



**OEPA REPORT
FOR
FAYETTE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

FEBRUARY 2009

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Board of Education Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) conducted an announced Education Performance Audit of the Fayette County School District during November 2006.

The Education Performance Audit Report was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education January 10, 2007. The State Board unanimously declared that extraordinary circumstances exist in Fayette County Schools. The State Superintendent of Schools was directed to appoint an improvement consultant team to make recommendations for correcting the emergency. After the report, the Fayette County School System would have six (6) months to correct the deficiencies and implement the recommendations from the Improvement Consultant Team that were approved by the State Board of Education.

The OEPA returned to Fayette County during November 2007 to conduct a progress review. The purpose of the review was to examine Fayette County School District's progress in meeting the standards required by State Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies and implementing the Improvement Consultant Team's recommendations.

The Fayette County Progress Report was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education in December 2007. The State Board continued the Nonapproval status and granted Fayette County until October 2008 to correct the remaining issues of the previous reports.

The OEPA returned to the Fayette County School System during November 2008 and again in January 2009 to determine if the county and schools had corrected the remaining issues. This report includes comments from the previous visits and the final assessment of Fayette County's status.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Dr. Donna Davis, Deputy Director

NAME	TITLE	COUNTY	CATEGORY
Monica Beane (Nov. 17, 18, 19)	Assistant Director Office of Instruction	WV Department of Education	AYP/Five-Year Strategic Plan/High Quality Standards
Laura Kiser (Nov. 17, 18, 19, 20)	Coordinator Office of Professional Preparation	WV Department of Education	Certification
Carroll Staats (Nov. 17, 18, 21)	Board President	Jackson County Board of Education	Evaluation
Whitni Kines (Nov. 17, 18, 19)	Director of Finance	Barbour County Schools	Finance
Randy Keathley (Nov. 17, 18, 19, 20)	Assistant Superintendent	Mingo County Schools	Hiring/Personnel
Thomas Deadrick (Nov. 17, 18, 19)	Associate Superintendent	Marion County Schools	Policies/Administration
Bill Elswick & Staff (Nov. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21)	Executive Director Office of School Facilities	WV Department of Education	Facilities
Richard Butler (Nov. 20)	Retired Superintendent College Professor	Gilmer County	Administration/Leadership

OEPA November 2008 Review

BEST PRACTICES/COMMENDATIONS

1. The Fayette County Schools Personnel Department and Personnel Director organized the evaluation policies, forms, and processes into *The Fayette County Schools Evaluator's Handbook – 2008-2009*. This handbook compiled policies, forms, timelines, etc., for all employee groups (classroom teachers, school administrators, coaches, service personnel, professional support personnel, substitute personnel, etc.) in a concise, easily readable handbook that provides a quick reference tool for school administrators to use when evaluating school personnel. The handbook is most helpful to the personnel office and school administrators as they manage the evaluation processes for multiple categories of personnel.
2. The Team recognized the commitment and dedication of the Office of Personnel staff to the improvement of office operation and providing quality services to Fayette County employees, students, and citizens.

The Team found the office staff to be efficient and well organized. The Team commended the Office of Personnel staff for making every effort to continue to remain abreast of school law and State policies by attending various relevant trainings.

3. The Director of Personnel had created and implemented a hiring protocol and personnel staffing plan for utilization countywide. Training on the hiring process, standards, documentation, and staff plan had been provided for administrators.
4. The Director of Personnel created and disseminated a detailed Fayette County Schools Evaluator Handbook for administrators. Administrators were provided handbook training at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

5.1. Accountability

5.1.1. Achievement

Improvement Consultant Team Finding(s):

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data for the 2005-2006 school year indicated that special education students in Fayette County performed below the state average across all grade levels in mathematics and also at the elementary and middle school grade levels in reading/language arts. Chart 1 shows the grade span/assessment percent of special education students' proficient in Fayette County and the percent of special education students' proficient statewide.

