



INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

BUCKHANNON-UPSHUR MIDDLE SCHOOL

UPSHUR COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

DECEMBER 2008

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School in Upshur County was conducted on October 21, 2008. 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 Improvement 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 D. Brock, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Robert Crawford, Coordinator,
Office of ESL - International Schools

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Dennis J. Albright	Assistant Superintendent	Grant County Schools
Athanasia P. Butcher	High School Principal	Gilmer County High School Gilmer County
Brad A. Fittro	Elementary School Assistant Principal	Anna Jarvis Elementary School Taylor County
James E. Frazier	Elementary School Principal	Henry J. Kaiser Elementary School Jackson County
Frank Marino	Elementary School Principal	Nutter Fort Primary School Harrison County
David R. Mazza	Middle School Teacher	Lumberport Middle School Harrison County
Pat Metheney	High School Principal	Nicholas County High School Nicholas County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

87 UPSHUR COUNTY

Scott M. Lampinen, Superintendent

301 BUCKHANNON-UPSHUR MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Renee Warner, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 921 (2nd month 2006-2007 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2006-07

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	875	908	899	99.00	70.58	Yes	Yes	✓
White	860	892	883	98.99	70.53	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	486	509	502	98.62	59.79	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
Spec. Ed.	183	192	186	96.87	26.40	Yes	No	X
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	875	908	902	99.33	76.20	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	860	892	887	99.43	76.05	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	486	509	504	99.01	67.01	Yes	No	X
Spec. Ed.	183	192	190	98.95	30.76	Yes	No	X
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.0%**

87 UPSHUR COUNTY
Scott M. Lampinen, Superintendent
301 BUCKHANNON-UPSHUR MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
Renee Warner, Principal
Grades 06 - 08
Enrollment 910 (2nd month 2007-2008 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2007-08

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	863	896	882	98.43	67.92	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	851	883	869	98.41	67.81	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	455	480	470	97.91	55.25	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	164	172	166	96.51	24.05	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	863	896	881	98.32	76.35	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	851	883	868	98.30	76.13	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	455	480	470	97.91	66.44	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	164	172	166	96.51	27.84	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

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

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 96.5%**

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
06	294	282	290	279	98.64	6.81	25.45	49.10	14.34	4.30	67.74
07	293	284	285	276	97.27	9.78	19.57	48.55	20.65	1.45	70.65
08	309	297	307	296	99.35	9.46	25.00	38.85	21.96	4.73	65.54

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	294	282	289	278	98.30	5.76	16.91	42.09	28.78	6.47	77.34
07	293	284	285	276	97.27	6.52	16.30	41.67	25.00	10.51	77.17
08	309	297	307	296	99.35	5.07	20.27	36.49	28.72	9.46	74.66

Enr. - Enrollment
FAY - Full Academic Year
Part. - Participation

BUCKHANNON-UPSHUR MIDDLE SCHOOL

Assessment Trend Results by Class, Selected Subgroup

Reading				
Percent Proficient				
Year	Grade 06	Grade 07	Grade 08	All Grades
All Student				
2004	74.29	72.20	81.94	75.90
2005	77.66	77.04	79.22	77.96
2006	74.76	80.27	77.49	77.43
2007	73.64	75.64	77.62	75.63
2008	76.47	76.84	74.59	75.93

Mathematics				
Percent Proficient				
Year	Grade 06	Grade 07	Grade 08	All Grades
All Student				
2004	58.62	53.18	76.08	62.04
2005	68.33	65.83	70.55	68.21
2006	63.25	72.75	67.84	67.83
2007	71.76	69.87	70.40	70.66
2008	67.24	70.52	65.47	67.68

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1.1. Achievement.

Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) for two consecutive years for the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts and the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts. This is the first year that the school failed to achieve AYP in the SES subgroup in mathematics.

Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the all students (AS) subgroup in mathematics and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plan and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery in both mathematics and reading: Grade 6 – 32.26 percent in mathematics; Grade 7 – 29.35 percent in mathematics; Grade 8 – 34.46 percent in mathematics and 25.34 percent in reading. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

It is significant that the percent proficient declined in all subgroups in mathematics from 2006-2007 to 2007-2008. Reading/language arts percent proficient showed a negligible increase in the AS and W subgroups and declined in the SES and SE subgroups.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

- 7.1.2. 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 enrichment and acceleration. (Policy 2510)**

The Team could not verify that seven of the nine mathematics teachers, approximately one-third of the science teachers, four of the seven English teachers, and four of the five social studies teachers exhibited high expectations for all students. Teachers' questioning in these classes was at the recall of knowledge level of Bloom's taxonomy. Recall was the norm with these classes and students were not challenged to move to higher level 21st Century thinking skills.

- 7.1.4. Instruction. Instruction is consistent with the programmatic definitions in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs* (hereinafter Policy 2510). (Policy 2510)**

Approximately 29 teachers had the same lesson plans for the same classes throughout the day (i.e., Algebra I classes in different periods had the same lesson plans). This did not consider variations in learning based on student needs.

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

Fifteen teachers did not vary instruction throughout the Education Performance Audit Team's observation period. Instructional strategies involved a heavy reliance on teacher-directed instruction and/or worksheets.

