

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

RITCHIE COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL

RITCHIE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JANUARY 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Ritchie County Middle School in Ritchie County was conducted on November 30, 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 – Marian Covey, Coordinator, Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Ron Cantley	Assistant Administrator Curriculum and Instruction	Raleigh County
Randy Nutter	Middle School Assistant Principal	Pleasants County Middle Pleasants County
Mary Grace Tallhamer	Middle School Principal	Robert L. Bland Middle Lewis County
Larry Werry	Elementary School Principal	Fairview Elementary Marion County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

77 RITCHIE COUNTY

Dr. Richard N. Butler, Superintendent

302 RITCHIE COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

April Haught, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 387

2004-2005 WESTEST

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	360	383	381	99.47	72.90	Yes	Yes	✓
White	355	377	375	99.46	72.80	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	207	229	228	99.56	64.56	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	64	73	72	98.63	26.98	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	360	383	382	99.73	74.37	Yes	Averaging	✓
White	355	377	376	99.73	74.57	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	207	229	229	100.00	65.70	Yes	Confidence Interval - Averaging	✓
Spec. Ed.	64	73	73	100.00	26.56	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 97.4%

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class

Mathematics											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	119	113	118	112	99.16	3.57	25.89	50.89	16.96	2.68	70.54
07	151	141	150	140	99.34	10.00	11.43	37.14	30.71	10.71	78.57
08	113	106	113	106	100.00	6.60	25.47	42.45	17.92	7.55	67.92

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	119	113	119	113	100.00	7.08	23.01	42.48	22.12	5.31	69.91
07	151	141	150	140	99.34	7.86	9.29	39.29	35.00	8.57	82.86
08	113	106	113	106	100.00	1.89	30.19	43.40	17.92	6.60	67.92

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%
RITCHIE COUNTY	142	1%	19%	63%	15%	1%	20%	80%
RITCHIE COUNTY MIDDLE	142	1%	19%	63%	15%	1%	20%	80%

**Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test
Passage Rate**

Percentage of Students	School Year
55.41%	2003-04
59.00%	2002-03
58.689%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

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

Ritchie County Middle School achieved AYP in reading/language arts in the all students (AS) subgroup by averaging and in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup by application of the confidence interval – averaging and may have achievement difficulties if interventions are not applied and consistent classroom assessments for learning are not practiced to determine student mastery of specific skills. Furthermore, the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class data showed that 30.19 percent of Grade 8 students were below mastery in reading/language arts and 25.47 percent were below mastery in mathematics. Also, 23.01 percent of the Grade 6 students were below mastery in reading/language arts and 25.89 percent were below mastery in mathematics.

Ritchie County Middle School's professional development opportunities were specific to the school's performance deficiencies. The following professional development and training opportunities were provided.

1. COMPASS training.
2. Curriculum Alignment using Compass.
3. Individualized Education Program (IEP) training for all special education teachers using Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) alignment to write IEPs.
4. WESTEST analysis.
5. Alternate Assessment training.
6. Kurzweil and IEP computer program.
7. I KNOW website.
8. NAEP testing.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

- 6.1.2. High expectations.** While several teachers exhibited excellent teaching strategies, four teachers excelled in their teaching methods. These teachers exemplified high expectations, student involvement, and varied instructional strategies and were excellent role models for students and other teachers.
- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The building was clean and educationally stimulating and evidenced a warm and inviting atmosphere for the students, staff, and public.
- 6.1.4. Instruction.** The staff was aware of the importance of mathematics and placed a great deal of emphasis on student mastery of mathematical concepts. This was a school priority with students receiving 90 minutes of mathematics daily throughout the school year.
- 6.1.5. Instructional strategies.** Ritchie County hired instructional coaches to assist teachers and students in improving student achievement. These coaches were available to work with individual students and whole classes to ensure mastery of concepts. Feedback from the staff indicated that this practice had been very effective thus far.
- 6.5.1. Parents and the community are provided information.** The school staff developed a school calendar which was provided to each student. The information contained within this calendar communicated information to students and parents regarding curriculum, illness, social activities, and various contact information.

Each teacher was provided a minimum of three stamped postcards each term to mail parents when their child did something noteworthy. These postcards, notables, provided positive feedback and increased teacher/parent contact.
- 6.8.1. Leadership.** The principal was well organized and dedicated to the achievement of all students. The principal and assistant principal were positive role models for students and staff and carried out the administrative responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

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

6.1. Curriculum

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)

Two teachers observed by the Team did not exhibit effective classroom management techniques. The first was a Grade 8 English classroom teacher in which instruction was on a much lower level than Grade 8. Students were not engaged throughout the entire class period; 10 out of 21 students were not doing anything educational throughout the Team observation. The second teacher was a long term mathematics substitute teacher. All teacher dialogue that was directed to the group was in competition with student dialogue. The students did not pay attention to the teacher throughout the entire observation and less than half of the class was engaged in the classroom activities.

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 observed classrooms and interviewed teachers and students and found that all teachers were not providing instruction in writing to all students on a weekly basis. The Team also found that not all student writing was collected and corrected for spelling, punctuation, content, and grammar.

