



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

SUTTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

BRAXTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2011

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced (five days in advance) Education Performance Audit of Sutton Elementary School in Braxton County was conducted March 9, 2010.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Sutton Elementary School was conducted April 28, 2011. 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.

08 BRAXTON COUNTY

Dennis Albright, Superintendent

205 SUTTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Passed

Don E. Johnson, Principal

Grades PK - 04

Enrollment 181 (2nd month 2008-09 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2008-2009

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	52	62	62	100.00	48.07	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	52	61	61	100.00	48.07	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	37	45	45	100.00	48.64	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	15	19	19	100.00	33.33	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	52	62	62	100.00	40.38	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	52	61	61	100.00	40.38	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	37	45	45	100.00	37.83	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	15	19	19	100.00	20.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 95.6%

08 BRAXTON COUNTY
Dennis Albright, Superintendent
205 SUTTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Passed
Don E. Johnson, Principal
Grades PK - 04
Enrollment 181 (2nd month 2009-10 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2009-2010

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	62	72	72	100.00	29.03	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	60	69	69	100.00	28.33	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	20	22	22	100.00	10.00	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	46	56	56	100.00	30.43	Yes	NA	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	62	72	72	100.00	25.80	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	60	69	69	100.00	25.00	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	20	22	22	100.00	5.00	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	46	56	56	100.00	26.08	Yes	NA	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

Passed
Attendance Rate = 96.3%

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Met Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Sutton Elementary School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the all students (AS) and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. The remaining subgroups 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 improve achievement of all students.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery in both mathematics and reading: Grade 3 – 42.31 percent in mathematics and 50.00 percent in reading; Grade 4 – 61.54 percent in mathematics and 69.23 percent in reading. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided as reported by the principal.

1. Accelerated Reader Remote Follow-Up.
2. Music IPod Training.
3. Edline.
4. TechSteps.
5. Math Facts in a Flash.
6. WESTEST2 Training.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

MET STANDARD. Sutton Elementary School again achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the all students (AS) and racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups in mathematics and reading/language arts by application of the confidence interval. The remaining subgroups had been addressed in the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan and the staff was working to improve the achievement of students in these subgroups.

The school continued to provide professional development and/or training opportunities.

1. Training in the use of the new technology which had been purchased for the school.
2. Analysis of assessments to determine deficiencies and faculty plans to address the deficiencies.
3. Training in the use of the new mathematics textbook series.

4. Training in implementation of TechSteps, Accelerated Reader, Grade Quick, Odyssey, DIBELS, and West Virginia Writes.
5. Response to Intervention (RTI) Review.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

- 7.1.1. **Curriculum based on content standards and objectives. The curriculum is based on the content standards and objectives approved by the West Virginia Board of Education. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

Teacher interviews and lesson plan reviews indicated that the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) were not being applied consistently and appropriately. Several teachers developed lesson plans and then matched them to the CSOs. Others were not using the CSOs in designing curriculum or in developing lessons. The curriculum observed needed to support 21st Century learning skills and the needs of diverse learners. Also, adequate coverage of the CSOs could not be verified in at least one of the three split-grade classes.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All teachers had copies of the West Virginia 21st Century Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) and kept them in their lesson plan books and used them when preparing lesson plans. Several faculty discussions had been held on methods to implement the CSOs and sharing ideas on how best to do this. Through teacher interviews and lesson plan reviews the Team found teachers were using the CSOs to guide their curriculum.

Implementation of the CSOs was monitored by the principal through frequent reviews of lesson plans and frequent classroom walkthroughs.

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 instructional strategies, the physical learning environment, classroom practices, and WESTEST2 results indicated that high expectations for student achievement needed to be fostered.

The Team observed students in one class who were not taking part in instruction. The teacher was teaching to the majority of the class while four students were not engaged in the educational process.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal provided Professional On-going Staff Development (POSD) to the staff during which instructional strategies and classroom practices were being continually emphasized, discussed and shared. RESA 4 conducted training and provided assistance with the Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) for the school. The IPI showed on a scale of 1 to 6, with 1 being recall of facts and 6 being "independent study", the average score for the school was approximately 4. The Team visited classrooms and observed instruction and found teachers using various instructional methods to get students to think and perform at a higher level.

7.1.3. 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)

Two teachers were not providing 90 minute reading blocks, as time was taken away for whole class rest room breaks. At least 15 minutes of this time was involved in preparation for the breaks, the actual breaks, and resuming the reading block. The organization of this instructional time was inadequate.

