

# OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



**FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR**

**PLEASANTS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**PLEASANTS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**MAY 2006**

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Pleasants County Middle School in Pleasants County on April 12, 2005.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Pleasants County Middle School in Pleasants County was conducted March 27, 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  
2003-2004**

**67 PLEASANTS COUNTY**  
Thomas E. Long, Superintendent

**301 PLEASANTS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement**  
George Michael Wells, Principal  
Grades 05 - 08  
Enrollment 414

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on April 20	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
<b>Mathematics</b>								
All	404	413	411	99.52	70.64	Yes	Yes	✓
White	395	404	402	99.50	70.22	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	177	182	181	99.45	61.36	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	65	67	67	100.00	26.15	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	404	413	411	99.52	75.62	Yes	Yes	✓
White	395	404	402	99.50	75.31	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	177	182	181	99.45	64.77	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	65	67	67	100.00	27.69	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

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

**Passed  
Attendance Rate = 98.4%**

## 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.

### 67 PLEASANTS COUNTY

Thomas E. Long, Superintendent

### 301 PLEASANTS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

George Michael Wells, Principal

Grades 05 - 08

Enrollment 412

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	406	419	419	100.00	72.16	Yes	Yes	✓
White	399	411	411	100.00	71.92	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	169	173	173	100.00	63.90	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	63	66	66	100.00	28.57	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	406	419	419	100.00	82.01	Yes	Yes	✓
White	399	411	411	100.00	81.95	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	169	173	173	100.00	73.96	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	63	66	66	100.00	44.44	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

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

**Passed**

**Attendance Rate = 98.1%**

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

	<b>Total # Tested</b>	<b>% Novice</b>	<b>% Partial Mastery</b>	<b>% Mastery</b>	<b>% Above Mastery</b>	<b>% Distinguished</b>	<b>% Below # Mastery</b>	<b>% At or # Above Mastery</b>
<b>STATE – WV</b>	21040	2%	24%	57%	14%	3%	27%	73%
<b>PLEASANTS COUNTY</b>	102	5%	37%	53%	5%	0%	42%	58%
<b>PLEASANTS COUNTY MIDDLE</b>	102	5%	37%	53%	5%	0%	42%	58%

## **ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **Below Standard**

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

Pleasants County Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in one or more subgroups designated in 5.1.1. Achievement. One subgroup designated in 5.1.1. Achievement, included: special education students (SE). 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 Temporary Accreditation status at the September 10, 2004 State Board meeting.

The school revised its Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) to improve performance and progress on the standard and the West Virginia Board of Education upgraded Pleasants County Middle School to Conditional Accreditation status with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve AYP.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**NONCOMPLIANCE.** Pleasants County Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics. They showed substantial progress for the SE subgroup in reading/language arts from 2003-2004 (27.69 percent) to (44.44 percent) in 2004-2005. However, the remaining subgroups showed modest increases in percent proficient. The Team recommended that the school and county step up efforts to provide intensive instruction that will be effective in substantial student achievement.

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

- 1. Four Square Writing.**
- 2. Kansas Writing Method.**
- 3. West Virginia Department of Education Leadership Conferences.**
- 4. County Summer Institute.**
  - Prioritization of Curriculum.**
  - Curriculum Mapping.**
- 5. Five-Year Strategic Plan.**
- 6. Computer Training.**
- 7. Data Analysis.**
- 8. Staff Retreat Stonewall Jackson Resort – through Comprehensive School Reform Grant.**
- 9. Five x Five Walkthroughs.**
- 10. Book Studies.**

## IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

1. **Principal and assistant principal conduct five x five walkthroughs.**
2. **Special education inclusion in reading at all grade levels.**
3. **Common planning time.**

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

### NONCOMPLIANCES

#### 6.1. Curriculum

- 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)**

Through classroom observations, the Team reported that several teachers were not keeping students fully engaged throughout the entire period. Teachers were observed to be grading papers, and a lack of variety of instructional strategies was also observed in some classrooms.

### FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

**COMPLIANCE. On the day of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit, the Team observed that students were engaged throughout the entire period. The principal indicated that the application of varied instructional strategies was monitored through classroom walkthroughs and formal observations.**

- 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 determined that the writing process needed to be implemented more consistently. Approximately two-thirds of the teachers and students interviewed had difficulty articulating how often and when instruction in writing took place and most of the time the writing was not being corrected for spelling, punctuation, and content.

### FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

**COMPLIANCE. Staff interviewed reported that language arts and special education teachers received training in the Kansas Writing method. The 2004-2005 Writing Assessment results showed 58 percent of Pleasants County Middle School's students At or Below Mastery. This was substantially below West Virginia's percent (73 percent). The Team will expect the 2005-2006 performance levels to show improvement with the professional development that has been provided in writing instruction.**

## **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)

After reviewing teacher lesson plans, the Team found that several teachers' lesson plans were inadequate. For example, several were sketchy and did not include concepts to be taught, one teacher's plans had a complete week omitted, and several plans would be difficult for a substitute teacher to follow.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** The principal and assistant principal reviewed lesson plans quarterly. The Team reviewed the form used by the administrators.

- 6.2.4. Data analysis.** Prior to the beginning of and through the school term the county, school, and teacher have a system for analyzing, interpreting, and using student performance data to identify and assist students who are not at grade level in achieving approved state and local content standards and objectives. The county, principal, counselors, and teachers assess student scores on the American College Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test and develop curriculum, programs, and/or practices to improve student and school performance. (Policy 2510)

Through teacher and administrator interviews the Team found that WESTEST data were not being used effectively. Only five teachers reportedly had access to individual test results on hand. Also, a majority of teachers reported to have only analyzed the data once, and that was at the retreat at the beginning of the school year.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** WESTEST data had been analyzed and the Five-Year Strategic Plan was based on this analysis.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1.2. High expectations.** Special Education (Learning disabled, gifted and speech) students were required to go to the elementary building for services. The Team recommended that the special education students remain in the middle school facility for all services.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**RECOMMENDATION PARTIALLY FOLLOWED.** The principal indicated that students no longer go to the elementary building for services. A Grade 5 classroom was relocated near the end of the middle school section for Grade 5 specific learning disabled students and gifted students.