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 of the lesson plans from the related arts classes were generic and outdated. The objectives in the physical education classes were not specific to the strategies and Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) to be taught. Some of the dates of the lessons in the music classes were from October 15, 2004. The agendas for each of the technical education classes were the same throughout the entire six week rotation and were repetitive each day of the week. Dates were not listed in the technical education plans and the plans did not address the uniqueness of each class and group of students. The Team recommended that the related arts teachers be given assistance on developing lesson plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.4. Instruction. Given the low achievement of the special education (SE) subgroup, the Team investigated the various reasons for this and offered the following recommendations to eliminate this achievement gap.

1. The school should consider emphasizing having special education teachers and aides work predominantly in the reading/language arts and mathematics classes. Self-contained special education classrooms in science and social studies needed to be examined for effectiveness.
2. The school is urged to provide as much access to general education classes and curriculum through teaming and collaboration as possible in reading/language arts and mathematics.
3. The top performing students identified as moderate mentally impaired (MMI) should be placed in a collaborative class for exposure to a more intense curriculum.
4. While some of the general education teachers and special education teachers have common planning times, the school should strive to make this available to all collaborative teachers.
5. The Team observed that the expectations for the special education students were lowered in some of the classes. It is imperative that the special education students be challenged to decrease the achievement gap. Teachers must be cautious of confusing lowering expectations with helping the special education students.

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. Only one of the mathematics classes observed had full function graphing calculators for student use. The Team recommended that at least the Grades 7 and 8 mathematics classes have the graphing calculators.

6.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations. The Team observed that in the physical education class a high school student was supervising a group of students while the physical education teacher was working with another group of students in an area where the teacher could not see the other group. The Team recommended that the physical education teacher supervise the entire class.

Exemplary Programs & Practices

6.1.3. Learning environment.

Title: Health and Wellness Center

Description of Program

A Health and Wellness Center is located in the Ritchie County Middle School Complex. The Wellness Center includes two examination rooms, a laboratory room, office, and waiting room. Services provided by the Center have proven successful through expanded services and its increased use.

The school has daily access to a nurse practitioner or doctor, both of whom can write prescriptions, a nurse, and a receptionist. The Center now houses an agency that provides mental health care for students and dental service is also provided once a month. Students receive dental care based on a recent Health Care study indicating the need for these services. Cleaning, fillings, and general dental care can be provided at the Center. The Center is for all Ritchie County students, staff, and the staff's family members.

The Wellness Center supports education in a number of ways.

1. Students and staff are evaluated on site by a professional and those who are sick and need to go home can be sent home following the examination.
2. Students and staff are also offered preventive services. Well-child appointments, vaccinations, physicals, and health education are among the services provided to help keep students healthy and in school.
3. Prescribed medication at school is administered by a trained medical professional.
4. Students and staff experiencing various crisis situations receive immediate help with both physical and mental issues.

Summary of Results

The on-site Health Wellness Center has improved student attendance, protected instructional time, improved wellness, provided health educational programs, and the use of the Center has increased.

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Indicators of Efficiency

Indicators of efficiency for student and school system performance and processes were reviewed in the following areas: Curriculum delivery, including but not limited to, the use of distance learning; facilities; administrative practices; personnel; utilization of regional education service agency, or other regional services that may be established by their assigned regional education service agency. This section contains indicators of efficiency that the Education Performance Audit Team assessed as requiring more efficient and effective application.

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Ritchie County Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Ritchie 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 Ritchie County or the accreditation status of the schools.

7.1.1. Curriculum. The school district and school conduct an annual curriculum audit regarding student curricular requests and overall school curriculum needs, including distance learning in combination with accessible and available resources.

The effectiveness of collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers must be improved. Given the low test scores in the special education (SE) subgroup, it is imperative that this issue be addressed as soon as possible. Assistance may be requested from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Instructional Services and Office of Special Education and RESA V.

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

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.4. Instruction.	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
6.2.3. 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 Ritchie County Middle School and Ritchie County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be developed in the special education department to provide quality services as demonstrated by the general education teachers. The Team recommended that the Ritchie County School System Director of Special Education and the school administrator engage the Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director at RESA V in developing the school’s capacity to improve the school’s achievement of the special education 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.

- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** A ceramic kiln and blackout areas were not available in the art facility in the middle school; however, these items are available in the high school which is connected to the middle school. **(Does not adversely impact education)**

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 special education (SE) subgroup, Ritchie County Middle School and Ritchie County must implement high yield instructional practices that will improve students' achievement. Ritchie County must actively pursue assistance from RESA V, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development to assist with school improvement efforts. The special education (SE) 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
77-302 Ritchie County Middle	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.4; 6.1.6; 6.2.3		
			5.1.1 (SE)	May 31, 2007

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified three (3) high quality standards – necessary to improve performance and progress to meet 5.1.1 Achievement – for the special education (SE) subgroup. The Team also presented three (3) recommendations and one (1) exemplary program.

Ritchie County Middle 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 (5.1.1 SE). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Ritchie County 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 adequate yearly progress (AYP).