

## **Carson City School District Accountability Analysis**

The Carson City School District Accountability Report for School year 1998-1999 was in compliance with both the spirit and letter of the law. There is congruency between data and those areas reported exemplary as well as those areas reported to be in need of improvement. Suggestions are made only for improving the content and process of future reports.

1. *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**

Having gained 70 students over the previous year, Carson City School District reached an enrollment of 8,358. According to the *School Accountability Data Tables* for the 1998-99 school year, this represented a slight growth rate of 0.6%. The district was comprised of six elementary schools for kindergarten through fifth grade, and two middle schools serving grades six through eight, and one high school. With the addition of a newly established Alternative High School at the Corbett campus, there are now two high schools. In the 1998-99 report, however, the new high school, with an enrollment of 78, appeared to have been treated functionally as a satellite of Carson High School.

### **Student Attendance Rate**

District-wide student attendance rates remained steady at 94%, ranging from lows of 92% at Carson High School and Eagle Valley Middle School to a high of 96% at Mark Twain Elementary School.

### **Teacher Attendance Rate**

Teacher attendance rose to 95%, a 2% increase from the previous year. It ranged from a low of 92% at Bordewich/Bray Elementary School to a high of 96% at Fremont and Fritsch Elementary Schools, Carson Middle School, and Carson High School.

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

The dropout rate at Carson High School was 2.6%, down from 5.2% the year before and 6% the year before that, indicating a positive trend.

The non-promotion rates in Carson City School District for 1998-99 were between 1% and 2% of students in kindergarten and first grade, while less than 1% were retained in second through fifth grades. Above fifth grade, no students were reported as being retained.

## **Truancy Rate**

The district's truancy rate rose to 3% and became a concern, especially at Fritsch Elementary School where the truancy rate was 11%. It was also a concern at Eagle Valley Middle School, which had a 5% rate, and Carson High School, which had a 4% truancy rate.

## **Transiency Rate**

The transiency rate of 26% was slightly less than in the previous year and well below the statewide average of 37.5%. Transiency ranged from a low of 10% at Fremont Elementary School to a high of 51% at Bordewich/Bray Elementary School. The latter was nearly twice the district average.

## **Student/Teacher Ratios**

Elementary school class sizes were as follows: kindergarten classes averaged 25 students; first grade classes, 16; second grades, 16; third grades, 19; fourth grades, 26; fifth grades, 28; and sixth grades, which were in the middle schools, averaged 26.

The district's average class size in secondary core courses was 21 in English and mathematics, 18 in science, and 22 in social studies. The class sizes ranged from 23 to 28 at the middle school level and from 10 to 26 at Carson High School. All sizes in the secondary core areas were lower than the previous year.

## **Student/Counselor Ratios**

The district-wide counselor to student ratio for 1998-99 was 1:548 but varied widely with 1:376 at Bordewich/Bray Elementary School, 1:402 at Carson City High School, and 1:702 at Fritsch Elementary School. The district-wide average was slightly higher in 1998-1999 (1:548) than in 1997-1998 (1:529).

## **Suspension/Expulsion Rate**

In 1998-99, the number of students suspended or expelled was 114, down substantially (46%) from the previous year. Once again the vast majority of offences (90 incidents) were violence against other students. This was followed by weapons possession (12 cases). In both categories, most of the incidents occurred at Carson High School with 46 of the former and 6 of the latter. The reason cited by the district for the number of suspensions/expulsions was the implementation of a new "zero tolerance" policy.

