

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

HURRICANE MIDDLE SCHOOL

PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

OCTOBER 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Hurricane Middle School in Putnam County on February 15, 2006.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Hurricane Middle School in Putnam County was conducted September 22, 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

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

72 PUTNAM COUNTY

Harold L. "Chuck" Hatfield, Superintendent

310 HURRICANE MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Greg LeMaster, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 835

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	786	837	825	98.56	82.17	Yes	Yes	✓
White	764	810	798	98.51	82.58	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	15	18	18	100.00	53.33	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	297	332	322	96.98	71.67	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	161	178	174	97.75	43.39	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	786	837	825	98.56	81.72	Yes	Yes	✓
White	764	810	799	98.64	82.01	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	15	18	17	94.44	57.14	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	297	332	323	97.28	71.47	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	161	178	171	96.06	49.35	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 96.9%

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.

72 PUTNAM COUNTY
Harold L. "Chuck" Hatfield, Superintendent
310 HURRICANE MIDDLE CHOOOL - Passed
Greg LeMaster, Principal
Grades 6 - 8
Enrollment 873
2005-2006

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	786	831	829	99.75	85.96	Yes	Yes	✓
White	759	801	799	99.75	86.12	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	18	20	20	100.00	77.77	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	297	315	313	99.36	79.32	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	145	152	150	98.68	51.04	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	**	**	**	100.00	100.00	NA	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	786	831	828	99.63	88.63	Yes	Yes	✓
White	759	801	798	99.62	88.75	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	18	20	20	100.00	77.77	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	297	315	312	99.04	82.65	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	145	152	149	98.02	64.08	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.2%

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Hurricane Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement for the special education (SE) subgroup. 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.

Hurricane Middle School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. It is further noted that the racial/ethnicity black (B) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored below the State's percent proficient level in mathematics and reading/language arts. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plans and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Note: It was noted that the SE subgroup percent proficient in both mathematics (43.39 percent) and reading/language arts (49.35 percent) is promising.

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

1. Technology training.
2. WVEIS training.
3. No Child Left Behind.
4. Content Standards and Objectives training.
5. Informal Reading assessment.
6. Individualized Education Program (IEP) Software.
7. Accomplished Teacher Project.
8. Positive Behavior.
9. Alternate Assessment.
10. Standards Based Math.
11. Differentiated Instruction.
12. Physical Best.
13. Curriculum Mapping.
14. Positive Behavior Support.
15. Innovative Instructional Strategies.
16. Motivating the Reluctant Learner.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Hurricane Middle School improved substantially in the special education (SE) subgroup from a 43.39 percent mathematics proficient rate in 2005 to 51.04 percent in 2006. The SE subgroup increased in reading/language arts from 49.35 percent to 64.04 percent.

The following programs, instructional strategies, and/or professional development were provided by the West Virginia Department of Education, RESA III, county, and/or school.

1. The school incorporated the Wilson Reading program.
2. Teachers worked one on one with students during Advisory/Advisee on specific skills that had not been achieved.
3. The master schedule was revised to provide 90 minutes daily instruction for math and reading and 45 minutes daily instruction for social studies and science.
4. Putnam County School System supported the school's initiatives by providing an additional teacher which allowed the 90 minutes of math and language arts.
5. This teacher rearranges daily afternoon planning to accommodate students who need remediation.
6. After-school tutoring is available for students on the borderline of cut scores.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

NONCOMPLIANCES

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 physical education curriculum did not address the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) as approved by the West Virginia Board of Education and indicated by lesson plans and the activity taking place. Neither a physical education curriculum nor a course syllabus was available. Sequencing was not incorporated for one grade to the next in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Identical activities were repeated in each of the classes and grade levels. The activities listed in the lesson plans were all team sports or competitive activities. The physical education CSOs require that the curriculum include individual non-competitive activities, rhythmic activities, and outdoor adventure activities, such as, hiking, archery, etc.

