

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

SHERMAN HIGH SCHOOL

BOONE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

FEBRUARY 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Sherman High School in Boone County was conducted on January 10, 2006. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was to investigate the reasons for performance and progress that are persistently below standard and to make recommendations to the school and school system, as appropriate, and to the West Virginia Board of Education on such measures as it considers necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the standard.

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 subgroups that failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Allen Brock, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Brenda Morris, Coordinator,
Instructional Technology

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – A. J. Parker, Coordinator, Office of
Special Education Programs & Services

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Ben Roebuck	Retired Middle School Principal	Milton Middle Cabell County
Clyde Stepp	High School Principal	Liberty High Raleigh County
Thomas Tull	Middle School Principal	George Washington Middle Putnam County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

This section presents the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability and the Education Performance Audit Team's findings.

06 BOONE COUNTY

Steve Pauley, Superintendent

502 SHERMAN HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Theresa Lonker, Principal

Grades 09 - 12

Enrollment 425

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
Mathematics								
All	100	103	100	97.08	60.82	Yes	Yes	✓
White	99	102	99	97.05	61.45	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	46	48	47	97.91	48.88	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	17	19	19	100.00	11.76	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	100	103	100	97.08	75.25	Yes	Yes	✓
White	99	102	99	97.05	76.04	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	46	48	46	95.83	63.63	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	17	19	18	94.73	50.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Needs to Improve
Graduation Rate = 77.5%**

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class

Mathematics											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
10	103	100	100	97	97.09	10.31	28.87	47.42	7.22	6.19	60.82

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
10	103	100	100	97	97.09	2.06	22.68	42.27	25.77	7.22	75.26

Enr. - Enrollment
FAY - Full Academic Year
Part. - Participation

2004-2005 Writing Assessment Distribution of Performance Across All Performance Levels Grade 10

	Total # Tested	% Novice	% Partial Mastery	% Mastery	% Above Mastery	% Distinguished	% Below # Mastery	% At or # Above Mastery
STATE – WV	18579	2%	12%	51%	27%	9%	14%	86%
BOONE COUNTY	276	1%	16%	59%	21%	3%	17%	83%
SHERMAN HIGH	100	1%	16%	56%	24%	3%	17%	83%

Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
56.30%	2003-04
Not Available	2002-03
60.65%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Achieved Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Sherman High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) on the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability. However, the number of students enrolled for the full academic year (FAY) in the economically disadvantaged (SES) and special education (SE) subgroups considered for the achievement standard was below the number (N) 50 and was not considered for AYP. Had this not been the case Sherman High School would have been below the State's proficiency level in the SES and the SE subgroups.

It is further noted that a significant achievement gap existed between the SES and SE subgroups compared to the all students (AS) and racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups. The SE subgroup's performance in mathematics was exceptionally deficient at 11.76 percent; however, the SE performance in reading/language arts was 50 percent. Boone County and Sherman High School must implement high-yield instructional strategies and interventions to improve student achievement.

5.1.4. Graduation rate.

This is the first year that Sherman High School did not attain adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.4. Graduation rate. In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, "The school will be notified of any subgroup that initially has not made AYP in one year . . . however the school/county school district will be considered to have met the AYP standards and will not be identified as a temporary accreditation status school . . . schools and county school districts are encouraged to revise the school and county Unified Improvement Plans when a subgroup is identified in any one year."

Sherman High School's graduation rate dropped from 85 percent in 2003-2004 to 77.5 percent in 2004-2005.

The following professional development/training opportunities were provided by the West Virginia Board of Education, RESA III, county and/or school.

1. Bloom's Taxonomy.
2. Closing the Gap.
3. Developing Instructional Focus Calendars.
4. Writing Assessment.
5. Five-Year Strategic Plan.
6. Effective Schools Conference.
7. Data Disaggregation.
8. Marzano's Strategies.
9. High Schools That Work.
10. Advanced Placement training.
11. Vertical Alignment.
12. I Know Website.
13. Curriculum Mapping in Mathematics.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Sherman High School had undertaken initiatives for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The prominent initiatives and activities included the following.

- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The educational facility was well maintained and attractive and fostered a learning environment conducive to teaching and learning.
- 6.1.4. Instruction.** The media specialist played a key role in curriculum delivery. The library was utilized extensively and the media specialist facilitated numerous and varied library/media activities. Examples of these included: The Mountain State Library Network in which the card catalogue is linked to 36 other educational facilities across West Virginia; numerous classes were involved in developing lessons and curriculum with the aid of the media specialist; and the middle school students utilized the library extensively.
- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** The Team commended the computer science department. All students were taught basic computer and networking skills which were used throughout their high school careers on a frequent, if not daily, basis. Interested students may also receive advanced training which includes advanced networking skills; website construction and management; software troubleshooting; and basic computer repair, upgrade, and maintenance. These students use the skills to recondition old, donated computers and help maintain the school's computer system.
- 6.2.2. Counseling services.** Teachers initiated an "adopt" at-risk students strategy to increase the graduation rate. Peer tutoring was also stressed to help increase student success, which research has shown will also increase the graduation rate. A skills class and a reading program have been implemented to increase student achievement.
- 6.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations.** The school environment appeared calm, safe, and nurturing. The students and staff indicated that they felt safe and secure. Students and staff indicated that discipline was administered in a fair and consistent manner, which contributed to the positive school climate. Students reported to the Team that the staff genuinely cared for them and were supportive and interested in their success.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standards.

6.1. Curriculum

- 6.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives. The curriculum is based on the content standards and objectives approved by the West Virginia Board of Education. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The Team observed inconsistencies among the faculty members concerning their lesson plans and teaching their subject area Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). Several teachers could not articulate how the CSOs were utilized to guide their classroom instruction. Some teachers could only discuss how the WESTEST results were used for whole class instruction but could not discuss how they were used for individual students.

- 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)**

Collaboration between special education and general education teachers was evident in some of the classrooms. However, Team observations and teacher interviews indicated that the special education co-teacher was not being used effectively in several classrooms. It was reported to the Team that the special education teacher was used in more of an aide role in several of the collaboration classrooms. The special education teacher and the general education teacher must collaboratively develop and implement classroom lessons. Achievement of students in the special education (SE) subgroup is indicative that special education teachers should have greater involvement with these classes.

The Team did not observe varied instructional strategies and best practices instruction. Instruction in several classes relied upon direct instruction with worksheets or small group instruction.

- 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 providing instruction in writing to all students on a weekly basis. The Team also found that not all of the student writing was collected and corrected for spelling, punctuation, content, and grammar. Some teachers stated that they believed instruction in writing meant having students write the answers to questions on a piece of paper.

- 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)**

Although a schoolwide multicultural plan had been developed, the teachers could not articulate the components of the plan and give examples of how the plan was being implemented at the school level. The Team observed minimal multicultural activities were being implemented throughout the school.

6.2. Student and School Performance

- 6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan.** A Unified County Improvement Plan and a Unified School Improvement Plan are established, implemented, and reviewed annually. Each respective plan shall be a five-year plan that includes the mission and goals of the school or school system to improve student or school system performance or progress. The plan shall be revised annually in each area in which the school or system is below the standard on the annual performance measures.

While a Five-Year Strategic Plan was in place, several teachers could not articulate the various components of this plan or how they utilized the plan to guide school improvement.

6.6. Personnel

- 6.6.2. Licensure.** Professional educators and other professional employees required to be licensed under West Virginia Board of Education policy are licensed for their assignments including employees engaged in extracurricular activities. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2; Policy 5202)

The following educators were not licensed for their assignments.

1. One teacher who taught the speech class needed to have a Speech Communications Endorsement or an Out-of-Field authorization to teach the speech class.
2. One mathematics teacher was not credentialed and needed to apply for certification or a substitute permit.
3. One teacher was teaching English for students identified as Learning Disabled (LD), but was only certified to teach Social Studies (5-12) and Elementary Education (K-6).

