



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

HUNTINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

CABELL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2012

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Huntington Middle School in Cabell County was conducted January 26, 2011.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Huntington Middle School was conducted January 24, 2012. 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.”

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

12 CABELL COUNTY

William A. Smith, Superintendent

310 HUNTINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Walter Brison, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 512 (2nd month 2008-2009 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	428	511	507	99.21	49.88	Yes	Yes	✓
White	299	360	356	98.88	54.36	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	121	140	140	100.00	37.19	Yes	No	✗
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	45	64	64	100.00	13.33	Yes	NA	✓
Low SES	253	312	308	98.71	37.69	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	428	511	506	99.02	64.16	Yes	Yes	✓
White	299	360	355	98.61	67.78	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	121	140	140	100.00	53.71	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	45	64	64	100.00	20.00	Yes	NA	✓
Low SES	253	312	307	98.39	49.60	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 96.0%

12 CABELL COUNTY
William A. Smith, Superintendent
310 HUNTINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
Walter Brison, Principal
Grades 06 - 08
Enrollment 516 (2nd month 2009-2010 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	432	512	505	98.63	34.96	Yes	Yes	✓
White	293	354	347	98.02	40.00	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	128	144	144	100.00	21.87	Yes	No	X
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	39	56	52	92.85	13.15	By Average	NA	✓
Low SES	255	318	315	99.05	22.83	Yes	No	X
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	432	512	505	98.63	37.29	Yes	Yes	✓
White	293	354	347	98.02	42.75	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	128	144	144	100.00	25.78	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	39	56	52	92.85	7.89	By Average	NA	✓
Low SES	255	318	314	98.74	25.98	Yes	No	X
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Attendance Rate = 96.8%

12 CABELL COUNTY
William A. Smith, Superintendent
310 HUNTINGTON MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
Walter Brison, Principal
Grades 06 - 08
Enrollment 612 (2nd month 2010-2011 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2010-2011

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	499	609	586	96.22	39.34	Yes	No	X
White	361	438	420	95.89	41.19	Yes	No	X
Black	123	153	149	97.38	32.23	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	55	70	66	94.28	22.64	By Average	Safe Harbors	✓
Low SES	292	384	371	96.61	28.62	Yes	No	X
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	499	609	589	96.71	52.14	Yes	Yes	✓
White	361	438	421	96.11	56.25	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	123	153	151	98.69	38.52	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	55	70	66	94.28	16.98	By Average	Safe Harbors	✓
Low SES	292	384	373	97.13	40.14	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

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

Passed
Attendance Rate = 94.8%

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Huntington Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in the racial/ethnicity black (B) and the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups in mathematics and the SES subgroup in reading/language arts. Huntington Middle School achieved AYP in the B subgroup in reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education issued the school Temporary Accreditation status at the December 2010 State Board meeting.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery and novice in both mathematics and reading: Grade 6 – 73.72 percent in mathematics and 73.72 percent in reading; Grade 7 – 59.44 percent in mathematics and 55.24 percent in reading; Grade 8 – 60.77 percent in mathematics and 57.69 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. Understanding by Design.
2. WESTEST2 Data Analysis.
3. CHAMPS (School Behavior Program) and Foundations Common Area Policy.
4. Mathematics and Reading Destinations.
5. TechSteps.
6. Responder Technology.
7. Autism.
8. Links.
9. ACT Explore.
10. WVEIS Web.
11. Movement in the Classroom.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

ACHIEVED STANDARD. Huntington Middle School made gains in all subgroups in mathematics and reading/language arts. Significant gains were made in mathematics in the all students (AS) subgroup (+4.38 percent), the racial/ethnicity black (B) subgroup (+10.36 percent), the special education (SE) subgroup (+9.49 percent), and the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup (+5.79 percent). Significant gains in reading/language arts were made in the AS subgroup (+14.85 percent), the

racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroup (+13.5 percent), the B subgroup (+12.74 percent), the SE subgroup (+9.09 percent) and the SES subgroup (+14.16 percent). Teachers indicated various reasons for the increase in student achievement including high quality staff development and the realization of the areas cited in the Education Performance Audit being issues that needed addressed by the staff.