**State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Fourth Grade**

**Terra Nova Results  
4<sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Reading</b>	27	20	31.6	20	19	20.3	48	49	46
<b>Language</b>	24	25	27.6	24	21	24.4	49	47	50
<b>Math</b>	31	33	33.9	15	19	15.9	42	42	41
<b>Science</b>	19	12	21.8	19	21	18.8	50	55	49

The district-wide performance of the 99% of the fourth graders who were tested indicated achievement similar to the national average in all areas. The average reading scores were at the 46<sup>th</sup> percentile, language scores at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile; mathematics at the 41<sup>st</sup> percentile; and science at the 49<sup>th</sup> percentile. Each essentially approximated the state average for fourth graders except for math achievement, which was 15 percentile points below the state average. While Fritsch and Seelinger Elementary School students scored at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile level in all tested areas, none of the other elementary schools quite reached the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile level in any area. This discrepancy was most pronounced in math where none of the other four schools' test averages reached even the 40<sup>th</sup> percentile.

**State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Eighth Grade**

**Terra Nova Results  
8<sup>th</sup> 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
<b>Reading</b>	13	16	18.3	33	31	31.6	60	58	59
<b>Language</b>	17	20	21.8	26	20	21.8	57	51	52
<b>Math</b>	16	16	15.2	33	29	28.7	60	59	59
<b>Science</b>	15	12	16.9	27	27	31.4	58	60	59

At the eighth grade level, 99% of eligible students took the TerraNova tests in October 1999. At this grade level, district average scores surpassed the state averages in all four areas -- by eight percentile points in reading, by one point in language, by ten in math, and by 11 in science. The average achievement level was at the 59<sup>th</sup> percentile in all areas but language, which was at the 52<sup>nd</sup> percentile.

## State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Tenth Grade

### Terra Nova Results 10<sup>th</sup> 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	14	19	15.5	36	40	32.0	64	64	61
Language	18	17	16.4	30	31	24.4	57	60	55
Math	25	17	16.0	31	38	29.8	55	64	59
Science	22	6	16.5	31	36	32.4	55	67	61

Of the eligible tenth grade Carson City students, 97% took the TerraNova tests. Results showed that, in October 1999, average tenth grade scores on the TerraNova were at the 61<sup>st</sup> percentile in reading, the 55<sup>th</sup> percentile in language, the 59<sup>th</sup> percentile in mathematics, and 61<sup>st</sup> percentile in science. These performances substantially exceeded national averages. They also surpassed state averages.

It should be noted that, while the average fourth grade achievement was at or slightly below the national norms, eighth grade achievement exceeded national norms in all four areas and tenth grade achievement was even higher compared to national averages. Based on these results, all Carson City School District schools were rated as "Adequate" although none reached "High Achievement" status.

## State Mandated Test Results: Writing Exams

### 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		
	97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
Ideas	NA	NR	49.0	75.3	82.5	81.4
Organization	NA	NR	44.7	71.5	77.9	77.7
Voice	NA	NR	42.1	68.9	83.3	78.6
Conventions	NA	NR	46.4	71.8	66.4	72.4

**Fourth Grade:** On the new fourth grade writing examination the percent of Carson City students demonstrating proficiency was 49% on Ideas, 45% on Organization, 42% on Voice, and 48% on Conventions. These were from 4 to 5 points below state average scores in each of the four areas.

**Eighth Grade:** The results of the eighth grade writing examination revealed that, district-wide, students demonstrated proficiency in each of the four areas at rates of

81.4% in Ideas, 77.7% in Organization, 78.6% in Voice and 72.4% in Conventions. These evaluations approximated or surpassed state levels in each of the areas. Only in Voice was there an indication of a slight decline from the previous year. More students at Eagle Valley Middle School demonstrated proficiency than at Carson Middle School. Between-school differences ranged from 6 to 13 percentage points in the four areas.

### State Mandated Test 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
99.2	83.0	99.8	99.2	72.0	98.6	98.7	99.5	100.0	NA	NA	0.51

On the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination, Carson City seniors demonstrated proficiency at rates of 99.8% in reading, 98.6% in mathematics, and 100% in writing. These levels were almost identical to those of the previous year. The district report stated that only 0.51% of Carson High School seniors who took the tests did not receive their standard diploma as a result of failing them.

### ACT/SAT Results

#### ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
47.5	49.0	55.6	22.3	21.8	22.3

#### 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
46.0	42.0	53.1	539	517	518	520	501	515

The ACT was taken by 55.6% of the graduating class. The average score was 22.3 on this test. This surpassed the state composite score of 21.5 and the national average of 21.0. Similarly, 53.1% of graduating seniors took the SAT and attained average scores of 518 on the Verbal and 515 on the Math portions. The average combined score of 1033 surpassed the state average of 1029 and the national average of 1016.

## **Special Programs**

Participation in elementary special programs district-wide included 14% enrollment in special education classes, with four of the elementary schools approximating this proportion. Bordewich/Bray Elementary School housed three self-contained special education classes and had 19% of its students enrolled in special education, while Empire Elementary School had only 10% special education students. Eleven percent of Carson City elementary students were enrolled in classes for English as a Second Language, 1% in migrant education, 4% in gifted and talented, and 5% in after school care. Forty percent of elementary children qualified for free- or reduced-price meals. However the proportion of students varied greatly among elementary schools, ranging from 74% at Empire Elementary School, 57% at Bordewich/Bray, and 53% at Mark Twain to lower percentages of 20% at Fritsch Elementary School, 26% at Fremont, and 36% at Seelinger.

More than 90% of elementary students were enrolled in music and computer education classes, with 93% in music and 96% in computer education. Physical education classes were provided for 74% of students and art classes for 65%.

Among secondary students, 14% were enrolled in special education and 5% in English as a Second Language classes. Occupational education served 69% of secondary students, but this varied with Carson High School serving 43% and the middle schools each serving between 81% and 84%. Secondary music class participation also varied with 22.5% enrolled at Carson Middle School, 32% at Eagle Valley and 15% at Carson High School. In art classes, participation included 72% of the students at Carson Middle School, 82% at Eagle Valley, and only 17% at the high school. Foreign language class enrollment included 10% at Carson Middle School, 3% at Eagle Valley, and 29% at Carson High School. Advanced placement classes enrolled 8% of high school students, and 57% of secondary students participated in athletics. The secondary school course listings reflected a diverse and comprehensive curriculum in the general, special-needs, and college preparatory and occupational domains.

## **Teachers**

In 1998-99, the profile of Carson City teachers showed that 20% held the master's degree and the remaining 80% held the bachelor's degree. Half (50%) had ten years or more of experience, and 30% had between 4 and 9 years of teaching experience. Only 6% were new to teaching, and 14% had been teaching between 1 and 3 years. Less than one half of one percent of teachers were assigned outside their area of licensure and seven of the nine schools had no teachers assigned outside their licensure area.

## **Technology/Computers**

The district completed cabling of all of its schools in 1998-99. A "Tech Center" was made functional at Carson High School. Though owned by Western Nevada Community College, the high school students and teachers used the facility during

daytime hours. In 1998-99 the district owned about 400 computers, of which 338 had Internet access. They were dispersed through computer labs at all schools in the district. Bordewich/Bray Elementary School was the only school that did not have Internet access in its computer lab. It did have Internet access in its library, as did both middle schools and the high school. Media centers were networked at all schools except for three of the elementary schools. Only the new alternative high school had classroom computers with Internet access. The student-to-computer ratio of approximately 20:1 was fairly evenly *distributed at all levels and in all schools.*

### **Remedial College Courses (UCCSN Class Enrollments)**

The Carson City School district reported that 14% of their recent graduates enrolled in remedial courses.

### **Expenditures**

Carson City School District reported per-pupil expenditures of \$3,695.21 on instruction, \$611 on administration, \$575 on operations, \$177 on staff support, and \$651 on student support. The district received \$60,955 in Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration funds during 1998-99.

