

## **Nye County School District Accountability Analysis**

Nye County School District continues to comply with both the spirit and letter of the law regarding accountability reporting. Modest parental involvement is reported again and recommended are included to enhance future reports including compliance with state and federal accountability requirements.

- 1. A 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**

The Nye County School District is located in central Nevada and encompasses 18,064 square miles. There are 16 schools district-wide: four elementary schools serving grades K-5, 6 elementary schools serving K-8, one middle school, 3 high schools, and 2 junior high schools. Enrollment for 1999-00 was 5,444 students, an increase of 3.4% over the previous year.

### **Student Attendance Rate**

The student attendance rate was 93%, the same as in the previous year.

### **Teacher Attendance Rate**

The teacher attendance rate was also the same as in the previous year, 94%.

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

The overall high school dropout rate was 4% compared with the previous year's rate of 6%. Nye County retained 4% of kindergartners, 5% of the first graders, 2% of grade 2, 1% of grade 3, 2% of grade 4, and 1% of grade 5. Grades 6, 7, and 8 retained less than 1% of their students. Eighteen percent of ninth graders at Pahrump High School and 7% of students at Tonopah had too few credits to be promoted to tenth grade.

### **Student Completion Indices**

Two hundred and eighty-two students (93%) received an advanced or standard diploma. Sixteen students (5%) received an adjusted diploma, while eight students (2%) earned a certificate of attendance.

## **Transiency Rate**

The district reported a transiency rate of 37%, compared with the previous year's 36%. The transiency rate in the district's elementary schools ranged from 4% to 46%. Manse Elementary School and Mt. Charleston Elementary School topped the list with 46% each. Transiency at secondary schools ranged from 18% to 45%. Gabbs High School's rate was 45%.

## **Student-Teacher Ratios**

The average student-teacher ratio in kindergarten was 18:1. In grades one and two the ratio was 16:1. Ratios in other grades were 19:1 in grade three, 22:1 in grade four, 20:1 in grade five, and 23:1 in grade six. At the secondary level English class sizes ranged from 8 to 24 students. Math classes ranged from 7 to 26 students, and science classes from 7 to 24 students. Social studies class sizes ranged from 4 to 24 students.

## **Student-Counselor Ratios**

The district-wide student-to-counselor ratio was 450:1, up from last year's 418:1. The elementary school ratio ranged from 155:1 at Armagosa Valley Elementary School to 1,206:1 at Mt. Charleston Elementary School. The ratio at the secondary level increased in all schools except Gabbs High School. The student-to-counselor range in Nye County secondary schools was from 292:1 to 505:1.

## **Suspension/Expulsion Rate**

At the elementary school level suspensions or expulsions resulted from three instances of student violence to staff, 19 instances of violence to other students, and four instances of weapon possession. Secondary schools reported 11 instances of threats or extortion, three cases of violence to staff, and 107 instances of violence to students. There were 26 instances of drug possession and two cases of alcohol/drug distribution. Twenty-four students were charged with alcohol possession. Weapon possession resulted in 19 suspensions or expulsions. These figures are very essentially similar to those of the previous year.

## **Habitual Disciplinary Problems**

No students were expelled for 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
<b>Reading</b>	21	21.7	28.2	14	16.0	14.5	48	48	43
<b>Language</b>	29	22.7	30.0	15	23.0	21.8	42	52	45
<b>Math</b>	33	17.4	23.8	15	25.6	22.8	41	57	49
<b>Science</b>	13	23.4	27.1	19	16.3	19.5	53	47	46

The average fourth grade reading score decreased from the 48<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 43<sup>rd</sup> percentile. The state average was at the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile. Language scores dropped from the 52<sup>nd</sup> percentile to 45<sup>th</sup> percentile. The district was below the state average of the 56<sup>th</sup> percentile rank. Math achievement also decreased from the 57<sup>th</sup> to the 49<sup>th</sup> percentile, below the state average percentile of 57. Science scores dipped slightly from the 47<sup>th</sup> to the 46<sup>th</sup> percentile, similar to the state average of 47. Twenty-three students were excused from testing because of special education designation, and one student because of limited English proficiency. The percentage of eligible students taking the test ranged from 97.4% at Round Mountain Elementary School to 100% for the three other elementary schools.

