

**Executive Summary
Annual Evaluation of Federal and State Program
Goals and Objectives
Included in the Consolidated Application
Fiscal Year 2004-2005**

Christina School District



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Executive Summary

Purpose of Evaluation

Each year, the Christina School District (CSD) applies for supplementary funds from federal and state grants that augment our local offerings by providing more intensive programs and services for our children. Some of the programs help our children to read and write better. Other programs help our children in mathematics, science and social studies or teach them about the hazards of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. Some grants allow us to pay for after-school, summer school tutoring and professional development -- still others make possible the purchase materials and extra supplies. To obtain these funds, we submit a consolidated application to the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) for approval. This application includes a district-level improvement plan based on school-level improvement plans. The district plan explains what we want to do with the funds, how we want to do it and what we expect to happen as a result of these programs and services. This report presents the evaluation of the Christina School District's progress in carrying out its 2004-2005-improvement plan.

Description of "What was Evaluated"

The information (data) utilized to evaluate our plan came from many sources and was analyzed as group data only (grade levels and districtwide averages). No individual student records are shown and each student's privacy was protected. In most cases, we looked at the outcome from different student populations that are part of the Christina student body including: racial/ethnic groups, genders, students with/without disabilities, students with and without English proficiency and income level. This type of review helps us to identify gaps and to eliminate them so that 'no child or group is ever left behind.' We examined progress in academic performance, student behavior, health-related information, staff professional improvement, vo-tech preparation for participation in society and home-school partnerships.

Data Collection Methods and Sources

The data needed to evaluate the programs funded through the 2004-2005 Consolidated Application came from a variety of sources: (1) district-level state mandated reports, (2) *School and District Profiles 2005*, (3) Delaware Student Testing Programs, (4) individual site-based data, (5) district committee reports, (6) Board of Education presentations, (7) reports supplied by consultants and (8) information and data reports provided by the Districts Technology Service Department. Most of the information is based on a combination of state achievement testing, district records, anecdotal information, interviews with central staff, program and service managers, schedules, and the *Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Abuse Among Delaware Students 2004* (University of Delaware, July 2005).

The information in this report is outcome based and descriptive in nature. We examined the differences between our level of expectation (sometimes referred to as the standard of acceptable performance or criteria of success) and the actual outcome. This helped us to conclude if our objectives had been completely attained, partially attained or not attained. The definition of attaining an objective was refined as follows: (1) Completely Attained -- outcome meets or exceeds annual target, (2) Partially Attained -- outcome exceeds the FY04 outcome but is less than the FY05 target, and (3) Not Attained -- FY05 outcome is less than the FY04 outcome. Determining progress within goals resulted from examining the collective outcomes of each goal's component objectives.

Major Findings Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Has the Christina School District student achievement improved? *Partially Attained – Improvement continued but moderated in response to increased statewide Intermediate Targets.*

The Christina School District continued to make progress as it refines its comprehensive improvement plan based on a renewed district vision, mission and previous annual evaluations. The district has three primary goals: (1) student achievement, (2) expansion and enhancement of a student intervention delivery system, and (3) increase the percentage of highly qualified teachers as required by NCLB. Ultimately, continued incremental progress within these goals will result in consistently positive outcomes. Of the 20 local objectives that comprised the district's improvement plan, 12 (60%) were fully or partly attained, 6 (30%) were not attained, 1 (5%) was postponed due to local conditions during FY05 and 1 (5%) was undetermined awaiting DDOE data.

By and large, the district was below Adequate Yearly Progress and State Progress requirements and was therefore rated Academic Review, Not under District Improvement Status. In the elementary grades categories with 40 or more students (N = 16 cells locally), 94% of the categories (15 of 16 cells) met or exceeded the target. In the middle grades categories with 40 or more students (N = 16 cells locally), 50% of the categories (8 of 16 cells) met or exceeded the target. In the high school grade category with 40 or more students (N = 16 cells locally), 38% of the categories (6 of 16 cells) met or exceeded the target.

Across all benchmark grades (3, 5, 8, and 10), approximately 67% of our students met or exceeded state standards in the basic core subjects. In mathematics, 60% (N = 5584) of our students met or exceeded state standards. In reading, 75.3% (N = 5244) met or exceeded standards. In writing, 67% (N = 5614) successfully met or exceeded state standards. In mathematics and reading, the results were higher than the previous year when 56.7% in mathematics and 70.9% in reading met or exceeded the state standards. In writing, about the same percentage of students met or exceeded state standards as previously attained in FY04 when 66.2% attained proficiency. We then examined achievement in depth by determining (1) the extent that districtwide achievement targets were attained as measured by DSTP 1, (2) the amount and direction of DSTP 1 changes from the prior year, (3) comparison to statewide DSTP 1 averages for the current year, (4) 4-year aggregated data trends for each DSTP 1 benchmark grade and core subject, and (5) disaggregated data outcomes for reading, mathematics and writing for 2004-2005.

