

Commissioner's Evaluation of the Asbury Park School District July 23, 2007

The QSAC process is designed to evaluate the thoroughness and efficiency of all the public school districts in the State. This assessment will provide feedback to school districts both in terms of compliance with state and federal requirements and best practices in schools in five key areas – Operations Management, Personnel, Instruction and Program, Governance and Fiscal Management. In accordance with the statutory requirements of N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-10 et seq., the Asbury Park School District was assessed by an evaluation team that made a preliminary determination of the status of the district on each of the indicators contained in the District Performance Review (DPR). That work was then reviewed by senior staff in the Department of Education, who used data and other information available in the department, to recommend a final score in each of the five areas examined by QSAC.

After reviewing the recommendations of the senior staff delineated in the attached memorandum from Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer, I have adopted those recommendations. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14 and N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-53, the Commissioner is obligated to review the results of the reports and examine all relevant data to ensure that the final determination of performance in each area is appropriate and accurately reflects the district's achievement of each of the performance indicators. Therefore, some adjustments have been made to the evaluation team's results to reflect information available to the department and to ensure consistency within and among the DPR results. I have made the following determination as to the Asbury Park School District's placement on the QSAC continuum in each of the five areas:

Operations Management - 72% of indicators met.

Personnel – 28% of indicators met.

Instruction and Program – 15% of indicators met.

Governance – 11% of indicators met.

Fiscal Management – 36% of indicators met.

Pursuant to the regulations governing QSAC implementation, you may appeal this decision to the State Board of Education within 30 days by following the procedures outlined in N.J.A.C. 6A:30-8.3. In addition, if you disagree with any of these determinations, you may present information to support your position and request that I reconsider my decision within 7 days of the date hereof, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:30-8.3(h).

Because the Asbury Park School District has met fewer than 80% of the indicators in all five areas, the district will be required to prepare an improvement plan for each area.

Staff from the Division of School and District Improvement will work collaboratively with you to complete that process. In addition, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7A-14, the Commissioner may ask the State Board of Education to place the district under partial state intervention in the four areas where the district has met fewer than 50% of the indicators, Personnel, Instruction and Program, Governance and Fiscal Management. Such determination will be made as this process moves forward.

MEMORANDUM

To: Commissioner Lucille E. Davy
From: Deputy Commissioner Willa Spicer
Re: QSAC Report from Asbury Park
Date: July 20, 2007

The Department of Education's senior staff examined the results of the QSAC review completed by an evaluation team and proposes the following modifications based upon information provided by the evaluation team as well as from data and other information in the department. A final weighting in each of the five areas examined by QSAC -- Operations Management, Personnel, Instruction and Program, Governance, and Fiscal Management-- is recommended to you as noted below.

Operations Management

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score: 72	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 72%	
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score: 72	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 72%	

- Department staff concurred with the findings of the evaluation team.

Personnel

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score: 38	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 38%	
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score: 28	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 28%	

- Department staff recommends that indicator #A3c be rescored because there does not appear to be a plan to recruit and retain teachers, although the district does maintain a list of vacancies. This reduces the score for this section by 10 points.

Instruction and Program

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score: 18	Possible Points: 120	Total Score: 15%	
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score: 18	Possible Points: 120	Total Score: 15%	

- Department staff concurred with the findings of the evaluation team.

Governance

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score: 22	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 22%	
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score: 11	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 11%	

- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #C1 because a board member was found to have violated the School Ethics Act, although there is no change to the point total.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #G1 because the organizational chart is not adopted annually, although there is no change to the point total.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #H5 because Board Secretary and Treasurer's reports are not timely approved, and reducing the total by 11 points.

Fiscal Management

Overall Score: Evaluation Team			
Raw Score: 50	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 50%	
Overall Score: Department Recommendation			
Raw Score: 36	Possible Points: 100	Total Score: 36%	

- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #A2c because the evaluation team's notes indicate that a position control roster exists (indicator #B4b) and this is confirmed by department staff. This increases the total by 1 point.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B3 because the evaluation team's notes indicate that purchasing policies are antiquated and need updating (indicator #B3a) and that there are no formal policies or procedures for access to confidential data (indicator #B3c). This reduces the total score by 2 points.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B4a because the evaluation team's notes indicate that the budget status report is reviewed monthly instead of the required minimum semi-monthly, resulting in a reduction of 1 point.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B4e because the annual audit cited several instances of confirming orders. This reduces the total by 1 point.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B4f because the evaluation team's notes indicate that blanket purchase orders are issued. The annual audit also cited invalid purchase orders. This reduces the total by 1 point.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B5 because the annual audit cited three instances where the bid threshold was exceeded but bids were not advertised (indicator #B5a), as well as quotations that were required but not sought. The Department's Office of Compliance Investigation reported similar findings. This reduces the total by 4 points.
- Department staff recommends rescoring indicator #B6 because there is a discrepancy in the tally sheet and the evaluation team's field notes, which indicated that the voucher packages tested were not complete as required.

Department staff therefore recommends rescoring indicator #B6 and reducing the score by 6 points.

- Department staff recommends rescoring indicators #C2b (repeat audit findings of substantive nature), #C2c (material weaknesses in findings) and #C2d (there were no deficit balances in the general fund, special revenue fund, capital projects fund, or debt service fund), because of contrary findings contained in the district's annual audit. None of these changes result in any additional impact on the total score.