

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

PHILIPPI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BARBOUR COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

DECEMBER 2003

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Philippi Elementary School in Barbour County was conducted on December 17, 2002. The Office of Education Performance Audits selected Philippi Elementary School for review based on a weighted selection process. The purpose of that review was to assess the school's compliance and progress with the high quality standards and performance measures mandated by West Virginia Code §18-2E-5.

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Unified School Improvement Plan, interviewed school personnel and school system administrators, observed classrooms, and examined school records. The review was limited in scope and concentrated on the following standards: Curriculum and Instruction; Student and School Performance; Administrative Practices and School-Community Relations; Personnel; Professional Development and Evaluation; Safe, Drug Free, and Disciplined Schools; Leadership; and Resource Evaluation.

A Follow-up Review of Philippi Elementary School was conducted October 28, 2003. The purpose of the follow-up was to verify correction of the findings identified during the original Individual Education Performance School Audit. This review was conducted six months after the Office of Education Performance Audits reported the findings of the initial on-site review to the West Virginia Board of Education, Philippi Elementary School, and Barbour County School District. The review was in accordance with West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 which specify that a school may remain on full accreditation status and a county school district may remain on full approval status for six months following an on-site review providing all annual performance measures are met, there are no safety or health deficiencies that would endanger students, or extraordinary circumstances as defined by the West Virginia Board of Education.

02-204 PHILIPPI ELEMENTARY

Grades Pre K - 5
Enrollment 391

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

According to the West Virginia Achieves *No Child Left Behind* data, Philippi Elementary School meets adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability.

NONCOMPLIANCE

4.1b Student Achievement. A minimum of fifty percent (50%) of the school's students in grades 3 through 11 perform at or above the 3rd quartile in total basic skills; and no more than fifteen percent (15%) of the students perform within the 1st quartile, or the percentage of students performing within the 1st quartile is decreased based on two (2) of the most recent three (3) years. (Education Goal 3)

More than fifteen percent (15%) of the students performed within the 1st quartile in total basic skills on the Stanford-9 Achievement Test (SAT-9). This level of student achievement indicates a need to implement curriculum and instructional strategies to improve student achievement. Decreasing the percentage of students performing in the 1st or bottom quartile may necessitate restructuring the curriculum and aligning instruction with the West Virginia Board of Education Instructional Goals and Objectives (IGOs). Goals, time lines, and activities in the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) must be followed and completed by a June 30, 2004 Date Certain.

SIX MONTH REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. According to the West Virginia Achieves *No Child Left Behind* data, Philippi Elementary School meets adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

NONCOMPLIANCES

5.1 Curriculum

- 5.1.10. Programs of study.** Health was not taught at Grade 5. When asked during an interview, the teacher indicated health was integrated in science instruction; however, the teacher did not have the West Virginia Board of Education Instructional Goals and Objectives (IGOs) for health. Art was not being taught in a Grade 4 class and in a Grade 5 class.

SIX MONTH REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed lessons for Grades 4 and 5 teachers, observed classrooms, and interviewed teachers and verified that health and art were being taught in Grades 4 and 5.

5.7 Administrative Practices and School-Community Relations

- 5.7.6. Local school improvement council, faculty senate, and curriculum team.** Faculty members on Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) were not elected until September 27, 2002. West Virginia Code §18-5A-2 requires that LSIC membership be elected by September 15, 2002.

SIX MONTH REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Faculty members were elected by the Faculty Senate to serve on the Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) at the April 2003 Faculty Senate meeting. These representatives were reelected by the Faculty Senate at its meeting held on August 26, 2003, and are currently serving on the LSIC. The first meeting of the LSIC for the 2003-04 school year was held September 14, 2003.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1.3. High expectations.** The Team observed that a few students in some classes were not on task. The Team also observed that reteaching was evident in most classrooms; however, little evidence of enrichment activities existed. The Team recommended that the teachers participate in professional development in classroom management and instructional strategies to ensure that students are active learners. Teachers also needed to implement instructional strategies that meet all students' learning styles.

