

Clark County School District Accountability Analysis Accountability Analysis

The Clark County School District Accountability document continues to be a massive, interesting, and useful document. The district is commended, once again, for compliance with both the intent and the letter of the legislation. A number of suggestions/recommendations are made for improvement of future reports. More specificity in some building plans and addressing additional issues are key recommendations.

- 1. A 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

The district-wide pupil enrollment increased from 203,777 (1998-1999) to 217,526 (1999-2000), an increase of 6.6%. There are 250 schools in the district, an increase by 10% over the previous year. Eighty-three year-round elementary schools and four year-round middle year schools made it one of the largest year-round school systems in the nation. In addition there are two charter schools operating in the district, Odyssey (K-8) and Keystone Academy (9-11).

Student Attendance

The student attendance rate was 94.1% in 1999-2000, an improvement of .8% from the previous year when the average daily attendance was 93.3%.

Western and Cheyenne High Schools increased their average daily attendance from 86% and 89% in 1998-1999 to 91% respectively in 1999-2000.

There were no middle schools with an attendance percentage below 90% and only one high school (Keystone Academy Charter School at 87%).

Only Madison Elementary School (89.4%) had an attendance rate below 90%.

Teacher Attendance Rate

The teacher attendance rate remained constant at 95% in 1999-2000, the same as reported in the prior year.

Dropout/Non-Promotion Rate

The dropout rate for grades 9-12 was 6.9% representing a decline of 2.1% from the previous year's rate of 9%. Fifteen high schools showed a decline in dropouts. For example, some showed a decline of 3% to 4%, only one high school (Laughlin H.S.) had a double digit (13%) dropout rate, and none of the schools had a significant increase from the previous year.

In the majority of cases, former students cited the "need to work" as the main reason they left.

Twenty-four percent of the ninth grade students were credit deficient.

The retention rate in Clark County School District K-8 schools ranged from 0.0% to 12%, by grade level, with a median of 1%.

Charter Schools

The dropout rate at Keystone Academy was 16% in 1999-2000.

Keystone Academy Charter School had 47% of the ninth graders with credit deficiencies

Odyssey Charter School did not retain any K-8 students.

Student Completion Indices

The district reported that 7,966, or 78.0% of students received the advanced or standard diploma, 421 (4%) received the adjusted diploma and 664 (6%) received the certificate of attendance.

Transiency Rate

The transiency level decreased district-wide by 10% from 43% in 1998-1999 to 33% in 1999-2000. However, the district expressed some concern as to the accuracy of these percentages, due to implementation of a new computer program.

At the building level, 18 elementary schools reported transiency rates of 50% or higher and two secondary schools, one of which is a charter school, reported transiency of more than 50%.

Student/Teacher Ratios

The 1999-2000 student-to-teacher ratios varied from 26:1 in kindergarten to 16:1 in first and second grade, with 19:1 in third grade, and 29:1 in grade four. The fifth grade

student-to-teacher ratio was 28:1. Class size at the elementary level generally did not exceed 31 students per teacher.

In grades 7-12 the average class sizes for core classes were 27 in English, 28 in math and science and 29 in social studies.

Student/Counselor Ratios

The district-wide student-to-counselor ratio showed a slight increase from 521:1 in the prior year to 563:1 in 1999-2000.

The highest ratio at the secondary level was 962:1 at Bowler Middle School. The second highest ratio was at Sawyer M.S. at 744:1

The highest ratio at the elementary school level was 2346:1 at Garehime Elementary School. Approximately 33% of the schools reported a student-to-counselor ratio of more than 1000:1

Suspension/Expulsion Rate

There were slight decreases at the middle school level in the possession/use of alcohol and possession of weapons categories. The rest of the categories had modest increases district-wide. When looking at individual schools, the numbers fluctuated greatly, some decreases and some increases.

In the middle schools the number of suspensions for violence to other students ranged from one to 561. For example, Cortney, O'Callahan, Johnson, and Lied were a few of the schools with a high incidence of violence to other students. Cortney reported 561 cases. The reported incidents of violence to other students in the high schools ranged from zero to 163 reported cases. Mojave, Silverado, Las Vegas, Green Valley, and Cimarron were substantially higher than the other high schools.

At the elementary level, a few schools reported high rates of violence to other students. Bennett had 19 cases and Fitzgerald had 14 incidences, as did Galloway. Wilhelm reported 11 cases of violence to staff and Fitzgerald had eight reported cases. Galloway reported seven cases of weapon possession and seven cases of threat/extortion.

