

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

WASHINGTON IRVING MIDDLE SCHOOL

HARRISON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Washington Irving Middle School in Harrison County was conducted on March 1, 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 – Bane McCracken, Coordinator, Office of Healthy Schools

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – John Putnam, Coordinator, Office of Student Assessment

TEAM MEMBERS

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

307 WASHINGTON IRVING MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Doug Hogue, Principal

Grades 06-08

Enrollment 657

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	602	656	641	97.71	67.90	Yes	Yes	✓
White	554	604	590	97.68	68.62	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	43	47	46	97.87	54.76	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	327	371	359	96.76	53.45	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	86	105	103	98.09	23.52	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	602	656	643	98.01	80.47	Yes	Yes	✓
White	554	604	592	98.01	80.62	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	43	47	46	97.87	76.19	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	327	371	361	97.30	70.00	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	86	105	103	98.09	32.94	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 94.8%

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	221	201	216	198	97.74	11.11	21.21	48.99	17.17	1.52	67.68
07	221	201	218	200	98.64	8.00	26.00	47.50	16.50	2.00	66.00
08	214	200	207	194	96.73	8.76	21.13	42.78	22.16	5.15	70.10

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	221	201	216	198	97.74	4.04	16.16	39.39	31.82	8.59	79.80
07	221	201	218	200	98.64	1.50	16.50	39.50	30.00	12.50	82.00
08	214	200	209	196	97.66	4.59	15.82	41.33	28.57	9.69	79.59

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%
WASHINGTON IRVING MIDDLE	215	1%	28%	61%	9%	0%	29%	71%

Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
74.40%	2003-04
75.04%	2002-03
(Unavailable)	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Washington Irving Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement in the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts and the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics. 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 issued the school Conditional Accreditation status at the September 2005 State Board meeting.

Washington Irving Middle School achieved AYP in the SES subgroup in reading/language arts by application of the confidence interval and may have an achievement deficiency if remediation and interventions are not emphasized. Additionally, students in the racial/ethnicity black (B) subgroup were not considered in AYP because of the number (N) less than 50. Achievement of students in the B subgroup in mathematics was below the State's proficiency level. Harrison County curriculum staff and school staff must monitor the achievement of these students and promote instructional strategies and activities that are designed to close the achievement gap of the B, SES, and SE subgroups.

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. Online Writing Assessment Writing Roadmap.
2. Plato Learning.
3. WVEIS Training for Attendance and Grades.
4. IKnow Website.
5. Compass Learning.
6. Odyssey training.
7. Policy 2320 In-service.
8. WESTEST Analysis.
9. Pilot School for the "Sunday Reading Program".
10. ACT Explore.
11. Individualized Education Plan Writer training.
12. Beverly Eisele Literacy Institute.
13. Four Square Writing with Libby Bucy.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The Team found that during the 2004-05 school year, over 6000 books were circulated to the 600 plus students. The Team commended the library services and school staff for the number of books being circulated and used by students.

6.8.1. Leadership. The principal and assistant principal were organized and exhibited a high level of professionalism. The administrators have the knowledge and ability to correct the deficiencies and are dedicated to the education of all students.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standard (5.1.1. – SES/SE)

6.1. Curriculum

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

The Team observed that many teachers enabled the low performance of students by using socioeconomic status as an explanation for students' inability to achieve. This did not reflect a high expectation for all students to achieve.

- 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)**

The physical education program of study lacked a written, sequential curriculum and did not have information regarding students' progress. The absence of a written curriculum made it extremely difficult to monitor student progress and have a roadmap for the class to ensure the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) were being presented.

- 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 observed that the majority of instruction in the classes was teacher directed instead of engaging students in active learning experiences. Methods such as lecture, handouts, and guided discussions were overly utilized in many 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)**

Writing across the curriculum was not being implemented consistently by all teachers. All teachers were not conducting writing activities on a weekly basis. The Statewide Writing Assessment score at 71 percent At or Above Mastery was lower than both Harrison County's and West Virginia's results.

