Special School District

Instructional Effectiveness Program Evaluation

Special Education, Court Programs & Career Training

Paul Bauer, Chair

Board Approved: February 10, 2009

INSTRUCTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Special Education, Courts & Career Training

Standard Program Evaluation

Program Evaluation Question(s)
What do student outcomes as measured by district assessments and student data indicate about instructional effectiveness?

I. Program/Service Information

1. Name of Program or Services: Instructional Effectiveness

2. Personnel Responsible for Evaluation and Program:
   Paul Bauer, Director

3. Demographic Description of Program:

   Location(s): Ackerman School
   Bridges Program
   Courts Programs
   Litzsinger School
   Neuwoehner School
   Northview School
   Southview School

   Number of staff: 170 Classroom Teachers, 248 Paraprofessionals

   Participants: Approximately 1000 students, Ages 5-21

   Length of program/service: This report includes literacy assessment data for each school year since 2003-2004. The report includes student achievement and behavior data since 2005-2006.

4. Date of Evaluation (Year/Duration):
   December 2008

5. Goal/Objective of Program/Services:
Develop and enhance quality educational/instructional programs to improve performance and enable students to meet their personal, academic and career goals.

6. Brief description of relationship between program goals, CSIP and MSIP Standards:
MSIP Standard 6.2.1 requires that districts use a variety of assessment data (e.g., longitudinal, demographic, disaggregated, diagnostic, surveys, etc.) to support districtwide decisions about curriculum and instruction. MSIP Standard 8.1 requires that school districts evaluate instructional effectiveness at least biennially. The first goal of the District's CSIP states that the district will develop and enhance quality educational/instructional programs to improve performance and enable students to meet their personal, academic and career goals.

II. Evaluation Criteria for Programs/Services Offered

Literacy Assessment Continuum
Woodcock Johnson-III
Street Survival Skills Questionnaire (SSSQ)
PBIS Physical Aggression Data

III. Description of Stakeholders Engagement in Program Evaluation:

Name	Role
Paul Bauer	Chair
Chris Baldwin	Program Evaluation
Phyllis Kulp	Federal Programs
Marsha Myers	Principal
Debbie Scanlon	Principal
Lorie Arnsman Schwartz	Principal
Kelly Grigsby	Principal
Stephanie Valleroy	Principal
Wendi Pendergrass	Principal
Lori White	Principal

IV. Results

Literacy Assessment

Each year, staff administer the district's continuum of literacy assessments. This continuum consists of five assessments. In order of difficulty, they are the Story Observation Checklist, Checklist of Emergent Literacy Skills, Beginning Reading Test, Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), and the Qualitative Reading Inventory-III (QRI). A specific assessment is chosen for a student based upon the student's current literacy skills. A student is determined to have made progress if (a) the student participates in an assessment at one level then participates in the assessment at the next level or (b) the student achieves a higher score on the same assessment. Teachers administer the literacy assessments during two windows during the school year, each about two weeks long: one window is in September, the other from late April to early May. Literacy Assessment results are presented in Table 1 (District Total), Table 2 (Totals by Gender), and Table 3 (Totals by Ethnicity).

Table 1. District Literacy Assessment Data

Year	Total Students	Students w/ Pre and Post	Students Progressed	Percent Progressed: Pre/Post Group	Percent Progressed: Total
03-04	470	320	293	92%	62%
04-05	627	463	368	79%	59%
05-06	740	577	499	86%	67%
06-07	762	584	486	83%	64%
07-08	766	568	460	81%	60%

Table 1 indicates that 81% of students who participated in both the pre and post test during 2007-2008 showed progress in literacy skills. These students represent 60% of all students enrolled. Except for gains made in the 2005-2006 school year, this percentage has declined over the last five years. It is important to note that not all students participate in both the pre- and post-test. As shown above, student progress was not determined for 198 students during the 2007-2008 school year. Thus, the district was unable to determine progress for about 25% of the students in special education schools. Reasons for non-participation are listed below:

Reason	Student Count
Enrolled at start of year, but exited before first testing window	13
Enrolled for first test window, exited before second window	69
Entered after first testing window	72
Entered after first testing window, exited before second window	22
Deceased	2
Absent	12
Unable to test	6
Refused to participate	2
Total	*198*