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. A team of teachers attended training for Reading Strategies and Classroom Management in Morgantown during the summer of 2003. This team has provided two day-long staff development trainings for the faculty in these areas. This staff development is an ongoing process. The county has employed a Literacy Coach who works with teachers on active reading techniques and learning styles. This coach works continually with large groups and small groups of teachers and with individual teachers to develop strategies for active learning.

- 5.1.6. Instructional strategies.** The Team recommended that the principal monitor classroom instruction to ensure that teachers are using a variety of teaching strategies.

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Even though the school assistant principal position was cut in the spring of 2003, the principal makes it a priority to review and monitor teacher lesson plans, looking specifically for a variety of teaching strategies and active learning activities. The principal also practices the four minute walk through in which he attempts to visit all classrooms often and monitor instruction. The Literacy Coach also helps with this monitoring process and helps teachers who are having difficulty with the active learning process.

- 5.1.8. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** The Team observed limited use of technology within the classrooms. Classrooms had a limited number of computers, most of which were outdated. Computers in the laboratory were Internet accessible and included the Compass Learning program; however, word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation productivity software were not available. When asked during interviews, teachers indicated that the computer laboratory was used frequently. The Team recommended that the Technology Plan be revised to include installing productivity software in the computer laboratory and upgrading classroom computers, as funds are available.

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The Technology Plan has been revised and the software program, Star Office Productivity Software, has been installed on the computer laboratory file server. All classrooms now have at least one computer. The Technology Plan primarily calls for students to use computers in the laboratory setting.

- 5.1.14. Multicultural education.** The Team saw evidence in lesson plans and classroom observations that multicultural lessons were taught; however, the multicultural plan was broad and did not provide specific direction at each grade level and curricular area. The Team recommended that the schoolwide multicultural plan be revised to include specific activities at each grade and curricular area.

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The faculty prepared a total school curriculum for multicultural education. The curriculum is integrated into the reading and social studies programs at all grade levels.

- 5.2.1. Unified School Improvement Plan.** The Team recommended that the West Virginia Continuous Improvement Process Self-Assessment be included in the needs assessment of the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP)

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM CONCLUSION

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The staff used the West Virginia Department of Education booklet, *Elementary School Improvement Planner*, to survey the needs of the school. Survey needs were used in revising the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP).

IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCE NEEDS

A thorough and efficient system of schools requires the provision of an adequate level of appropriately managed resources. The West Virginia Board of Education adopted resource evaluation as a part of the accreditation and evaluation process. This process is intended to meaningfully evaluate the needs for facilities, personnel, curriculum, equipment and materials in each of the county's schools and how those impact program and student performance.

15.1. Facilities, equipment, and materials. Facilities and equipment specified in Policy 6200, Chapters 1 through 14, are available in all schools, classrooms, and other required areas. A determination will be made by using the Process for Improving Education (W.Va. Code §18-2E-5) whether any identified deficiencies adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program if it is below the West Virginia Board of Education standards due to inadequacies or inappropriate management in the areas of facilities, equipment, and materials. The Education Performance Audit Teams shall utilize an assessment instrument for the evaluation of school facilities, which generally follows the requirements of Policy 6200. Note: Corrective measures to be taken in response to any identified resource deficiency will of necessity be subject to the feasibility of modifying existing facilities, consideration of alternative methods of instructional delivery, availability of funding, and prioritization of educational needs through Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plans and the West Virginia School Building Authority. This policy does not change the authority, judgment, or priorities of the School Building Authority who is statutorily responsible for prioritizing "Need" for the purpose of funding school improvements or school construction in the State of West Virginia or the prerogative of the Legislature in providing resources. (Policy 6200 and *Tomblin v. Gainer*)

15.1.8. Grades 1 – 12 classrooms. The heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) unit fans were noisy in some classrooms and interfered with teaching and learning.

