

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

CLAY MIDDLE SCHOOL

CLAY COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

DECEMBER 2005

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Clay Middle School in Clay County on November 18, 2004.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Clay Middle School in Clay County was conducted October 18, 2005. 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
2003-2004**

16 CLAY COUNTY

Jerry A. Linkinogor, Superintendent

301 CLAY MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

Joan Haynie, Principal

Grades 05 - 08

Enrollment 506

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on April 20	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
Mathematics								
All	472	491	488	99.39	65.45	Yes	Yes	✓
White	469	488	485	99.39	65.66	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	355	358	355	99.16	61.36	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	97	105	102	97.14	22.34	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	472	491	489	99.59	79.14	Yes	Yes	✓
White	469	488	486	99.59	79.01	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	355	358	356	99.44	74.50	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	97	105	103	98.10	34.73	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY - Full Academic Year

* - 0 students in subgroup

** - Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.0%**

**SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
2004-2005**

This section presents the performance measures and the Follow-up Education Performance Audit Team's findings. The high quality educational standards and performance measures were investigated through the examination of documents; observation of practices; and interviews with personnel, students, and parents.

16 CLAY COUNTY

Jerry A. Linkinoggor, Superintendent

301 CLAY MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

Joan Haynie, Principal

Grades 05 - 08

Enrollment 502

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	453	469	463	98.72	72.32	Yes	Yes	✓
White	450	466	460	98.71	72.13	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	332	340	334	98.23	68.80	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	85	90	88	97.77	30.12	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	453	469	465	99.14	79.73	Yes	Yes	✓
White	450	466	462	99.14	79.59	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	332	340	336	98.82	75.60	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	85	90	88	97.77	36.14	Yes	No	X
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 93.1%**

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Clay Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in one or more subgroups designated in 5.1.1. Achievement. One subgroup designated in 5.1.1. Achievement, included special education students (SE). 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 September 10, 2004 State Board meeting.

The Team determined that the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) had been revised to address 5.1.1. Achievement. The high quality activities included in the revision will facilitate the increase in test scores when fully implemented.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. During the 2004-2005 school year Clay Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup in reading/language arts. The staff at the middle school implemented several measures to improve achievement for all students, including the students in the SE subgroup. Among those measures were:

- 1. Analysis of WESTEST results and customized instruction for students, particularly students in the SE subgroup.**
- 2. Students were provided supplemental services.**
- 3. Students in the SE subgroup were included in core subject classes with general education students.**
- 4. Special education teachers and the core subject teachers collaborated and co-taught in the general mathematics classes.**
- 5. Reading/language arts classes were repeated for targeted students who failed to achieve mastery on the WESTEST.**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

NONCOMPLIANCES

6.1. Curriculum

- 6.1.1. 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)**

Observations and an interview of a special education teacher indicated that the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) were not the foundation for instruction. The teacher did not have lesson plans and indicated that he did not provide direct instruction, but was “only” facilitating what the regular education teacher developed.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) provided the foundation for instruction. Pacing guides were provided for the prioritized curriculum and were being used by all teachers. The principal monitored this use through classroom visits and lesson plan reviews. The Team reviewed special education teachers’ lesson plans which showed that the CSOs were being taught.

- 6.1.3. Learning environment. School staff provides a safe and nurturing environment that is conducive to learning. (Policy 2510)**

The Team observed two special education aides seated at desks in a special education classroom. One reported that, “They were to do what was asked of them by the teacher,” and that the students that they were assigned to were absent today. This question was raised because a student was removed from the classroom for disruption, rather than the aide working with the student. The aides would be better utilized if they were directly involved in the instruction and behavior management of students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal reviewed duties with the classroom aides. Special education aides have assigned duties during the day and are involved in student learning at all times. Personal care aides have been assigned additional duties when their students are absent.

6.1.4. Instruction. Instruction is consistent with the programmatic definitions in Policy 2510. (Policy 2510)

Generally, instructional strategies employed by teachers were numerous and varied. However, science teachers did not provide the 50 percent investigation, inquiry, experimentation requirement by Policy 2510.