Table 2. District Literacy Assessment Data by Gender

					Percent Progressed	
Year	**Gender**	**Total Students**	**Students w/ Pre and Post**	**Students Progressed**	**Pre/Post Group**	**Total**
03-04	Male	351	227	211	93%	60%
	Female	119	93	82	88%	69%
04-05	Male	443	326	255	78%	58%
	Female	184	137	113	82%	61%
05-06	Male	529	400	354	89%	67%
	Female	211	177	145	82%	69%
06-07	Male	533	414	350	85%	66%
	Female	229	170	136	80%	59%
07-08	Male	537	399	330	83%	61%
	Female	229	169	130	77%	57%

The table above shows that, except for 2004-2005, a greater percentage of males taking both the pre- and post-test showed progress compared to females. The percentage of females showing progress has decreased each year, while the percentage of males increased in 2005-2006 but has decreased each year thereafter. When all students are considered, the percentages of both males and females showing progress has declined over the past three years.

Table 3. District Literacy Assessment Data by Ethnicity

					Percent Progressed	
Year	**Ethnicity**	**Total Students**	**Students w/ Pre and Post**	**Students Progressed**	**Pre/Post Group**	**Total**
03-04	Asian	7	7	7	100%	100%
	Black	287	196	178	91%	62%
	Hispanic	3	2	2	100%	67%
	White	173	115	106	92%	61%
04-05	Asian	8	8	7	88%	88%
	Black	367	262	218	83%	59%
	Hispanic	6	3	3	100%	50%
	White	246	190	140	74%	57%
05-06	Asian	11	9	8	89%	73%
	Black	414	309	265	86%	64%
	Hispanic	7	7	6	86%	86%
	White	308	252	220	87%	71%
06-07	Asian	9	9	7	78%	78%
	Black	421	303	250	83%	59%
	Hispanic	6	4	4	100%	67%
	Am. Indian	1	1	1	100%	100%
	White	325	267	224	84%	69%
07-08	Asian	9	8	7	88%	78%
	Black	399	291	234	80%	59%
	Hispanic	7	4	3	75%	43%
	Am. Indian	1	1	1	100%	100%
	White	350	264	215	81%	61%

The table above shows that, for both Black and White students, the percentage of students showing progress has declined since 2005-2006. Except for 2004-2005, the percentage of White students has been slightly higher than that of Black students. Both groups showed the same rate of decline. Despite these declines it should be noted that for all groups except Hispanic students (consisting of only four students of whom 75% showed improvement), 80% or more of those students assessed showed progress in their levels of literacy in 2007-2008. It can therefore be stated that, while the percentage of students showing progress has declined somewhat during the past three years, literacy programs are effective in improving literacy for a large majority of students.

Woodcock-Johnson III (WJ-III) and SSSQ Data

The SSD district assessments of student achievement are the Woodcock-Johnson III (WJ-III) and the Street Survival Skills Questionnaire (SSSQ). Classroom teachers administer the assessments each year to students in the special education schools in grades 2, 6, 9, and 12 who are enrolled during a 2-week window in October and November. The WJ-III is a standardized instrument for

measuring academic achievement in 4 areas: Reading, Math, Written Language, and Academic Skills (Science, Social Studies, and Humanities). Students must achieve a minimum score called a Basal Score for the assessment to be a valid measure of achievement. The test yields a Standard Score (SS) in each of the 4 areas that is compared to the student's intelligence quotient (IQ) to determine if the student is performing at expectancy. Students who perform within an expected range based on their IQ are said to be "At Expectancy"; that is, performing at a level commensurate with their ability. "Expectancy" can only be determined for those students who have an IQ score in their file, participate in the testing, and for whom staff can obtain a WJ-III or SSSQ score.

