

**OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS**



**FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR**

**SUMMERS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL**

**SUMMERS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**MARCH 2006**

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Summers County High School in Summers County on October 20, 2004.

At the direction of the West Virginia Board of Education another review was conducted on March 23, 2005 to investigate the violations of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2421, *Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment and Violence Policy*.

The Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Summers County High School in Summers County was conducted February 2, 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**

**81 SUMMERS COUNTY**  
Vicki S. Hinerman, Superintendent

**502 SUMMERS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement**

Garnette Crowder, Principal  
Grades 09 - 12  
Enrollment 488

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	109	117	114	97.44	57.54	Yes	Yes	√
White	105	113	110	97.35	55.88	Yes	Confidence Interval	√
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	58	58	55	94.83	36.36	Yes	No	<b>X</b>
Spec. Ed.	31	34	32	94.12	0.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	109	117	113	96.58	71.42	Yes	Confidence Interval	√
White	105	113	109	96.46	70.29	Yes	Confidence Interval	√
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	58	58	55	94.83	52.72	Yes	No	<b>X</b>
Spec. Ed.	31	34	31	91.18	10.71	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY = Full Academic Year.

\* = 0 students in subgroups.

\*\* = Below 10 students in subgroups.

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 81.0%**

**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.

**81 SUMMERS COUNTY**

Vicki S. Hinerman, Superintendent

**502 SUMMERS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – Passed**

Garnette L. Crowder, Principal

Grades 09 - 12

Enrollment 488

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	108	112	109	97.32	57.54	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	100	103	100	97.08	57.14	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	65	67	65	97.01	49.20	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	26	27	26	96.29	16.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	108	112	108	96.42	69.52	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	100	103	99	96.11	68.04	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	65	67	64	95.52	62.90	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	26	27	26	96.29	36.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY = Full Academic Year.

\* = 0 students in subgroups.

\*\* = Below 10 students in subgroups.

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 86.2%**

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

### **Below Standard**

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

Summers County High School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in one or more subgroups designated in 5.1.1. Achievement. One subgroup designated in 5.1.1. Achievement, included: economically disadvantaged (SES) students. 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 Team determined that the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) had been revised to address 5.1.1. Achievement. The USIP plan was well designed to improve student achievement. A strong Curriculum Team and advisory teams who worked with students and the principal were active in school improvement. The school still has not completely implemented the USIP and must do so to increase student achievement.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. Summers County High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) for 5.1.1. Achievement.**

**Summers County High School achieved AYP in the all students (AS), racial/ethnicity white (W), and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups only by application of the confidence interval in both mathematics and reading/language arts. The special education (SE) subgroup was not considered in AYP due to the number (N) less than 50. The SE subgroup's percent proficient at 16 percent in mathematics and 36 percent in reading/language arts was below the state's proficiency level.**

**The school showed modest improvement in some subgroups; however, the percent proficient decreased in the AS and W subgroups in reading/language arts and remained the same for the AS subgroup in mathematics. The SES and SE subgroups' percent proficient showed improvement, but still lagged behind the AS and W subgroups.**

**The student performance results provided a compelling need for Summers County to review program delivery, support programs, and professional development to improve student achievement.**

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

### NONCOMPLIANCE

#### 6.1. Curriculum

**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)**

Through teacher and student interviews and observations, the Team found that the existing policy on harassment, racial, sexual, religious/ethnic harassment or violence was not enforced consistently schoolwide. Students stated that some students who violated school rules were not disciplined. Some teachers indicated that there have been incidents of harassment that they have not reported to the school administration. The reason that was given was that the former administration did not act on such instances; therefore, the teachers stopped reporting incidents. However, it was also reported that with the new administration, reporting these types of problems is increasing.

The Team witnessed a serious student violation of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2421, *Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment and Violence Policy*, and strongly urges the Summers County Central Office staff and school administrators and staff to initiate immediate action with an emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance for any form or incident of harassment or violence. To be effective the policy and expectations must be communicated schoolwide to students and staff, communicated to parents, and the policy must be applied consistently. The stated purpose of Policy 2421, “is to prevent racial, sexual or religious/ethnic harassment or violence . . . to protect the academic environment, and to assure that our educational institutions respond to harassment and/or violence incidents when they occur in a manner that effectively deters future incidents. . . .”

A school environment in which harassment is tolerated by staff carries over into the classroom learning environment and affects student classroom performance. Name calling, disrespecting students, and not showing interest on a personal level were noted as contributing to low student performance.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**NONCOMPLIANCE.** The Team interviewed students and staff and concluded that major issues still remained pertaining to the discipline and harassment issues.

Interviews were conducted with all teachers during their planning time and a majority of them stated that there were problems with follow-through on disciplinary issues at the school. While the staff was in agreement that numerous programs had been implemented to improve the harassment/bullying issues at the school, there was consensus that the problem occurs when the school rules are not applied consistently and thoroughly.

Examples of some general school rules that the Team observed to not be enforced and to be an area of contention by the staff included the following.