- The district exceeded the FY05 statewide language arts target, 62%, by 8-percentage points (70.4%). Similarly, in mathematics, the statewide target, 41%, was exceeded locally by 19-percentage points (60.0%).
- In reading, grades 3, 5, and 8 showed improvement between the 2004 and 2005 DSTP administration. The reading objective was attained for grade 5, partially attained for grades 3, 8 and all grades combined. The writing objective was attained for grades 3 and 10; the targeted level of proficiency for all grades combined was attained. The mathematics objective was completely attained by grades 3 and 5, and partially attained for grades 8, 10 and all students combined.
- Increases in the percentage of students who met or exceeded state standards for 12 of 20 comparisons were noted where the FY05 outcome exceeded those in FY04. These included: grade 3 reading, writing and mathematics; grade 4 science; grade 5 reading and mathematics; grade 8 reading, mathematics, science and social studies; and, grade 10 writing and mathematics.
- Grade 3 reading, writing and mathematics were at or above the state averages in terms of the percentage of students who attained Proficiency Level 3 or above. Thirteen of 20 four-year aggregated data trends were upward (grades 3 and 10 for mathematics, reading and

writing; grade 5 mathematics and writing; grade 8 reading, science and social studies; grade 4 social studies; and grade 6 science. At each grade (3, 5, 8, and 10) in both reading and mathematics the national percentile rank of the average has increased substantially from the initial administration of the DSTP in 1998. This suggests improvement in comparison to a national or norming sample of age-grade peers.

- There were several positive findings among our children with disabilities in the lower grades. In reading, grade 3 students with disabilities achieved state standards more frequently than their age-grade peers throughout Delaware (68% versus 63%). In grade 3 writing, a higher percentage of children with disabilities met or exceeded state standards in Christina than similar students' statewide (43% versus 37%). Similar finding for mathematics proficiency were attained in grade 5 where 44.6% of Christina's special education students met or exceeded state standards. Across Delaware, the FY05 statewide proficiency level was 42.6%.
- For grade 3 and 5 Title I reading, mathematics and writing participants, the percentage of students attaining state standards continued to improve and were higher this year than the previous 4 years. In reading, writing and mathematics, the district's grade 3 outcomes were greater than the statewide average for those who equaled or exceeded state standards.
- There were noteworthy improvements from the FY04 evaluation in the percentage of Voc-tech students who met or exceeded Performance Level 3 on the DSTP assessments. Five hundred and fifteen students had DSTP scores. Of these, the following met or exceeded state standards; Reading 70.1% (compared with 63.7% in FY04), Mathematics 51.6% (compared with 44.0% in FY04), Writing 74.3% (compared with 53.4% in FY04) and all core subjects, 46.0% (compared with 30.1% in FY04).
- Information from the district's student data files provided GPAs associated with Career Technical Pathways. Districtwide, 82.9% (N = 521) of pathway participants completing 3 Voc-tech related credits earned a GPA of 2.0 or higher. The average GPA was 2.71.
- The school-year Extra Time and summer school data suggests that these components provided services that resulted in improved student learning and achievement, thus contributing to Goal A. Many children who were below standards met or exceeded standards by either the spring DSTP test administrations or by summer's end; others improved their standing and with appropriate follow-up (Individual Improvement Plans) may meet standards when they retake the DSTP 1 in April 2006.
- Positive progress was made across several achievement related activities and processes. All schools continued to have building level plans for the effective use of technology. These procedures were integrated with their PEPs and target objectives. In addition, each school had a shared decision-making component as evidenced by site council minutes and referenced in their annual evaluations. Parent participation data revealed that the district efforts to increase involvement were effective and the number of PTA members increased dramatically.

The current achievement outcome continues to suggest the following: First, there are still a substantial number of students in all grades and many groups who have yet to attain state and local standards. There are continuing gaps between minority and majority students, students with and without disabilities, English speaking students and Language Minority students and Economically Disadvantaged and Advantaged students. Second, DSTP 1 achievement gaps between groups and grade levels appear to increase over time. Attaining consistent progress in all core areas as students move throughout schooling continues to be challenging in Christina and across Delaware. Unless the gaps between the lowest and highest performing groups close and there is continuous improvement of all students, the district "average" or proficiency will not significantly improve. As the annual intermediate targets increase, the "slope will be increasingly more difficult to climb" for those groups who continue to struggle. This will inhibit adequate

yearly progress and increase the difficulty of attaining the requirements specified in the NCLB Act.