Chart 1

GRADE SPAN / ASSESSMENT	SUBGROUP	FAYETTE COUNTY PERCENT PROFICIENT 05- 06	FAYETTE COUNTY PERCENT PROFICIENT 06- 07	FAYETTE COUNTY PERCENT PROFICIENT 07- 08	STATE PERCENT PROFICIENT 05-06	STATE PERCENT PROFICIENT 06-07	STATE PERCENT PROFICIENT 07-08
Elementary Mathematics	SE	47.2	49.7 (N)	40.9 (N)	53.3	54.9 (N)	51.8 (N)
Middle Mathematics	SE	22.1	36.5 (H)	44.2 (H)	33.5	37.0 (N)	37.6 (N)
Secondary Mathematics	SE	19.6	20.5 (N)	17.2 (N)	22.4	24.1 (N)	23.1 (N)
Elementary Reading/ English Language Arts	SE	43.8	42.0 (N)	37.1 (N)	46.8	48.4 (N)	47.2 (N)
Middle Reading/ English Language Arts	SE	24.8	37.4 (H)	42.1 (N)	37.5	39.9 (N)	40.3 (N)
Secondary Reading/English Language Arts	SE	30.8	24.8 (N)	28.9 (N)	28.4	28.1 (N)	26.7 (N)
Secondary Mathematics	AS		60.9 (H)	61.0 (N)		68.5 (Y)	68.3 (Y)
Secondary Mathematics	B		52.4 (H)	47.3 (N)		52.9 (N)	52.2 (N)
Secondary Mathematics	SES		57.1 (H)	55.1 (N)		58.6 (N)	58.2 (N)
Secondary Reading/English Language Arts	SES		70.6 (C)	68.1 (N)		66.0 (N)	65.0 (N)

SE – denotes Special Education

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data for the 2006-2007 school year showed that special education students in Fayette County continued to perform below the state average across all grade levels in mathematics and in reading/language arts.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data for the 2007-2008 school year was addressed in the Fayette County Five-Year Strategic Plan. Specific notation was made on increasing mathematics in all subgroups.

Prioritized Strategic Issues included:

1. To increase achievement in mathematics, grades 3-12.
2. To increase student achievement in reading, grades 3-12.
3. To increase the district's graduation rate.
4. To utilize a variety of data to make informed decisions related to the instruction of all students, grades K-12.
5. To increase the leadership capacity of the district's administrators.

The 2007-2008 grade span/assessment data in Chart 1 show that the special education (SE) subgroup continued to not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) at the school district level for all grade spans and assessed areas, except for the middle level which showed measurable improvement in both mathematics and reading/language arts. The secondary level also improved in reading/language arts, but did not make AYP.

Additionally, Fayette County School System did not achieve AYP for the 2007-2008 school year at the secondary level in mathematics for the all students (AS), racial ethnicity black (B), and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups and in reading/language arts for the SES subgroup.

School district achievement data indicated that Fayette County has not demonstrated improvement in student achievement and additional subgroups entered the list of those that failed to make AYP.

New Finding November 2008

The Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) Team noted that the staff development council neglected to meet as required (four times per year-one per nine weeks). West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5500, *County Professional Staff Development Councils*, Section 5.9. states, "The professional staff development council shall meet at least quarterly each year."

Fayette County Professional Staff Development Council Minutes indicated the following dates and members in attendance.

- January 23, 2008 (7 members present)
- March 6, 2008 (3 members present) no quorum
- May 7, 2008 (only the Associate Superintendent was present) no quorum

The county Professional Staff Development Council meetings must be scheduled and held regularly so that a consistent process for evaluation and planning of targeted professional development may be utilized. If face-to-face meetings are difficult to schedule/attend, the utilization of a Google Group on the West Virginia Department of Education WebTop or a county wiki might better serve the needs of this group.

W.Va. Code §18-3-8. County Professional staff development councils and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5500, *County Professional Staff Development Councils*, were not being followed.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

1. Create an early literacy plan that incorporates the tenants of tiered instruction as demonstrated in Fayette County's two Reading First (RF) schools. This model has demonstrated increased reading achievement as a foundation for academic success and reduction in special education referrals. Through the benchmark screening and targeted interventions inherent in the tiered instruction that is central to the Reading First (RF) model, students who are ultimately but appropriately identified for special education have a better foundation in reading and the potential to demonstrate improved results. WVDE can provide technical assistance in creating this plan.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Literacy Plan/Literacy Coaches

The Team interviewed Fayette County Central staff who provided the following information. According to a literacy coach, the K-3 plan is moving to 4th grade and is to move to a Comprehensive Reading block with word study and phonics included. They also want to implement a writing workshop in every class. Middle and high schools use Learning Focused Strategies as their Literacy Plan. The county has worked on a balanced reading program, K-4, for about four years. Literacy coaches at each elementary school are in the 5th year. Curricular coaches (middle and high) are in their 4th year. Coaches are teachers who are asked to do four hours of coaching a week, including pre- and post- conferences. Every year the elementary schools form a literacy team which includes the principal, the literacy coach, a special educator, and a regular teacher. They look at test data and implement a project based on needs. They do four half-day trainings for teachers. They meet in October to plan the sessions and determine what data to collect for the project. Between the end of March and the beginning of April, the Board schedules a gallery walk on a Saturday. Schools do a display and explain their project to parents and the community. Response to Intervention is implemented in all schools, even Reading First schools, due to the uncertainty of the continuance of Reading First. All K-4 teachers were trained so that schools would have everyone on the same page. The Director of Curriculum indicated that Title 1 and Special Education teachers were also trained.