- 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)**

Even though the school had a Multicultural Plan, there was no evidence of systematic implementation. All teachers could not articulate the components of the plan or the activities in place that implemented the plan.

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)

In many cases lesson plans had not been prepared for weeks or were written after the class was taught. Many lesson plans did not include hands-on activities for students. Many teachers' lesson plans seldom contained objectives or assessment, and did not address the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.** The Team observed a lack of coordination in teaching the reading and language arts curriculum objectives. The reading teachers could not effectively relate what was being taught in the language arts classrooms and the language arts teachers could not effectively relate what was being taught in the reading classes. One reading teacher was observed to be teaching language arts concepts and the students stated that they did little reading in the classes. The Team recommended that a concerted effort be made to coordinate the teaching of objectives for the reading and language arts programs to provide seamless instruction across grade levels and eliminate unnecessary duplication.
- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The Team observed the following issues regarding the learning environment: Temperature of classrooms (too warm); inadequate ventilation; overcrowding and large class sizes; and excessive noise. The Team recommended that the administration investigate solutions to the problems listed to create an environment that is comfortable and conducive to teaching and learning.

Indicator 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 Washington Irving 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.

Team members were disturbed by the prevalence of teachers' comments stating that student socioeconomic status was a reason for the low achievement scores. It is extremely important that all teachers exhibit high expectations for all students regardless of parental resources. This mindset is not only detrimental to students but has the potential to adversely impact productive teaching methods and the enthusiasm of teachers.

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 Washington Irving Middle School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.2. High expectations.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.1.4. Instruction.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.1.5. Instructional strategies.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
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 Promotions (304) 558-8830
6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.	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 Washington Irving Middle School and Harrison County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the administration must actively pursue staff development for teachers in the area of varying instructional strategies to ensure that all students remain engaged and that all students have the opportunity to learn by varying modalities. Additionally, it is imperative that all staff embrace the concept that all students can learn. The Team recommended that the Harrison County School System Director of Special Education and the school administrator engage the Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director at RESA VII in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement of the special education students and the economically disadvantaged students.

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 site was not 11 acres + one acre for each 100 students over 600. The site was not easily accessible and conveniently located and was not large enough for future expansion. The location was not removed from undesirable noise and traffic. The topography was not varied enough to provide a desirable appearance and had steep inclines. The site was not suitable for special instructional needs, e.g., outdoor learning. Sufficient on-site, solid surface parking for staff, visitors, and individuals with limited mobility was not available. Playground/recreational areas separated from streets and parking were not available.
- 17.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** The administrative office area did not include an adequate reception/waiting area.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have a ceramic kiln. The music facility was not of adequate size and did not have adequate storage. A podium and acoustical treatment were not available. The physical education facility did not have a display case.

- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science rooms were not located with easy access to outdoor activities and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building. The following equipment was not available in all science classrooms: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, ventilation fume hood, demo table, adequate laboratory workspace, balance cases, and darkening provisions.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage did not have fire resistant curtains, acoustical panels, and controlled illumination.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** The food service area was not convenient to the service drive for deliveries and removal of wastes. A chalkboard and bulletin board were not available. A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not provided. Food and non-food storage was not adequate.
- 17.1.15 Health service units.** A health services unit of adequate size was not provided. The following were not available: Curtained or small rooms with cots, bulletin board, scales, and refrigerator with locked storage.

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 (SES) and special education (SE) subgroups, Washington Irving Middle School and Harrison County must implement high-yield instructional practices and strategies that will improve students' achievement. Harrison County must actively pursue assistance from RESA VII, 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.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
33-307 Washington Irving Middle	Conditional Accreditation	6,1,2; 6.1.4; 6.1.5; 6.1.6; 6.1.12; 6.2.3		
			5.1.1 (SES/SE)	May 31, 2007

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified six high-quality standards – necessary to improve performance and progress to meet 5.1.1 Achievement – for the economically disadvantaged (SES) and special education (SE) subgroups. The Team presented two recommendations, noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Washington Irving 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 SES/SE). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Washington Irving Middle School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report and a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP).