

## **White Pine County School District Accountability Analysis**

The White Pine County School District Accountability Report for the current year is a major improvement over those of the past two years. There are still a number of concerns relating to the accuracy of some data and overall thoroughness. A number of suggestions/recommendations are included to assist the district in preparing future reports and to comply with state and federal reporting requirements.

- 1. Summary of the student performance and school characteristics deemed relevant to 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**

Students attended a kindergarten school, four elementary schools, one middle school, and two high schools. The State Data Tables reported enrollment as 1,684. The previous year's enrollment was 1,854, showing a decline of 170 students or about 9.2%. These figures differ somewhat from those in the district report.

### **Student Attendance Rate**

The average daily student attendance was 95%, an increase of 2.1% over the prior year.

### **Teacher Attendance Rates**

Teacher attendance rate was 93% down from the rate of 94% in the 1998-1999 school year.

### **Dropout and Non-Promotion Rates**

The dropout rate for grades 9-12 was 5.5%, a considerable reduction from the 10.5% dropout rate in the prior year. Retention rates for all grades were reported. The retention rates for grades 6-8 were zero. No ninth graders were reported as having earned too few credits for promotion to tenth grade.

### **Student Completion Indices**

The number of seniors receiving a standard diploma was 101, which was 96% of the class. Adjusted diplomas were awarded to 2% (two students), and certificates of attendance were awarded to 2% (two students).

### Transiency Rate

The rate of transiency was 14%, a decrease of 2.4% from the previous year.

### Student/Teacher Ratios

The average student-to-teacher ratios in the elementary grades were 11.5:1 in kindergarten, 12:1 in first, 10:1 in second grade, 13:1 in third grade, 16:1 in fourth grade, 15:1 in fifth grade, and 6.5:1 in grade six. Average class sizes for secondary English, math and science were 17, and for social studies the average was 19.4.

### Student/Counselor Ratios

The state data tables reported a student to counselor ratio of 811:1. Ratios reported for individual schools were not consistent with the district-wide student-to-counselor rates listed.

### Suspension/Expulsion Rate

The district report showed that most suspension or expulsions were at the secondary level. Frequencies of these incidents were as follows: 103 due to violence to other students, up 10 from 93 reported the prior year; one for violence to staff down from nine incidents the year before; and two for possession of weapons compared to three the prior year. The two cases of suspensions or expulsions for distribution of a controlled substance represented a substantial improvement from 12 the previous year. Five disciplinary actions for possession of alcohol followed a year with no such incidents.

### Number of habitual disciplinary problem students

No students were reported as expelled due to habitual disciplinary problems.

### State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova: Fourth Grade

#### TerraNova Results 4<sup>th</sup> 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	14	18.3	28.7	17	13.3	18.3	53	49	42
Language	18	20.7	30.7	25	18.2	18.4	52	49	43
Math	19	21.3	28.1	21	18.9	15.8	49	49	44
Science	8	16.0	31.0	26	20.8	13.8	60	50	42

One hundred percent of eligible fourth-graders completed the TerraNova tests.

Lower levels of achievement were evident in all subject areas in the fall of 2000 in comparison with the two previous years. Average percentile ranks ranged from 42 to 44. The White Pine fourth graders' scores were significantly lower than the state averages which ranged from the 47<sup>th</sup> to the 57<sup>th</sup> percentile. In every area tested, more students were in the bottom quarter of national norms than in the top quarter.

**State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova: Eight Grade**

**TerraNova Results  
8<sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Reading</b>	20	22.4	29.1	19	25.9	25.2	49	53	46
<b>Language</b>	27	21.2	25.2	18	24.7	20.5	45	52	47
<b>Math</b>	29	23.0	19.2	12	28.7	24.8	42	54	53
<b>Science</b>	10	23.3	20.5	27	27.8	21.3	60	55	54

The percent of eligible eighth graders completing the TerraNova tests was reported as 100%. Eighth grade scores on the TerraNova tests were considerably lower than in the previous year in reading and language but relatively stable in math and science. Their reading and language scores were below state averages, but the math and science scores were slightly above state averages. All eighth grade scores for White Pine County were higher than they had been three years before.

