

Mineral County School District Accountability Analysis

The Mineral County School district accountability report contains all required items but some data are erroneously reported. Recommendations are made for improving the data reporting as well and focusing on future reports to meet both state and federal requirements.

- 1. A 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

In 1999-2000, the Mineral County School District provided services for 907 students. This represented an enrollment decrease of 12.7%, in addition to a 3.3% decrease the previous year, for two consecutive years of declining enrollment.

Student Attendance Rate

The student attendance rate for 1999-2000 was 93%. The rate for each of the two previous years was 93.7%. The range between individual schools was from 91% to 94%.

Teacher Attendance Rate

Teacher attendance rate in Mineral County was 92.8%, which was below the state average of 94.9%. The rate for the previous year, 94%, was also below the state average.

Dropout and Non-Promotion Rates

Elementary retention rates ranged from 0% to 5%, the highest rate occurring in fifth grade. One percent of ninth graders had earned too few credits for promotion to tenth grade.

The district's high school dropout rate was 6.9%. For the previous year it was 6.5%. This trend toward more dropouts in the district occurred at a time when the state dropout percentages were decreasing. The average state dropout rate was 6.1% in 1999-2000, having dropped from 7.8% in 1998-1999.

Student Completion Indices

In 1999-2000, 93% of seniors earned an advanced or standard diploma which considerably exceeded the state average of 80.6%. No students were awarded an adjusted diploma, and 2% were granted a certificate of attendance.

Transiency Rate

For the second consecutive year, the district's transiency rate was 26%. The highest rate, 29%, occurred at Mineral County High School.

Student/Teacher Ratios

Student-to-teacher ratios declined within the district and continued to be lower than state averages. The range at elementary levels was from 13:1 to 24:1. At the secondary level, the student-to-teacher ratios also remained below state averages. Science had the lowest ratio, 14:1, while other core subjects were at 17:1.

Student/Counselor Ratios

The student-to-counselor rate for 1999-2000 was 302:1, well below the state average of 534.4:1. With the hiring of an additional counselor, this figure has returned to the low rate attained two years ago.

Suspension/Expulsion Rate

The district reported 102 instances of student suspensions or expulsions. Most of these were related to student-to-student violence. The highest frequency of suspensions or expulsions occurred with the fourth through eighth grade students at Hawthorne Elementary School. Among the 300 upper elementary students at Hawthorne, there were 36 instances of suspension or expulsion due to violence to other students and 17 involving threat or extortion.

Numbers of habitual disciplinary problem students

The district did not expel any students as habitual disciplinary problems during the 1999-2000 school year.

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	34	32.9	27.9	10	13.2	13.1	35	38	46
Language	40	39.5	26.2	12	14.5	21.3	33	33	50
Math	50	35.5	23.0	11	30.3	34.4	28	47	63
Science	18	34.2	24.6	12	13.2	27.9	47	36	49

District results on the fourth grade scores showed considerable improvement over the previous year. There are fewer students in the bottom quarter, and in some cases the percentages improved by more than ten points. The percentage of students in the top quarter was essentially stable in reading and up in the other three areas; in science, the growth was 14.7%. Students also showed significant gains in average percentile ranks for all four test areas. All eligible students at Hawthorne Elementary were tested. Only 81.8% of the eligible students at Schurz were 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	28	34.2	25.4	20	23.3	14.1	46	43	43
Language	30	31.1	28.2	20	9.5	15.5	46	42	42
Math	40	30.1	26.8	11	11.0	11.3	36	38	42
Science	21	24.7	22.6	16	16.4	14.1	50	45	45

The district's results for the eighth grade can be characterized as mixed. The percentage of students in the bottom quarter declined in all four areas; however, the percentage in the top quarter declined in two areas while growing in the other two, though the gain in math was slight. The average percentile rank improved in math while remaining stable in reading, language, and science. All eligible students at in the district were tested.

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	40	26.3	28.1	10	21.1	21.1	37	52	50
Language	31	19.3	25.0	17	26.3	25.0	44	55	51
Math	29	23.7	32.8	10	16.9	15.5	37	48	41
Science	12	31.7	25.0	10	31.7	33.9	55	48	55

Unlike the fourth grade results, those for the tenth grade showed a downward trend. The percentage of students in the bottom quarter increased in all areas except science; the percentage in the top quarter was the same in reading and grew in science, but declined in language and math. Average percentile ranks declined in all areas except science. All eligible students at in the district were tested.

State Mandated Test Results: Writing Exams

**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	NR	56.0	53.0	68.5	75.0	69.0
Organization	NR	49.3	52.0	65.5	70.0	69.0
Voice	NR	52.0	50.0	61.5	70.0	60.0
Conventions	NR	50.7	55.0	61.5	70.0	70.0

The percentage of students demonstrating proficiency on the fourth grade writing test increased in Organization and Conventions, although fewer were proficient in the other two traits. At the eighth grade level, the percent demonstrating writing proficiency in Conventions remained the same, while there were decreased levels of proficiency in the other three traits.

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
95.8	100	97.6	97.2	100	93.0	98.6	100	100	NA	0.0	2.0

While 100% of seniors in 1998-1999 passed all areas of the high school proficiency exam, 98% of district students passed all sections in 1999-2000. Two percent of seniors were denied a diploma based on their performance on this exam.

