



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

**INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT
FOR
RALPH R. WILLIS VOCATIONAL CENTER**

LOGAN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2009

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in Logan County was conducted on March 5, 2009. The purpose of the review was to assess the technical education center's compliance and progress with the high quality standards mandated by West Virginia Code §18-2E-5.

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Five-Year Strategic Plan, interviewed school personnel and school system administrators, observed classrooms, and examined school records.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Allen D. Brock, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Betty Jo Jordan, Executive Director, Office of Technology and Secondary Program Improvement

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Barry W. Crist	Principal	Fayette Institute of Technology Fayette County
Craig Lee Loy	High School Principal	Valley High School Fayette County
Clyde P. Stepp	High School Assistant Principal	Liberty High School Raleigh County

45-701 RALPH R. WILLIS VOCATIONAL CENTER

Kobie H. Coburn, Principal

**PERFORMANCE DATA
2007-2008**

6.1.8. Job placement rates for vocational programs.

- Students completing occupational concentrations – 147.
- Students placed (employed, continuing education, military) – 122 (90%).
- Seventy-three percent of those employed were employed in the field for which they were trained.
- Seventy-three percent of those continuing their education were continuing in the same field.

The Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center's performance in placement was excellent. The percentages of students employed in field and continuing education in field exceeded the State standard (60 percent).

6.1.9. Percent of students passing end-of-course career/technical tests.

The State standard for End of Course career/technical tests for the 2007-08 school year was 60 percent of students scoring 74 percent or higher on the test.

End-of-Course Test		
Number Tested	Number Met Standard	Percent Met Standard
484	196	40.5

The Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center attained 40.5 percent. The technical center needs to increase the passage rate on the performance assessment.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were available as reported by the director.

1. Summer Conference.
2. Logan County Teachers' Academy.
3. West Virginia 21st Century Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) Analysis and Introduction to WV Board of Education Policies 2510.13, 4319, and 2350.
4. Sexual Harassment.
5. Utilizing the Electronic Gradebook.
6. Implementing Office 2007 as a Major Communication Device.
7. School Safety – How Does It Affect You?

8. Lesson Plan Committee – Raising the Standard.
9. School Safety Team – Developing a Safe Environment.
10. Thinkfinity.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

COMMENDATIONS

- 7.1.2. High expectations.** High expectations were evident throughout the facility. All teachers kept all students on task and working on high quality activities. It was evident that the teachers' main focus was student achievement and their ability to be hired upon graduation. All staff exhibited high expectations for students and self.
- 7.1.4. Instruction.** The Automotive Technology and Collision Repair programs were a pilot site for student internship through the West Virginia Automobile Dealers Association. Over ten local dealers were working with the instructors to provide work based experiences. Both programs had received program modernization grants from the West Virginia Department of Education to acquire current, state-of-the-art technologies.
- 7.8.1. Leadership.** The principal was organized and efficient and created an atmosphere that fostered an effective and efficient operation. He was a positive role model for students and staff. His professional leadership exhibited school pride and ownership with the express purpose of guidance and direction of school improvement.

NONCOMPLIANCE

7.1. Curriculum

- 7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The application of technology is included throughout all programs of study and students have regular access to library/educational technology centers or classroom libraries. (Policy 2470; Policy 2510)**

While a plan was in place to correct the impediments to technology access and technology application, the Team observed the following violations of Policy 6022.

Section 302. Technology.

Specification: 302.073. Switching.

The data infrastructure shall provide a minimum of 100MB Ethernet Layer II Switching to all Local Area Network (LAN) drops. 1GB Ethernet Layer III Switching should be utilized for Local Area Network drops.

Specification: 302.074. Cabling.

A minimum of CAT5e Plenum rated cabling, rated and tested at 350Mhz, shall be utilized for all data infrastructure. CAT6 Plenum rated cabling, rated at 350Mhz should be utilized for all data infrastructure.

Specification: 302.08. Wireless Infrastructure.

302.081. All wireless implementations shall be secured with encryption.

Deficiencies

Although the school was making efforts toward upgrading their Local Area Network (LAN) Infrastructure, several problems still existed.

1. 100MB Layer II Switching did not exist. Several old hubs still existed in the network. Examples included:
 1. Adult ABE Class had hub lying in the floor.
 2. 10MB media converters were being used with hubs for the fiber connections limiting network performance.
 3. Electronics currently being utilized were not adequately mounted in approved distribution frames.
2. Existing cabling was nonstructured Category 5, which did not meet the CAT5e specification. Current cabling was not structured and was in poor condition. Interviews with staff indicated that frequent network problems affected instruction. The school principal as well as the school's approved Technology Plan indicated plans to upgrade to CAT6. New electronics and distribution frames were installed in the summer of 2008, but remained non-operational. The new electronics will not be useful until the cable drops are replaced. Upgrading the school's LAN cabling had not been scheduled.

Wireless existed in the school, but it was not encrypted which left the school's network exposed.

Recommendation

- 7.1.3. Learning environment.** The ProStart laboratory was heavily soiled. Evidence of food preparation from past days was visible due to the area not being cleaned. The refrigerator and the area was extremely cluttered and contained outdated food. The Team recommended that the area be cleaned and maintained to ensure student safety and health.

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 Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Logan 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 Logan County or the accreditation status of the school.

The education programs at the Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center would operate more efficiently if Logan County and the vocational center followed the Technology Plan and upgraded the LAN cabling.

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 Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

- 18.1. 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 the Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center and Logan County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiency and the recommendation .

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.

19.1. 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 of West Virginia 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*)

None identified.

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.

None identified.

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified one high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress: 7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.

The Team presented three commendations and one recommendation.

Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center's Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and progress standards related to student and school performance. The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in improvement efforts. Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5, the school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct any deficiencies noted in the report.

Section 17.10. of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 states:

If during an on-site review, a school or county board is found to be in noncompliance with one or more standards, the school and county electronic strategic improvement plans must be revised and shall be submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education within 30 days of receipt of the draft written report. The plans shall include objectives, a time line, a plan for evaluation of the success of the improvements, a cost estimate and a date certain for achieving full accreditation and/or full approval status as applicable.

Based upon the results of the Education Performance Audit, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education direct Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center and Logan County to revise the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan within 30 days and correct the finding noted in the report by the next accreditation cycle.