Huntington Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics for two consecutive years. Huntington Middle School failed to achieve AYP in the all students (AS) and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups for the 2010-2011 school year. AYP was achieved in the racial/ethnicity black (B) and special education (SES) subgroups in mathematics and reading/language arts and in the SES subgroup in reading/language arts only through the safe harbor provision. The principal is strongly recommended to investigate and continue high quality, research-based programs and practices to increase student achievement in all areas.

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education-Performance Based Accreditation System* in Section §126-13-6 provides:

6.1. A system of points on an index will be used to assess and weigh annual performance measures for state accreditation of schools and approval of school systems that gives credit or points on an index to prevent any one measure alone from causing a school to achieve less than full accreditation status or a school system from achieving less than full approval status: Provided, That a school or school system that achieves AYP is eligible for no less than full accreditation or full approval status, as applicable, and the system established pursuant to this subsection shall only apply to schools and school systems that do not achieve AYP.

The index showed that Huntington Middle School performed within the point range (553.00 – 485.89) for full accreditation status

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

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)

At least 50 percent of the teachers did not vary instructional strategies. Teacher directed instruction was the predominant instructional strategy. A wider variety of instructional strategies is imperative to maintain student attention and interest and actively involve students in learning. The school proficiency levels on the WESTEST2 provided compelling evidence that more effective instructional strategies are essential in all classes to improve student achievement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. While the school had made progress in the area of instructional strategies, five teachers still did not vary instructional strategies during the observation period. The Team followed-up the classroom observations with interviews of teachers, students in those classes, and the principal on types of instructional delivery. The administrative team was monitoring classroom curriculum delivery and had provided staff development on the methods of varying instruction to meet students' needs.

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)

According to the librarian, students did not have opportunities to check books out of the library. The library was restricted to whole class use and needed to be open to students to check out books of their own interest. The library was used for classroom assignments.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Students were afforded time throughout the day to visit the library to check out books of their own interest.

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)

Minimal multicultural activities occurred at the school to expose students to other cultures and develop appreciation for diversity. There was no written Multicultural Plan at the school to guide multicultural activities. Additionally, there was no zero tolerance guide or procedures or plan for bullying and harassment that teachers could articulate. Each teacher dealt with students in his/her own manner.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school had created a multicultural committee which had developed a thorough and comprehensive multicultural program. There were many activities buildingwide and students and staff reported that the activities were interesting and stimulating. A complete zero tolerance guide was in place and all staff were aware of the steps for dealing with bullying and/or harassment.

7.1.13. 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 through 12. The county board submits a school calendar with a minimum 180 instructional days. (W.Va. Code §18-5-45; Policy 2510)

The first three days of school were dedicated to only Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8, respectively. This was due to the school being newly opened; however, this practice did not provide for an equal opportunity to attend 180 school days. The principal stated that this was the only year that this was to happen. This two days lost instruction combined with the number of days of school cancellation due to inclement weather and early dismissal resulted in lost instructional time.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Students reported to school the first day of the school year.

7.6. Personnel

- 7.6.4. Teacher and principal internship. The county board develops and implements a beginning teacher internship program and a beginning principal internship program that conform with W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b and 2d; Policy 5899; Policy 5900)**

According to the teachers, the mentorship program was ineffective. New teachers and mentors were meeting, but not to the extent possible and mentoring logs were not available. Meetings were regularly scheduled and at least two of the teachers said they did not benefit from the meetings. The principal was not involved in any of these meetings nor participated as chairman of the professional support team required by W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Cabell County had developed and implemented a thorough and effective mentorship program for new teachers. Central office administrators and building level principals had input into developing the program. The program allowed for comprehensive training for new teachers.

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)**

While school rules were in place, the perception of a majority of the teachers was that the administration did not consistently follow these rules with students. This perception adversely affected the learning environment as many staff members were disgruntled with this issue.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. At least 95 percent of the teachers stated that all school rules were enforced consistently by the school's administrative team. Communication between the administration and the teachers was clear and student discipline was fair, consistent, and effective.

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)**

The perception of a majority of the staff was that the principal was negative and not supportive of the staff. Teachers reported that the principal was not receptive to teacher concerns and said they felt intimidated. This perception

negatively affected the school's learning environment. The Team urged the Cabell County Superintendent of Schools to evaluate the issue and develop a solution to encourage a supportive teaching and learning environment.