1. **Cellular Phones.** According to the student handbook, “Cellular phones and pagers must not be on or visible during the class period.” A sheet of paper was taped to each classroom door stating that no cell phones were permitted in the classrooms. Teachers stated that they stopped confiscating cell phones because it is cumbersome in time, they do not want to confront some of the students about the issue, and there is very little done with the student once the violation has occurred. The Team observed numerous cell phones throughout the two days of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit.
2. **Profanity.** According to the student handbook, “At no time shall we allow profanity, cursing or vulgarity to be used on campus.” The Team heard instances of profanity during the Follow-up Education Performance Audit and teachers stated that it continued to be a major problem.
3. **Hats.** According to the student handbook, “Students shall be prohibited from wearing head coverings in the building.” The Team observed several students wearing hats on the days of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit. Some confusion existed among the staff members on this issue. Several stated that they believed that hats were not to be worn but could be carried, while others believed that the procedure was that hats were not to be carried throughout the building. It is imperative that all staff be made aware of the various policies of the school and that each rule be enforced consistently throughout the building.
4. **Tardiness.** According to the student handbook, disciplinary procedures begin after the third tardy. Teachers stated that many students are tardy on a regular basis with no repercussions. The Team observed several students who were late for classes at each class change.

While the issues stated above are not major infractions in and of themselves, they are indicative of the overall problem of inconsistencies in policy enforcement by teachers and administrators. Through interviews with students, it was obvious that the students were well aware that they did not face consequences if they did not abide by all school rules. This tends to lead to violations of larger and more serious policies.

Several teachers stated that they were not reporting as many violations due to the long amount of time that it took the administration to react to the problem. The teachers believed that the reason for this was that the principal, who is the primary disciplinarian at the school, had so much paperwork to do that she did not have time to get to the issues in a timely manner. The Team recommended that discipline be delivered by the assistant principal, which the principal and superintendent stated that they had already considered that possibility and believed that change would take place in the near future.

It was stated by numerous students and several staff members that student athletes were not subjected to the same disciplinary procedures as non-athletes. One issue that kept coming up in the interviews happened during the latest football season.

Summers County High's football team traveled to Westside High School and after the game took several items from the locker room. These items included a football helmet, several pairs of shoes, and some items of clothing. It was decided that if the students brought back the items and returned them to Westside, the athletes would receive one day of in-school suspension. Teachers were upset by this action because they saw it as the athletes were taken out of school for the day, rode to Westside High School, returned the items, and were taken out to lunch before returning to school. This was seen as far too light of a punishment by the staff and several students. The report on the WVEIS records show these as violations of school rules rather than the more accurate theft category.

In addition to student athletes, the staff is under the assumption that special education students are given far too lenient discipline when rules are broken. It was stated to the Team during several of the interviews that special education students could not be disciplined and that teacher intervention with special education students was extremely low. It was apparent to the Team that the staff was not aware of the provisions for discipline as they pertain to special education students. The superintendent stated that the staff had been made aware of the procedures for discipline of special education students; however, very little knowledge was shown by the teachers during interviews.

Another area of concern of the staff was the apparent lack of support that the building level administration received from the central office. One of the recurring reasons as to why the building level administration was not more consistent with disciplinary procedures was perceived that the central office staff had been less than supportive in the past and had overturned decisions by the principal. Teachers were suspicious of the confidence placed on the principal because directors from the central office were monitoring the hallways and observing classes for a two-week period. This perceived lack of confidence has had a demoralizing effect on staff.

When asked if the administration reacted consistently and severely to harassment/bullying and physical fights, students and staff stated that they believed that to be the case. One instance that had drawn a great deal of attention from the community recently was when two female students were involved in an altercation and the second girl hit the first girl. The aggressor was suspended from school. The boyfriend of the suspended girl made verbal threats against the victim and her brother. That student, an eighteen year old male, was suspended from school and faces expulsion for up to one (1) school year. Students and staff recalled other instances where there was a physical altercation and the administrative staff acted swiftly and thoroughly to resolve the situation.



## **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 Team assessed as requiring more efficient and effective application.

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Summers County High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Indicators of Efficiency shall not be used to affect the approval status of Summers County or the accreditation status of the schools.

**The Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) needed to be effectively implemented and applied to result in improved student, school, and school system performance.**

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The school achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP); however, improvement in percent proficient was modest in mathematics. The percent proficient in reading/language arts was slightly less than the previous year (2003-2004), except for the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup which increased the percent proficient. The special education (SE) subgroup showed a significant increase in percent proficient over the previous year.**

## **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 Summers County High School and Summers County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiency. However, the county and school must provide the leadership and mechanisms already in place to target resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student and school performance. The Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) is a strong document for school improvement; however, the plan needs to be thoroughly implemented. Summers County Central Office staff is urged to exercise greater involvement and capacity development with the school to assist and monitor implementation of the USIP.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The Team determined that Summers County High School and Summers County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiency; however, they have failed in using that capacity to bring about consistent enforcement of the discipline policy and the Student Code of Conduct and Teacher Code of Conduct. A major change in policy implementation and disciplinary procedures must take place. It must be realized that school and county policies that are not enforced tend to erode the effectiveness of the school's administration to enforce all other policies. The superintendent has stated that she will take the necessary steps and provide the needed supervision to resolve the deficiencies.**

## 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 Checklist, Summers County High School was below standard in the areas listed. The principal checked and the Team confirmed the following school facility resource needs.