ACT/SAT Results

ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
28	44	38	21.4	19.0	20.3

While the percentage of seniors taking the ACT dropped to 38% in 1999-2000, the average score increased slightly and moved closer to the state average.

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
7	4	8	368	480	548	450	420	544

The percentage of seniors taking the SAT in 1999-2000 doubled, though it was only 8%, considerably below the state average of 34%. Student scores, on the other hand, were significantly higher and exceeded state averages by comfortable margins.

Special Programs

Student participation in special education programs at the elementary level ranged from 11% to 18%; at the secondary level the range was from 12% to 20%. Participation in the free and reduced-price lunch program ranged from 40% at Hawthorne Primary to 82% at Schurz. The district reported no participation in English as a Second Language (ESL), migrant, or gifted programs.

District-wide 6% of students were enrolled in music, 7% in art, 12% in physical education, and 7% in computer education. At the elementary level, these opportunities were less in 1999-2000 than in the prior year. No music, art, physical education, or computer classes were provided at Hawthorne Primary (K-3) School. No music, art, or computer classes were provided at Schurz Elementary School. Only 18% to 28% of the fourth through eighth grade students at Hawthorne Elementary were instructed in music, art, physical education, or computer use.

Secondary student participation in such programs as music, occupational education, and foreign language was generally lower than in the previous year. For example, at Mineral County High School, participation in occupational education dropped from 65% to 50% and participation in athletics dropped from 62% to 40%.

Teachers

Only 22% of district teachers had advanced degrees, which was notably lower than the state average of 48.7%. On the other hand, only 8% of the teachers were new or had less than 3 years of experience, though the state average is nearly 29% in this category. The percentage of Mineral County teachers with over 20 years of experience was 35%, as compared with 10

Technology/Computers

Except for Hawthorne Primary, all schools in the district were reported as having access to the Internet. Elementary student/computer ratios ranged from 3:1 at Schurz to 19:1 at Hawthorne Primary. The ratio at Mineral County High School was 6:1.

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement for the district was rated as low. Two individual schools, Hawthorne Primary and Schurz, were rated as moderate.

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

Data from the UCCSN system showed that 44.4% of the recent graduates from Mineral County who were enrolled in higher education were receiving remedial services.

Expenditures

The district did not provide accurate information in the category of per-pupil instruction. Consequently, it cannot be determined with accuracy what the overall per-pupil expenditure was in the district. For the areas in which data were provided, there were increases in operations and student support, and decreases in administration and staff support.

The district also reported receiving remediation funds in the following categories: \$58,926 in Title I funding; \$101,197 in low performing school funding; and \$39,388 in other remediation funding.

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 district reported considerable use of the Western Regional Professional Development Program for assistance with teacher training and curriculum mapping. In addition, training was provided for elementary teachers in the Accelerated Reader program. Fourth grade scores showed significant improvement from those reported in the previous year.

The district reduced its counselor/student ratio by hiring a person to provide those services at Hawthorne Elementary and Junior High; this significantly lowered the district's overall ratio.

The Schurz school has moved from a school in need of improvement to one in which the local data indicate considerable improvement. District data indicate the bulk of special remediation funding was concentrated at this site.

The Part III report for Mineral County High School was dated 1998-1999, the year before the accountability report was to be included in this document. This report stated, "students are able to take advance courses such as college calculus and English and receive dual credit upon successful completion." This statement was at variance with the state data tables, which showed zero enrollment in advanced placement courses at Mineral High in both 1998-1999 and 1999-2000.

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 site plan for Schurz indicated a need to improve student attendance even further; the current rate is 91%. Other plans were more general in nature and not necessarily tied to quantifiable measures.

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

As noted in the previous year's report, district and school data were, for the most part, general and not linked with specific and measurable objectives.

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

The district has begun to focus upon the elements of the state accountability plan. To the extent that plans are keyed to quantifiable measures, these are the primary data source.

6. Missing or incomplete data.

The district report stated that all schools have access to the Internet, but the school report from Hawthorne Primary Elementary indicated that this school does not. The district report stated that each school had a 6:1 student/computer ratio, but other data indicated that this was more likely a district-wide average.

Inaccurate information was presented in the expenditures section; the figure of \$135 for per pupil instructional costs did not seem at all realistic and was inconsistent with total expenditures listed.

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

The district needs to be more conscientious about providing accurate data regarding expenditures. This is the second consecutive year for which an obviously incorrect figure was given for per-pupil instruction expenditures.

Conscientious attention could also prevent submitting a high school evaluation of accountability findings, which was either mislabeled or from the wrong year. Consistency should be verified between data and stated achievements to prevent such misinformation as was presented in regard to advanced placement programming.

The district has shown growth on a number of measures of academic progress, particularly at the elementary level. However, the district and the individual schools generally do not often link specific plans for improvement with measures, which would effectively gauge progress. This is the third consecutive year in which this recommendation is made. There are other rural districts close at hand, which could lend expertise in this process, and it is recommended that the Mineral County School District seek such assistance in becoming a data-driven organization.

An additional recommendation relates to the inclusion, in future reports, of plans to address such items as the high remediation rates at the UCCSN of recent graduates from Mineral County, the high suspension rate in the district, and the low parental participation rates at two schools.