**State Mandated Test Results: TerraNova, Eighth 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>	23	24.4	26.5	19	18.6	19.6	49	45	46
<b>Language</b>	25	28.5	30.1	17	16.2	19.1	46	43	45
<b>Math</b>	41	35.8	26.6	12	14.7	20.9	34	39	47
<b>Science</b>	14	27.8	25.2	19	15.2	20.1	52	43	47

Average eighth grade reading scores in the district increased from the 45<sup>th</sup> percentile to the 46<sup>th</sup> percentile. The state average was the 51<sup>st</sup> percentile. Similarly, the language score rose from the 43<sup>rd</sup> percentile to the 45<sup>th</sup>, below the state average of 51<sup>st</sup> percentile. Math scores, however, increased from the 39<sup>th</sup> to the 47<sup>th</sup> percentile, but this

was still below the state average of the 49<sup>th</sup> percentile. Science increased from the 43<sup>rd</sup> to the 47<sup>th</sup> percentile. The state average was at the 48<sup>th</sup> percentile.

Armagosa Valley scored at the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile rank, while Tonopah Elementary School came in at the average 52<sup>nd</sup> percentile rank in reading. That pattern was generally true in the other three subjects also. The percentage of students tested ranged from 93.8% at Round Mountain Junior/Senior High School to 100% at three other schools.

**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>	25	25.1	21.9	25	25.1	22.6	50	50	54
<b>Language</b>	23	22.3	19.2	17	21.9	20.8	49	52	51
<b>Math</b>	27	22.7	24.6	18	19.6	21.2	44	48	49
<b>Science</b>	7	17.0	17.5	23	24.7	25.2	59	56	57

Reading scores for this year (2001-2002) increased from the 50<sup>th</sup> to the 54<sup>th</sup> percentile, above the state average of the 53<sup>rd</sup> percentile. Language scores decreased from the 52<sup>nd</sup> to the 51<sup>st</sup> percentile. The state average was at the 54<sup>th</sup> percentile. Math achievement increased from the 48<sup>th</sup> to the 49<sup>th</sup> percentile; the state average was at the 53<sup>rd</sup> percentile. Science scores increased from the 56<sup>th</sup> to the 57<sup>th</sup> percentile, which is above the state average of the 53<sup>rd</sup> percentile.

The percentage of eligible students tested ranged from a low of 89.4% at Pahrump High School to 100% at Beatty High School. Two students were not tested because of special education status and two others were exempt because of limited English.

**State Mandated Test Results: Writing Examination**

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

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	49	57	77	75	76
<b>Organization</b>	NR	44	53	80	70	70
<b>Voice</b>	NR	44	49	79	66	72
<b>Convention</b>	NR	50	56	68	67	71

Between 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 the percentage of fourth graders demonstrating writing proficiency increased on all traits. Thirty-three percent of fourth graders were proficient in all four writing traits, precisely the same as the state average. In grade 8, the percent demonstrating proficiency in the trait of ideas increased from 75% to 76%. Proficiency in organization remained at 70%, while proficiency in Voice rose from 66% to 72%, and proficiency in Conventions rose from 67% to 71%. The percentage of eighth graders demonstrating proficiency in all four writing traits was 57%, slightly higher than the state average.

**State Mandated Test Results: High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE)**

**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	97-98	98-99	99-00
99.0	99.0	99.0	99.0	99.0	98.0	100	100	100	NA	<1	2.0

The only area where the passing rate declined was math, which declined by 1% from 99% to 98%. The percentage of students passing reading and writing remained the same as 1998-1999. Two percent of students were denied a diploma as a result of not passing the HSPE.

## ACT/SAT Results

### ACT Results

% SENIORS TAKING ACT			ACT COMPOSITE SCORE		
97-98	98-99	99-00	97-98	98-99	99-00
36	31	39	20	20	20

The percent of seniors taking the ACT admissions test increased from 31% to 39% in 1999-2000. The ACT composite average has remained at 20 for this three-year period. The average ACT score for Nevada was 21.5 in 1999-2000.

### 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
34	5	15	497	467	477	491	475	465

The percent of seniors taking the ACT admissions test increased from 31% to 39% in 1999-2000. The ACT composite average has remained at 20 for this three-year period. The average ACT score for Nevada was 21.5 in 1999-2000. The percent of seniors taking the SAT admissions test increased to 15% in 1999-2000 from only 5% in the previous year. The SAT verbal average score increased in 1999-2000 from 467 to 477. The SAT math average score showed a decline from 475 to 465. The state averages for SAT scores in 1999-2000 were 510 on the verbal measures and 517 in math.

## Special Programs

Special education enrollment in elementary schools ranged from 9% to 18%. English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction was provided to 2% of students district-wide, but to 33% of students at Armagosa Valley Elementary School and to 38% of students at Duckwater Elementary School. ESL enrollment at the other elementary schools ranged from zero to six percent. Thirteen percent of the students at Manse Elementary were enrolled in gifted programming, but none at the other elementary schools. Participation in the free or reduced-price lunch program was 44% district-wide, with individual elementary schools ranging from 10% to 76%.

