

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

GORE MIDDLE SCHOOL

HARRISON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Gore Middle School in Harrison County was conducted on February 28, 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 Five-Year Strategic 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 – Bane McCracken, Coordinator, Office of Healthy Schools

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Dr. Mary Harris-John	Assistant Professor	Marshall University
Ernie Jarvis	Junior High School Assistant Principal	Summersville Junior High Nicholas County
Dr. Jack Kaufman	Professor of Education	Mercer County
Thomas Wood	High School Assistant Principal	John Marshall High Marshall County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

33 HARRISON COUNTY

Dr. Carl H. Friebel, Jr., Superintendent

305 GORE MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Ed Propst, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 301

WESTEST 2004-2005

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	283	309	303	98.05	65.59	Yes	Yes	✓
White	273	294	289	98.29	65.55	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	184	205	200	97.56	59.11	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	59	66	63	95.45	31.03	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	283	309	303	98.05	77.69	Yes	Yes	✓
White	273	294	289	98.29	77.32	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	184	205	200	97.56	70.00	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	59	66	64	96.96	32.75	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 96.4%

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
06	96	84	92	81	95.83	8.64	22.22	45.68	17.28	6.17	69.14
07	96	90	95	89	98.96	8.99	29.21	37.08	22.47	2.25	61.80
08	117	109	116	109	99.15	12.84	21.10	44.04	19.27	2.75	66.06

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	96	84	91	80	94.79	5.00	15.00	42.50	28.75	8.75	80.00
07	96	90	95	89	98.96	6.74	16.85	42.70	31.46	2.25	76.40
08	117	109	117	109	100.00	3.67	19.27	39.45	26.61	11.01	77.06

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

Other Relevant Performance Data

2004-2005 Writing Assessment Distribution of Performance Across All Performance Levels Grade 7

	Total # Tested	% Novice	% Partial Mastery	% Mastery	% Above Mastery	% Distinguished	% Below # Mastery	% At or # Above Mastery
STATE - WV	21040	2%	24%	57%	14%	3%	27%	73%
HARRISON COUNTY	839	2%	25%	60%	12%	1%	27%	73%
GORE MIDDLE	92	5%	24%	58%	12%	1%	29%	71%

Physical Assessment - Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
46.13%	2003-04
50.74%	2002-03
50.965%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Gore Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement for the special education (SE) subgroup in reading/language arts. In accordance with Section 9.4 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education continued the school's Conditional Accreditation status at the September 2005 State Board meeting.

Gore Middle School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts and mathematics by application of the confidence interval and in the SE subgroup in mathematics by the safe harbors provision. The school may have an achievement deficiency if remediation and interventions that have been implemented are not continued. Harrison County curriculum staff and school staff must continue to monitor the achievement of these students and promote instructional strategies and activities that are designed to close the achievement gap.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class data showed the combined percent of students Below Mastery and Novice to be very high in mathematics (over 30 percent) in each grade level. Additionally, the Grade 7 Statewide Writing Assessment percent At or Above Mastery (71 percent) was below both the county and state's scores. These indicate a need for direct and high-yield instructional strategies to improve achievement of all students.

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

1. WESTEST Results Analysis.
2. Differentiated Instruction.
3. I Know Test Design.
4. Classroom Management Techniques.
5. Five-Year Strategic Plan Design.
6. ACT Explore/Plan Workshop.
7. Alternate Assessment Workshop.
8. TestMate Clarity Software Training.
9. Writing Roadmap Training.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

- 6.1.2. High expectations.** The Team commended the school staff for their proactive approach to improving student achievement on the WESTEST. The school requested a waiver from the Harrison County Board of Education for the first semester exams and replace them with a sample WESTEST with questions coordinated to all Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). Results were being used to drive instruction for the second semester.
- 6.1.4. Instruction.** The Team observed teachers using the following instructional strategies related to special education: Team planning; collaboration; co-teaching; variety of teaching strategies; adaptations to tests and assignments; use of computers and other technologies; frequent monitoring of student progress; and instructional alignment with Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). The Team believed that this approach will lead to a greater level of achievement for the special education students and all students.
- 6.1.5. Instructional strategies.** The faculty used a variety of instructional strategies. The teachers changed teaching modalities every 15-20 minutes and kept students interested in the lessons being taught. All students were fully engaged and active in their classes.
- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** The Team commended the teachers who wrote and received a grant for a wireless, mobile computer laboratory. This laboratory was utilized by a high number of students and was an integral part of the school's technology program. The mobile computer laboratory contained 15 computers.
- 6.1.12. Multicultural activities.** The staff did an excellent job in implementing the Multicultural Plan. Numerous high-quality activities were occurring to increase student knowledge of other cultures and appreciation and understanding for diversity.
- 6.8.1. Leadership.** The principal and assistant principal were well prepared and exhibited a high level of instructional leadership. They held high expectations for all staff and students and were devoted to the educational process.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standard (5.1.1. - SE).