**State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova: Tenth Grade**

**TerraNova Results  
10<sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Reading</b>	21	25.5	18.2	26	23.5	28.1	53	52	57
<b>Language</b>	15	16.8	19.8	19	18.8	16.5	54	49	48
<b>Math</b>	22	30.1	23.8	24	25.2	20.5	50	48	50
<b>Science</b>	4	21.1	17.4	21	27.5	37.2	60	53	63

The percent of eligible tenth graders completing the TerraNova tests was reported as 100%. Tenth grade TerraNova results showed little change in language or math from the prior year. Reading and science average percentiles improved, with gains of five and ten percentile ranks, respectively.

**State Mandated Test Results: Writing Exam**

**Writing Examination  
4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade**

MEASURED TRAIT	PERCENT PROFICIENT					
	4 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE			8 <sup>TH</sup> GRADE		
	98-99	99-00	00-01	98-99	99-00	00-01
<b>Ideas</b>	NR	69.5	NR	NR	69.4	NR
<b>Organization</b>	NR	65.2	NR	NR	69.4	NR
<b>Voice</b>	NR	56.5	NR	NR	68.2	NR
<b>Conventions</b>	NR	73.9	NR	NR	64.7	NR

The district report was the only one in the state that did not report writing proficiency of fourth and eighth graders for 2000-2001. The district report listed unlikely percentages of proficiency for 1999-2000 for each of the elementary schools – a range from 2.5% to 3% proficient. No data were presented showing the percent of students in these grades proficient in all four traits tested.

**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
100	100	94.5	100	99.2	93.9	100	100	90.0	NA	NR	2.0

The district report reported high school proficiency separately for the two high schools. The state data tables indicated that 2% of seniors were denied a diploma.

**ACT/SAT Results**

**ACT Results**

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
61	35	64.5	21.2	19.8	17.1

Though the district report listed only individual school results and did not include district-wide data on the ACT or SAT, according to state data tables, the percent of White Pine seniors taking the ACT was up dramatically from 35% in 1998-99 to 64.5% in 1999-2000. While the participation rate was up, the average score was down 2.7 points from

the prior year and 4.1 points below the performance two years before when 61% of seniors took the ACT. The 1999-2000 average score of 17.1 was below the state average of 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
21	15	13	507	503	531	503	430	545

Thirteen percent of White Pine seniors took the SAT earning a verbal average of 531 and a math average of 545. While the participation rate was low, these performances compare well to the state average SAT scores of 510 for verbal and 517 for math measures.

### Special Programs

Special education programs enrolled 9.8% of elementary students. Free or reduced-price meals were provided to 11.8% of elementary students. No students were enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes or migrant education. Other elementary school special program participation included 41.3% in music, 100% in physical education, 44% in art, 83% in computer education and 2% in the gifted and talented program.

In the secondary schools, 15.5% were enrolled in special education. No secondary students were enrolled in ESL, migrant, and gifted programs. There were no students in the free or reduced-price meal program at the secondary level. Music and art had participation rates of 44% and 37%, respectively. Additionally, 1.6% were enrolled in advanced placement courses. Thirty percent had foreign language instruction, and 28% took occupational education courses.

### Teachers

Eighty-three percent of White Pine County teachers have bachelor's degrees and 17% hold advanced degrees. Fifty-three percent of teachers have more than ten years of experience and all teachers are teaching within their areas of endorsement.

### Technology/Computers

According to the state data tables, elementary ratios of students to computers ranged from no computers at Murry Street Kindergarten to 10:1 at Baker Elementary School. Norman and McGill Elementary Schools had 5:1 ratios and Lund Elementary School a 3:1 ratio. The middle school reported an 11:1 ratio, and the two high schools reported ratios of 10:1. Internet access was available in all but one school, Murry Street Kindergarten. The remaining four elementary schools have Internet access in their

library and all classrooms. Two elementary schools also have Internet access in computer labs. White Pine Middle School has Internet access in the library, computer lab, and in the classroom. The two high schools have Internet access in the library and all classrooms. White Pine High School also has Internet access in a computer lab.