Therefore, all of our schools must continue to work toward 100% proficiency in reading/language arts and in mathematics. The accountability environment offers continuous challenges not respites. For all grades and groups, the fabric of student proficiency continues to require annual adjustments, alterations and repairs. Consequently, implementation of research based strategies, early identification of and interventions based on scientific research for at-risk students, intensive exposure to tutoring, extra-instructional time, and continuous monitoring of student outcomes should continue to be the focus for those who are likely to achieve less from schooling. Those who are currently at the highest point of the local achievement distribution also must continue to progress. Other recommendations are provided in the report.

B. Has CSD Expanded and Enhanced Intervention Delivery Systems for Students? *Partially Attained --strategic progress and implementation of targeted services noted in some area; other progress somewhat constrained.*

There were 7 objectives listed in the *Consolidated Application 2004-2005* for Goal B organized around: student progress through coordinated interventions, student health, professional development, school climate/student behavior, and district dropout and graduation rates. The activities associated with this goal were somewhat constrained during this year due to a variety of administrative changes, staff reorganization and refined definition and mission clarification for the Student Services Department.

- The district shifted its computer operations toward utilizing common statewide systems and resources. Planning is in progress to develop the Student Data Tracking module within *eSchoolPlus* during the 2005-2006 school year.
- Christina partially attained its annual dropout reduction target, a 1-percentage point reduction. Although the outcome was less than the criteria of success, the drop out rate was lower than the previous year. During 2002-2003, Christina's dropout rate was reported as 9.0% (N=4919). In 2003-2004 (the latest available data), the reported rate was 8.8% (N=4834).
- According to the Delaware Department of Education all schools in the Christina School District had fewer than 5 unsafe incidents for every 100 students for three consecutive fiscal years. Therefore there were no Persistently Dangerous Schools during FY04. Outcomes for FY05 are pending receipt of data from DDOE.
- Christina grade 11 students reported using the Wellness Center for a variety of purposes and with greater frequency than their age-grade peers across Delaware.
- Changes in the percentage of students earning C or higher in a health course was below the criterion of success, a 10 percentage point increase.
- The suspension and arrest indicators continued to send mixed signals that warrant closer monitoring. The data suggests that the increases in codes CO6 (Weapons from 22 to 84), CO4 (Offensive Touching – Employee victim from 86 to 110), DO9 (Terroristic Threats to student victim – from 36 to 54) and CO5 (Terroristic Threats to Employee victim – from 21 to 70) were the key offenses that contributed to the overall rise. The other categories (e.g., Fighting, Unsafe items, Bullying) showed reductions from their FY04 levels, a very positive finding.
- Student reported use of alcohol, tobacco and other substances were somewhat higher in grades 5 and 8 than in grade 11 when compared to statewide usage patterns.
- Student perception of school safety in grades 5, 8 and 11 was less positive than their peers throughout Delaware. This was especially so in grade 11. All grades reported

violence as a problem in their school more frequently than the statewide average. With the exception of grade 5, students continued to report obeying and respecting teachers at lower rates than the statewide average.

Specifically, the district may wish to consider the following:

- A high priority should be assigned to the development and implementation of a new student data tracking system. It has the potential for determining what is working while providing a rational basis for change. Rebuilding this system should provide for periodic school based reports that may assist school improvement teams in their efforts.
- Underlying factors leading to student perception of diminished safety and positive school climate as reported in the *Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Abuse Among Delaware Students* (University of Delaware, 2004) continue to require attention. Possible studies between the frequency of HB 85 substance abuse codes and self reports from annual surveys might be informative. Should verification occur, services and procedures for addressing these situations will be required.

C: Has the CSD Assisted Teachers to move to “Highly Qualified” Status? *This was Completely Attained. The District is progressing Toward NCLB Compliance by June 30, 2006.*

- The single objective assigned to this goal was attained. The information provided to DDOE during 2004-2005 revealed an increase that exceeded the FY05 target of 20%. The current level of highly qualified teachers was calculated at 87.0% leaving a gap of 13.0% to be closed by June 30, 2006.

Additional Recommendations

- Monitor decisions, programmatic changes and implementation of new initiatives; and examine links between new strategies, outcomes and underlying factors on both district and school levels. If performed over time, this process provides for the most rational targeting of resources within schools and across the district.
- Continue to provide professional development about data interpretation, testing, assessment, evaluation and instructional strategies at the school level. This is important for two reasons: (1) NCLB requires an understanding and use of scientifically based research in the selection, implementation and evaluation of programs, strategies and services, and (2) Standards-based environments, presuppose that factors which may influence or moderate the effects of implemented strategies and services upon outcomes should be examined on a continuous basis. Together, this rationale suggests the utility of conducting school level action research. Faculty selected topics in which staff formulate questions, collect and review the data and examine outcomes would provide a level of comprehension and empowerment for local improvement and the district as a whole.

Basic steps that may ensure that program evaluation promotes Adequate Yearly Progress and assists the Christina School District in accomplishing its mission are provided in the report.