### **Parent Involvement**

Attendance at the year's initial parent/guardian/teacher conferences, among elementary schools, averaged 78% across the district, down from 83% the previous year. Four of the six elementary schools lead the way with an attendance rates over 90%. These were Fremont (96%), Fritsch (99%), Mark Twain (94%), and Seelinger (96%). Empire was close behind with 89% and Bordewich/Bray had 79%. Additional parental involvement activities in the district were parent orientations and workshops; PTA/PTO, Booster Clubs and/or PTSA meetings during the year; and distribution of periodic newsletters to parents at all schools. Parents were on advisory committees or task forces at five of the elementary schools, both middle schools, and the high school. Parents served as classroom aides at all elementary schools, Eagle Valley Middle School and the high school. Finally, mail surveys were conducted to determine parents' attitudes and degree of satisfaction with the schools by two elementary schools, both middle schools, and the high school.

- 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.*

Consistent and persistent implementation of the district Strategic Plan. For the third consecutive year the district diligently implemented its Strategic Plan first developed in 1997-98. The district worked to improve aspects of the plan, develop benchmarks, and detail goals and tasks to be accomplished at each of the nine school sites. In doing so, the

district consistently followed the basic objectives it set out to accomplish, continued to use the plan as a guide, and incorporated it in its communications both within the district and with parent and community groups.

Continued the systematic improvement of K-5 reading skills. A reading program, Success For All, was implemented for kindergarten through fifth grade at three Title I elementary schools while two non-Title I elementary schools began training staff in the Cell/ExLL program. Four additional Reading Recovery teachers were trained. These efforts contributed to the improved student achievement and improved teacher proficiency in the teaching of reading.

Evaluation of the Even Start program. Pre- and post-data on school readiness were collected and analyzed using the PPVT/TVIP measuring devices. The data showed that children in Title I schools still lagged behind those in non-Title I schools, but that they were making gains more quickly. This reinforced the efficacy of Even Start interventions.

*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.*

Improve Writing Skills in Elementary Schools. Based on the performance on state writing examinations, especially at the fourth grade level, the district determined that there was much room for improvement in the writing skills of elementary children in Carson City School District.

Bring District Curriculum into 100% Alignment with State Standards. This goal was 75% completed for reading, language, and math and nearly totally completed for science at all school sites, but needed to be finished.

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

Improvement of Writing. Professional development in the traits writing process was planned for elementary teachers in kindergarten through the fourth grade classes in order to improve the writing skills of pupils at those levels and lead to higher achievement.

Alignment of the Curriculum. Plans were made to continue the task of aligning local curriculum with State Standards by: (1) offering in-service in the process of curriculum mapping; (2) developing curriculum maps at each school site focusing on the areas of reading, language, and math that are in congruence with State Standards; and (3) reaching a consensus on the maps at both the site and district levels. The target date set for completion of this project was November 2000.



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

Improvement in Writing. Improvement of fourth grade writing performance will be judged by achievement as reflected by higher scores on the TerraNova and the fourth grade state writing examination.

Alignment of the Curriculum. Completion of this task can be judged when consensus has been reached as to whether the curriculum maps do indeed reflect alignment with State Standards in each of the four areas.

6. *Missing or incomplete data.*

It was unclear whether the new Alternative High School had been established as a separate site school or as merely a satellite of Carson City High School.

The data on special programs were not aggregated for the six elementary schools or for the two middle schools. For example, only district averages were given for art and for music, rather than elementary averages and middle school averages. This made it difficult to analyze participation at these school levels.

There was a slight difference in the K-5 retention figures of the district and that listed in the State Accountability Data Tables for 1998-99.

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

1. Aggregate the data on average levels of participation in special programs by school level (elementary, middle, and high school).
2. Clarify how the new Alternative High School is to be classified in the future -- as a separate school or as a satellite of Carson High School. If it is to be an autonomous high school then all data need to be disaggregated. (This was clarified when the district reviewed the report. It is a division of the high school)
3. Secure and utilize an outside monitor for the Success for All reading program. (It is understood that this is happening).