

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

HAMILTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

WOOD COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Hamilton Junior High School in Wood County was conducted on March 13, 2006. 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 Five-Year Strategic 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 – Lisa Youell, Closing the Achievement Gap (CAG) Liaison, Office of School Improvement

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Denver Drake	Middle School Principal	Braxton County Middle Braxton County
Rhonda Judy	Middle School Assistant Principal	Robert L. Bland Middle Lewis County
Dr. Jack Kaufman	Professor of Education	Mercer County
Mary Alice Kaufman	Board Member	Mercer County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

96 WOOD COUNTY

William A. Niday, Superintendent

404 HAMILTON JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Michael Winland, Principal

Grades 07 - 09

Enrollment 623

WESTEST 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	370	391	387	98.97	78.14	Yes	Yes	✓
White	361	382	378	98.95	78.43	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	163	182	179	98.35	71.25	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	62	68	66	97.05	35.00	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	370	391	386	98.72	82.19	Yes	Yes	✓
White	361	382	377	98.69	82.30	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	163	182	178	97.80	72.95	Yes	Averaging	✓
Spec. Ed.	62	68	66	97.05	30.00	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.6%

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
07	189	180	187	178	98.94	5.06	12.36	57.30	21.35	3.93	82.58
08	202	190	200	188	99.01	7.98	18.09	40.43	29.26	4.26	73.94

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
07	189	180	186	177	98.41	5.08	11.86	41.24	33.90	7.91	83.05
08	202	190	200	188	99.01	2.66	15.96	32.45	38.83	10.11	81.38

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%
WOOD COUNTY	1028	3%	21%	62%	11%	2%	25%	75%
HAMILTON JUNIOR HIGH	177	4%	17%	67%	11%	1%	21%	79%

Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
55.88%	2003-04
37.35%	2002-03
36.918%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Hamilton Junior High School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement for the special education (SE) subgroup in 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 with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve AYP.

Hamilton Junior High School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts only by averaging and in the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics by application of the safe harbors provision. 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 close the achievement gap for the SE and SES students.

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

1. Prioritized Curriculum.
2. Graphic Organizers.
3. Collaborative Pairs.
4. Summarizing.
5. Vocabulary in the Context of Content.
6. Previewing.
7. Scaffolding.
8. Formative Assessment.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

- 6.1.2. High expectations.** The Team commended a teacher for her leadership in developing a student project to honor and assist students displaced by Hurricane Katrina and creating *The Giant Little Children's Book* that was designed to provide resources for displaced students in Louisiana. The book sales netted nearly \$360 for the hurricane relief fund. Those who purchased the book mailed it to a school in Louisiana.

Wood County Schools provided a prioritized curriculum for each subject area that assisted teachers in monitoring coverage of the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). This was an excellent aid for teachers in planning instruction.

- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The Team commended the student body for their positive deportment during the Education Performance Audit. Students were mannerly, helpful, and were positive representatives for the school.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

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

6.1. Curriculum

- 6.1.5. Instructional strategies. Staff demonstrates the use of the various instructional strategies and techniques contained in Policies 2510 and 2520. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

While most lesson plans identified the content to be taught, many plans did not identify the instructional strategies to be used in dealing with that content. Classroom observations also indicated that a variety of instructional strategies was not evident.

Collaboration between special education and general education teachers was evident in many of the classrooms. However, Team observations and teacher interviews indicated that the special education co-teacher was not being used effectively in reading/language arts classrooms. Student achievement in the special education (SE) subgroup was indicative that special education teachers should have greater involvement with these classes.

The Team could not verify that the physical education curriculum addressed the five movements required by the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). The program overemphasized team competitive sports. Information, observations, and teacher interviews confirmed that skills were not being taught; only that competitive team games were being played.

6.2. Student and School Performance

- 6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback. Lesson plans that are based on approved content standards and objectives are prepared in advance and the principal reviews, comments on them a minimum of once each quarter, and provides written feedback to the teacher as necessary to improve instruction. (Policy 2510; Policy 5310)**

The Team reported that some lesson plans were inadequate and the administrator's comments did not provide written feedback to the teachers as necessary to improve instruction. Several lesson plans could not be followed by substitute teachers. Given the deficiencies in the special education (SE) subgroup and the performance of the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup, it was particularly important that the administrators review plans and assure that lessons are coherent, relevant, sequential, and address students' learning needs.

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)**

The Team interviewed teachers and found that special education teachers were the teachers of record in classes in which they were not certified. These teachers must be collaborating with general education teachers and must not be the teacher of record when giving grades.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** While the computer laboratories were being utilized a great deal of the time, only a small number of classroom computers were being utilized throughout the day of the Education Performance Audit. The Team recommended that classroom computers that were not being utilized be moved to areas of the building where students will have access to them.

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 Hamilton Junior High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Wood 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 Wood 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 curriculum delivery would be more effective and efficient with the application of varied instructional strategies. Hamilton Junior High School had an abundance of test data from which to build stimulating curriculum that meets the individual and collective student needs. Wood County curriculum staff and the principal are strongly urged to ensure that all classrooms concentrate on curriculum delivery that is effective and efficient.

Programs were needed to assist teachers in developing lesson plans and in implementing the writing process. These issues would better serve the school and have a direct impact on student achievement.

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 Hamilton Junior High School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.5. Instructional strategies.	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
6.6.2. Licensure.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation (304) 558-7842

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 Hamilton Junior High School and Wood County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be developed in the special education department to provide quality services. The Team recommended that the Wood 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.

- 17.1.3. Teachers' workroom.** The teachers' workroom was not adequate in size.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have mechanical ventilation or black-out areas. The music facility did not have adequate storage.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The science facilities were not of adequate size and were not located with easy access to outdoor activities or isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building. The following equipment was not available: Ventilation fume hood, demo table, and emergency showers.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage was not adequate in size and had no acoustical panels. An auditorium was not available.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not available and a locker/dressing room was not available.
- 17.1.15. Health service units.** The health services unit did not have a work counter.

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, Hamilton Junior High School and Wood County must implement high-yield instructional practices and instruction that will improve students' achievement. Wood 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. 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
96-404 Hamilton Junior High	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.5; 6.2.3; 6.6.2		
			5.1.1 (SE)	May 31, 2007

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified three 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 two school initiatives for achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP) and one recommendation. Additionally, the Team noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Hamilton Junior High School’s Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance 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 Hamilton Junior High 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 AYP.