

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

PARKERSBURG HIGH SCHOOL

WOOD COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

MAY 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Parkersburg High School in Wood County on May 31, 2005.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Parkersburg High School in Wood County was conducted March 30, 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**

96 WOOD COUNTY

William A. Niday, Superintendent

501 PARKERSBURG HIGH SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

Ralph Board, Principal

Grades 10 - 12

Enrollment 1386

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
Mathematics								
All	474	495	476	96.16	70.89	Yes	Yes	✓
White	459	478	460	96.23	70.88	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	144	157	146	92.99	54.07	By Improvement	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	62	66	59	89.39	18.18	No	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	474	495	476	96.16	81.40	Yes	Yes	✓
White	459	478	460	96.23	81.71	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	144	157	146	92.99	70.37	By Improvement	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	62	66	59	89.39	21.81	No	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Graduation Rate = 81.8%**

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.

96 WOOD COUNTY
William A. Niday, Superintendent
501 PARKERSBURG HIGH SCHOOL - Passed
Ralph Board, Principal
Grades 10 - 12
Enrollment 1280

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	420	438	426	97.26	74.08	Yes	Yes	✓
White	411	426	414	97.18	74.25	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	144	155	149	96.12	58.69	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	46	52	51	98.07	20.00	Yes	NA	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	420	438	424	96.80	78.13	Yes	Yes	✓
White	411	426	412	96.71	78.14	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	144	155	148	95.48	64.23	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	46	52	51	98.07	31.11	Yes	NA	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

Passed
Graduation Rate = 80.4%

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Parkersburg High School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in one or more subgroups designated in 5.1.1. Achievement. One subgroup designated in 5.1.1. Achievement, included special education students (SE).

Parkersburg High School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. The county staff and school staff are urged to address this subgroup in the county and school Unified Improvement Plans and apply interventions to close the achievement gap for SES and SE students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Parkersburg High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP). The percent proficient of the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup continued to be substantially lower than the all students (AS) and racial ethnicity/white (W) subgroups and only achieved AYP by application of the confidence interval. Parkersburg High School and Wood County must continue to concentrate efforts on improving the achievement of the SES subgroup.

The special education (SE) subgroup was not considered in accreditation because the number (N) was less than 50. The achievement of this subgroup, although improved from the previous year, remained below standard. The Team encouraged the school to continue to develop skill mastery of the SE subgroup and continue to improve achievement.

Some of the activities instituted at Parkersburg High School to improve student achievement included the following:

- 1. At-risk-teams of teachers, counselors, and administrators were created for identified students in Grades 10, 11, and 12. Students were tracked by teams and provided assistance when they were unsuccessful.**
- 2. Under the direction of the Assistant Principal, special education students were included into general education classrooms.**
- 3. Teachers had been trained in collaboration and general education and special education teachers met weekly to collaborate on instruction.**
- 4. Study halls were eliminated.**
- 5. The school instituted a “Big Red Camp” during the summer for at-risk Grade 10 students entering from the junior high schools.**

5.1.2. Participation rate.

One subgroup designated in 5.1.2. Participation rate, included special education students (SE). Furthermore, the school achieved AYP in participation rate for the SES subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts by improvement. The county and school are urged to vigorously address these issues.

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 school revised its Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) to improve performance and progress on the standards and the West Virginia Board of Education upgraded Parkersburg High School to Conditional Accreditation status with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve AYP.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The participation rate on the WESTEST improved for the all students (AS) subgroup and all the subgroups. The participation rate for economically disadvantaged (SES) students increased from 92.99 percent to 96.12 percent in mathematics and from 92.99 percent to 95.48 percent in reading/language arts. The participation rate for the special education (SE) subgroup increased from 89.39 percent to 98.07 percent in mathematics and reading/language arts.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

NONCOMPLIANCES

6.1. Curriculum

6.1.2. High expectations. Through curricular offerings, instructional practices, and administrative practices, staff demonstrates high expectations for the learning and achieving of all students and all students have equal educational opportunities including reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration. (Policy 2510)

The Team observed at least eight (8) classrooms in which the teachers stopped instruction prior to the end of class. In one classroom, the teacher stopped instruction six (6) minutes early and dismissed students to lunch early.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Following faculty discussions on instructional time, all teachers indicated that instructional activities occur the full class period. This was being monitored by the school administrators with the five by five walkthroughs. The Follow-up Education Performance Audit Team observed that all classes were actively engaged until the end of the class.

6.1.3. Learning environment. School staff provides a safe and nurturing environment that is conducive to learning. (Policy 2510)

The Team found a general lack of consistency for chemical storage. Several bottles had labels that were worn to the point in which the contents could not be properly identified. The Team observed chemicals packed in boxes on the floor.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE.

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 found that there was little or no evidence of feedback from the administration regarding lesson plans. The administrator admitted only providing feedback once this year (2004-2005) and was not able to provide any evidence of feedback to improve instruction. In addition, the special education teachers involved with inclusion did not provide evidence of lesson plans for inclusion classes. Three teachers commented, "We are not the teacher of record, so we just use the regular teacher's lesson plans."

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal devised a lesson plan review checklist that is completed by the school administrators and returned to the teaching staff. A review of teacher lesson plans showed several reviews by the school administrators with comments for improvement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The Team observed that 12 of 26 computers in a laboratory on the third floor were not functioning properly. The Team recommended that Parkersburg High School utilize RESA V and/or other avenues to ensure the computers are repaired and functioning properly.

While the Team saw evidence that the computer laboratory was used by English classes, nothing was available to support technology use by the other content areas. The Team recommended that Parkersburg High School utilize computers and other technology in all content areas on a regular basis.