Reading First and Response to Intervention (RTI) Schools

Meadow Bridge Elementary and Scarbro Elementary are the two Reading First Schools in the county. All other elementary schools were trained this summer (2007) by the West Virginia Department of Education in Response to Intervention. Most schools are initiating Tier I this year. They're also doing a book study as part of their training. The literacy coach said she has some dealings with Reading First, but the county received extensive help from the West Virginia Department of Education reading monitors.

Why DIBELS in some schools and not others?

Staff in schools not using DIBELS indicated a desire to use this assessment process. The county curricular team decided which schools got DIBELS. Both Reading First schools received it. The Literacy Team discussed who would use it and how it would be used. Other schools use the other assessments (Diagnostic Reading Assessment, high-frequency words, word writing). The Team informally observed that schools using DIBELS were applying formative and summative assessments to monitor student progress.

SUMMATION

Education Performance Audit Teams visited all schools in Fayette County and reported that staff in some schools were implementing tiered instruction and the literacy plan, where others were not or only one teacher was applying the instruction. This recommendation was not being delivered to the extent as intended to improve achievement of students with disabilities.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. The two Reading First schools had been included in recent professional development offered by Fayette County to build capacity beyond federal and state funding for the program. The county early literacy plan involved students in grades K-4.

2. Ensure that all special education and Title I teachers analyze formative and summative assessment data from students for whom they are responsible and engage in continuous student progress monitoring to ensure that students are benefiting from their supplemental instruction and interventions.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Scarbro Elementary had a sheet they used for monitoring student progress at all grade levels. No other school was reported to be doing consistent benchmarking to monitor student progress.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. It was indicated at the Fayette County Board of Education office that benchmarking will occur during the 2008-2009 school year. The five-year strategic plan included utilizing Acuity and State test item banks to develop benchmark assessments for each grade level.

The Associate Superintendent indicated that benchmarking would be optional for schools this school year 2008-2009. The rationale for waiting was to allow time for curriculum mapping to be in place and to check for alignment with Acuity items in the Benchmark item test bank. The West Virginia Department of Education granted Fayette County access to the Benchmark items and the Director of Elementary Schools/Assessment K-12 released the benchmark assessments to schools on January 21, 2009. A plan is in place for schools to review their benchmark data and plan instruction accordingly. According to the Associate Superintendent, benchmarking will be required for all 22 schools (excluding the Career-Technical Center) in the 2009-2010 school year.

3. Use the dedicated reading and math positions at Collins Middle School to provide direct, explicit targeted instruction in reading and math for the entirety of an instructional period or block. This follows research that dictates explicit instruction provided by qualified teachers for extended time to erase deficits in learning and basic skills. WVDE will provide technical assistance in designing schedules that make this an option for students who are in the bottom quartile of reading and math achievement.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Collins Middle School provided direct, explicit targeted instruction in reading and mathematics.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. No further action was required.

4. Identify at least two special education teachers in co-teaching assignments at the secondary level to become technology integration specialists for special education. This training of special education teachers will support the use of technology by all teachers in the schools where the teachers are located. Applications for these positions will be available in March from the WVDE.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The Team asked staff at each secondary school to identify the special education teachers in co-teaching assignments who became the technology integration specialist for special education. The responses were mixed as indicated below.

Oak Hill High School

“Doesn’t have any”. The principal was unaware that this was to happen.

Meadow Bridge High School

The principal provided a name for the assignment, but said the individual had not had training, but had worked at West Virginia Tech.

Midland Trail High School

The principal stated that the position was paid from out of a grant.

Information was not provided at the other high schools.

SUMMATION

A review of postings at the central office showed individuals were hired in these positions in addition to their other assignments. It would be difficult for these persons to perform their teaching responsibilities and serve as Technology Integration Specialists. Based on school interviews, the value of this process was negligible.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

PROGRESSING.

- The county employed full time Technology Integration Specialists to assist with technology integration. According to the eWalk data collected from August 26, 2008 to November 17, 2008, of 398 elementary walkthroughs recorded, students were using technology as listed below.
 - Curricular Software Program – 9 percent
 - Writing Roadmap/Acuity/Odyssey - 9 percent
 - Internet Usage -11 percent
 - Microsoft Office - 3 percent
 - Interactive Whiteboard - 2 percent
 - Elmo - 4 percent
 - TechSteps/EdClass - 1 percent
 - Mobile Labs - 9 percent
 - Other Technology - 9 percent
- High School data collected indicated students were using technology as listed below.
 - Use of TI Navigators – 0 percent
 - Active instructional use of calculators - 7 percent
 - Active instructional use of computers - 16 percent
 - Incorporation of TechSteps/EdClass - 3 percent

- TI 73/TI 84 - 3 percent
- Mobile Labs - 1 percent

Based upon the eWalk data collected to date November 2008 (and entered by administrators in the eWalk database), the Technology Integration Specialists were providing much needed assistance with technology integration.