- 17.1.1. School location.** The site acreage of 4 acres was less than the recommended 15 acres for a 9-12 school and the site was not large enough for future expansion.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The music facility area did not have adequate storage and needed more folding chairs.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.**
- Room 210 – did not have gas, ventilation fume hood, demo table, emergency showers, balance cases, tables, and adequate storage.
  - Room 212 – did not have adequate storage.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage facilities.** The high school auditorium did not have broadcast capabilities, speakers and distance learning capability, and was inadequate in size.
- 17.1.13. Grades 7-12 school site vocational.** The business education space did not have room darkening provisions, display and map rail, and worktable/work counter.

- 17.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not provided.
- 17.1.15. Health service units.** The following health service equipment was not provided:  
Medicine chest, refrigerator with locked storage, and locked medication box.

**FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The facility resource needs remained as noted in the December 2004 Draft Report.**

## **EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION**

One of the most important elements in the Education Performance Audit process is monitoring student progress through early detection and intervention programs.

Given the achievement levels of students in the economically disadvantaged students (SES) subgroup, Summers County High School and Summers County must implement curriculum and instruction that will improve students' achievement. Furthermore, Summers County High School must be diligent in efforts with the all students (AS) subgroup in reading/language arts and the white (W) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts as the assessed standard was met by application of the confidence interval. While 31 students were tested in the special education (SE) subgroup and were not considered because of the number (N) less than 50, zero percent (0.00%) of students in this subgroup were proficient in mathematics and only 10.71 percent (10.71%) were proficient in reading/language arts. Summers County must actively pursue assistance from RESA I, 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.

### **TEAM SUMMARY**

**Summers County High School's student achievement was low, although the school met adequate yearly progress (AYP). The Team observed that little change occurred in instruction and programs to improve student achievement. The school has had extensive training on harassment and bullying and initiated programs; however, staff was unable to articulate or demonstrate school improvement efforts regarding strategies and initiatives to improve students' performance.**

**SCHOOL SYSTEM APPROVAL AND SCHOOL ACCREDITATION  
STATUS**

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
81-502 Summers County High School	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.12		October 2, 2006

**Education Performance Audit Summary**

**The Team reported that the county superintendent, principal, and assistant principal know what the problems are and have the knowledge to solve the problems. An obvious staff division exists between the central office and school; the school’s administrative team; and the staff and administration.**

**Due to the continued issues with discipline and failure to substantially improve student achievement, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the Conditional Accreditation status with a date certain of October 2, 2006 to resolve the noncompliance. If the situation is not remedied at that date, a Seriously Impaired status will be recommended. Furthermore, Summers County and Summers County High School have not demonstrated consistent leadership to cause sustained improvement. The Office of Education Performance Audits further recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education consider providing assistance to guide the school in reclaiming a cohesive, instruction focused, and disciplined school. The specific recommendations which are attached would be expected to be followed to correct the noncompliance.**

## **SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS THAT NEED TO BE FOLLOWED TO IMPROVE THE DISCIPLINE AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**

1. An administrative plan on who is to be responsible for handling different types of discipline issues should be developed and communicated to the staff. The principals' expectations of the role of teachers in handling in-class discipline should be communicated to the staff.
2. The role and extent of the county level administrators in monitoring and accepting appeals regarding discipline at the school should be established and communicated to the staff.
3. One or more of the site-based leadership teams (Local School Improvement Council, Faculty Senate, or Curriculum Team) need to discuss the discipline issues and review school policies and procedures for handling student discipline in a manner that is consistent with State and local policies. These recommendations need to be forwarded to the principal for consideration.
4. The student discipline policy must be followed consistently, thoroughly, and expeditiously without delaying the consequences beyond the day they occur unless absolutely necessary for investigations and interviews.
5. Staff training in harassment and discipline should be continued.
6. The Five-Year Strategic Plan should be revised to reflect the objective of making the school consistent and comfortable with implementing the zero tolerance for harassment and dealing with other discipline issues.
7. Administrators develop a collegial school culture that promotes team work and ensures that the Employee Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct are enforced so that the school environment is less threatening to students.
8. Administrators and teachers maintain a clear focus on instructional delivery and high-yield instructional practices to improve achievement of all subgroups.
9. The principal should monitor the reporting of WVEIS disciplinary data to ascertain that all infractions are accurate and reported in a timely fashion.
10. Summers County and Summers County High School seek assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Healthy Schools, regarding discipline issues and the Office of Instructional Services, Office of School Improvement, and Office of Special Education for achievement issues.