Science was not being instructed with 50 percent minimum hands-on investigation and experimentation 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." Teachers gave varying answers to the degree of hands-on science activities. No specific reason was given for this lack of instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The 90 minute reading blocks were now continuous periods without whole class restroom breaks. Students were provided opportunities to go to rest rooms on an individual as needed basis. The Team observed science classes and interviewed teachers and found the classes were meeting the 50 percent hands-on activities requirement.

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)

Instruction in at least half of the classrooms did not involve using higher level thinking skills. Memorization of facts and teacher directed instruction were the predominate instructional strategies observed during classroom observations and reviewed in lesson plans.

The school was limited in access to educational technology with only one mobile computer laboratory. Each classroom had four or five computers; however, the school lacked bandwidth and this limited computer capabilities during high usage, such as students taking the statewide writing assessment.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school had been provided a new 30-station computer laboratory and Smart Boards and Elmos for all classrooms. Teachers were using these electronics to enhance instruction and provide a learning environment in which students were required to analyze and think. The principal and teachers reported the problems with the computer programs because of the lack of bandwidth have apparently been solved with the new equipment.

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)

The Team observed minimal computer usage throughout the day of the Education Performance Audit. Sutton Elementary School did not have a computer laboratory due to a lack of space. It did have a mobile laboratory "Computer of Wheels" for teachers to reserve or check out. Teachers reported that the mobile laboratory remained in one or two classrooms where it was primarily used. The Team observed students using the mobile computers and found that students were not fluent in the use of technology.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school had a new 30-station computer laboratory which was used by all students for 30 minutes once a day on a scheduled basis. Teachers had been provided classroom Smart Boards and Elmos which

were being used in all classrooms on the day of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit. Students observed in the computer lab appeared to be skilled in using the computers.

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.

At least half of the teachers could not discuss the goals of the Five-Year Strategic Plan in a meaningful way. While the principal stated numerous discussions had been held with the staff concerning the goals of the plan, it was evident that teachers did not use these goals as a basis for their curriculum.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The faculty was involved in revising the school Five-Year Strategic Plan. Teachers interviewed were knowledgeable of the school's goals in the plan and discussed activities to address these goals in their classrooms.

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)

All lesson plans had not been checked at least one time per quarter. One teacher had lesson plans only for the current week for the Team to review.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. A review of lesson plans showed the principal had provided formal reviews of all teachers' lesson plans quarterly and many informal reviews during classroom walkthroughs. Teachers had large lesson plan books which contained the lesson plans for the year.

7.7. Safe, Drug Free, Violence Free, and Disciplined Schools

7.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations. School rules, procedures, and expectations are written; clearly communicated to students, parents, and staff; and enforced. (Policy 2510; Policy 4373)

Teachers were unaware of a schoolwide discipline policy. Discipline was left to the classroom teachers and the methods of applying student discipline varied buildingwide.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. A committee of the staff met during the summer and developed a schoolwide discipline plan based on positive behavior reinforcements and consequences for negative behavior. Teachers interviewed reported the discipline plan was being implemented schoolwide and it was working well. The Team observed the discipline plan in all classrooms.

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 Sutton Elementary School, the Team determined the central office administration, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA 4 assist the building administrator and teachers to improve student and school achievement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal reported that the Braxton County superintendent had provided much assistance in addressing the deficiencies. Assistance was also received from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Improvement, in revising the Five Year Strategic Plan. RESA 4 provided teacher training on the Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) and administered the IPI for the school.

RECOMMENDATION

7.1.3. Learning environment. The facility did not promote a positive environment for teaching and learning. Paint was peeling in several areas throughout the building, clutter existed in several areas and classrooms, and the building was dirty. Lights were out or dim throughout the school, in hallways and classrooms, resulting in poor illumination. The Team recommended that the building be thoroughly cleaned and painted in many areas. The principal stated that the building would be painted with the upcoming construction of the addition to the building.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The school had received new floor tile, ceiling tile, and new lights throughout the building. All walls in the classrooms, hallways and other facilities had been painted. The building was clean and bright and provided a positive learning environment.

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 Sutton Elementary School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Braxton 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 Braxton 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.

