

**OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS**

**FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR**

**HEDGESVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**BERKELEY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**JULY 2006**

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Hedgesville Middle School in Berkeley County on October 27, 2005.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Hedgesville Middle School in Berkeley County was conducted April 24, 2006. The purpose of the follow-up was to verify correction of the findings identified during the original Education Performance Audit. 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 that meets or exceeds the performance and progress standards but has other deficiencies shall remain on full accreditation status and a county school district shall remain on full approval status for the remainder of the accreditation period and shall have an opportunity to correct those deficiencies. The Code and policy include the provision that a school "... does not have any deficiencies which would endanger student health or safety or other extraordinary circumstances as defined by the West Virginia Board of Education."

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE 2004-2005

This section presents the performance measures and the Follow-up Education Performance Audit Team's findings. The high quality educational standards and performance measures were investigated through the examination of documents; observation of practices; and interviews with personnel, students, and parents.

### 04 BERKELEY COUNTY

Manual P. Arvon, II, Superintendent

### 301 HEDGESVILLE MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

Charles R. Scott, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 590

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
<b>Mathematics</b>								
All	549	589	583	98.98	71.92	Yes	Yes	✓
White	524	556	550	98.92	72.69	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	13	17	17	100.00	53.84	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	187	207	202	97.58	64.13	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	93	100	99	99.00	22.82	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	549	589	583	98.98	81.10	Yes	Yes	✓
White	524	556	550	98.92	81.53	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	13	17	17	100.00	69.23	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	187	207	202	97.58	76.08	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	93	100	99	99.00	30.43	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

\*\* -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed  
Attendance Rate = 97.8%**

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

### **Below Standard.**

#### **5.1.1. Achievement.**

Hedgesville Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement of the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts. In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education issued the school Conditional Accreditation status at the September 2005 State Board meeting.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**NONCOMPLIANCE. The school failed to attain adequate yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. for the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts.**

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

### NONCOMPLIANCES

#### 6.1. Curriculum

#### **6.1.2. High expectations. Through curricular offerings, instructional practices, and administrative practices, staff demonstrates high expectations for the learning and achieving of all students and all students have equal education opportunities including reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration. (Policy 2510)**

Several teachers were observed to be conducting a majority of the instruction seated at their desks. Minimal, if any, interaction with students was observed by the Team in at least four classroom settings.

One science teacher did not exhibit high expectations for his students. During the classroom observation, students were not instructed at all. Some students were outside the class decorating the classroom door and the remainder of the class was making red ribbon cards. The teacher had no lesson plans and a radio was playing at a loud level. Derogatory comments were made to the teacher by the students with no recourse by the teacher. This teacher placed a student in a closet in the room to work on missed work, thus missing instruction during this period. The door to the closet was closed, which was a supervision issue.

One special education teacher did not exhibit high expectations for his students. He stated that "he hated students" and that the only reason that he was at the school was because he had been laid off at Verizon. All but one of this teacher's students had been suspended the day of the Education Performance Audit. After this initial interview, the

teacher then stated to other Team members that he loved students and working at the school.

One math teacher had no classroom control and minimal lesson plans. The students were singing, hitting each other, and students were observed to be calling each other derogatory names.

#### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** The Team observed classrooms and saw that teachers kept students engaged in classroom activities throughout the entire class period. Various staff development activities had been conducted including APL strategies in classroom management, cooperative learning, and differentiated instruction.

The principal had met with the two teachers noted in the original report. Classroom management items had been discussed as well as maintaining high expectations for all students. The Team determined that the administration had the situation under control and that significant improvements had been made.

Staff development pertaining to lesson plans and their content was provided.

**6.1.4. Instruction.** Instruction is consistent with the programmatic definitions in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs* (hereinafter Policy 2510). (Policy 2510)

Through teacher interviews concerning the CORE classes, it was determined that this was ineffective in improving student achievement. This time was designed for remediation; however, three teachers stated that the time was only used for student interaction and study hall. Students were observed talking and walking around the room. Very few students were observed by the Team to be working.

#### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** The fifth period time had been reconstructed and this time was structured and minimal instructional time was lost. Monday's lessons were used for developmental guidance and Tuesday through Friday lessons were used for remediation for all students who scored below mastery on the WESTEST. Other students participated in structured educational activities.

**6.1.5. Instructional strategies. Staff demonstrates the use of the various instructional strategies and techniques contained in Policies 2510 and 2520. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The Team did not observe varied instructional strategies in best practice instruction. Instruction in many of the classes observed relied upon direct instruction with worksheets and whole group instruction. Staff development on varied instructional strategies would greatly enhance the instruction at the school.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. Through classroom observations the Team found that varied instructional strategies were being incorporated into the classrooms. Staff development in differentiated instruction and Marzano techniques had been put into place. The administration regularly observed classrooms to ensure that the strategies were varied in all classrooms.**

**6.1.6. Instruction in writing. Instruction in writing shall be a part of every child's weekly educational curriculum in grades K through 12 in every appropriate class. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The Team interviewed teachers and students and found all teachers were not giving writing assignments to all students on a weekly basis. Also, the Team found that not all student writing was collected and corrected for spelling, punctuation, content, and grammar.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. The administration regularly reviewed lesson plans to ensure that writing lessons were conducted on at least a weekly basis.**

**6.1.12. Multicultural activities. Multicultural activities are included at all programmatic levels, K-4, 5-8, and 9-12 with an emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance for racial, sexual, religious/ethnic harassment or violence. (Policy 2421)**

A countywide multicultural plan had been developed; however, the teachers and students were not able to articulate this plan or the various parts of it. Multicultural activities were described as "Martin Luther King Day and lessons from social studies textbooks." This does not satisfy the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2421.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. All teachers were provided a copy of the Berkeley County Schools Comprehensive Diversity Plan and the Hedgesville Middle School Multicultural Plan. The county plan was discussed to ensure that teachers were aware of the plan and its various parts. The guidance counselor provided weekly lessons for teachers.**

## 6.2. Student and School Performance

- 6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback. Lesson plans that are based on approved content standards and objectives are prepared in advance and the principal reviews, comments on them a minimum of once each quarter, and provides written feedback to the teacher as necessary to improve instruction. (Policy 2510; Policy 5310)**

While some teachers had excellent lesson plans, some lesson plans were difficult to follow and would be difficult for a substitute teacher to implement. These plans needed to be enhanced to guide instruction.

### FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

**COMPLIANCE. The administration developed a lesson plan checklist to be used when reviewing monthly plans. All teachers had been provided a copy of this checklist to make them aware of the expectations. In January 2006, all teachers met with the assistant principal to discuss the strength of their individual plans and the modifications that were needed so that the plans were clear for a substitute to implement.**

## 6.6. Personnel

- 6.6.4. Teacher and principal internship. The county board develops and implements a beginning teacher internship program and a beginning principal internship program that conform with W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b and 2d; Policy 5899; Policy 5900)**

A first year teacher had a mentor assigned, but there had been no meeting between them by the date of the Education Performance Audit (October 27, 2005).

### FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

**COMPLIANCE. The teacher and mentor met on a daily basis. The Team reviewed documentation of these meetings.**

## 6.8. Leadership

- 6.8.1. Leadership. Leadership at the school district, school, and classroom levels is demonstrated by vision, school culture and instruction, management and environment, community, and professionalism. (Policy 5500.03)**

Given the number and types of deficiencies found at the school, it is evident that the leadership of the school is in need of assistance from the Berkeley County administration, RESA VIII, and the West Virginia Department of Education. It is imperative that the school's administration take a stronger lead in dealing with the various issues and take the necessary steps to correct these deficiencies to ensure student achievement.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** With the help of the Berkeley County administration and RESA VIII, the Hedgesville Middle School administration had been working to correct the deficiencies found in the report. In January 2006, the principal and assistant principal met with central office staff to discuss the action steps needed to correct the deficiencies noted. Both the Berkeley County administration and RESA VIII were taking a hands-on approach to help correct the issues.

## **INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY**

Indicators of efficiency for student and school system performance and processes were reviewed in the following areas: Curriculum delivery, including but not limited to, the use of distance learning; facilities; administrative practices; personnel; utilization of regional education service agency, or other regional services that may be established by their assigned regional education service agency. This section contains indicators of efficiency that the Education Performance Audit Team assessed as requiring more efficient and effective application.

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Hedgesville Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Berkeley County is obligated to follow the Indicators of Efficiency noted by the Team. Indicators of Efficiency shall not be used to affect the approval status of Berkeley County or the accreditation status of the schools.

**7.1.1. Curriculum. The school district and school conduct an annual curriculum audit regarding student curricular requests and overall school curriculum needs, including distance learning in combination with accessible and available resources.**

Programs are needed to assist teachers in developing lesson plans, exhibiting high expectations for all students, and implementing the writing process. Improvement in these issues would better serve the school and have a direct impact on student achievement.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**Various programs had been put into place to correct the deficiencies noted in the report.**

## **BUILDING CAPACITY TO CORRECT DEFICIENCIES**

- 16.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county Unified Improvement Plan development is intended, in part, to provide mechanisms to target resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance.**

The Team determined that Hedgesville Middle School and Berkeley County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be developed in the special education department to provide quality services in order to increase student achievement. The Team recommended that the Berkeley County School System Director of Special Education and the school administrator engage the Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director at RESA VIII in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement of the special education students.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The administration had implemented programs and plans to address the deficiency in the special education subgroup with help from the Berkeley County administration, RESA VIII personnel, and staff from the West Virginia Department of Education. Team teaching, staff development, differentiated instruction, and Marzano training had been implemented to improve student achievement.**

- 16.3.2. Determining the areas of weakness and of ineffectiveness that appear to have contributed to the substandard performance of students or the deficiencies of the school or school system;**

It is imperative that all teachers exhibit high expectations for all students. It was apparent to the Team that this is an area causing issues at the school.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**Staff development and individual teacher conferences to address high expectations had been implemented.**

## 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.

**17.1. 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*)

According to the items checked in the School Facilities Evaluation Checklist, the school was below standard in the following areas. The principal checked and the Team confirmed the following school facility resource needs.

- 17.1.1. School location.** The topography was not varied enough to provide a desirable appearance but without steep inclines. Sufficient handicapped parking was not available.
- 17.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** The administrative office area did not include an adequate reception/waiting area.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** Science Room H did not have: Hot water, gas, air vacuum, ventilation fume hood, blanket, emergency showers, and main gas shut-off. Science Room M did not have: Hot water, gas, AC and DC current, air vacuum, chalkboard, bulletin boards, open and closed shelving, ventilation fume hood, demo table, adequate laboratory workspace, showers, balance cases, main gas shut-off, and adequate storage. Science Room O did not have: Gas, air vacuum, ventilation fume hood, demo table, electricity in the laboratory workspace, blanket, and balance cases.

- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage was not of adequate size and was not located to have convenient access to language arts and music instruction and close to seating. The following were not available: Fire resistant curtains, acoustical panels, film screens, controlled illumination, and outlets.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** The food service area was not convenient to a service drive for deliveries and removal of wastes. The area could not accommodate three-eighths of the student body. Seating for dining and study purposes was inadequate. A teachers' dining area and kitchen of adequate size was not provided. Food and non-food storage was not adequate. A locker/dressing room was not available.
- 17.1.15. Health service units.** A health services unit of adequate size was not available. Curtained or small rooms with cots, a bulletin board, work counter, and scales were not available.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The facility resource needs remained as noted in the December 2005 Draft Report with the exception of the following:**

- 17.1.2. The school utilized the library for a reception/waiting area. The library is located across the hall from the main office.**
- 17.1.11. Science Room H had access to hot water. Science Room M had the following equipment: AC and DC current, chalkboard, bulletin board, open and closed shelving, demo table, and adequate laboratory workspace. Other equipment was not available. Science Room O had a demo table and AC and DC current. Other equipment was not available.**
- 17.1.14. The food service area can seat 266 students out of the 590 students at the school, which is greater than three-eighths of the population. Lockers were provided for the kitchen staff.**

## **EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION**

One of the most important elements in the Education Performance Audit process is monitoring student progress through early detection and intervention programs.

Given the achievement levels of students in the special education (SE) subgroup, Hedgesville Middle School and Berkeley County must implement high yield instructional strategies that will improve students' achievement. Berkeley County must actively pursue assistance from RESA VIII, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the Center for Professional Development to assist with school improvement efforts. Curriculum must be data-driven and instruction must be relevant to the curriculum and provide all students the opportunity to learn.

### **TEAM SUMMARY**

**Assistance had been provided to the school from the Berkeley County office staff, RESA VIII personnel, and the West Virginia Department of Education.**

## SCHOOL SYSTEM APPROVAL AND SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
04-301 Hedgesville Middle	Conditional Accreditation		5.1.1 (SE)	May 31, 2007

### Education Performance Audit Summary

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the Full Approval status of the Berkeley County School System and continue the Conditional Accreditation status of Hedgesville Middle School with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

Hedgesville Middle School responded to the Education Performance Audit Report and corrected all the High Quality Standards necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the standard 5.1.1. Achievement for the special education (SE) subgroup. The Team will conduct another visit before November 15, 2007 to ensure that the momentum is sustained and the school is realizing improved achievement in the SE subgroup.