- 7.1.6. 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)**

Twenty-five teachers stated in interviews that they did not provide writing assignments on a weekly basis. The principal also verified this during the administrative interview.

7.1.11. Guidance and advisement. Students are provided specific guidance and advisement opportunities to allow them to choose a career major prior to completion of grade 10. (Policy 2510)

Teachers could not verify that a developmental guidance program was in place. The guidance counselors were not in the building on the day of the Education Performance Audit; however, teachers and administrators could not articulate the presence of a developmental guidance program. In the absence of school leaders ability to discuss the basics of a developmental guidance program, the Team determined that a formal program was not in place.

7.1.12. 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)

A comprehensive schoolwide approach to multicultural education activities was not in place. Teachers could not discuss any multicultural activities other than Heritage Day in the spring. Furthermore, a written county and/or school Multicultural Plan was not provided.

7.2. Student and School Performance

7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans. An electronic county strategic improvement plan and an electronic school strategic 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.

Only two teachers interviewed could discuss the goals of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

The plan adequately addressed the school's needs, the data analysis was specific and prioritized the need for improvement, and the goals and objectives were appropriate. It is imperative that all teachers be knowledgeable of the plan and use this plan to guide the educational process. The plan must be communicated to all staff and reviewed periodically to monitor progress, implementation, and to evaluate the plan's effectiveness.

The plan must include the OEPA analysis with the OEPA Checklist included in the data analysis.

Goal 4 was supported by only one professional development opportunity. The Strategic Plan's West Virginia Department of Education reviewer recommended that the school's leadership team continue to explore opportunities to support professional growth in parental involvement.

- 7.2.3. 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)**

A majority of the lesson plans the Team observed could not be followed by a substitute teacher. Steps to implement the plan for the day and materials necessary beyond the textbook were not noted in the plan.

- 7.2.4. Data analysis. Prior to the beginning of and through the school term the county, school, and teacher have a system for analyzing, interpreting, and using student performance data to identify and assist students who are not at grade level in achieving approved state and local content standards and objectives. The county, principal, counselors, and teachers assess student scores on the American College Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test and develop curriculum, programs, and/or practices to improve student and school performance. (Policy 2510)**

None of the teachers interviewed could discuss the modifications that were in place to address the low scores in the special education (SE) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups. When questioned, teachers could only discuss the activities being implemented to address the overall weaknesses of the school.

7.8. Leadership

- 7.8.1. Leadership. Leadership at the school district, school, and classroom levels is demonstrated by vision, school culture and instruction, management and environment, community, and professionalism. (Policy 5500.03)**

Due to the number of deficiencies found at Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School, the Team determined that assistance from the central office administration, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA VII be sought to assist the building administrator in improvement. WESTEST data and practices the Team observed were related and clearly indicated a need for a School Support System in school leadership.

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 Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Upshur 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 Upshur County or the accreditation status of the schools.

8.1.1. 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.

Several issues led to the low percent proficient at Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School. Issues such as high expectations, planning for lessons, varied instructional strategies, the Five-Year Strategic Plan, and data analysis could, individually and collectively be extremely detrimental to the educational process. Given the combination of these, it is imperative that the administration diligently address these areas before worse problems arise. The Team believed that the principal has the ability to correct the issues, but constant and aggressive monitoring and the implementation of high quality programs is essential.

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 Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School 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 Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School and Upshur County have not demonstrated the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies.

The Team recommended that the Upshur County School System Superintendent and the school administrator contact Dr. Karen Huffman, Division of Special Projects - Superintendent's Center for 21st Century Schools, West Virginia Department of Education at (304) 558-7010 to arrange a School Support System for correcting the deficiencies and improving student and school performance.

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*)

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.

- 19.1.1. School location.** The school site was not large enough for future expansion and was not located away from undesirable noise and traffic. The sidewalks were not adequate with designated crosswalks, curbcuts, and correct slope. There was not sufficient on-site, solid surface parking for staff, visitors, and individuals with limited mobility.
- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have a ceramic kiln or black-out areas.
- 19.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage did not have controlled illumination.
- 19.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not provided.

19.1.15. Health service units. A health service unit with adequate size was not available. The school did not have curtained or small rooms with cots, a toilet, lavatory, scales, refrigerator with locked storage, or 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 all subgroups, Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School and Upshur County must implement high yield instructional practices and instruction that will improve students' achievement. Upshur County must actively pursue assistance from RESA VII, 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.

The School Support System presented under the Capacity Building section will be an invaluable resource in guiding school improvement.

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified ten high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress. They include the following.

- 7.1.2. High expectations.
- 7.1.4. Instruction.
- 7.1.5. Instructional strategies.
- 7.1.6. Instruction in writing.
- 7.1.11. Guidance and advisement.
- 7.1.12. Multicultural activities.
- 7.2.1. Five-year County and School electronic strategic improvement plans.
- 7.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.
- 7.2.4. Data analysis.
- 7.8.1. Leadership.

The Team noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School'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 initial report to guide Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School in improvement efforts. Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5 the school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct 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 Buckhannon-Upshur Middle School and Upshur County to revise the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan within 30 days and correct the findings noted in the report by the next accreditation cycle.