

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

POCAHONTAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

POCAHONTAS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

DECEMBER 2005

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Pocahontas County High School in Pocahontas County was conducted on November 3, 2005. 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 – Dan Blackwood, Coordinator, Office of Instructional Materials

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Frankie Appel	Retired Coordinator	Greenbrier County
Gary Nichols	Middle School Principal	Shady Spring Middle Raleigh County
Clyde Stepp	High School Principal	Liberty High Raleigh County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

69 POCAHONTAS COUNTY
Dr. J. Patrick Law, Superintendent

501 POCAHONTAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – Met Standard

Thomas W. Sanders, Principal
Grades 09-12
Enrollment 421

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	98	100	99	99.00	60.82	Yes	Yes	✓
White	98	100	99	99.00	60.82	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	44	45	44	97.77	48.83	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	18	18	18	100.00	16.66	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	98	100	99	99.00	69.07	Yes	Averaging	✓
White	98	100	99	99.00	69.07	Yes	Averaging	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	44	45	44	97.77	58.13	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	18	18	18	100.00	11.11	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year
* -- 0 students in subgroup
** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Needs to Improve – 1st Year Below Standard
Graduation Rate = 74.3%

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	100	98	99	97	99.00	9.28	29.90	46.39	10.31	4.12	60.82

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
10	100	98	99	97	99.00	7.22	23.71	42.27	13.40	13.40	69.07

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

Other Relevant Performance Data

2004-2005 Writing Assessment Grade 10

	Total # Tested	% Novice	% Partial Mastery	% Mastery	% Above Mastery	% Distinguished	% Below # Mastery	% At or # Above Mastery
POCAHONTAS COUNTY HIGH	100	7%	24%	42%	18%	9%	31%	69%

Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
73.83%	2003-04
50.00%	2002-03
67.105%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Met Standards

5.1.1. Achievement.

Students in the economically disadvantaged (SES) and the special education (SE) subgroups were not considered in AYP because of the number (N) less than 50 in these subgroups. Achievement of students in these subgroups was substantially below the State's proficiency level. Pocahontas 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.

5.1.4. Graduation rate.

This is the first year that Pocahontas County High School failed to achieve 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 was notified of any subgroup that initially did not make AYP in one year on any indicator. Pocahontas County High School and Pocahontas County were encouraged to revise the school and county Unified Improvement Plans when a subgroup is identified in any one year.

The following professional development and training opportunities were provided by the county and/or school.

1. Vertical Teaming for language arts, math, science, and social studies teachers.
2. Five Year Strategic Plan.
3. Instructional Strategies that Work.
4. Research Based Instructional Strategies.
5. Literacy in Career and Technical Education.
6. Numeracy in Career and Technical Education.
7. Classroom Instructional Strategies that Work.
8. Curriculum Alignment.

* Individual staff members participated in additional areas of staff development specific to their instructional areas.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

5.1.4. Graduation rate. The administration and staff have taken a proactive approach to correct the graduation rate deficiency. Assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education had been requested and several local activities have been implemented. Teacher and peer tutoring have been provided to help ensure student success and graduation.

6.1.3. Learning environment. The educational facility was well maintained and attractive. Given the age of the facility, the appearance and functionality of the infrastructure was excellent.

The student body exhibited excellent behavior throughout the Team's visit. Students were helpful, polite, and mannerly.

The staff was knowledgeable, professional, and exhibited high expectations for student achievement. During teacher interviews and classroom observations, it was evident that staff was concerned about their students and expected high achievement levels. The teachers articulated about the issues facing the school and initiatives undertaken to overcome these issues.

The Team commended the principal and assistant principal for their professional behavior and devotion to student education. The administrators were well prepared and organized and exhibited a true commitment for education. The principal and assistant principal had a clear vision of the direction that the school needs to take to increase student achievement and graduation rate.

6.1.4. Instruction. The staff recognized the low performance in special education and have been applying strategies to correct the deficiency. This is the first year for full inclusion for the school and it appeared to be implemented affectively.

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. Each student was provided extensive access to technology and its application within the instructional day. The Team observed the varied use of technology in instruction delivery throughout the building. Staff and students indicated that technology was an integral part of the daily instruction and that student learning was being positively affected by this practice.

6.1.11. Guidance and advisement. The guidance counselor developed a student binder for all senior students to make them aware of important information concerning graduation requirements, college testing tips, strategies, career choices, scholarships, and other life skills. Plans were in place to introduce this booklet to the Grades 9, 10, and 11 classes.

- 6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.** Lesson plans were clear and concise, correlated with the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs), and could easily be followed by a substitute teacher.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1.4. Instruction.** Through teacher interviews and classroom observations, the Team found limited integration between the academic and career-technical programs. The Team recommended that the two areas coordinate curricula to ensure efficient coverage of the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) in both areas.

Exemplary Programs & Practices

6.1.9. – Programs of study.