Four of the elementary schools allowed all students at least one half hour of computer access per week while Murry Street Kindergarten had no student access to computers. White Pine Middle School and Lund High School allowed 100% of students at least one half hour per week access while White Pine High School provided 80% of students a minimum of one half hour of access.

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

Of recent graduates from White Pine County schools who enrolled in Nevada universities and community colleges the UCCSN, 41.1% were enrolled in remedial courses.

### **Expenditures**

Average per-pupil expenditure is reported as \$4,495 for instruction, \$1,297 for administration, \$835 for building operation, \$119 for staff support, and \$667 for student support. Total per-pupil expenditure was not included in the district report but the sum of the five areas of expenditure reported was \$7,413. This total was included in state data tables.

No information on revenues/resources was provided in the district report but a pie chart appeared in each school report, which shows sources as an opening balance of .5%, federal 2.8%, local 32.6%, and state 64.2%.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parent participation at parent/teacher conferences was reported as moderate in the state data tables. The district reported 97.6% attendance at elementary conferences and 63% attendance at secondary conferences.

- 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.***

Under the heading "Plan for Individual School and District Improvement," the Part III report provided selected highlights for some schools and mentioned improvement needs at all district schools. No specific categories of exemplary achievement or improvement in outcomes were presented in the district's Part III report.

**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.***

Under the heading "Specific Goals for Individual School Improvement," each school listed targets for improvement in the Part III report. Most schools recognized a need for an increase in average percentile scores on the TerraNova. Additionally, needs to increase parent involvement and increase student attendance rates, and to decrease dropouts were mentioned.

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

Plans to correct deficiencies and improve achievement were simply listed as follows, with no details:

Summer program to improve math and reading competencies.

Alignment of curriculum with the Nevada State Standards.

Staff development to improve service delivery and technology applications.

School administrators will develop remedial plans to address declining TerraNova scores.

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

It can be inferred that TerraNova scores and other accountability data will be used to assess progress in need areas.

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

There is a concern regarding that no information was provided on non-promotion rates.

No writing proficiency results for 2000-2001 were presented. The 1999-2000 proficiency rates listed for elementary schools were unlikely, ranging from 2.5% to 3%. Could these be averages of trait scores rather than percent of students demonstrating proficiency?

The report of pupil/counselor ratio for elementary schools ranged from zero to 460:1; the middle school ratio was 341:1 and the two high schools reported ratios of 60:1 and 324:1. The reported district ratio of 856:1 is not consistent with these ratios.

District revenue sources were reported in the individual school documents only.

Tabular presentations of elementary school characteristics was reported by individual schools with a district total as the last column in the tables. The district totals seem to be the averages of the individual school entries. Averaging the individual school entries without taking the number of students at each school into account may yield incorrect district figures. The same concern is present for the tabular presentations of secondary schools. While totals were presented for both the elementary and secondary levels, no overall district figures were presented.

There were a few entries that were difficult to interpret. For example, technology use at the two high schools was reported as 4.6 and 2.6. The average performance on the ACT exam was reported as a percentage rather than an average score.

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

The Parts I and II district and individual school reports were concise and generally in compliance with state accountability reporting guidelines. The reports employed extensive use of tables to organize and present the required data.

While most of the information in the district reports was consistent with the state data tables, there were a few concerns as noted above.

The Part III report needs to be expanded to provide a closer correspondence to state guidelines for this report. Greater attention to guidelines for the Part III report would assist the district in developing a focus on the usefulness of accountability data.

This panel noted concerns with the White Pine School District accountability reporting in its 1998, 1999, and 2000 analyses for the 1996-97, 1997-98, and 1998-99 school years. Some of these concerns remain. The district administration is encouraged to review the panel's reports from this year and the previous three years in light of the guidelines presented in the state's ***Handbook for Implementation of NRS 385.347 School Accountability Legislation***. We continue to urge leadership in reporting and using accountability criteria for data based planning.

In addition to the recommendations listed above, the district should begin addressing other issues tied to student performance such as the high percentage of students needing be enroll in remedial courses in the UCCSN.