School took advanced placement classes. Twenty-eight percent of junior high school students were enrolled in music, while only 21% were enrolled in music at the high school level. Art enrollment involved 45% of the junior high school students, but only 18% at the high school. Foreign language classes included 39% at the junior high and 36% at the high school. All junior high students participated in occupational education while 66% of high school students were enrolled in occupational education courses. Participation in athletic programs involved 35% of students in junior high and 39% of high school students.

Teachers

Of teachers in the district, 15% were new or had less than 3 years of experience; 40% had 3 to 10 years of experience; 31%, 11-20 years; and 14% over 20 years experience. Eighty-eight percent of the teachers hold a bachelor's degree, while 12% have earned their master's degree. The only cases in which teachers were teaching outside their areas of licensure was in math, where 5% of the classes were taught by teachers without certification in math.

Technology/Computers

All elementary schools have computer classes which feature keyboarding and basic computer literacy. The junior high school has two computer labs, one for teaching the computer curriculum and one for student/teacher use. The high school has all classrooms equipped with computers. Internet access is available at all schools.

The district also has several computer labs that are used for teaching various parts of the curriculum, e.g., a science computer lab. The student to computer ratio ranged from 4:1 to 9:1. The district report noted that over 40% of the computers were over three years old and did not meet current "Level I" standards. Deleting the older computers from the ratio, the district average computer to student to computer ratio was 10.8:1.

University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN) Remedial Class Enrollments

Of recent Churchill County graduates enrolled in Nevada community colleges and university system, 23.1% were enrolled in remedial college classes.

Expenditures

The per-pupil expenditure for instruction in 1999-00 was \$4,054. Total per-pupil expenditure was \$6,205. The district also garnered \$377,585 in Title I Remedial Education Funds; \$77,867 for Low Performing School Funds; \$64,658 in Before/After Summer School Funds; and \$37,189 in the “other” category.

Parent Involvement

The level of attendance at parent/teacher conferences was judged as moderate. Activities related to parental and community involvement were listed in the reports for the district and for individual schools.

- 2. Areas the school district’s Part III Report indicated 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.***

Churchill County High School reported that it had improved in math and language arts instruction, citing as evidence their TerraNova test scores and Nevada State Proficiency Exam results. The improvements enumerated occurred between the 1999-2000 school year and the 2000-2001 school year. Both secondary schools reported that they had analyzed test score data to identify weakness and modify instruction accordingly. The science curriculum was revised to improve test scores in that area. Grant money was used to hire a “Transition Facilitator” to help students who did earn the prescribed number of credits to move to the next grade. At Churchill County Junior High School a “Student Bucks” program helped to reduce tardiness and improve attendance.

Elementary schools also reported that they have been analyzing test data and developing action plans designed to focus on specific areas of need. Examples of exemplary achievement or areas of improvement at the various elementary schools included the following: At West End Elementary school, the number of student referrals to the office dropped to an all-time low. This was attributed to a new program – “Character Counts” – which was taught to all West End teachers and implemented into daily lessons. Lahontan Elementary reported improved reading scores and attributed the change to after-school tutoring and the Project Life Remedial Reading Program. Northside Elementary School reported that test scores improved in all four areas tested between the 1998-1999 school year and the 1999-2000 school year. E. C. Best Elementary School also noted improved scores on the fourth grade TerraNova test. They reported implementation of Accelerated Reader Model Classroom status in 12 classrooms and the library. Numa Elementary School found that students had improved in their scores in comparison with state averages.

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

At the secondary level 10% of the students did not earn the requisite number of credits to move from grade 9 to grade 10. Science test score performance has been a problem. After-school tutoring, a homework club, and summer school programs have been developed for at-risk students.

At the elementary level more reading practice, phonics, developing math concepts, language arts, and parental involvement were seen as areas in need of improvement.

4. *Summary of the school district's plans for improvement in the school site.*

Two staff members were trained as Regional Professional Development trainers to come back to West End Elementary School and train teachers on State Standards, curriculum mapping, and differentiated instruction. A consultant was also hired. The Character Counts! Program was introduced. Saxon Math and Accelerated Reading/Reading Renaissance will be fully implemented next year. Lahontan Elementary School has had success with the Project Life Reading Program. Northside Elementary School has a School-wide Focus Plan that includes silent reading, journal writing, and directed writing. E.C. Best has acquired the Accelerated Reader Project Life remedial program, and Reading Renaissance program. Numa Elementary School also uses Project Life and has a special concern for ESL students.

In addition to the activities mentioned in the preceding paragraph which have been implemented, each school identified in its individual plan a number of additional activities focused on future improvement. Examples include a summer school credit retention program for seventh and eighth graders needing credits in math or English for promotion to ninth grade by the end of their eighth grade year, piloting a program called Planet K-12 – a computerized program enabling parents to review their child's grades in each class on a daily basis, further implementing the Accelerated Reader/Reading Renaissance program, surveys of parents and teachers, and expanded after-school tutoring.

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

Churchill County School District does a fine job in using the accountability data as the springboard for further academic development. In particular, test data from TerraNova scores, writing exams, and HSPE are used extensively to plan for improvement.

6. *Missing or incomplete data.*

The data used to support exemplary achievement or improved outcomes noted by some schools referred to different reporting years than what this accountability period

called for. The improvements noted in High School Proficiency Exam performance at Churchill High School occurred between 1999-2000 and 2000-2001. The improved scores in all four content areas, reported by Northside Elementary School, occurred between the 1998-1999 school and the 1999-2000 school year. The most recent data (from the fall of 2000) showed declines in three of the four areas, but these were not addressed.

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

Churchill County is to be commended for its compliance with accountability requirements and the use of data in planning school improvement.

Continued usage of the Regional Professional Program is recommended.

Technology usage has been excellent and needs continual improvement and upgrading.

On additional suggestion that the panel makes to the Churchill County School district is that other databased indicators be addressed in Parts I and III. The panel recommends that issues such as the high remedial class enrollment in the UCCSN could/should be addressed.

Charter Schools

Considerable attention/assistance should be given to the new charter school so that students attending that school achieve success at a level experienced by students in the regular district schools. In addition, the charter school should be given direction on complying with Nevada accountability regulations so that the Part III portion of the report reflects in-depth analyses and plans for improvement.