Staff administer the SSSQ to students in grades 6, 9, and 12 if they do not earn a basal score on the WJ-III. Typically this indicates student functioning at a very low level and/or significant physical, mental, and/or developmental disabilities. The SSSQ requires minimal reading by the student. The examiner orally presents a question and the student responds by pointing to one of four pictures presented on a page. Students receive raw scores in 9 areas: Basic Concepts, Functional Signs, Tools, Domestics, Health & Safety, Public Services, Time, Monetary, and Measurements. The raw scores are converted to scaled scores. A conversion table is used to convert full scale scores into a Survival Skills Quotient (SSQ), allowing for direct comparisons between IQ and SSQ to determine whether a student is functioning at expectancy as defined above. Expectancy can only be determined for those students who have an IQ score on file. Some extremely low functioning students may not be able to take the SSSQ and are listed as "Unable to Test". This decreases the percentage of students for whom expected performance can be determined. Students may also not participate in testing for a variety of other reasons (e.g., absent during the testing window, unable to test because of disability, refuses to test, IEP specifies exemption). WJ-III Reading and SSSQ assessment results are presented in Table 4 (District Totals), Table 5 (Totals by Gender), and Table 6 (Totals by Ethnicity).

Table 4. WJ-III Reading and SSSQ Assessment Data

					Percent at Expectancy	
Year	**Test**	**Total Students**	**Students w/ IQ Score and Standard Score**	**Students Reading at Expectancy**	**IQ and Std. Score Group**	**Total**
05-06	WJ-III	163	128	64	50%	39%
	SSSQ	96	36	16	44%	17%
06-07	WJ-III	187	121	62	51%	33%
	SSSQ	102	40	24	60%	25%
07-08	WJ-III	180	121	55	45%	31%
	SSSQ	108	36	18	50%	17%

The above data indicate that the percentage of students achieving at expected levels as shown by the WJ-III has decreased from three years ago, after a slight increase in 2006-2007. The percentage of students at expected levels on the SSSQ increased by 16% between 2005-06 and 2006-07, but decreased in 2007-08, though still above the level of 2005-06. Of all students in the

special education schools (a group including students who took a test, part of a test only, or did not participate in testing), the percentage of students at expectancy on the WJ-III has decreased each year. For students taking the SSSQ, the percentage at expectancy increased in 2006-2007 but decreased in 2007-2008 to a level commensurate with the 2005-2006 results. Seventy-two students in the SSSQ group did not have scores in 2007-2008. The largest number of these students (29 students), scored so low on the SSSQ due to the severity of the disability, that staff could not obtain a score that was convertible to a scaled score. Overall, the 72 students did not have scores for the following reasons:

Reason	**Student Count**
No IQ score in file	12
Score too low to convert to Standard Score	10
Unable to test due to severity of disability	29
Test was unscorable	19
Behavior interfered with testing	1
Absent	1
Total	*72*

Fifty-nine students in the WJ-III group did not have both an IQ score and a Standard Score. Of those students, 26 attended special education schools and 33 attended JDC or Lakeside. Thirteen of these students did not yield scores that could be converted to standard scores due to the severity of their disability. Overall, students did not have both scores for the following reasons:

	Student Count	
Reason	**Special Education Schools**	**JDC/Lakeside**
No IQ score in file	8	6
Unable to test due to severity of disability	13	0
Not tested	1	27
Behavior interfered with testing	1	0
Absent	2	0
Refused to test	1	0
Total	*26*	*33*

Table 5. WJ-III Reading and SSSQ Assessment Data by Gender

						Percent at Expectancy	
Year	**Test**	**Gender**	**Total Students**	**Students w/ IQ Score and Std. Score**	**Students Reading at Expectancy**	**IQ and Std. Score Group**	**Total**
05-06	WJ-III	Male	119	101	52	51%	44%
		Female	44	27	12	44%	27%
	SSSQ	Male	60	22	11	50%	18%
		Female	36	14	5	36%	14%
06-07	WJ-III	Male	139	97	46	47%	33%
		Female	48	24	16	67%	33%
	SSSQ	Male	64	24	16	67%	25%
		Female	38	16	8	50%	21%
07-08	WJ-III	Male	138	94	41	44%	30%
		Female	42	27	14	52%	33%
	SSSQ	Male	64	24	12	50%	19%
		Female	44	12	6	50%	14%

The above table shows that of students taking the WJ-III, the percentage of males reading at expected levels has decreased each year, while the percentage of females increased in 2006-07 then decreased in 2007-08 (still to a level higher than in 2005-06). In 2006-07 and 2007-08, the percentage of females reading at expected levels was higher than that of males. On the SSSQ, the percentage of males at expected levels increased from 2005-06 to 2006-07 but decreased to its earlier level in 2007-08. The percentage of females increased from 2005-06 to 2006-07 and remained constant in 2007-08.