Due to the number and quality of deficiencies found at Huntington Middle School, the Team determined the central office administration, the West Virginia Center for Professional Development, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA 2 needed to provide assistance in neutralizing emotions and focusing on facts and options to improve management and operation of the school.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. It was evident that a great deal of work had been conducted at Huntington Middle School concerning the area of leadership. The Cabell County Central Office had worked with the staff and principal extensively to investigate the reason for the divide between the two. The principal interviewed every employee in the building individually to reveal the areas of concern and great changes were made to improve the relationship. At least 95 percent of the staff the Team interviewed stated that the school relationship significantly improved and the school atmosphere had improved. The principal stated that he had reevaluated his leadership methods and had made changes to improve the relationship with the staff and that these changes were paying great dividends by way of less building anxiety and a more positive atmosphere.

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 Huntington Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Cabell 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 Cabell 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 the Team reported several issues at the school, the issue that first must be addressed is the apparent breakdown in communication and trust between the principal and staff. This issue made it difficult for the school to function at optimal levels. The school's Temporary Accreditation status makes it even more crucial that this issue be addressed. The deficiencies must be corrected by the time that the follow-up audit team returns to the school. All staff must work together efficiently and effectively to accomplish corrective action.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The staff of Huntington Middle School had made great strides in correcting the deficiencies found in the original Education Performance Audit. Significant gains were made in all subgroups in mathematics and reading/language arts. The educational atmosphere had significantly improved with a stronger communication pathway and a stronger bond between the administration and the teachers. Huntington Middle School must continue to strive to improve the learning environment and provide a high quality and challenging curriculum to further increase student achievement.

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 Huntington 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 school's capacity to correct the deficiencies in this report may be compromised by the teachers' perception of the principal. The number and quality of the deficiencies found at Huntington Middle School will be extremely difficult to correct until all the staff are cohesive in their duties. The Team's classroom observations and teacher interviews showed that the teachers possessed the knowledge, skills, and willingness to deliver a high quality instructional program. The principal also seemed to have administrative skills to manage the school and was not aware of the negative schoolwide perception. Capacity will need to be developed to transform the school's culture.

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

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

While one deficiency was not clearly corrected, the school had made significant changes in procedures and in the entire learning environment to provide a high quality learning atmosphere for students. Staff and administrators pointed to the original Education Performance Audit as the catalyst that initiated the dramatic change and nearly all staff interviewed stated that great results emanated from the changes.

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*)

Huntington Middle School is a new construction; however, some requirements of Policy 6200 were not available.

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 11 acres and was not large enough for future expansion.
- 19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The science facilities did not have a ventilation fume hood, demo table, fire extinguisher, blanket, emergency showers, first aid kit, or darkening provisions.
- 19.1.15. Health service units.** A health service unit of adequate size was not provided and there were no curtained or small rooms with cots.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

- 19.1.1. The school is constructed on 4.5 acres. While this is less than recommended for a middle school, it is waived for an urban setting. The waiver (from the School Board Authority) is on file with the Operations Department of Cabell County Schools.**
- 19.1.11. The science facilities was equipped with a ventilation fume hood, demo table, fire extinguisher, blanket, emergency showers, first aid kit, and darkening provisions.**
- 19.1.15. A health services unit of adequate size was in place and a small room with a cot was being provided.**

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.

Huntington Middle School is likely to maintain the course of its performance levels if it does not receive continuous and sustained support from local and State education agencies. Working on the learning environment of the school needs to be a high priority.

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 received a great deal of support from the Cabell County Central Office. While staff reported a much better learning atmosphere, the Team strongly recommended that the progress continue.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
12-310 Huntington Middle	Conditional Accreditation	7.1.5.		September 4, 2012

Education Performance Audit Summary

One finding (7.1.5. Instructional strategies) from the original Education Performance Audit continued as an issue at the school.

Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5, the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education issue Huntington Middle School Conditional Accreditation status with a September 4, 2012 Date Certain to correct the remaining finding. If the *noncompliance* is not corrected by the Date Certain, the school will be recommended for Low Performing status and the ensuing consequences in W.Va. Code §18-2E-5. (n) (6).

The OEPA will conduct another follow-up review after September 4, 2012 to determine that improvement efforts have been sustained and the remaining standard (7.1.5) has been corrected.