Lesson plans were being developed in a special education classroom while the Team was observing the class. The comment was made that the teacher was trying to get them printed out. The teacher was addressing the lesson plan issue while students were in the classroom and no direct instruction was observed.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The science teachers received additional staff development in strategies for investigation, inquiry, and experimentation.

The West Virginia Department of Education Science Coordinator visited the classrooms and worked with teachers on hands-on science strategies.

The special education teacher reported that lessons are normally prepared during non-instructional time.

6.2. Student and School Performance

6.2.2. Counseling services. Counselors shall spend at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the work day in a direct counseling relationship with students, and shall devote no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the work day to counseling-related administrative activities as stated in W.Va. Code §18-5-18b. (W.Va. Code §18-5-18b; Policy 2315)

The Team conducted interviews and observations and was unable to verify the 75 percent direct counseling services. Students and teachers indicated that the counselor was available to students and developmental guidance and student transition plans were part of the duties completed by the counselor. Lesson plans were not in place for delivering developmental guidance, a schedule or organized plan was not in place to show counseling services for student transition plans, career counseling, individual counseling, and/or group counseling. Consequently, the Team was unable to verify counseling time distribution suggested by Policy 2315.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The counselor maintained a daily counseling log showing time devoted to group counseling, individual counseling, and counseling related administrative tasks. It verified that at least 75 percent of the counselor's time was spent in direct counseling services.

Lesson plans and a schedule for delivering developmental guidance were available in the counselor's office. These plans were distributed to all staff for classroom reinforcement and follow-up.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.4. Instruction. Collaboration between regular and special education teachers was not documented on the county adopted log form. The Team recommended that specific staff development be provided for the use of the county log form and the proper techniques and methods of effective collaboration be applied.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. Two teachers' computers were observed to have AOL Instant Messenger (IM) running during class time. One teacher was observed to be using IM during class time. The Team recommended that AOL Instant Messenger not be present at startup on classroom computers. The principal indicated that all staff was instructed to not have IM enabled on their computers.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Instant Messenger had been removed from all computers.

INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY

Indicators of efficiency for student and school system performance and processes were reviewed in the following areas: Curriculum delivery, including but not limited to, the use of distance learning; facilities; administrative practices; personnel; utilization of regional education service agency, or other regional services that may be established by their assigned regional education service agency. This section contains indicators of efficiency that the Education Performance Team assessed as requiring more efficient and effective application.

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Clay Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Indicators of Efficiency shall not be used to affect the approval status of Clay County or the accreditation status of the schools.

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.

Given the deficiencies pertaining to the special education department and the low WESTEST scores in the special education (SE) subgroup, Clay County and Clay Middle School must aggressively pursue staff development opportunities to assist these teachers to improve instruction. Special education personnel could use their time more efficiently to improve achievement of the special education (SE) subgroup in reading/language arts and mathematics. However, the capacity must be developed in the special education department to provide quality services as demonstrated by the general education teachers.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Extensive staff development had been provided the school staff. Some of the staff development programs included:

- 1. Differentiated Instruction and Understanding by Design.**
- 2. Marzano's Classroom Strategies That Work.**
- 3. Individualized Education Program (IEP) training.**
- 4. Module 3 training (to coordinate CSOs with instruction).**

The school schedule was restructured to provide repeated instruction in reading/language arts for targeted students, special education students were included with general education classrooms, and special education teachers and core subject teachers co-taught mathematics.

BUILDING CAPACITY TO CORRECT DEFICIENCIES

- 16.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county Unified 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 Clay Middle School and Clay County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be developed in the special education department to provide quality services as demonstrated by the general education teachers. The Team recommended that the Clay County School System Director of Special Education and the school administrator engage the Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director at RESA III in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement of the special education students.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Even though improvement in student achievement, including special education (SE) students in mathematics and reading/language arts, was achieved on the 2005 WESTEST, the SE subgroup did not achieve high enough in the reading/language arts area to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

Extensive staff development on improving student achievement had been provided by the Clay County Schools' administrative staff and the RESA III Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director. Staff development activities included the following:

- 1. Differentiated Instruction presented by the Special Education Director at RESA III and Understanding by Design presented by the Foreign Language Coordinator at the West Virginia Department of Education.**
- 2. Implementing the Read 180 Program presented by RESA III.**
- 3. Training on the use of the IKNOW web site.**
- 4. Individualized Education Program (IEP) training for teachers presented by the county special education director, etc.**

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.

- 17.1. 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 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.

- 17.1.1. School location.** The site did not have 11 acres plus one acre for each 100 students over 600. The site was not large enough for future expansion. The playground/recreational areas were not separated from streets and parking nor were they well equipped and appropriate for the age level.
- 17.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms.** The size of the academic learning areas was not adequate (28-30 square feet per student).
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art area did not have two deep sinks, a ceramic kiln, or black-out areas, etc.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.**
- Grade 6 Facilities: The science classrooms did not have the following: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, ventilation fume hood, demo table, laboratory workspace at 2.5 linear

ft./student with sink/water/gas/electricity, fire extinguisher, blanket, emergency showers, and darkening provisions.

Grade 7 Facilities: The science classrooms did not have the following: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, ventilation fume hood, demo table, laboratory workspace at 2.5 linear ft./student with sink/water/gas/electricity, fire extinguisher, blanket, emergency showers, and darkening provisions.

- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage was not of adequate size, located for convenient access to language arts and music instructional area, close to seating, and did not have fire resistant curtains, acoustical panels, film screens, controlled illumination, and adequate electrical outlets.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not available. A locker/dressing room was not available.
- 17.1.15. Health service units.** A health services unit of adequate size was not available and a toilet was not available.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The facility resource needs remained as noted in the January 2005 Draft Report.

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 the special education (SE) subgroup, Clay Middle School and Clay County must implement curriculum and instruction that will improve students' achievement. Clay County must actively pursue assistance from RESA III, 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 with the opportunity to learn.

TEAM SUMMARY

Clay Middle School has had extensive support from the Clay County administrative staff, RESA III, West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development in their efforts to improve achievement. Many of these activities have been cited in this report.

- 1. RESA III provided supplemental services to targeted students who failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP), provided several staff development sessions for the school staff, collaborated with the county and other agencies in other support activities, and provided financing and training for the Read 180 program.**
- 2. The Foreign Language Coordinator, West Virginia Department of Education and Special Education Coordinator, RESA III provided staff development on instructional strategies training in collaboration and co-teaching.**
- 3. Staff development for special education teachers on special education law and meeting the needs of special education students was provided. Staff development on strategies in science was provided by the Science Coordinator, West Virginia Department of Education.**
- 4. Sixty percent of the school staff attended the State Middle School Conference coordinated by the Middle School Coordinator, West Virginia Department of Education.**
- 5. The West Virginia Achieves School Improvement Program and Standards Based Instruction were presented by the Mathematics and Title I Mathematics Coordinators.**
- 6. The Center for Professional Development provided Beginning Teacher and Mentor Teacher training and the Governor's Summer Institute.**

SCHOOL SYSTEM APPROVAL AND SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
16-301 Clay Middle	Conditional Accreditation		5.1.1 (SE)	May 31, 2007

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the **Full Approval** status of the Clay County School System and continue Clay Middle School's **Conditional Accreditation** status with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

NEW ISSUE

6.1.13. 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)

Clay County and Clay Middle School had a system in place during the opening of the instructional term in which one grade attended school and the other two grades remained at home.

Friday, August 26 - All 8th grade students will be in attendance, 6th and 7th grade students will remain at home.

Monday, August 29 – All 7th grade students will be in attendance, 6th and 8th grade students will remain at home.

Tuesday, August 30 – All 6th grade students will be in attendance, 7th and 8th grade students will remain at home.

Wednesday, August 31 – All students will be in attendance.

This practice caused students to lose two instructional days from the school calendar. There has been no assertion that this practice was planned to use accrued instructional time. This exclusion of students on instructional days violated W.Va. Code §18-5-45 and Policy 2510, in addition to decreasing much needed instructional time for students. The Office of Education Performance Audits recommended that this practice be discontinued for the 2006 – 2007 school year for the middle school as well as other schools in which this instructional exclusion is occurring.