- 15.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** Folding chairs were not available in the music facility. The multipurpose room was used for the lunchroom, which limited its use for physical education classes. General storage space was inadequate in specialized instructional areas.
- 15.1.15. Health service units.** The health service unit did not have adequate space and a refrigerator was not available.

SIX MONTH REVIEW

- 15.1.8. A county review of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) unit discovered that the air baffles had been placed too close to the end of the air ducts in some classrooms. When corrections were made and the air baffles were moved back into the air ducts according to specifications, the noise problem was eliminated.**
- 15.1.10 The school has changed music teachers, and the new music teacher wanted chairs in the music room (the former music teacher did not want chairs). These chairs have been provided and students were using them on the day of the review. There has been no change in the use of the multipurpose room for lunch and physical education classes. The lack of storage space in the school was eased somewhat by the reduction in the number of staff members during spring 2003. The classroom left vacant by these cuts in staff is now used for storage.**
- 15.1.15. Space for the health services had not changed. Locked storage space for medication remained unavailable.**

BUILDING CAPACITY TO CORRECT DEFICIENCIES

West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 establishes that the needed resources are available to assist the school or school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies identified in the assessment and accountability process. To assist Philippi Elementary School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

14.3.11. Ensuring that the needed capacity is available from the state and local level to assist the school or school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies. The Team determined that Barbour County Schools and Philippi Elementary School have the capacity to implement the strategies needed to improve student achievement and correct the identified noncompliances.

SIX MONTH REVIEW

The school staff and county administrative staff have worked together to implement strategies to improve student achievement and correct the identified noncompliances. Student achievement has improved dramatically and all the noncompliances have been corrected, except those involving facility needs, which will take time and funds to correct.

EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION

The Team was concerned that some teachers did not believe that all children could learn. Teachers were asked during interviews to identify factors contributing to the low student performance on the Stanford-9 Achievement Test (SAT-9). A few teachers told the Team that the major reasons for having a high percentage of students in the bottom quartile included: 1. Living in a poverty area; 2. high unemployment; 3. socioeconomic status of the parents; and 4. the home situations of some students.

The Team realized this was not the belief of the majority of the faculty; however, it was the consensus of the Team that the mission of the school be reviewed to ensure that all students have equal educational opportunities and that teachers guide students to achieve at high levels. The Team further recommended that professional development be developed, presented, and monitored to provide teachers the skills to use a variety of instructional strategies suited to the students' individual learning styles.

If the mission of the school is going to be realized, it is paramount that all teachers believe that "All children can learn." Teachers must take the responsibility for the students' learning, have high expectations for all students, and expect quality work from all students.

SIX MONTH REVIEW

The school has been working to improve student achievement. The staff has been involved in training in the Ruby Payne model. The reasons given by the staff for having a high percentage of students in the bottom quartile came from Rudy Payne's research. In addition, the county has employed a Literacy Coach to work with teachers in identifying students' reading problems and learning styles and planning active learning strategies to reach these students. The school's Student Assistance Team (SAT) has been active and within the first two weeks of school this year had considered more than 20 students who were having learning problems and the SAT developed modifications. Staff development on several topics designed to increase student learning has been provided and continues to be provided. Some staff changes have been made that improved high expectations for all students.

SCHOOL DISTRICT APPROVAL & SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education grant continue the **Full Approval** status of the Barbour County School District and **Full Accreditation** status of Philippi Elementary School.

SIX MONTH REVIEW SUMMARY

The January 2003 Draft Education Performance Audit Report identified two (2) noncompliances, five (5) recommendations, and Philippi Elementary School did not meet the Annual Performance Measure 4.1b-Student Achievement. The Team also identified one (1) early detection and intervention issue. West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, provided the school six months to correct deficiencies before the school's accreditation status would be affected. The Office of Education Performance Audits conducted a six month review of the noncompliances and recommendations and reported that the school has corrected all the areas of noncompliances and has favorably reacted to all the recommendations.