

Douglas County School District Accountability Analysis

The Douglas School District Accountability Report for School year 1999-2000 was in compliance with both the spirit and letter of the law. It should be considered as a model for districts wishing to improve their report. A few suggestions are offered for making for report more reader friendly and for complying with new federal law.

- 1. 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

During the 1999-2000 school year, enrollment was at 7,158 students, a decrease of 164 or 2.2% from the previous year. Students attended seven elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools.

Student Attendance Rate

The student attendance rate was 94.5% compared to 94% for the 1998-1999 school year, an increase of .5%.

Teacher Attendance Rates

The teacher attendance was 96%, which was the same as the prior year's teacher attendance rate.

Dropout and non-Promotion Rates

The grades 9-12 dropout rate for 1999-2000 was 2.7%, representing a decline of 1.4% from the previous year's rate of 4.1%. Retention rates in the grades K, 1, and 2 were 1.3%, 1.8%, and 1.2% respectively. Retention rates in grades 3 through 6 were .5% or less. Grade 7 had a 1.8% retention rate while the rate for grade 8 was .8%.

Student Completion Indices

The number of seniors receiving a standard diploma was 392, or 87% of the senior class. Adjusted diplomas were awarded to 24 students, 5.3% of the class. No certificates of attendance were awarded.

Transiency Rate

The transiency rate was 18%, a decrease of 3% from last year.

Student/Teacher Ratio

The average pupil-teacher ratios in the elementary grades were 24:1 in kindergarten, 16:1 in first and second grades, 19:1 in third grade, 23:1 in fourth grade, 25:1 in fifth and sixth grade. Average class size in the secondary (7th -12th) grades were 26 for English classes, 24 for math, 19 for science, and 26 for social studies. The average class sizes were all lower for high school grades than for the middle school grades.

Student/Counselor Ratio

The student-to-counselor ratio for elementary schools ranged from 327:1 for Zephyr Cove Elementary School to 855:1 for Minden Elementary School. (The enrollment at Minden was 342, so it appears that the school had a part-time counselor.) The middle school ratios ranged from 321:1 to 412:1; the two high schools had ratios of 249:1 and 358:1. The district-wide student-to-counselor ratio was 447:1.

Suspension/Expulsion Rate

The district reported suspensions or expulsions as follows: 151 instances were due to violence to other students, a decrease from 166 in the prior year; six for violence to staff, down from eight the previous year, eight for threats/extortion which was a new category for this accountability report. In 1999-2000 there were four instances of suspensions or expulsions for possession of weapons, substantially fewer than the 18 reported the year before. The four instances of suspensions or expulsions for distribution of a controlled substance reflected an increase from two in the prior year. There were three instances of suspension or expulsion for possession of a controlled substance, a significant decrease from 22 in the prior year; while the 14 instances of disciplinary actions for possession of alcohol was up from 10 the previous year. The number of suspensions and expulsions were down from the prior year in all categories except distribution of controlled substances and possession of alcohol.

Number of habitual disciplinary problem students

Four students were expelled as habitual disciplinary problems. One student attended Carson Valley Middle School, two attended Pau-Wa-Lu Middle School, and one attended Whittell High School

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	12	20.3	21.0	23	25.7	20.6	58	55	52
Language	18	18.5	19.5	24	33.1	31.4	55	60	59
Math	12	21.2	17.6	30	22.3	20.9	60	52	52
Science	8	16.1	17.9	28	24.9	20.2	62	56	53

While the Douglas County fourth graders were above the state averages in three of the four subject areas (the exception being mathematics), declines in performance were evident over the three-year period in reading, math, and science. The percent of eligible fourth graders completing the TerraNova tests was as 99.6%.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Eighth 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	15	13.2	13.8	32	33.2	36.7	60	63	63
Language	18	14.1	12.5	29	32.3	35.9	56	61	64
Math	12	12.6	11.4	39	37.9	49.6	64	65	70
Science	5	11.3	12.4	27	30.1	32.1	62	62	62

In contrast to the fourth grade results, the eighth grade performance on the TerraNova was uniformly high in all subject areas and substantially above the state averages. All subject averages were above the 60th percentile again this year. Notably, mathematics achievement reached the 70th percentile, up five percentile ranks from the prior year.

All middle schools were in the adequate achievement level of accountability designations. The percent of eligible eighth graders completing the TerraNova tests was 99.2%.

State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Tenth 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	12	14.2	9.6	33	37.6	40.3	65	64	69
Language	8	11.4	9.7	31	31.5	36.0	63	62	66
Math	12	11.1	11.0	35	40.2	47.5	64	68	72
Science	3	14.6	10.1	35	40.6	41.7	68	66	69

Performance for tenth graders has demonstrated solid improvement in all subject areas over the past four years with scores that are nine to thirteen percentile ranks above the state averages.

Both high schools were in the adequate achievement level of accountability designations. The percent of eligible tenth graders completing the TerraNova tests was 99.5%.

State Mandated Test Results: Writing Exam

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

MEASURED TRAIT	PERCENT PROFICIENT					
	4 TH GRADE			8 TH GRADE		
	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01
Ideas	71.0	62.8	62.9	80.1	88.6	89.6
Organization	64.7	55.5	59.2	77.2	86.7	89.0
Voice	69.4	52.4	58.6	78.0	85.5	85.4
Conventions	62.9	55.9	59.8	71.1	81.5	83.5

Results for the fourth grade Writing Proficiency Examination were above state averages on all traits. Fourth grade proficiency rates improved over the prior year to around 60% on the separate traits, with 40% of students demonstrating proficiency for all four traits. The eighth grade writing proficiency rates were also well above the state averages and similar to or higher than in 1998-1999. Seventy-six percent of eighth graders were reported as proficient on all traits as compared with the state average of 56%.