Instructional strategies in physical education were inappropriate, ineffective, and did not involve all students. Teaching and instruction were nonexistent on the day of the Education Performance Audit. Students were playing games while the teacher was observing and some students were not involved in any activity. The games should have been organized in smaller groups with more equipment so that all students practice skills. Only two balls were available for over 40 students. Playing the games without introduction and teaching of skills for the activity and all student participation and practicing the skills was an ineffective instructional technique.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. A course syllabus and physical education curriculum were available and guided the curriculum of the classes. A variety of activities was observed and listed in lesson plans. All activities were guided and instructed thoroughly by the teachers. A multitude of equipment and materials were used for the activities. Identical activities

continued to be repeated for different grade levels. For example, football was being instructed for Grades 6, 7, and 8, as were several other activities. This seemed contradictory to the principal's interview in which he stated that he "divides teachers for different skill activities."

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 interviewed staff and conducted observations and reported that very little true collaboration occurred between the special education teachers and the general education teachers. In most cases, the general education teacher developed and implemented the lesson plans without full participation of the special education teacher.

Instruction in many of the classes relied upon one or two instructional strategies. Several classes were composed of teacher directed instruction with little student interaction. Some classes relied upon small group instruction in which one or two of the students did a majority of the work and other students socialized during this time.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The staff had received staff development on the implementation of collaboration. Through teacher and student interviews, this practice appeared to be greatly improved from the time of the original Education Performance Audit. Staff reported and the Team observed that student achievement had improved and the students were more comfortable with the new process. The Team observed a variety of instructional strategies throughout the building.

Training on Thinking Math II, Differentiated Instruction, and Writing Road Map will be held on In Service and Continuing Education days.

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The application of technology is included throughout all programs of study and students have regular access to library/educational technology centers or classroom libraries. (Policy 2470; Policy 2510)

Several students interviewed stated that they rarely utilized computers. Computer logs in the new part of the building were not up-to-date to verify student use of the computer laboratory. The Team also noted that very few classroom computers were being utilized by students. Teachers stated that computer laboratories were not capable of whole class instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Teachers and students verified that the usage of the school's technology had greatly increased. The three computer laboratories were well utilized. The school will be receiving three whiteboards to use.

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)

A countywide or schoolwide multicultural plan was not in place. There were very few multicultural activities throughout the building. Students could not articulate any knowledge of multicultural activities and the Team reported that there were few multicultural activities included at all programmatic levels as required by Policy 2421.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school was using a school-based Multicultural Plan and the teachers and students interviewed could articulate the plan.

Putnam County provided a county Multicultural Plan which was a comprehensive plan in a notebook format. According to the principal, Character Education and Multicultural Education were addressed during the Advisor/Advisee time.

6.2. Student and School Performance

6.2.2. Counseling services. Counselors shall spend at least 75 percent of the work day in a direct counseling relationship with students, and shall devote no more than 25 percent of the work day to counseling-related administrative activities as stated in W.Va. Code §18-5-18b. (W.Va. Code §18-5-18b; Policy 2315)

Evidence did not exist to show that the guidance counselors were involved in a direct counseling relationship with students 75 percent of the work day. According to the counselors, the percentage of time spent with students was probably less than 75 percent of the time. A counseling log failed to verify the required 75 percent of student contact time. Students stated that they had little contact with counselors during the year. Several students stated that the only time that they could visit the counselors was during lunch time; however, the counselors had lunch duties which impeded counseling opportunities.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. The principal moved the counselors so they would be more accessible to students. Each counselor works with three different teams and principal/assistant principal and is located in that section of the building. The principal provided counselors a list of expectations and also calculated the 75 percent student contact requirement as 4½ hours daily.

While these arrangements and expectations have been established, the Team interviewed counselors and reviewed counseling log books. It was not possible to verify that the counselors were spending at least 75 percent of their time in direct student counseling. One counselor was absent on the day of the visit; however, the Team was able to review the log. Another log that contained a section for parent contact, a section for student contact, and section for teachers concerning students, and a telephone log, but this did not fulfill the direct student contact.

One counselor stated that the 75 percent direct contact time was “probably” met monthly. The Team will return to check that this standard is being totally implemented.

- 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)

Some lesson plans were difficult to follow and would be difficult for a substitute teacher to implement. Several plans listed activities for the entire period, such as, “check for understanding”, “students will research medieval times via online information and instruction”, and “map review”.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal developed a lesson plan format that included the necessary components of effective lesson plans and reviewed them weekly. Teachers could adapt them for their individual needs as long as the components were included.