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 that the physical education program lacked a written, sequential curriculum. A written, sequential curriculum for physical education needed to be developed to reduce emphasis on basketball and team sports and offer more individual lifetime activities and be based on the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs).

Exemplary Programs & Practices

6.1.5 Instructional Strategies.

Title: Seventh Grade Team Interdisciplinary Forensics Unit

Description of Program

The Grade 7 team holds an annual, 10-day collaborative lesson that incorporates writing, math, and science. The Forensics Unit is an interdisciplinary plan in which students are detectives and solve a crime using state-of-the-art methods.

Students arrived on a Monday morning and discovered the crime scene, an English teacher's classroom had been vandalized and various items of evidence were strewn across the room. Students dusted for fingerprints, conducted fiber analysis tests, photographed and labeled evidence, used triangulation methods to reconstruct the crime scene, and interviewed possible leads and suspects. The students were informed that a staff member in the building was responsible and it is their job to figure out the perpetrator and the motive. Students screened the classroom for clues and began a crime log describing their role in the investigation and their problem solving processes. They accumulated data in their crime log for the duration of the 10-day lesson. Several stages of prediction and writing are conducted until students had a lock on a primary suspect. Students used their clues to establish motive and checked suspect alibis. These stages coincided with steps taken in science class to figure out who sabotaged the classroom. The teachers were fingerprinted and the students applied probability to base a comparison with the fingerprints collected. The following activities listed by class were used for this unit.

Science Class

- Fiber analysis tests were conducted on evidence.
- A mystery powder lab was conducted.
- Crime Log entries were made.

Math Class

- Triangulation methods were used to develop a grid-like recreation of the crime scene.
- Crime Log entries were made.

English Class

- Crime Log entries were made.
- Questionnaires were completed to assess various suspects.
- Interviews were conducted for possible witnesses.
- The crime scene was sketched.

Mug shots were taken of the possible suspects and students were reminded that all suspects were innocent until proven guilty. At the conclusion of the unit, students wrote a final entry in their log explaining their suspect and the evidence collected to support their claim. All of their work was compiled into a folder and reviewed for an evaluative grade.

Summary of Results

The hands-on activity encouraged student engagement in group problem-solving and team work. Grade 7 teachers were involved in this project and the curriculum was integrated which demonstrated the interrelationship of the different classes. This program was chosen by the West Virginia Middle School Conference to be presented at their Spring Conference last year.

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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 Gore Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Harrison 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 Harrison 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.

The administration and staff have taken a proactive approach to the special education (SE) subgroup performance and modified instruction to decrease the achievement gap. It is imperative that the school continue to investigate and evaluate the teaching strategies that are employed to ensure student success. The Team believed that the steps taken will result in an improvement in student assessment scores and achievement.

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 Gore Middle 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

- 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 Gore Middle School and Harrison County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiency. The school and county have initiated programs, activities, and high-yield instructional strategies designed to improve student achievement.

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.

- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** Not all of the science classrooms had the following: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, AC and DC current, air vacuum, ventilation fume hood, demo table, sufficient laboratory workspace, and an emergency shower.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage did not have acoustical panels.
- 17.1.15. Health service units.** The health services unit was not of adequate size and lacked the following: Curtained or small room with cots, bulletin board, toilet, lavatory, scales, work counter, desk and chair.

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.

None identified.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
33-305 Gore Middle	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.1		
			5.1.1 (SE)	May 31, 2007

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified one high-quality standard – necessary to improve performance and progress to meet 5.1.1 Achievement – for the special education (SE) subgroup. The Team presented one exemplary program and offered a capacity building resource.

Gore Middle School’s Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and progress standards related to student and school performance in the area of deficiency (5.1.1 SE). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Gore Middle School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct the deficiency noted in the report and a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).