

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL

FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

DECEMBER 2007

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Valley High School in Fayette County on November 15, 2006.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Valley High School in Fayette County was conducted October 30, 2007. 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.

20 FAYETTE COUNTY

Chris Perkins, Superintendent

507 VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL – Reconfigured School

Ray Londeree, Principal

Grades 06 - 12

Enrollment 586 (2nd month enrollment report)

WESTEST 2005-2006

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	323	338	332	98.22	59.62	NA	NA	NA
White	297	311	305	98.07	59.10	NA	NA	NA
Black	25	26	26	100.00	68.00	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	204	213	208	97.65	53.26	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	43	45	42	93.33	27.50	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	323	338	332	98.22	74.44	NA	NA	NA
White	297	311	305	98.07	75.25	NA	NA	NA
Black	25	26	26	100.00	68.00	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	204	213	208	97.65	67.33	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	43	45	42	93.33	45.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed or Failed
Attendance Rate = Not Available
Graduation Rate = Not Available

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

20 FAYETTE COUNTY

Chris Perkins, Superintendent

507 VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Lee Loy, Principal

Grades 06 - 12

Enrollment 577 (2nd month enrollment report)

WESTEST 2006-2007

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	307	327	322	98.47	57.04	Yes	No	X
White	280	295	292	98.98	56.98	Yes	No	X
Black	23	28	26	92.85	54.54	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	178	193	190	98.44	55.36	Yes	No	X
Spec. Ed.	49	52	51	98.07	28.57	Yes	NA	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	307	327	322	98.47	68.85	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	280	295	292	98.98	68.45	Yes	Confidence Interval - Averaging	✓
Black	23	28	26	92.85	68.18	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	178	193	190	98.44	67.23	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	49	52	51	98.07	24.48	Yes	NA	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Graduation Rate = 87.8%**

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Achieved Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Since this school was considered a new school because of reconfiguration with three other schools, accountability was not applied relative to adequate yearly progress (AYP). The school's mathematics percent proficient has been low and mathematics has been low throughout Fayette County. The WESTEST results, although not applicable for accountability, should be used by the school and county for strategic planning.

The Grade 7 Statewide Writing Assessment performance levels were far below the state levels with Valley High School's students at 53 percent below mastery compared to 25 percent for West Virginia and 32 percent for Fayette County.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The achievement in both mathematics and reading/language continued to decline. The Team interviewed the administrators and mathematics teachers concerning what was being done to improve student mathematics achievement. Following are several of the things the school was doing to improve student achievement in mathematics.

- 1. A numeracy coach had been employed on an extracurricular contract to work with mathematics teachers.**
- 2. The numeracy coach had held several meetings with the school's mathematics faculty to analyze WESTEST scores and identify weaknesses in the mathematics curriculum and the individual students. This information was being used to provide supplemental materials to improve the weaknesses in the curriculum and to target instruction to students both in class and after-school tutoring.**
- 3. Mathematics teachers were using bell ringers.**
- 4. The mathematics teachers were being trained in "Cooperative Learning".**
- 5. Mathematics teachers used the "I Know" website with students.**
- 6. Teachers were being trained in focused learning strategies.**
- 7. The Mathematics Department had new graphing calculators.**
- 8. The Mathematics Department had new geometry sketch pads.**
- 9. Mathematics teachers were building benchmark tests to check and guide math instruction.**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

7.1. Curriculum

7.1.2. High expectations. Through curricular offerings, instructional practices, and administrative practices, staff demonstrates high expectations for the learning and achieving of all students and all students have equal education opportunities including reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration. (Policy 2510)

One physical education class finished the weight training session at least 30 minutes early. The students were then allowed to sit on the bleachers or play basketball for the remainder of the period. This did not exhibit high expectations for the students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Team members visited classrooms, the gymnasium, and walked by classrooms during the last ten minutes of class periods and found all classes working during these periods of time.

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)

The Team observed two math classes in which the majority of instruction was teacher directed instead of engaging students in active learning experiences.

Methods such as lecture, handouts, and guided discussions were overly utilized in many classrooms. These practices were verified through classroom observations and lesson plan reviews.

One math teacher had less than one grade per student per week. This practice places an unreasonably high value on each grade taken.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The staff had received additional staff development on effective instructional strategies, and it appeared to have had a positive effect on instruction. Some of the staff development was 1. Marzano – Instructional Strategies That Work, 2. How to Use Graphing Calculators, 3. Building Academic Vocabulary, 4. Reading in the Content Area, 5. Differentiated Instruction, and 6. Scaffolding Learning Focus.

Instruction and grading were monitored by the administrators by walkthroughs, reviewing lesson plans, and conferencing with teachers.