Music instruction was provided to all students in seven of the 10 elementary schools. Art instruction was provided to all students in nine of the elementary schools. Physical education was provided for 100% of the students at four of the elementary schools.

At the secondary level, the special education enrollment ranged from 10% at Beatty High School to 43% at Gabbs High School. The only secondary school providing ESL was Beatty High School where 12% of the students participated. Four percent of the

students at Clarke Middle School participated in gifted programs. This was the only secondary school providing gifted programming. The only high school offering advanced placement courses was Pahrump High School where 4% of the students were enrolled. Enrollment in occupational education ranged from 56% at Pahrump High School to 100% at Beatty High School. Foreign language was offered at three high schools. Participation in foreign language classes was 33% at Pahrump High, 22% at Tonopah High and 2% at Beatty High. Secondary student participation in athletics ranged from 38% to 73% at the various schools.

### **Teachers**

Of the teachers in the district 76% held bachelor's degrees and 24% held master's degrees. Thirteen percent had less than three years of experience, 49% had taught 3 to 10 years, and 38% had 10 to 20 years of experience. Eight percent had taught over 20 years. Ninety-three percent of Nye County teachers taught within their area of licensure or endorsement. Five percent of English classes and 8% of science classes were taught by teachers without appropriate licenses.

### **Technology/Computers**

All of the district's elementary schools offered computer use for a minimum of one half hour per week. The district student/computer ratio was 10:1, and computer labs were found in 10 of the 15 schools. Internet access was available in all classrooms, computer labs, and in seven school libraries. The availability of these technological resources represented a considerable improvement over the previous year.

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

Of recent Nye County graduates at Nevada universities and community colleges, 35.6% were enrolled in remedial UCCSN classes.

### **Expenditures**

The school district total expenditure per-pupil declined from \$6,675 in 1998-1999 to \$6,228 in 1999-2000. Each category of expenditures reflected similar per-pupil declines. Per-pupil, \$3,949 was allocated for instruction, \$705 for administration, \$733 for operations, \$149 for staff support, and \$692 for student support.

Nye County received \$293,501 in Title I remediation funds during 1999-2000.

### **Parent Involvement**

Attendance at parent-teacher conferences for the two-year period was judged as moderate. Parental activities were noted in the individual school reports.

**2. *Areas the school district's Part III identified as examples of exemplary achievements at the school site and/or areas of improvement in outcomes from those reported in the previous year.***

School improvement plans at each site were implemented to improve student test scores. Nye County School District developed criterion-referenced assessments for kindergarten through eighth grade. The district increased math requirements for graduation. Computer use was implemented in each classroom. The district also reported improvement in its high school proficiency course, curriculum, teacher training, and staff development. All buildings were wired for Internet connections. A remedial program was developed.

Examples of exemplary achievement or improvement at each school in the district were also cited.

**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.***

Reading, writing, and math skills were noted as in need of improvement. The percentages of students failing to demonstrate writing proficiency at grades four and eight were cited as evidence of need for improvement. The high percentage of ninth grade students failing and the 43% of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students failing the math proficiency exams were cited as areas of need. Examples of areas in need of improvement for each school in the district were also reported.

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

The newly developed Remedial Program and the new criterion referenced tests were noted as approaches to increasing academic proficiency. Implementation of the Accelerated Reader Program and STAR program focused on reading improvement. A Six-Trait writing program was being implemented to improve writing skills.

Plans for improvement at each school site were listed in the district's report. Plans responded to school test data and focus on improving student achievement. District-wide concerns focused on technology development and implementation, community relationships, and curricular areas, particularly mathematics.

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

Sources of information for determining effectiveness of the plans for improvement included criterion referenced measures as well as indicators required by the Nevada school accountability process.



**6. *Missing/incomplete data.***

Complete data were found in all areas.

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

Nye County School District is to be commended for its approach to the accountability process. The district has continued to respond to the spirit and intent of the law. The use of test data to drive academic improvement was evident throughout the report.

The Panel recommends that the district continue to move forward in its quest for academic achievement. In addition, plans to complete the process of curriculum alignment (scope and sequence) should be given priority. Attention should also be given to the continuing implementation of the district's technology plan.

An additional recommendation relates to expanding the scope of the report so that critical information such as the high percentage of recent graduates requiring remedial classes in the USSCN institutions is addressed.