



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

GERRARDSTOWN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BERKELEY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Gerrardstown Elementary School in Berkeley County was conducted February 14, 2013.

A Follow-Up Education Performance Audit was conducted April 1, 2014. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the follow-up review 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.”

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Carroll Staats

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

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)

Grade 2 teachers indicated that active inquiry, investigation, experimentation, and hands on science activities were between 30-50 percent. The principal indicated that it was about 30-40 percent. The Team saw science lessons plans, but the plans did not indicate many hands on or experimentation activities.

Science was not being instructed with 50 percent minimum investigation, experimentation, and hands-on activities in all classes. Science instruction mostly involved textbooks and worksheets. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2520.3 – 21st Century Science K-8 Content Standard and Objectives for West Virginia Schools, states, “Students will engage in active inquiries, investigations, and hands on activities for a minimum of 50 percent of the instructional time to develop conceptual understanding and research/laboratory skills.”

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The county instructional specialist provided staff a list of recommended resources for investigation, experimentation, and hands-on science activities and purchased resources needed to enhance science activities, e.g., AIMS materials. Classroom observations, teacher interviews, and lesson plan reviews provided evidence that science instruction was delivered as required, often integrated in other subjects. Science hands-on activities were discussed during monthly data team meetings and monitored by the principal during classroom walkthroughs. Teachers incorporated science into the curriculum and used hands-on activities to keep students engaged and learning.

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)

Six of eight classrooms the Team observed did not vary instructional strategies during the day of the Education Performance Audit. Three of the four Grade 2 teachers were teaching from their desk and one remained at the front of the class during the entire Team observation period. Two of the four Grade 1 teachers did not vary instruction. Teacher directed instruction was predominant. Students were observed to be off task and not redirected by the teachers. The Team observed an abundance of workbook/worksheet tasks being used in Grade 2.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Staff was provided additional staff development to review Marzano's Instructional Strategies, APL strategies, research-based hands-on math activities, and student engagement techniques. Sessions covered such topics as *20 Instructional Strategies That Really Work* by Marcia Tate; Teach 21 Strategy Bank; TechSteps; Book Study - *Making Thinking Visible* by Ron Ritchart; Classroom Management - *Teach the Way They Learn* by Joanne Hines; *Total Participation Techniques – How to Actively Involve Students*, etc.

The principal conducted classroom walkthroughs and reviewed lesson plans with teachers to monitor instruction. Emphasis was placed on varying instructional strategies, actively engaging students, and teachers moving around the classroom to monitor students and provide assistance.

The Team observed the results of staff efforts through increased student engagement. Concerns in the initial Education Performance Audit Report were addressed and additional activities and techniques were being implemented in classroom instruction.

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 Gerrardstown Elementary School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Berkeley 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 Berkeley 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.

While student achievement was increasing, the area of instructional strategies was lacking. The principal must ensure that high quality professional development in this area is provided and incorporated buildingwide to ensure the greatest levels of student achievement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

As a result of quality professional development, teachers demonstrated a variety of instructional strategies in all classrooms. The principal, as curriculum leader, spent much of his time observing and conferencing with teachers and providing guidance to improve classroom instruction. The Team observed high quality instruction in all classrooms.

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 Gerrardstown Elementary 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.**

Gerrardstown Elementary School has demonstrated the capacity to increase student achievement based on the individual student data provided by the school. Staff had received high quality professional development and had high expectations for students and self. The Team determined that, upon correcting the issue of varied instructional strategies, student achievement will continue to increase.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The concerns regarding instructional strategies were addressed and the staff was implementing and varying instructional strategies in the classrooms. Based on the results of the most recent benchmark testing this year, student achievement continued to increase.

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.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The music facility did not have music stands or music chairs with folding arms. The physical education facility did not have a data projector or 50 inch screen monitor.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change in music. The physical education facility now has a data projector and screen.

19.1.14. Food service. A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not provided.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change.

19.1.15. Health service units. A health services unit of adequate size was not provided. The school did not have curtained or small rooms with cots, a bulletin board, or a work counter.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change.

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.

The staff had been provided high quality professional development to target the areas of weakness and the staff had high expectations for all students and provided a safe and secure learning environment. Once the area of instructional strategies is corrected, student achievement will continue to increase.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

High quality professional development targeting the areas of weakness continued and the staff used new strategies to improve their classroom instruction. Student achievement continued to increase.

Education Performance Audit Recommendation

Based upon the results of the Final Education Performance Audit, it is recommended and a motion is requested to approve this report.