Number of habitual disciplinary problem students

No elementary students were expelled for being habitual disciplinary problems. The number of middle school pupils expelled for habitual disciplinary problems varied from zero to five. District-wide, 30 students from the 41 middle schools were expelled for habitual disciplinary problems. The high school expulsions varied from zero to four, with a total of 25 expulsions at the 31 high schools.

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	25.5	24.4	16	18.3	19.2	48	48	49
Language	22	21.0	19.9	27	30.7	30.9	53	57	57
Math	20	18.0	17.7	29	32.0	32.3	56	59	59
Science	18	27.9	27.8	17	16.6	16.0	50	45	44

District wide, 99% of eligible fourth graders were tested. Only one school tested less than 90% of its eligible fourth graders: Squires reported testing 89.7% of eligible students.

TerraNova scores of fourth graders in the Clark County School District showed little change from the previous year with average percentile ranks in language and math staying the same. Reading increased by one percentile rank and science declined by one rank. The reading score was slightly below the state average of 50, the language score was at the statewide average, the math score was two ranks above the statewide average and the science score was three percentile ranks below the average.

In 1999-2000 Fitzgerald, Martinez, and Lynch Elementary Schools were designated as “demonstrating Need for Improvement” (See graphs in Appendix A). This was the fourth straight year that Fitzgerald students scored low enough to be so classified. A number of schools had one to three areas where 40% or more of the students scored in the bottom quarter.

Vandenberg was designated a High Achieving School and several schools had over 40% of the students scoring in the top quarter in one to three areas.

Charter Schools

Odyssey Charter School was also designated as “Demonstrating Need for Improvement” due to very low test scores (See graphs in Appendix A). These scores represented a considerable drop from the previous year in each area tested.

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	22	27.1	26.5	24	23.5	23.5	52	49	49
Language	25	25.8	24.3	23	23.7	24.6	49	50	51
Math	26	26.9	25.0	24	23.8	25.0	49	48	51
Science	19	29.8	28.7	16	17.4	18.3	49	44	45

For 1999-2000, the percent of eligible eighth graders completing the tests varied from 94.3% to 100%, with 98% being most representative of the percentage taking the test in the majority of the middle schools.

TerraNova scores of eighth graders in the Clark County School District showed little change from the previous year with reading remaining steady at the 49th percentile. Language increased by one percentile rank, math by three ranks and science increased by one rank. The reading score was below the state average of 51, the language score was below the statewide average of 53, the math score was one rank below the statewide average, and the science score was three percentile ranks below the average. District-wide, there was a slight increase in percent of students in the top quarter and a corresponding decrease in the percent in the bottom quarter. The overall average percentile ranks were slightly higher.

West Middle School was classified “Demonstrating Need for Improvement” for the first year and Roy W. Martin Middle School was classified “Demonstrating Need for Improvement” for the second straight year (See Appendix A for graphs).

Hyde Park Middle School/Academy of Science & Math was classified a High Achieving School.

Charter Schools

Odyssey Charter School eighth graders had the following scores: reading - 49th percentile; language - 44th percentile; math - 34th percentile; and science - 47th percentile, at the district average in reading, lower than the district average in language and math, and slightly above the district average in science.

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	27	25.7	23.0	25	24.5	25.9	50	51	53
Language	18	22.3	18.7	26	26.4	28.0	55	53	56
Math	26	25.5	20.4	26	28.8	31.7	51	53	58
Science	12	25.4	21.9	22	25.2	27.4	56	50	53

The percent of eligible tenth graders completing the TerraNova test was reported as 97.3%. There was an increase in the percent of tenth grade students in the top quarter and a corresponding decrease in the percentage of those scoring in the bottom quarter.

TerraNova scores of tenth graders in the Clark County School District showed modest gains from the previous year with reading scores increasing by two ranks to the 53 percentile. Language scores increased by three percentile ranks, math by five ranks, and science by three percentile ranks. The reading score was below the state average of 56, the language score was below the statewide average of 57, the math score was two ranks below the statewide average, and the science score was five percentile ranks below the state average.

The Advanced Technology Academy was classified as an Exemplary School for the fourth year in a row.

Charter Schools

Keystone Academy's scores continued to be below statewide averages but did show significant improvement when compared with the previous year's scores.

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	60.7	51.4	51.7	74.4	77.1	72.9
Organization	53.9	48.0	49.9	70.5	74.2	69.9
Voice	56.4	46.4	44.8	70.9	72.1	66.1
Conventions	57.3	51.8	54.9	65.1	71.6	68.0

31.8 percent of all fourth graders demonstrated proficiency on all four writing traits in 2000-2001. Bartlett Elementary had the highest percentage at 68.5%, proficient on all traits and Martinez had the lowest percentage at 3.4%. Writing scores for the fourth grade group were generally equivalent to those of the previous year. Statewide, 33.1% of fourth graders demonstrated proficiency on all four writing traits.

