

**Final Education Performance Audit Report**

**For**

**INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL**

**RALEIGH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**JULY 2008**

**West Virginia Board of Education**

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Independence High School in Raleigh County was conducted on February 1, 2007.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Independence High School was conducted April 29, 2008. 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.

**74 RALEIGH COUNTY**

Dr. Charlotte Hutchens, Superintendent

**502 INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL – Passed**

Bob Meadows, Principal

Grades 09 - 12

Enrollment 739 (2005-06 2nd month enrollment report)

**WESTEST 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 | 162 | 167 | 163 | 97.60 | 60.12 | Yes | Yes |  |
| White | 158 | 163 | 159 | 97.54 | 59.09 | Yes | Yes |  |
| Black | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Hispanic | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Indian | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Asian | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Low SES | 89 | 93 | 89 | 95.69 | 48.23 | Yes | Confidence Interval |  |
| Spec. Ed. | 16 | 17 | 15 | 88.23 | 7.14 | NA | NA | NA |
| LEP | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| **Reading/Language Arts** | | | | | | | | |
| All | 162 | 167 | 165 | 98.80 | 71.25 | Yes | Yes |  |
| White | 158 | 163 | 161 | 98.77 | 71.15 | Yes | Yes |  |
| Black | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Hispanic | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Indian | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Asian | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Low SES | 89 | 93 | 91 | 97.84 | 58.62 | Yes | Confidence Interval |  |
| Spec. Ed. | 16 | 17 | 16 | 94.11 | 6.66 | NA | NA | NA |
| LEP | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

\*\* -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 86.2%**

**74 RALEIGH COUNTY**

Dr. Charlotte Hutchens, Superintendent

**502 INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL – Passed**

Bob Meadows, Principal

Grades 09 - 12

Enrollment 754 (2006-07 2nd month enrollment report)

**WESTEST 2006-2007**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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 | 182 | 189 | 186 | 98.41 | 66.29 | Yes | Yes |  |
| White | 174 | 181 | 178 | 98.34 | 67.05 | Yes | Yes |  |
| Black | \*\* | \*\* | **\*\*** | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Hispanic | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Indian | \*\* | \*\* | **\*\*** | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Asian | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Low SES | 101 | 106 | 104 | 98.11 | 55.00 | Yes | Confidence Interval |  |
| Spec. Ed. | 17 | 18 | 18 | 100.00 | 11.76 | NA | NA | NA |
| LEP | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| **Reading/Language Arts** | | | | | | | | |
| All | 182 | 189 | 185 | 97.88 | 76.11 | Yes | Yes |  |
| White | 174 | 181 | 178 | 98.34 | 76.87 | Yes | Yes |  |
| Black | \*\* | \*\* | **\*\*** | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Hispanic | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Indian | \*\* | **\*\*** | \*\* | \*\* | \*\* | NA | NA | NA |
| Asian | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |
| Low SES | 101 | 106 | 103 | 97.16 | 68.68 | Yes | Confidence Interval |  |
| Spec. Ed. | 17 | 18 | 18 | 100.00 | 11.76 | NA | NA | NA |
| LEP | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* | \* |

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

\*\* -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 91.4%**

**ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Met Standard**

**5.1.1. Achievement.**

**Independence High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. It is further noted that the special education (SE) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored far 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 close the achievement gap for the SE and SES students.**

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) information by class data showed that 39.88 percent of Grade 10 students were below mastery in mathematics and 28.75 percent were below mastery in reading. This provides an implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement programs.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided.

1. Smart Board/Data Projector.
2. Grade Quick.
3. Writing Roadmap I and II.
4. SAS in Schools.
5. 21st Century Training and Technology.
6. WESTEST Analysis.
7. Writing Assessment and WESTEST: Improving our Scores.
8. Pacing and Mapping.
9. Data Analysis – HSTW Training.
10. Differentiated Instruction.
11. Safe and Healthy Schools Training.
12. Technology Academy.
13. The Self-Directed Learner.
14. ACT PLAN Workshop.
15. Respect and Protect.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. Independence High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP). Adequate yearly progress was achieved in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading with the application of the confidence interval. The school showed increases in the number of students scoring at the proficient level in all subgroups with the largest gain in the SES subgroup in reading/language arts with an increase from 58.62 percent to 68.68 percent. Students in the special education (SE) subgroup still scored low, but the percent proficient increased in both mathematics and reading/language arts. The percent proficient in mathematics increased from 7.14 percent to 11.76 percent and in reading/language arts increased from 6.66 percent to 11.76 percent.**

**EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

**Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.**

**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 education opportunities including reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration. (Policy 2510)**

All of the Algebra II classes were kept on the same pace with the same lesson plans. This practice did not allow for individual class differences and flexibility in curriculum delivery.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. A review of the teachers’ lesson plans revealed individual planning for each section and class being taught by the teacher.**

**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 interviewed teachers and students and found all teachers were not providing instruction in writing assignments to all students on a weekly basis. Also, the Team found student writing was not always collected and corrected for spelling, punctuation, content, and grammar.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed a large collection of student writing samples collected from teachers in all subject disciplines. Interviews with teachers from different subject areas confirmed that all teachers were participating in student writing. The school had part-time services of the county Academic Writing Coach, and he has been effectively working with the faculty with writing techniques that may be used in various subjects across the 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)**

The administration stated that there was no county or school Multicultural Plan. When questioned, teachers could not articulate many buildingwide multicultural activities.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. Interviews with teachers and classroom observations showed teachers were aware of the school’s Multicultural Plan that had been developed and were actively involved in implementing the plan.**

* + 1. **Instructional day. Priority is given to teaching and learning, and classroom instructional time is protected from interruption. An instructional day is provided that includes a minimum of 315 minutes for kindergarten and grades 1 through 4; 330 minutes for grades 5 through 8; and 345 minutes for grades 9 through12. The county board submits a school calendar with a minimum 180 instructional days. (W.Va. Code §18-5-45; Policy 2510)**

The following practices failed to demonstrate that priority was given to teaching and learning and the integrity of the instructional day.

1. Only Grade 9 students attended school the first day of the school year.

2. Students scheduled to eat during the second lunch did not receive the required 8100 minutes. Due to lunch scheduling, these students received 7650 minutes of instruction.

3. Several classes observed ended instruction 5-10 minutes early.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.**

1. **Beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, all students reported to school on the first day of the instructional calendar.**
2. **The times were changed for students in the second lunch period to ensure they received 8100 minutes of instructional time. This was confirmed by the principal and the school master schedule.**
3. **The staff received time management training and techniques to ensure they effectively use the entire instructional period. Observations in a number of classrooms at the beginning of class periods and at the end of class periods showed classes beginning quickly and students remaining engaged until the end of the class period.**

**6.2. Student and School Performance**

**6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan. A Unified County Improvement Plan and a Unified School Improvement Plan are established, implemented, and reviewed annually. Each respective plan shall be a five-year plan that includes the mission and goals of the school or school system to improve student or school system performance or progress. The plan shall be revised annually in each area in which the school or system is below the standard on the annual performance measures.**

All teachers were not aware of the various components of the Five-Year Strategic Plan. They could not articulate how the plan would be used to address the needs of the school and students.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. The Five-Year Strategic Plan had been rewritten and contained information useful to teachers. All teachers had copies of the plan that they used in planning their instruction. Teachers were able to readily discuss the plan and how they were using it to guide their instruction. Various departments meet weekly during one conference period and review the plan and assess how they are meeting the goals and implementing the action steps.**

**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)**

Lesson plans of two mathematics teachers and one science teacher were not thorough enough to be followed by a substitute teacher. It is important that instruction be continuous and sequential and a substitute teacher be able to continue the lessons and instruction of the classroom teacher.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed lesson plans for all mathematics and science teachers, as well as samplings of other teachers’ lesson plans, and found them to be sufficiently complete for a substitute teacher to follow.**

**6.7. Safe, Drug Free, Violence Free, and Disciplined Schools**

**6.7.2. Policy implementation. The county and schools implement: a policy governing disciplinary procedures; a policy for grading consistent with student confidentiality; policies governing student due process rights and nondiscrimination; the Student Code of Conduct policy; the Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment, and Violence policy; an approved policy on tobacco use; an approved policy on substance abuse; and an approved policy on AIDS Education. (W.Va. Code §18A‑5‑1 and §18‑8‑8; Policy 2421; Policy 2422.4; Policy 2422.5; Policy 4373; Policy 2515)**

Smokeless tobacco was evident in the male rest room located nearest the library.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE. Observations in the rest rooms and throughout the building did not reveal any use of tobacco. The principal and faculty reported that it is a continuous effort to prevent students from using tobacco products and they think the use of tobacco has been dramatically reduced. The school had an active RAZE group that presented anti-tobacco use programs to the student body and prepared informational bulletin boards throughout the building. One such program was the “Through with Chew Week” during February 2008.**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**6.2.4. Data analysis.** While the teachers were utilizing the WESTEST data, they were not using the ACT Plan or ACT Explore data. The Team recommended that the school use all student data to make decisions on curriculum delivery.

**FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The counselors used ACT Explore data when helping students prepare their transitional educational plan at the end of the eighth grade. The ACT Plan test data were being used when planning the students’ three-year component of the plan. The Team reviewed some of the plans students had prepared in conferences with counselors using this data. ACT Plan data were also used to identify student skill weaknesses and plan instruction to address these weaknesses in their high school English and mathematics classes.**

**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 Independence High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Raleigh 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 Raleigh 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.**

A schoolwide program was needed to assist teachers in implementing the writing process. The Five-Year Strategic Plan needed to be effectively implemented and applied to result in improved student and school performance.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

**The school, with the assistance of the county academic writing coach, implemented the 6+1 Traits of Writing program to assist teachers in implementing the writing process. Teachers reported they were implementing the writing process in all classes. Samples of student writings from all classes were available for the Team to review.**

**Teachers were knowledgeable of the school’s Five-Year Strategic Plan and were implementing it throughout the school. Student achievement, as measured by the WESTEST, had improved.**

**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 Independence High 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 electronic strategic 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 Independence High School and Raleigh County have the capacity to correct deficiencies noted in the report and target resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

**The faculty of Independence High School, with assistance from the Raleigh County administrative staff, had corrected all deficiencies noted in the report and as a result the teaching and learning processes have improved.**

**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.

**17.1.4. Counselor’s office.** The counselor’s office did not have adequate space.

**17.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** The Library/Resource/Media Center did not provide appropriate space.

**17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility was not of adequate size, did not have access to natural and artificial light, did not have adequate storage, and did not have the following equipment: Two deep sinks, mechanical ventilation, ceramic kiln, or black-out areas. The music facility did not have a chalkboard/whiteboard and bulletin board.

**17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The science facilities did not have the following equipment: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, AC and DC current, air vacuum, chalkboard, bulletin boards, open and closed shelving, ventilation fume hood, demo table, sufficient laboratory workspace, fire extinguisher, blanket, and emergency showers.

**17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The high school stage did not have a wood floor.

**17.1.13. Grades 7-12 school site vocational.** The business education all purpose facility did not have an overhead projector and a screen. The business education instructional facility did not have tables or adjustable chairs. The co-op, marketing, and agriculture education classes did not have adequate space.

**17.1.14. Food service.** The kitchen was not of adequate size. Food and non-food storage was not adequate. A locker/dressing room was not available.

**FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The facility resource needs remained the same as identified in the Draft Education Performance Audit with the exception of the following:**

**17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** **A new Art Room had been constructed and the appropriate equipment had been provided.**

**An additional classroom had been dedicated to the science program in which a new science laboratory had been placed. The laboratory and a classroom are shared by two science teachers making more laboratory space and time available to more students.**

**17.1.14. Food service.** **A locker/dressing room was available in the food service 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.

Given the achievement levels of students in the mathematics subgroup, Independence High School and Raleigh County must implement high yield instructional practices and programs that will improve students’ achievement. Raleigh 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.

**FOLLOW-UP TEAM SUMMARY**

**The faculty received additional training in the use of varied, effective instructional strategies. Lesson planning had improved and instruction was taking place from bell to bell. The faculty reported using data from the ACT Explore, ACT Plan, Writing Assessment, WESTEST, and other sources to assess student needs and prioritize instruction to address identified needs. This data had been compiled in the Five-Year Strategic Plan and was used by the teaching staff in their weekly planning meetings to assess progress and any changes needed in the curriculum and instruction.**

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

| **School** | **Accreditation Status** | **Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards** | **Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement** | **Date Certain** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 74-502 Independence High | Full  Accreditation |  |  |  |

**Education Performance Audit Summary**

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the Full Accreditation status of Independence High School.