- 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)**

Technology use throughout the building was observed to be at minimal levels and several teachers stated that they did not use technology at all. A minimal number of students was observed to be using technology throughout the day and very few lesson plans indicated technology use.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. There did not appear to be a change in technology use. Mathematics teachers had new graphing calculators which were being used; the distance learning classroom appeared to be used; but a review of the logs for the middle school computer laboratory from September 4, 2007 through October 29, 2007 showed the laboratory had been used for approximately 180 periods of the possible 320 periods it was available for use; a review of the logs for the high school computer laboratory for the same period of time showed the laboratory had been used six times by four different teachers.

- 7.1.9. Programs of study. Programs of study are provided in grades K-12 as listed in Policy 2510 for elementary, middle, and high school levels, including career clusters and majors and an opportunity to examine a system of career clusters in grades 5-8 and to select a career cluster to explore in grades 9 and 10. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The following classes were not offered: Journalism, Advanced Placement (AP) Chemistry, AP Environmental Earth Science, and AP Physics.

The Physical Education classes were not meeting the required number of credits. This was reported to be due to only having two physical education teachers.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. A review of the curriculum audit showed journalism had been offered for the 2007-2008 school year, but there were only three students wanting the class so it was not scheduled. The following Advanced Placement (AP) classes were being taught this year: Calculus, Language/Composition, World History, Environmental/Earth Science, and English.

A glitch in the scheduling of middle school physical education was adjusted while the Team was there to ensure each middle school student was receiving one full period of physical education each school day for one semester.

- 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)**

Not all students reported to school on the first day, August 28, 2006. High school students reported the first day and middle school students reported the second day. This resulted in lost instructional time and instructional days required by W.Va. Code §18-5-45.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All students reported to school on the first day of school for students in August 2007.

7.2. Student and School Performance

- 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)**

Several lesson plans were incomplete and could not be followed by a substitute teacher. Many teachers relied upon the Learning Focused sheets which would be difficult, if not impossible, to provide direction to teach the classes. Many teachers stated that they had emergency lesson plans in the event they were ill and could not report to school. These plans did not allow for a continual flow of the educational process.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed the file of teacher lesson plans and found them to be complete and usable by the teachers and substitutes.

7.4. Regulatory Agency Reviews

- 7.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews. Determine during on-site reviews and include in reports whether required reviews and inspections have been conducted by the appropriate agencies, including, but not limited to, the State Fire Marshal, the Health Department, the School Building Authority of West Virginia, and the responsible divisions within the West Virginia Department of Education, and whether noted deficiencies have been or are in the process of being corrected. The Office of Education Performance Audits may not conduct a duplicate review or inspection nor mandate more stringent compliance measures. (W.Va. Code §§18-9B-9, 10, 11, 18-4-10, and 18-5A-5; Policy 1224.1; Policy 8100; W.Va. Code §18-5-9; Policy 6200; Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §104.22 and §104.23; Policy 4334; Policy 4336)**

Three West Virginia Department of Health reports had not been corrected. These issues were: Dumpster lids open; the fire extinguisher in Room 202 was not charged; and a light shield was missing in Room 101.

Six Board of Risk and Insurance Management recommendations had not been corrected. These included: A ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) had not been installed in the 3rd hallway; a safety committee had not been formed at the school; fire extinguishers were not inspected monthly; chemicals in the chemistry storage room continued to be stored alphabetically; chemicals had not been inventoried; and emergency lights were not provided in the chemistry laboratory.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. Each morning the principal makes his rounds of the school after the trash has been picked up and checks to ensure the dumpster lids are closed (they were closed when checked by the Team.). The Team found the fire extinguisher in Room 202 to be fully charged and no missing light shields were in Room 101.

A check of the Board of Risk and Insurance Management recommendations found the ground fault interrupter had been installed, the school had formed a safety committee, fire extinguishers were checked by the custodian but no record could be found to show that they were inspected monthly, chemicals in the chemistry storage room had been rearranged and were stored by families, there was not a current inventory of chemicals, and no emergency lights were provided in the chemistry laboratory.

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

7.7.2. Policy implementation. The county and schools implement: a policy governing disciplinary procedures; a policy for grading consistent with student confidentiality; policies governing student due process rights and nondiscrimination; the Student Code of Conduct policy; the Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment, and Violence policy; and approved policy on tobacco use; an approved policy on substance abuse; and an approved policy on AIDS Education. (W.Va. Code §18A-5-1 and §18-8-8; Policy 2421; Policy 2422.4; Policy 2422.5; Policy 4373; Policy 2515)

Smokeless tobacco use was evident in the rest rooms. This was a violation of West Virginia State Code and West Virginia Board of Education policy.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team checked the rest rooms several times during the day and found no evidence of smokeless tobacco use or smoking.

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 Valley High School, the Team determined that assistance from the central office administration, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA IV be sought to assist the building administrator in implementing of high quality programs to improve student achievement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal reported there had been great support and assistance from the county central office, RESA IV, and from the West Virginia Department of Education. Therefore, many of the problems had been solved or at least improved.

RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1.9. Programs of study.** Only one Advanced Placement (AP) class was offered at the school. This was AP Literature and may be due to lack of trained personnel. The Team recommended that Valley High School and the Fayette County Board of Education investigate means to provide more AP classes for students.

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Four additional Advanced Placement (AP) classes had been added to the curriculum for this year – Environmental/Earth Science, Language Composition, Calculus, and World History.

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 Valley High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Fayette 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 Fayette 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.

The consolidation of four schools to form the current Valley High School had been a daunting task for the students, staff, and administration. The Team believed that the administration had the foresight and ability to work through the issues at hand and to guide the school in the proper direction.

The school failed to provide a number of required classes especially Advanced Placement (AP) classes. The county must devise a means to provide all required courses to all secondary schools in Fayette County.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

With the addition of the Advanced Placement (AP) classes, the school believed it was providing all required courses for this year.

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 Valley High School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

- 18.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county electronic strategic improvement plan development is intended, in part, to provide mechanisms to target resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance.**

The Team determined that Valley High School and Fayette County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. The school must continue to investigate and implement high quality programs and practices to ensure student success. Also, particular attention must continue to be given to the mathematics department to increase student scores on the WESTEST. The Team recommended that the Fayette County School System Director of Instruction and the school administrator engage the Director of Instruction and the Professional Development Director at RESA IV in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement in mathematics.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

With the assistance of Judy Pomeroy from RESA IV and Lou Maynus from the West Virginia Department of Education, the school had participated in the preparation of the Fayette County K-12 Math Leadership Plan.

Some of the things done at Valley High School to improve student achievement in mathematics are:

- 1. An after-school tutoring program designed around student mathematics weaknesses.**
- 2. Employment of a Numeracy Coach.**
- 3. Analysis of the WESTEST mathematics scores to find weaknesses in the curriculum and individual students.**
- 4. Purchase of new graphing calculators.**
- 5. Training of teachers in cooperative learning, use of graphing calculators, focused learning strategies, Marzano's Instructional Strategies That Work, 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.

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 15 acres. The site was not large enough for future expansion. The location was not removed from undesirable noise and traffic. The site was not suitable for special instructional needs, e.g. outdoor learning. The playgrounds/recreational areas were not well equipped and appropriate for the Grades 5-8 age level.

19.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms. Rooms 101-A, 210-A, 310-A, 401-A, and 405 did not have adequate storage. Room 201 was not of adequate size. Room 401 did not have a chalkboard or bulletin board.

19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas. The art facility did not have access to natural or artificial light and did not have the following equipment: Two deep sinks, mechanical ventilation, ceramic kiln, and black-out areas. The physical education facility did not have forced ventilation or a display case.

- 19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science facilities were not of adequate size and were not located with easy access to outdoor activities and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building. The following equipment was not available in all science classrooms: AC and DC current, fire extinguisher, sink, air vacuum, balance cases, darkening provisions, adequate storage, hot and cold water, chalkboard, bulletin board, open and closed shelving, demo table, blanket, emergency showers, chairs and tables, gas, main gas shut-off, ventilation fume hood, and laboratory workspace.
- 19.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage was not of adequate size, was not located to have convenient access to language arts and music instructional area, and was not close to seating. The middle school stage did not have acoustical panels, film screens, or controlled illumination. The high school auditorium was not of adequate size and did not have space for an orchestra, was not acoustically treated, did not have broadcast capabilities, lacked controlled illumination, and did not have speakers and distance learning capability. The high school stage was not of adequate size and did not have wood floors, light control panels, outlets, or adequate storage.
- 19.1.13. Grades 7-12 school site vocational.** Room 402 Keyboarding did not have room darkening provisions.
- 19.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not available.
- 19.1.15. Health service units.** The health service unit did not have curtained or small rooms with cots, a refrigerator with locked storage, or a work counter.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The findings remained the same with the following exceptions.

- 19.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms.** Some stored materials had been removed from Rooms 101-A, 210-A, 310-A, 401-A and 405. A chalkboard and bulletin board had been installed in Room 401.

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 mathematics, Valley High School and Fayette County must implement high yield instructional practices and instruction that will improve students' achievement. Fayette County must actively pursue assistance from RESA IV, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development to assist with school improvement efforts. Curriculum must be data-driven and instruction must be relevant to the curriculum and provide all students the opportunity to learn.

FOLLOW-UP TEAM SUMMARY

Student achievement on the WESTEST declined from 2005-06 to 2006-07.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
20-507 Valley High	Temporary Accreditation	7.1.7; 7.4.1		

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education issue Valley High School Temporary Accreditation and the school be given a May 31, 2008 directive to correct the remaining Education Performance Audit noncompliances or be determined to be Seriously Impaired with the ensuing consequences as stated in W. Va. Code §18-2E-5 and Policy 2320.