State Mandated Test Results: High School Proficiency Exam

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
99.0	100	100	99	99	99	99	100	100	NA	0.2	0.2

Passing rates on the High School Proficiency Exam for 1999-2000 seniors were 100% in reading and writing. The passing rate was 99% in math with only one student (0.2%), denied a high school diploma for not passing the High School Proficiency Exam.

ACT/SAT Results

ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
31	33.3	38.9	22.1	22.3	22.3

The average performance on the ACT exam was 22.3 for the 38.9% of seniors taking this exam which was up over the previous year.

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
35.9	27.0	29.8	514	526	513	515	526	523

About 30% of Douglas County seniors took the SAT with a verbal average of 513 and a math average of 523. These performances compare to the national average of 21 for the ACT and SAT national averages of 505 for verbal and 512 for math. The percentages of students taking these college entrance exams both increased over the prior year.

Special Programs

Participation in special programs included 10% in special education programs and 4% participating in English as a Second Language (ESL) programming. Free or reduced-price meals benefited 14% of elementary students in 1999-2000. No students were involved in migrant education programs. Three percent of students were in the gifted and talented program. While all elementary students took classes in art, music, physical education, and computer applications, the K-12 participation in these programs was 68% in art, 59% in music, 100% in physical education, and 99% in computer applications.

Additionally, 14% of high school students were enrolled in advanced placement courses. Forty-two percent had foreign language instruction, and 50% took occupational education courses.

Teachers

Of teachers in Douglas County, 67% have bachelor's degrees and 33% hold the master's or doctorate degree. Forty-seven percent of teachers have ten or more years of experience. Classes taught by teachers outside their areas of licensure included 1.5% of English classes, 1.2% of mathematics classes, and 2.3% occupational education classes. All science and social studies instruction was by teachers with the appropriate endorsements.

Technology /Computers

All students have at least two sources of access to the Internet. All schools but C. C. Meneley Elementary had access in the school library. All students had access to the Internet in a computer lab, and all but one classroom at George Whittell HS allowed Internet access. The district-wide ratio of students to computers was 7:1. The ratios were fairly even over schools with a low of 4:1 for Zephyr Cove Elementary School to a high of 10:1 for three other elementary schools.

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

Of recent graduates of Douglas County School District who attended universities or community colleges in Nevada, 23.1% were enrolled in remedial courses.

Expenditures

Average per-pupil expenditure was reported as \$3,773 for instruction, \$649 for administration, \$780 for building operation, \$310 for staff support, and \$588 for student support. Total per-pupil expenditure was \$6,100, up from \$5,472 in 1998-1999.

Information on revenues/resources is provided as follows: state, 40.7%, federal, 4.1%, local, 48.6%, with opening balances of 6.6%. Amounts and sources of funding for remedial education were reported with a total of \$359,443. Of this, amount, \$49,862 came from Remedial Grant SB 555 and \$309,581 from Title I funds for compensatory education.

Parent Involvement

Parent participation rates in the elementary school fall conferences were high at 85 to 100% for the elementary schools with a district average participation of 93%.

2. *Areas the school district's 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 Part III Report for Douglas County provided dense tabular school level reports that detailed the status of the district's accountability program. Listed in these tables were areas of exemplary achievement or improvement, evidence of the exemplary achievement or improvement, model programs, areas in need of improvement, evidence of the identified deficiencies, and school improvement plans to impact the identified need areas.

Most frequently mentioned were areas of exemplary achievement on local, state, and national achievement measures. Evidence to support the accomplishments was based on documented improvement in test performance and improvement on test performance over previous years. Also identified were improvements in interpersonal relations, disciplinary problems, and dropout rates. Evidence to support these improvements was derived from reduced rates of disciplinary referrals, suspensions, and dropouts. Other areas of accomplishment included restructured scheduling resulting in greater student accessibility to an increased array of offerings including new remedial programs. Additionally, an active and enhanced high school career-counseling program was credited with a high rate of application and acceptance in post-secondary education.

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.*

The most frequently noted areas needing improvement at the elementary level were reading and language arts. At the middle school level, reading and science achievement were recognized as in need of improvement. High schools reported needs in the areas of reading, math, and science achievement. Evidence of the identified deficiencies was derived from TerraNova scores, Nevada Writing Proficiency Testing, High School Proficiency Exams Tests, and district testing programs.

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

Detailed and appropriate programming and increased attention to target need areas were listed for each identified need at the school level.

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

Evidence of the needs identified was derived from TerraNova scores, Nevada Writing Proficiency Testing, High School Proficiency Exams Tests, and district testing programs. It can be inferred that these same evidence sources will be used to assess the effectiveness of interventions.

6. ***Missing or incomplete data.***

None.

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

As in previous years, the Douglas County School District's reporting was clear, concise, and readable. Formats for Parts I and II reports were revised and all data were easily accessible, with a table of contents enhancing convenience. The school reports were revised and are particularly parent friendly. The Part III report, again, was well organized as well as responsive and informative to the state guidelines. Douglas County makes appropriate use of state mandated assessments to identify need areas and evaluate interventions. Additionally, the use of quality supplemental assessments strengthened the district's ability to set achievement targets and monitor student progress. As in previous reviews, the panel wishes to recognize the Douglas County School District for the quality of its reporting and its integration of accountability processes into its administrative operation and curricular/instructional planning of the district.

Reporting of involvement in special and highlighted programs might benefit from adding a "district" row in each of the separate elementary and secondary charts. While there is a district report for all programs, separating district totals for elementary and secondary programming in special education, ESL, migrant education, gifted and talented, free and reduced-price meals, art, and music would be desirable.

The panel does recommend that future reports include 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, as well as utilization of the Regional Professional Development Programs.