It should be noted that the percentages of students for whom expectancy levels could be determined varied. The percentage of such males taking the WJ-III and females taking the SSSQ decreased over three years; the percentage for whom an expectancy level could be determined increased for males taking the SSSQ and females taking the WJ-III.

Table 6. WJ-III Reading and SSSQ Assessment Data by Ethnicity

						Percent at Expectancy	
Year	**Test**	**Ethnicity**	**Total Students**	**Students w/ IQ Score and Std. Score**	**Students Reading at Expectancy**	**IQ and Std. Score Group**	**Total**
05-06	WJ-III	Asian	2	1	1	100%	50%
		Black	97	80	37	46%	38%
		Hispanic	4	1	1	100%	25%
		White	60	46	25	54%	42%
	SSSQ	Asian	4	0	0	NA	NA
		Black	63	26	11	42%	17%
		White	29	10	5	50%	17%
06-07	WJ-III	Black	96	63	26	41%	27%
		Hispanic	3	2	1	50%	33%
		White	83	56	35	63%	42%
		Unknown	5	0	0	NA	NA
	SSSQ	Asian	1	0	0	NA	0%
		Black	52	20	14	70%	27%
		White	49	20	10	50%	20%
07-08	WJ-III	Asian	2	1	0	0%	0%
		Black	93	63	30	48%	32%
		White	73	57	25	44%	34%
		Unknown	12	0	0	NA	0%
	SSSQ	Asian	2	1	1	100%	50%
		Black	57	21	10	48%	18%
		Am. Ind.	1	0	0	NA	NA
		White	48	14	7	50%	15%

The above table shows that the performance of Black students on the WJ-III decreased in 2006-07 but increased in 2007-08 to its highest level. White students showed the opposite trend – an increase in 2006-07 and a decrease to its lowest level in 2007-08. An achievement gap thus narrowed, but this occurred because of decreases in performance rather than increases. On the SSSQ, the percentage of White students at expectancy was constant – 50% each year – while that of Black students varied widely, from 42% to 70% to 48 percent.

In all of the above analyses, it is important to note the percentage of students for whom teachers measured performance. For example, in 2007-08, schools obtained an IQ score and a standard score for only 121 of 180 students for the WJ-III, and only 36 of 108 students for the SSSQ. As noted above, several factors may explain this including (a) refusal of the student to participate in testing, (b) the student's SSSQ performance being too poor to obtain a usable score, (c) IQ score not submitted by teacher, (d) student absence from school, or (e) entry into the school after the testing window. School staff may affect some of these factors to some degree in that staff can

prepare students for testing and put steps in place to improve attendance. However, staff cannot control student ability levels or the entry date of students. The district holds IEP meetings and places students in separate schools throughout the year, so many students do not participate in district assessments or benefit from programs to improve literacy or other academic skills. In addition, the lack of scores for the high number of students taking either the SSSQ or the Woodcock-Johnson III indicates that these tests may not be appropriate for all students.

PBS Physical Aggression Towards Peers/Adults

Special Education Schools and Courts Programs collect quarterly Positive Behavior Support (PBS) data to determine the average incidence rate of physical aggression towards staff and students. The incidence rate is calculated by dividing the total number of incidences of physical aggression towards staff and students that each site reports through their PBS data and dividing it by the total number of students present. Physical aggression towards staff and students is defined as a physical assault, such as hitting, biting, or kicking a staff person or another student. The data are cumulative and school PBS teams, staff, and Title IV representatives review the data at the end of each quarter. Schools monitor their progress and adjust their Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports (PBIS) programs in order to meet the Title IV Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities goal for FY06, FY07, and FY08 of decreasing the previous years incident rate by 3% or maintaining at a level of no more than 1 incident per student by the end of the year. This goal aligns with the District's Comprehensive School Improvement Plan and building School Improvement Plans.

Table 7. District PBS Physical Aggression Data

Year	Total Students	Aggressive Incidents	Incident Rate
05-06	1079	2403	2.23
06-07	1730	1908	1.10
07-08	1721	1487	0.86

Note: Addition of Lakeside and JDC in 06-07

The data in Table 7 show that over the last three years, the number of incidents of physical aggression has decreased by almost 40%, resulting in a 60% decrease in the rate of incidents. This is noteworthy for two reasons. First, the data from 2005-06 do not include programs at Lakeside and Juvenile Detention Center, as they first began implementing and collecting data for PBS in 2006-2007. Second, during the above three-year span, the enrollment of special education schools has remained relatively constant. These decreases may in part be due to implementation of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in all schools, to the integration of character development into classroom instruction starting in 2006-07, and to additional staff in programs for students with social/emotional/behavior concerns (SEB).

V. Discussion

Strengths

- Though rates have declined somewhat in recent years, over 80% of students have shown progress in their level of literacy.
- Both the number and rate of incidents of aggression has declined drastically over the past 3 years, despite enrollment remaining approximately constant.

Concerns

- The percentages of students showing improved literacy and performing at expected levels have declined somewhat over time, with the percentage showing progress in literacy decreasing from 92% to 81% and the percent at expectancy as shown by the WJ-III decreasing from 50% to 45%.
- For a variety of reasons, the district was unable to measure progress or performance for a large number of students. This was primarily due to not being enrolled during one of the testing windows (177 of 198 students on the Literacy assessment), lacking an IQ score (33 of 59 students on the WJ-III assessment), and the SSSQ being unscorable or the student being untestable (60 of 72 students). This indicates that these tests may not be appropriate for a large number of students.
- The "achievement gap" between Black and White students, shown in terms of percentage of students at expected levels on the WJ-III and SSSQ, has become smaller. However, this is due to decreases in performance of White students as well as improved performance of Black students. The gap between the percentages of Black and White students showing improved literacy performance has remained almost constant, with White students consistently out-performing Black students by one percentage point.

Recommendations

1. SSD should expand its efforts for improving students' levels of literacy. These include development of Communication Arts curricula that ensure literacy performance standards and competencies are fully addressed, improvement of instruction to use instructional strategies shown to improve student performance and to close the achievement gap between ethnic groups, and adoption of common texts and materials that are aligned with the curriculum. Curricula should contain formative assessments based on Show-Me Standards and Grade Level/Course Level Expectations as well as on Alternate Performance Indicators and be aligned with those standards, expectations, and indicators.

2. Staff in special education schools and courts programs have begun implementing continuous improvement programs to attain a high level of quality in instruction. Actions to fully implement these processes should continue. One key part of the continuous improvement process is systematic formative data collection, review and analysis of data. Schools utilize professional learning communities and data teams – staff should continue to develop their skills in these processes.

3. SSD schools should continue to implement PBIS programs integrated with character development programs and continue to develop services provided to parents and students to continue the pattern of decreases in incidents of aggression by students.

4. SSD should refine its system of continuous formative assessment to measure student growth in academic skills. The Orchard system is currently being used for this purpose, as well as a locally-developed formative assessment of growth in demonstration of Alternate Performance Indicators for students taking the MAP-A. Staff should focus on developing these assessments and focus instruction on student performance areas shown as needing improvement. The current system of measuring student skills and progress relies on testing windows once or twice per year, and students who are not in school during those windows have no scores. A system of continuous assessment by which students are tested upon entry and throughout the year would enable schools to obtain data on student performance despite students' being absent or not enrolled at certain times throughout the year. Furthermore, the number of students for whom scores could not be obtained indicates that the tests currently used may not be appropriate for those students. Therefore, the district should investigate and adopt achievement tests that measure achievement and progress of all students.

V. Action Plan for Recommendations as A Result of Program Evaluation

Person responsible to champion action plan: Paul Bauer

Timeframe for reporting updates to Board of Education: Annual

_____ Date:_____

Signature of Administrator Responsible for Chairing Evaluation