Title: French

Description of Program

The French program offers five levels of French, with the majority of the students entering Level 2 from the middle school. The program integrated the four major language skills: Listening, speaking, reading, and writing the language while interweaving the culture of France and other francophonic cultures. The course is interactive with games, songs, cooking and movement, and students read and write extensively. Each year students participate in the county foreign language festival involving 150 student participants and attracts over 200 visitors. French students compete in French cooking, reading, recitation, and poster contests. The festival is sponsored by Pocahontas County Fairs and Festivals, with additional prizes given by First Citizens Bank. Judges for the cooking are gourmet cooks, many from the county's finest restaurants.

Each year French students participate in the National French Contest and students have won at the state level and twice placed nationally. Two students spent an academic year in a French high school. Many students continue studying French at the college level and travel with those programs. One student returned from four months in Senegal and another is currently working as an assistante d'anglais in Strasbourg.

The French Club travels abroad every year. Through the years over 400 students have traveled to Quebec where they stay with French-Canadian families and study the history of the province. Four smaller groups of advanced students have traveled to the French West Indies. Currently, 29 students planning to travel "In the Steps of Napoleon" are raising funds for their ten day trip to Paris, Corsica, and Provence during spring break in 2006. This will be the sixth group to travel in France on a custom designed tour. The students will visit their pen/e- pals at their school while they are in Corsica. Local businesses, clubs, families, and friends provide support for these trips.

Two seniors, majoring in Foreign Languages, mentor students at Marlinton Elementary School and teach French to first graders three days a week.

Summary of Results

The school's chapter of the National French Honor Society celebrates its twentieth year this year. Their members have had poetry published in the national magazine, L'Elan. The Society also awards ten travel scholarships annually nationwide. Over the years, four Pocahontas County High School students have won these \$1,000 prizes; in both 2004 and 2005 our student entered was runner up for this award.

Two years of foreign language study are required for 2008 graduates planning to go to college, with a third year highly recommended. Students who do Level 3 or above test regularly into higher level classes in college. This is particularly beneficial for West Virginia University

students, who receive free college credit for all the courses below the university class they test into.

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Exemplary Programs & Practices

6.1.10. Approved elective offerings.

Title: Forest Technology

Description of Program

The Forestry program is a comprehensive vocational program that offers four levels of technical instruction. This program integrates mathematics and writing skills with forestry topics. Outdoor hands-on instruction drives this program. The Forestry I program introduces the student to tree identification and classification along with an intense study in forest fire fighting and equipment safety. Students in the Forestry II program learn how to operate forest machinery and measure trees for different forest products. Forest products produced in this class (lumber) are utilized by the Building Construction classes. The Forestry III program incorporates advanced dendrology and silvicultural skills with the recognition and control of forest insect and disease problems. Other cooperative projects include a Forestry and Physics lesson in which forestry students work with physics students in activities, measuring tree heights and diameters, and running a compass and pacing course. The common language of mathematics is stressed. Forestry students gain an appreciation for the tools they often take for granted and Physics students gain an appreciation of how vector mathematics can be applied to real world situations. The Wildlife Management class is a very popular class, where the students learn about the wild animals, found in our region, and their habitats. An intense unit on stream entomology (level 1 SOS) is coupled with a fly fishing unit to promote healthy streams and clean water. The overall Forestry program attracts over 120 students per year.

Summary of Results

Pocahontas County Forestry students have participated in the academically challenging West Virginia Vocational-Agricultural Career Development Events and 4-H Forestry contests since 1986. These students have achieved 23 West Virginia State titles and seven National titles. Students have earned over \$20,000 in scholarships. Many of the contest participants have gone on to further their education in forestry and are employed in the forest industry.

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Exemplary Programs & Practices

6.1.14. Alignment with job market opportunities.

Title: Senior Work-Based Learning Program

Description of Program

The Senior Work-Based Learning Program was instituted ten years ago. The current program evolved from the School-to-Work program. Pocahontas County High School staff added the Work-Based Learning Program to the curriculum as a graduation requirement. Each senior graduating from Pocahontas County High School since 2000 has worked with a mentor. The work-based learning experience must correlate with the student's career cluster and major.

Summary of Results

As a result of the Work-Based Learning Program, every senior graduating from Pocahontas County High School has work-site experience in a field they are considering as a career choice. Most students have remained in their career field, but some have decided that the career was not the one they wanted. Either decision has validated the worth of the program. It allows students to view first-hand what the job is truly like. It also allows them to use tools and technology that can only be talked about in school. The portfolios that the students produce also validate the learning that has occurred. This is demonstrated in the presentations the students make to their Career Committee.

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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.

None identified.

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.

- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have two deep sinks or black-out areas. The physical education facility did not have a display case.
- 17.1.15 Health service units.** A health services unit of adequate size and furnishings was not available. The following items were not available: Curtained or small rooms with cots, bulletin board, toilet, lavatory, scales, medicine chest, refrigerator with locked storage, work counter, desk and chair, and locked medication box.

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
69-501 Pocahontas County High	Full Accreditation			

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team presented one (1) recommendation and three (3) exemplary programs.

Pocahontas County High School's Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and process standards and progress related to student and school performance in the area of deficiency (5.1.4). It is believed that practices are in place to correct the graduation rate issue. The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Pocahontas County High School in improvement efforts.