Fifty-three percent of Clark County eighth graders were proficient in all four traits. Scores on the eighth grade Writing Examination were down from the previous years in all four traits.

77.4 percent of the students at Becker Middle were proficient on all four traits, for the highest rate in the district. Only 17.6 % of the eighth graders at Virgin Valley School passed all four areas. The statewide average for eighth grade proficiency in all four writing traits was 56%.

Charter Schools

Odyssey Charter School had only 22.7 % proficiency in all four traits at the fourth grade level, and 59.4% demonstrated proficiency in all four writing traits at the eighth grade level.

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			
96.7	93.1	94.4	96.8	88.0	86.6	97.3	95.2	96.7	NA	5.6	7.3

The High School Proficiency Examination scores showed a decrease in the area of math, and the percent in the Denied Diploma category increased from 5.6% to 7.3%. The Denied Diploma percentage reflected June seniors who were credit sufficient but did not receive a diploma because they failed to pass one or more portions of the examination.

Charter Schools

Keystone Academy Charter School did not have any graduates because they offered classes for only ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades.

ACT/SAT Results

ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
23.7	22.4	24.0	21.4	21.4	21.4

Twenty-four percent of the seniors took the ACT examination and the composite average score was 21.4, the same as for the last three years. Statewide, 40.2% of seniors took the ACT exam and the statewide average score 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
23.2	23.3	24.9	504	506	502	513	517	515

The 24.9% of seniors taking the SAT was a 1.6% increase from the prior year. Statewide, 34% of seniors took the SAT. The average verbal score was 502 for Clark County seniors, and their average math performance was 515, both of these slightly lower than in the prior year. Statewide averages were 510 in verbal and 517 in math performance.

Special Programs

District-wide participation in special education programming was 11%, and 13% participated in English as a Second Language. (ESL was called the English Language Learner program in Clark County.) The district reported zero participation in migrant education, K-12; however, there was a 5% participation at Virgin Valley Elementary School. Per the district, this is due to district-wide totals being rounded. Forty percent of students in kindergarten through eighth grade participated in the free and reduced-price

meal program. Twelve percent of students in grades three through six participated in gifted programming.

At the elementary level, participation in services such as special education, gifted and talented program, ESL, and free and reduced-price meals was comparable to the previous year, with great variation among the schools. State data tables showed 100% participation by elementary students in music, art, physical education, and computer education at every elementary school.

Secondary special education participation was similar to that in the previous year with ranges from 8% to 16% in middle schools and from 1% to 13% in the high schools. There was a slight increase in ESL enrollment, with ranges varying from zero to 42% in the middle schools and from zero to 22% in high schools. Overall, there was a slight increase in participation in gifted programs at the middle school level and no change in the Advanced Placement program participation at the high school level. Sixteen percent of sixth through twelfth graders were enrolled in foreign language classes, with individual school enrollments similar to those in the prior year. Secondary music and art enrollments were slightly higher than the year before, overall, with a range from zero to 100%. Occupational education enrollment decreased slightly and ranged from 8% to 90%. Participation in athletics ranged from zero to 6% at the middle schools and from zero to 75% at the high schools. The district reported an average participation rate for athletics of 15% in grades six through twelve.

Teachers

Forty-seven percent of the teachers have a bachelor's degree and 52% have a master's degree, with 1% having a doctoral degree. These percentages were the same as those reported in 1998-1999. Ninety-eight percent were teaching in their areas of licensure. That included one percent teaching outside licensure in English, math and social studies. The district report showed 34% of teachers were new or had less than three years of experience, and 41% had three to ten years experience. Sixteen percent had 11-20 years experience and 9% had over 20 years experience. Significantly, 75% of the teachers had 10 years of experience or less.

Technology/Computers

The student-to-computer ratio for elementary schools ranged from 2:1 in the rural elementary schools to 38:1 at Hayes. The typical ratio was one computer for every 10-12 students. Several schools reported having no Internet access. While the district has made much progress in this area in recent years, this should continue to be a concern.

All secondary schools had Internet access. Overall, the secondary schools had student-to-computer ratios ranging from 1:1 (Advanced Technology Academy) to 14:1, with most having ratios less than 9:1.

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

Of the 1,069 recent graduates of Clark County high schools enrolled in Nevada universities or community colleges, 29.3% were enrolled in remedial college classes.