- 6.1.4. Instruction.** Students identified as learning disabled were not receiving the most effective education available through the existing pull out program in reading/language arts. Reading/language arts and mathematic classes should include team teaching with general education teachers and special education teachers in all grades. In consideration of the special education subgroup failing to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in reading/language arts and mathematics, the school staff must pursue a structure and instruction that will improve achievement.

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

**RECOMMENDATION PARTIALLY FOLLOWED.** Special education program delivery has gone to inclusion at all grade levels for reading. The principal indicated that “pending special education staffing,” inclusion would be expanded to language arts and mathematics next year (2006-2007).

- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** While the computer laboratories were being utilized, the Team found that very few of the classroom computers were being used, except for the Grade 5 classes. The Team recommended that individual classroom computers be better utilized.

The Pleasants County Middle School Technology Plan only indicated “70 percent (70%) of students will use technology to improve basic skills.” The Team recommended that the Indicators of Achievement reflect that all students use technology to improve basic skills.

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

**RECOMMENDATION NOT FOLLOWED.** The Team observed that classroom computers were being used in the afternoon.

The Team reviewed the computer laboratory logs and found in February that Laboratory 1 was used by only three teachers. Laboratory 2 also showed limited use in February.

March Laboratory 1 records showed that it was used by four teachers and two of these were primary users. Laboratory 2 records showed that one teacher used it one day for the Writing Assessment.

The Mobile Laboratory was available March 1 and records showed that it was used nine days. According to records the mobile laboratory was not used March 2 through March 24. The Team further reported that very little use of SUCCESS was occurring.

- 6.1.12. Multicultural activities.** While the school has an abundance of multicultural activities in place, there was a lack of the county multicultural plan. The Team recommended that a county multicultural plan be applied utilizing the components already in place.

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

**RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.** The principal provided a copy of the Pleasants County Multicultural Plan. The Pleasants County Middle School

**Multicultural Plan lacked some of the key components of a comprehensive plan. Ethnicity, culture, and the holocaust were the predominant multicultural activities included in the plan. The Team recommended that the school Multicultural Plan include the areas specified in Policy 2421. Some recommended areas include: Diversity, tolerance, zero tolerance of harassment and violence, and the various stereotypes.**

**6.5.2. Codes of conduct.** Through interviews with the principal, the Team found that 51 suspensions resulted from 38 individual students. Twenty-five percent (25%) of these resulted from physical assault/contact. The Team recommended that the school develop and implement an anger management program targeted to decrease the number of physical assault/contact incidences.

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

**RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The number of out-of-school suspensions for physical assault/contact was reduced from the previous year.**

**6.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations.** Given the design of the facility, the Team determined that safety might be an issue because individual classrooms cannot be secured if necessary. Also, outside access doors remained unlocked throughout the school day. The Team recommended that the school explore additional avenues to further secure the building during school hours. This would also assist in reducing the amount of noise and distractions from adjoining classrooms and hallways.

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

**RECOMMENDATION NOT FOLLOWED. The situation remained as noted in the original report. Securing individual classrooms is impossible without a major renovation or new construction.**

## 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 Pleasants County Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Pleasants 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 Pleasants 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 the proper development of lesson plans and in implementing the writing process. These issues would better serve the school and have a direct impact on student achievement.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**A program was held on developing lesson plans. Professional development was provided on instruction in writing. Writing assessment results for 2004-2005 at 58 percent was very low. Current Writing Assessment results will determine if the application of the professional development was effective.**

**7.1.3. Facilities. Schools are operated efficiently, economically, and without waste or duplication, and the number and location of schools efficiently serves the student population. (W. Va. Code §18-9D-15 and §18-9D-16d)**

The inability to secure each individual classroom during an emergency has the potential to be a serious problem. It is recommended that Pleasants County Middle School and Pleasants County explore methods in which this issue can be solved.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The situation remained as stated.**

## **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 Pleasants County Middle School and Pleasants County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies.

However, Pleasants County is urged to contact the RESA V Director of Special Education and the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Education, Executive Director, for assistance in designing and implementing programs for the special education (SE) subgroup.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The school has engaged the West Virginia Department of Education and RESA V for assistance with special education. Both agencies have provided support, technical assistance, and professional development. The inclusion model for reading was being used for all grades. The county plans to extend inclusion to language arts and mathematics pending staffing. Pleasants County and the middle school must build a systemic and specific approach that is collaborative and involves the central office administrators, school administrators, and the school's teaching staff.**

## 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.

**17.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** Pamphlets were not available for student use.

**17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have a ceramic kiln or black-out areas. The physical education facilities did not have a display case or bulletin board.

**17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The Grades 6, 7, and 8 science facilities were not of adequate size; did not have gas; an air vacuum; a ventilation hood; a demo table; an emergency blanket; or emergency showers; and no main gas shut-off.

**17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The auditorium did not have acoustical panels.

### FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

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

**17.1.5. Library/media and technology center.**

**SCHOOL SYSTEM APPROVAL AND SCHOOL ACCREDITATION  
STATUS**

<b>School</b>	<b>Accreditation Status</b>	<b>Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards</b>	<b>Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement</b>	<b>Date Certain</b>
67-301 Pleasants County 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 Pleasants County School System and continue the Conditional Accreditation status of Pleasants County Middle School with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).