6.7. Safe, Drug free, Violence Free, and Disciplined Schools

- 6.7.2. Policy implementation.** The county and schools implement: a policy governing disciplinary procedures; a policy for grading consistent with student confidentiality; policies governing student due process rights and nondiscrimination; the Student Code of Conduct policy; the Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment, and Violence policy; an approved policy on tobacco use; an approved policy on substance abuse; and an approved policy on AIDS Education. (W.Va. Code §18A-5-1 and §18-8-8; Policy 2421; Policy 2422.4; Policy 2422.5; Policy 2422.5A; Policy 4373; Policy 2515)

Tobacco use was evident in the student rest rooms. This violated the Student Code of Conduct and tobacco use policies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The Team observed that the operation of moving fresh air into the classrooms was not available without excessively noisy heating/cooling units. The Team recommended that staff investigate methods to bring fresh air into the classrooms to help increase student achievement.
- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** The Team determined that several of the computers and computer programs were outdated and/or inoperable. Staff reported that transportation difficulties caused significant delays in the computer repair and delivery. The Team noted that the computer technology teacher did an excellent job in spite of the situation. RESA III also repaired computers in a timely fashion. The Team recommended that county and school staff take measures to update operating systems and expedite transportation 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 Sherman High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Boone 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 Boone 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.

A more extensive array of curriculum delivery would improve effectiveness and efficiency with the application of varied instructional strategies. Boone County curriculum staff and the principal are strongly urged to ensure that instruction in all classrooms concentrates on effective and efficient curriculum delivery and check student skill mastery through frequent formative assessments.

The effectiveness of collaboration between regular education teachers and special education teachers must be improved. Given the low test scores in the economically disadvantaged (SES) and special education (SE) subgroups, it is imperative that this issue be addressed as soon as possible. Assistance may be requested from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Instructional Services, Office of Special Education, and the Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement.

All staff needed to have additional training on the utilization of the Five-Year Strategic Plan and the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). It is imperative that these drive the classroom instruction to ensure student mastery and to correct the school's deficiencies.

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 Sherman High School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389
6.1.5. Instructional strategies.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389
6.1.6. Instruction in writing.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.1.12. Multicultural activities.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Student Services and Health Promotion (304) 558-8830
6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805 West Virginia Department of Education Office of School Improvement (304) 558-8098
6.6.2. Licensure.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation (304) 558-7826
6.7.2. Policy implementation.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Student Services and Health Promotion (304) 558-8830

- 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 Sherman High School and Boone County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be developed in the Special Education Department to provide quality services as demonstrated by the general education teachers. The Team recommended that the Boone County School System Director of Special Education and the school administrator engage the Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director at RESA III in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement of the special education students.

- 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;**

Boone County has provided an array of staff development in programs and practices to improve student performance. It would be beneficial if staff development programs were continuous and sustained to lead to improved student performance. Student specific levels of achievement needed to have weaknesses addressed with learning sequences applied to the student's prior knowledge. Assessment must be ongoing with identified criteria linked to students' mastery of the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs).

- 16.3.11. 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.**

Boone County and Sherman High School are urged to contact RESA III, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the Center for Professional Development to assist the school and school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies noted in this report.

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 school site was not 15 acres plus one acre for each additional 100 students over 800.
- 17.1.6. Grades 9 through 12 computer laboratory.** The computer laboratories were not of adequate size.
- 17.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms.** Rooms 119, 123, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 201, 202, 204 and 205 were not of adequate size.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility was not of adequate size. The area lacked display facilities, ceramic kiln, and black-out areas.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The science facilities (Rooms 110, 111, and 112) were not of adequate size and did not have the following: AC and DC current; balance cases; and darkening provisions. Additionally, Rooms 110 and 111 did not have ventilation fume hoods and a demo table.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The high school stage did not have a screen or adequate storage.

- 17.1.13. Grades 7-12 school site vocational.** The business education facility was not of adequate size.

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 economically disadvantaged students (SES) and special education (SE) subgroups, Sherman High School and Boone County must implement high yield instructional practices that will improve students' achievement. Boone County must actively pursue assistance from RESA III, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia 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. The county and school must also vigorously address the low (77.5 percent) graduation rate.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
06-502 Sherman High	Full Accreditation	6.1.1; 6.1.5; 6.1.6; 6.1.12; 6.2.1; 6.6.2; 6.7.2.		

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified seven (7) high quality standards – necessary to improve performance and progress. The Team also presented five (5) school initiatives for achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP) and two (2) recommendations. The Team offered an indicator of efficiency for curriculum, suggested capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Sherman High School’s Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance standards and progress related to student and school performance in the area of deficiency (5.1.4 – Graduation rate). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Sherman High School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report.