

A.R. Hederick Elementary Booneville School District

School Context

Booneville School District is located in the River Valley Region of Northwest Arkansas, and serves approximately 1,450 students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. A. R. Hederick Elementary is the only elementary school located in Booneville and serves approximately 540 students in kindergarten through fourth grade. As stated in their “Parent’s Guide to Their Child’s Education,” the Booneville School Board, administration, and teachers work diligently to “improve instruction and enhance learning for all students, effectively communicate learning activities to parents, and ensure that all students become proficient on grade level learning expectations.”

As reported below, the district and school student populations are notably less diverse than the state as a whole. The number of students that participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch program and Special Education services in the Booneville School District and A. R. Hederick Elementary are similar to state averages, though the number of students in the Booneville District served through ESL programs is less than the state average.

In 2003 and 2004, A. R. Hederick Elementary met adequate yearly progress (AYP), as required by No Child Left Behind. In Arkansas, schools must make AYP on the state-mandated Benchmark exams, which are criterion-referenced tests in mathematics and literacy. In 2003 and 2004, the elementary level Benchmark exams were administered in grades 4, 6, and 8. Beginning in 2005, the Benchmark exams in math and literacy were administered in grades 3 through 8. Arkansas’ annual AYP goals are determined by the Arkansas Department of Education (arkedu.state.ar.us/nochild/ayp_improvement.html), and are part of the state’s plan, which has been approved by the U. S. Department of Education. The district and the school outperformed 4th and 6th grade state averages on Math and Literacy Benchmark exams in 2003 and 2004.

Student Demographics (2004): *The district and school population is notably less diverse than the state.*

	A. R. Hederick Elementary	Booneville District	Arkansas
% White	96.4	96.8	70.1
% African-American	0.5	0.4	22.9
% Hispanic	1.6	1.3	5.3
% Other	1.5	1.6	1.7

School Support Services: (2004) *A. R. Hederick serves more students through the Free and Reduced Lunch Program, 56.4%, than the state as a whole, 44.2%..*

	A. R. Hederick Elementary	Booneville District	Arkansas
% Free and Reduced Lunch	56.4	51.5	44.2
% English as a Second Language	0.7	0.5	2.8
% Special Education	9.0	12.0	11.3
% Migrant	1.8	1.4	1.5

Assessments by Grade: *A. R. Hederick and the Booneville School District continue to exceed 4th grade state proficiency averages for Benchmark exams. Both the district and the school show outstanding growth. A. R. Hederick increased reading proficiency from 64% in 2002 to 80.4% in 2004, and math proficiency from 70.0% in 2002 to 86.9% in 2004.*

		A. R. Hederick Elementary	Arkansas
Literacy % Proficient	2002	64.0	57.9
	2003	74.0	62.0
	2004	80.4	69.3
Math % Proficient	2002	70.0	49.2
	2003	73.1	61.0
	2004	86.9	65.2

Curriculum and Academic Goals

Booneville School District’s curriculum is driven by state and national standards and development is a district wide process. The district uses state and national standards to create its own curriculum with the help of administrators, staff, teachers, and vertical teams.

Curriculum includes student expectations, goals, and objectives and is revised throughout the year. “Refrigerator Curriculum” is provided to parents to assist in communication of district goals.

A. R. Hederick curriculum development is completed on campus and is a collaborative, ongoing process which includes all curriculum to be taught. A. R. Hederick curriculum is based on state standards, vertically aligned, designed by teachers and administration, and constantly revised. One of their goals is to obtain standardized test scores above national averages. Teachers are required to submit their lesson plans to the principal for review.

Staff Selection and Capacity Building

Booneville School District has a clear process for recruitment and hiring of new principals and looks internally for candidates first. For principal recruitment, advertisements are placed on the district website, the administrators bulletin, the Arkansas Association of Educational

Administrators website, and local newspapers. When selecting teachers, principals first interview several candidates before narrowing the candidate pool to three. These final three candidates are then called in for a second interview with the principal and superintendent. Teachers that are able to adapt to a variety of learning styles and a varied student population are preferred. For new teachers, training is provided by the local cooperative when the school year begins.