A concerted effort must be made by the principal and the staff to correct the issues at the school. Teachers indicated that a major reason for the low WESTEST2 scores was because special education students were being sent to the school from other schools in the county. While special education students from other schools are located at Sutton Elementary School, the deficiencies found were not attributed to this issue. Teachers not employing higher level thinking skills, not using the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) properly, minimal computer usage, and not being aware of the goals of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan were issues independent of the students in the classrooms. The teachers must be given the relevant staff development and the principal must ensure that the instruction is being delivered that is aligned with the State's curriculum and apply a wide variety of strategies that address various learning styles and aptitudes.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The Team found the school staff working hard to implement teaching strategies that would develop higher level thinking skills in their students. The curriculum and instruction was being guided by the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) and the Five-Year Strategic Plan. The school had been provided a great deal of new technology and teachers were using the technology daily to improve learning. The staff was confident the improvements in instruction and student learning will be reflected in future WESTEST2 assessments.

8.1.5. Personnel. The school district assesses the assignment of personnel as based on West Virginia Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies to determine the degree to which instructional and support services provided to the schools establish and support high quality curriculum and instructional services.

Two general education classroom teachers were absent on the day of the Education Performance Audit. With the small student enrollment (181) and small number of teachers, this limited the Team's capacity to review all teachers and programs.

Sutton Elementary School had three split-grade classrooms. The maximum number of split-grade classrooms K-6 provided by W.Va. Code §18-5-18a for Braxton County is seven. Braxton County must assess the assignment of personnel to determine the degree to which instructional services are provided to Sutton Elementary and other schools in the county to establish and support a high quality curriculum.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The number of split-grade classrooms had been reduced to two. The principal had requested enough staff to eliminate split-grade classrooms; however, Braxton County did not have the funds available to provide it.

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 Sutton 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.**

Multiple issues negatively affect the school's capacity to correct the deficiencies in this report and improve student and school performance.

This school contains three split-grade classrooms. This in itself is a difficult situation for a teacher to deliver the curriculum and West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) for two classes in required programs of study. Teachers for music and art are not provided and classroom teachers deliver these areas in addition to the core curriculum.

A lack of space prohibits the capability of a computer laboratory. Limited bandwidth also contributes to problems with classroom computers during high usage periods.

One day time custodian is employed at the school. The principal cleans up after evening activities. An addition is being added to the building. However, a consistent effort will have to be undertaken to develop the internal capacity for student achievement.

Time, personnel, space, and other resources must be organized in ways that maximize student achievement.

The Team recommended that the Braxton County School System Superintendent and the school administrator contact Mr. Charles Heinlein, Executive Director, Office of Organizational Effectiveness & Leadership, at 304-558-3199 to arrange a School Support System for correcting the deficiencies and improving student and school performance.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The number of split-grade classrooms had been reduced to two. The school did not have specialist teachers for music and art and these subjects continued to be taught by the classroom teachers.

The school now had a new 30-station computer laboratory which was used by all students each day.

One daytime custodian remained as the only person available to keep the building clean. When the Team visited, the building was clean and bright with shiny tile floors.

The principal received assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Improvement, in revising the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan to correct the deficiencies and improve 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 did not have five usable acres plus one acre for each 100 students over 240 and was not easily accessible and conveniently located. On-site, solid surface parking was insufficient for staff, visitors, and individuals with disabilities.
- 19.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** An adequate reception/waiting area was not available.
- 19.1.4. Counselor's office.** Adequate space and privacy were not available.
- 19.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** There was not appropriate space available. The school did not have a library/media and/or a technology center. (Impeded programs)

- 19.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms.** All classrooms did not have adequate storage. (Impeded programs)
- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** There was no art facility. There was no music facility. (Impeded programs)
- 19.1.14. Food service.** The food service area was not convenient to a service drive for deliveries and removal of wastes. An instructional board, bulletin board, locker/dressing room, student lavatory, or chairs were not available. A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not available.
- 19.1.15. Health service units.** A health service unit was not available. Curtained or small rooms with cots, work counter, and desk and chair were not available.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

- 19.1.2. The office area had been divided to provide a reception/waiting area.**
- 19.1.4. One staff member had been reassigned from the room where the counselor's office was located, which provided more space for the counselor.**
- 19.1.5. The school had a new computer laboratory and a collection of books was provided in the room where the computer laboratory was located.**
- 19.1.8. Some storage space was included in the new four classroom addition on the school.**

The other facility resource needs remained as previously 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.

Sutton Elementary School needs consistent and sustained professional development programs and guidance to enhance performance.

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

FOLLOW-UP TEAM SUMMARY

The school staff had worked hard to correct the deficiencies in the original Education Performance Audit report and continue to be open to new ideas and trainings to improve instruction and student learning. With their efforts and the new facilities and instructional equipment, teachers held high levels of optimism for improvements in student achievement.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
08-205 Sutton Elementary	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 Sutton Elementary School.