Lesson plans reviewed by the Team were comprehensive and could easily be followed by a substitute teacher for continuity in instruction.

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)

A physical education teacher did not have the appropriate endorsement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The teacher noted had the appropriate credentials.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan.** Most teachers were knowledgeable of the Five-Year Strategic Plan; however, teachers at one grade level could not articulate the components of the plan. The Team recommended that staff development on the development and implementation of the Five-Year Plan be conducted for all staff on an on-going basis.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Teachers interviewed articulated the various components of the Five-year Strategic Plan. The principal stated that every teacher had been given the Five-year Strategic Plan and the plan had been reviewed and specific actions to be completed were discussed. He also said that a written version of the plan was contained in the back of each teacher’s handbook. According to the principal, the Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) is in the process of revising the school’s plan. One teacher from each grade level in addition to a special education teacher and a related arts teacher are members of the LSIC to participate in revising the plan.

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 Hurricane Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Putnam 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 Putnam 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.

Special education students at Hurricane Middle School would be better served if the school's curriculum delivery was designed to meet the needs of this subgroup. An effective and efficient curriculum involves using available resources. The effectiveness of collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers needed to be improved. Assistance may be requested from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Instructional Services and Office of Special Education.

The computer laboratories were not being utilized effectively or efficiently. In view of the achievement of the special education (SE) subgroup and the achievement gap of the racial/ethnicity black (B) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups, the Team determined that this technology should be consistently used for a more efficient and effective application to enhance student learning.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The curriculum needs had been addressed to enhance student learning.

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

- 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 Hurricane Middle School and Putnam County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be further developed in the special education department to provide quality services to these students. The Team recommended that the Putnam 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.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The Putnam County School System and Hurricane Middle School have provided additional staff, adjusted the master schedule for more time in the core subjects, and provided staff training to improve the achievement of all 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 school site was not 11 acres +1 acre for each 100 students over 600. The school's location was not removed from undesirable noise and traffic. The site was not suitable for special instructional needs, e.g., outdoor learning. Well equipped and age level appropriate playgrounds/recreational areas were not provided.
- 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 was not adequate in size, did not have access to natural and artificial light, storage was inadequate, and did not have the following: Counter space, outlets, mechanical ventilation, a ceramic kiln, and black-out areas. The music facility did not have an adequate storage area. The physical education facility did not have a display case.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The Grades 6, 7, and 8 science facility did not have the following: Air vacuum, ventilation fume hood, demo table, and darkening provisions.

- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage did not have fire resistant curtains.
- 17.1.15 Health service units.** A health services unit of adequate size was not available. The following items were not available: Curtained or small rooms with cots, bulletin board, toilet, lavatory, scales, refrigerator with locked storage, work counter, and desk and chair.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

All items remained the same as noted during the February 15, 2006 Education Performance Audit with the exception of the following.

- 17.1.2.1. The administrative office area had been restructured to provide a reception/waiting area.**

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.

Hurricane Middle School and Putnam County must implement high-yield instructional practices and instruction that will improve achievement. Putnam 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. While the overall WESTEST results were very good, an achievement gap existed between the racial/ethnicity black (B) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups and that of the all students (AS) and racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups.

The special education (SE) subgroup achievement did not meet percent proficient; however, at 43.30 percent in mathematics and 49.35 percent in reading/language arts, AYP is achievable. Putnam County and Hurricane Middle School must work on collaborative services and bring about further improvement of the SE group.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

All subgroups achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP).

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
72-310 Hurricane Middle	Full Accreditation			

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 Putnam County School System and upgrade Hurricane Middle School to Full Accreditation status with a December 29, 2006 directive to correct the partial compliance standards or be issued Temporary Accreditation status.

NEW ISSUE

The school required students to purchase materials for individual classes. Teachers and the principal verified this practice. Such items included calculators for math classes, binder notebooks, paper, pencils, etc. Schools may not require students to purchase such items in accordance with a free and appropriate education. The Team will review this issue when it returns to check the partial compliance areas.