A. R. Hederick provides relevant professional development opportunities. Staff development is content driven and provides teachers with opportunities to work on strategies designed to meet state standards. Faculty and grade level meetings are used to improve curriculum and allow time for collaboration; all staff are expected to attend. When available, training is also provided for instructional programs used at A. R. Hederick.

Instructional Programs, Practices, & Arrangements

The Booneville School District allows principals and staff to select instructional programs. Instructional practices are focused on student performance and achievement. At the elementary level, reading and math are specifically targeted.

A. R. Hederick utilizes effective classroom materials that meet state frameworks. Students use research-based programs such as Everyday Math. Other instructional programs used by the school include: Effective Literacy, Early Literacy Learning in Arkansas (ELLA), Step Up to Writing, and XL Math. Instructional programs are supplemented by teachers when deemed necessary.

A.R. Hederick strives to arrange heterogeneous classes of students who are kept “on-task.” Instructional time is devoted to core subjects at the elementary and “pull-out time” is kept to a minimum. Additionally, classes at A.R. Hederick are divided to provide a balanced mix of student abilities in every class.

All teachers at A. R. Hederick follow the same curriculum and teach strategies to improve critical thinking. Every grade level reading teacher at A. R. Hederick uses the same reading program, including skills and spelling words. For text selection, each grade level selects a committee member to retrieve samples which are then discussed within each grade level. Representatives of instructional programs are also brought in for presentations. Teachers focus on using activities that develop higher order thinking skills.

Monitoring: Compilation, Analysis, & Use of Data

A. R. Hederick uses testing data, observations, artifact collections, and review of student work for monitoring. Data from norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests are used to evaluate curriculum, staff, and the school as a whole. Specific item analyses from the state Benchmark exams are used and scores are compared to other schools in the region. Furthermore, quarterly benchmark exams are developed in-house to allow for more frequent monitoring. A. R. Hederick’s principal is responsible for summative and ongoing evaluations of teachers, review of student work samples, and grades. A writing sample folder is kept for all students through fourth grade. Testing data are sent to the superintendent and the school board.

Recognition, Intervention, & Adjustment

The Booneville School District and A. R. Hederick provide intervention and adjustment services for students in a variety of ways. After school tutoring, extended day services, and summer school provide opportunities for students to improve academically. Differentiated curriculum and a gifted and talented program are also available for accelerated learners.

A. R. Hederick students are recognized for good behavior and academic achievement. A weekly award program recognizes students with good behavior. Awards are also given to students through the Accelerated Reader program twice every nine weeks and incentives are given for homework completion.

Factors Influencing Educational Practices

Local Influences, Relationships, & Communications

A. R. Hederick strives to involve parents in school and student improvement. Parents can help improve school performance and the school offers opportunities for parental involvement and communicates learning expectations to parents. Back to School Night, refrigerator curriculum, and nine weeks report cards offer information to parents and opportunities for involvement. Booneville provides basic information about the school district and schools at www.booneville.k12.ar.us.

The community and local businesses are involved in the education of students. In a collaborative “effort with area industry, businesses and individuals, a Distance Learning/Vocational Lab Center was opened in 2000.” The AB Littlefield Distance Learning Center offers Booneville high school students opportunities for advanced vocational training and college prep courses. The center is also used by area industries and the public for adult or continuing education.

Core Beliefs About Teaching & Learning and Organizational Knowledge

The Booneville School District believes their success is found in “teamwork, cooperation, and a desire for children to learn.” The district believes all students can learn, some just need more time. The district also believes that positive parental support makes a difference. The district lists its primary challenges as economics, parental support, and student motivation. High principal involvement, an innovative district and administration, and a safe and family-like environment are seen as factors for continued success.

A. R. Hederick lists many challenges to improving student academics but continues to have high expectations for students. A. R. Hederick has experienced several challenges, such as addressing the needs of special education under NCLB, difficulties with implementing school reform, and an increasing percentage of students on Free and Reduced Lunch. High expectations are maintained for students regardless of home environment and student background.