Expenditures

The average per-pupil expenditures in 1999-2000 were reported as \$3,279 for instruction (a \$10 increase), \$654 for administration (a \$30 increase), \$527 for expenditure operations (a \$6 increase), \$272 for staff support (a \$29 decrease), and \$521 for student support (a \$65 increase). Total per-pupil expenditures were \$5,253. This was an increase of \$83 over the previous year. The district received \$16,398,136 in Title I Funds (Federal), \$1,679,880 low performing school funds (state) and \$388,928 for before/after/summer schools funds (state).

Parent Involvement

The level of attendance at the first parent-teacher conference of the year was reported as "moderate." District-wide, an average of 73% of parents attended these conferences. The previous year's attendance was reported as 76%.

The district reported a concerted effort to increase parent and community involvement. Area Service Centers were introduced which have increased parent involvement and training opportunities. Parents were participating in classes, students were working with tutors in subjects where they were experiencing difficulty, and on-going professional development classes for teachers were taking place in the Area Service Centers.

The Board of Trustees increased the number of Community Educational Advisory Boards and many of the board members have Parent Advisory Councils that meet regularly. The district continued the Parent Hall of Fame for outstanding volunteers. There are now more than 500 school-community partnerships. The parent activities of the individual schools varied. Examples of these activities included surveying parents on a regular basis, newsletters being sent to parents, and active advisory board participation. Most schools utilized parent volunteers.

- 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 following are examples of accomplishments listed in the district report:

The dropout rate was reduced from 9% to 6.9%.

The district's truancy rate was reduced.

The Advanced Technology Academy was designated an exemplary school, and the Hyde Park Middle School/Academy of Science and Math was designated a high achieving school. The Advanced Technology School has an exceptionally low enrollment (748 students), 3.0% transiency rate, 97.0% attendance rate, one of the lowest counselor-to-student ratios (1:249) and a 1:1 computer-to-student ratio, with Internet access. Hyde Park, with an average enrollment rate (1,380) had a 16% transiency rate, a high attendance rate (95.2%), a low counselor-to-student ratio (1:345), a 1:5 computer ratio and Internet access. These schools have high parental participation and low enrollment changes.

Vanderberg Elementary School was designated a "high achieving" school.

College entrance exam scores are at or above the national average.

Ongoing efforts and progress towards aligning the district's core curriculum with state content standards in English/Language Arts, Math, and Science.

Attendance improved from the previous year and the transiency rate decreased reflecting improved stability.

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

Crime statistics are up in the district, and this is prominently mentioned as an area where improvement needs to be made.

Science scores, which were below the state average at every level, are addressed throughout the report including most Part III reports.

Martin and West Middle Schools are cited for specific plans for improvement and continuous improvement in the Part III Reports. Also, the individual school plans were very specific as to listed goals and progress reports. However, the strategies could be more specific. There needs to be an indication of the school staff analyzing the test data and other achievement information and aligning their remediation plans with specific areas of weakness.

Most lower performing schools appeared to focus on areas that reviewers would expect. These areas dealt with improving achievement scores, attendance, and basic academic skills.

4. Summary of the School District's plan for improvement at the school site.

Plans for improvement were in evidence for all schools. A number of academic enhancement programs were listed for every school in need of improvement, and those

included alignment of curriculum with standards, after- and before-school programs, faculty enhancement, and significant emphasis on reading and writing improvement through unique and proven programs. There is a strong emphasis on school safety.

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

The district uses information from state mandated tests, their own tests, and district audit teams.

6. *Missing or incomplete data.*

The data on the Transiency Rate appeared to be inaccurate due to a computer issue.

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

The Clark County School District Accountability document continues to be a massive, interesting, and useful document. The district is to be commended, once again, for full compliance with both the intent and the letter of the legislation.

The following are offered as suggestions or recommendations for improving the process of compliance with Nevada accountability legislation:

Individual schools should be more specific, especially the low achieving schools, as to plans and strategies for remediation and how the progress will be evaluated.

A focus on staff development in the science instruction area would be appropriate since the district lags behind state averages at all three grade levels tested.

As many teachers and administrators as possible should be taking advantage of Regional Professional Development Programs. While it appears that some are doing this, there is little evidence in the report that all schools or personnel are doing so.

A continued emphasis on attendance is warranted. Several schools are showing rates in the low ninety percent category.

One additional recommendation is that the district begin to address, in its report, issues such as the high rate of remediation required for recent graduates in the UCCSN and violence rates at some schools.

Charter Schools

The reports of the charter schools were minimal at best. It is strongly recommended that these schools and district personnel collaborate so that charter school personnel understand the process and expectations for reporting. It needs to be clear to all charter

school officials that the use of data for both accountability and school improvement is what is intended and that it will be beneficial to all students when this happens.