Several computers were stationed on folding tables. The Team recommended that computers be stationed on properly supported workstations to ensure student and staff safety.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 6.6.3. Evaluation.** The Team interviewed several teachers who were not aware of their evaluation cycle. The Team recommended that the administration provide information to teachers regarding the evaluation cycle.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The Team reviewed documents that showed the evaluation cycle for each teacher. The appropriate information had been shared with all teachers.

- 6.7.2. Policy implementation.** The Team was concerned about potential safety issues pertaining to the open school campus concept. The Team observed several exit doors that were unlocked and not monitored throughout the day. Several students and teachers expressed concern for student safety during interviews with Team members. The Team recommended that Parkersburg High School staff lock outside exit doors and close the campus to unauthorized persons. Additionally, the Team recommended that teachers monitor the hallways during class change.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Most outside exit doors had been marked “For Emergency Use Only” on the inside and marked “Not an Entry” on the outside. These doors were locked and could not be entered from the outside. Two doors leading to outside classrooms and the front door were not locked during the school day. The hallways were being monitored by teachers and administrators.

When the current construction is completed, the campus will be closed and there will not be a need to have outside doors unlocked during the school day.

Exemplary Programs & Practices

6.1.9. Programs of Study.

Title: World Language Department

Description of Program

The world language courses offered at Parkersburg High School reflect the national standards and what the national language organizations deem important in a contemporary language program. The teachers teach in and through their languages, rather than at their languages. First year courses are conducted 85-100 percent of the time in the target language except for language comparisons. In the second year honors and all upper-level courses, the target language is the language of instruction 100 percent of the time.

The courses are communication-based. All students use their target language for interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational reasons. They are engaged and directly involved in their language learning because they are immersed in the language and culture and are required to remain on-task during the entire class time. The teachers' carefully articulated lesson plans are designed to promote students' skill progression and provide real world use of the language.

Because the courses are also content based, students learn through themed units. The teachers do not rely solely on the provided textbook materials, but create and incorporate connections with other disciplines such as art, music, and history. Culture is an important aspect of the language being studied and is presented by integrating authentic documents/products [songs, pieces of art, literature (stories and poetry), maps, and other regalia] in the target language. Students are exposed to different practices and perspectives through such products as they learn language.

Opportunities for students to use their language skills abound. The spring Justo Lamas concert is one example in which area schools are invited to bring their Spanish students to join Parkersburg High School's students for an instructional-based musical presentation. The students are exposed to the language through the culture and become actively engaged in the concert.

The World Language Department teachers make a constant effort to improve their instruction. The teachers' research, read, and implement the various learning theories and differentiate instruction to address multiple intelligences and learning styles. Their lessons incorporate a constant use of scaffolding to support the students in their language learning efforts. Opportunities for before and after school tutoring are given on a year-round basis for those in need of additional help and acceleration is offered to advanced students. Two Advanced Placement (AP) courses are currently offered and teachers also counsel the feeder school teachers in the vertical-teaming approach to French and Spanish.

Summary of Results

- **National French Contest** – Since 1988, 43 students have been first place champions in Levels 1 – 5.
- **National Spanish Contest** – Since 1988, 69 students have been first place champions.
- **National Senior Scholars in the National Spanish Honors Society’s Essay Competition** – Seven students were National Seminar Scholars, two were also national champions.
- **National Quincentenary Essay Contest (1992)** – A Parkersburg High School student was the national winner.
- **National Junior Travel Scholar (1992)** – A Parkersburg High School student was the national winner.
- **National French Honor Society Travel Award/Scholarship (1993)** – A Parkersburg High School student was the national winner.

The World Language Department has numerous finalists and state champions every year on the National French and Spanish Exams. Many students also receive college credit for AP courses and demonstrate their superior performances on university placement tests. Outstanding students are chosen as members of the National French/Latin/Spanish Honor Societies and some have received travel awards and scholarships for their language study.

The World Language Department members have been honored by their former students as favorite educators of the Governor’s Honor Academy attendees, one as the outstanding educator of a Presidential Scholar, and one as the educator of distinction of a national Coca-Cola Scholar. The department is respected statewide for the excellence of the language program. Department members are part of their professional organizations, attend language conferences, and contribute to their profession. Their innovative instructional methods are presented at state, regional, and national conferences. Two teachers are members of the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language’s New Visions Committee, one is a member of the State Program Review Board, and one is a member of the State Commission on International Education. Several past State language organization office holders, two National Board Certified Teachers, and three past recipients of the State Foreign Language Teacher of the Year recognition are in the World Language Department.

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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 Parkersburg High School and Wood County Schools have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies and increase student achievement to meet adequate yearly progress (AYP).

Given the low performance results in the economically disadvantaged (SES) and special education (SE) subgroups, it is recommended that Parkersburg High School and Wood County pursue assistance from RESA V and the West Virginia Department of Education in order to investigate and implement programs and practices to increase student achievement.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Parkersburg High School with support from the county, RESA V, and the West Virginia Department of Education met adequate yearly progress (AYP).

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 removed from undesirable noise and traffic.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The science facilities did not have adequate size and were not located with easy access to outdoor activities and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of building.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** The food service seating area did not have the capability to accommodate three-eighths of the student body.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The facility resource needs remained as noted in the July 2005 Draft Report. Construction had begun on the new building which will house a science classroom wing and a cafeteria.

**SCHOOL SYSTEM APPROVAL AND SCHOOL ACCREDITATION
STATUS**

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
96-501 Parkersburg High	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 Wood County School System and continue the Full Accreditation status of Parkersburg High School. Additionally, the Team identified one exemplary program.