As of January 21, 2009, no plan was in place for review of eWalk data. The Superintendent indicated a plan of action was being developed to create a template for data review. They are looking at how to assess the data and how to monitor the data. This is the initial year of utilizing eWalk to collect data in schools.

5.1.4. Graduation

Improvement Consultant Team Finding(s):

The Improvement Consultant Team found that county personnel have initiated a proactive plan to address the issue of graduation rate.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

While the district graduation rate improved by 3.35 percent, individual schools did not adequately address the need to implement strategies to improve the graduation rate.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. Through student interviews, there was no indication of a schoolwide proactive plan to address the issue of graduation rate. Students indicated the counselors were “too busy” to meet with them. In addition, students indicated school was “boring” and teachers “did not care” whether students stayed in school or not. The majority of student responses indicated students did not need a high school diploma to get a job “in the mines, working construction, or in a fast-food restaurant.” Another issue was that students could take a course or two at the Vocational Center and then could get a job in “welding, construction, or food” industry.

Graduation Rate

County/School	2007-2008	2006-2007
Fayette County	82.3%	83.5%
Fayetteville High	81.4%	85.3%
Meadow Bridge High	91.7%	84.4%
Midland Trail High	79.6%	84.3%
Mount Hope High	78.1%	77.4%
Oak Hill High	82.3%	81.8%
Valley High	83.9%	87.8%

Graduation data showed the Fayette County School District declined in student graduation rate from the 2006-2007 school year to the 2007-2008 school year. Three schools showed a drop in graduation rate, one school showed a substantial increase in graduation rate, and two schools showed a modest increase in graduation rate.

Administrative interviews indicated the underlying root cause of high school dropout rate increases were largely due to changes indicated in the GED program. Students that are 16 and pass the GED are reimbursed for taking the GED. According to the administrators, this decreases the incentive to stay in school.

One school (Midland Trail High School) had implemented a Student Assistance Team (SAT) requirement for parental attendance. Parents are required to schedule their children at the beginning of each semester. According to the principal, parent involvement has increased. In addition, students who previously dropped out were enrolling in the second semester to complete school in the spring. Credit Recovery was being utilized as well.

In most high schools, students were aware of Credit Recovery; but student interviews indicated, students must take the initiative to seek information from the guidance counselors. Students at several high schools indicated that the counselors are “very busy” and difficult to meet with during the school day.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

The Improvement Consultant Team recommends that the county continue with the implementation of the following strategies:

- Establish the “Strive for Five” incentive program
- School graduation team meetings
- Conduct “Teen Court”
- Develop a county Multi-Disciplinary Investigative Team
- Apply for a SPF SIG alcohol, tobacco, & drug prevention grant
- File juvenile petitions for truancy
- Conduct home visits/school visits
- Provide orientation for the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney regarding the importance of accurate record keeping
- Establish a Family Resource Network

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The Team checked the secondary schools to determine implementation of the strategies to improve the graduation rate recommended by the Improvement Consultant Team.

- Secondary schools responded that they did not have the “Strive for Five” incentive program.

- Schools responded that they have graduation team meetings; although Midland Trail High School said they had not met.
- Schools responded that they did not use Teen Court. Most said they use peer mediation.
- Schools were unaware of a SPF SIG alcohol, tobacco, and drug prevention grant. Fayetteville High School was the exception.
- Schools reported that the attendance director files juvenile petitions for truancy.
- Some schools reported doing some home visits while others did not.
- Schools reported that the Assistant Prosecuting Attorney was provided orientation regarding accurate record keeping.
- Schools responded that the Family Resource Network is handled by the county.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. The Fayette County Board of Education indicated in its five-year strategic plan that the county had implemented the “Strive for Five” program in all schools. In addition, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) process was reported to be utilized to explore possible interventions at the secondary (grades 5-12) level. Former students, who had dropped out of school and are now adults, were said to have been utilized in awareness programs in grades 5-12.

Only one secondary student interviewed at the high schools visited was knowledgeable about the “Strive for Five” program. This particular student was a “winner” in the drawing during the 2007-08 school year. Most students interviewed indicated there were “no” programs available to encourage students to stay in school and graduate and “counselors were not available” throughout the day.

In addition to these efforts, the Improvement Consultant Team recommends that county personnel undertake an initiative to uncover and address “root cause” issues that contribute to the unacceptably low graduation rate at the specific schools affected. It is recommended that the county seek out adults who have dropped out of school in the past and invite those individuals to identify reasons for dropping out and enlist their help in encouraging students to stay in school. The team also recommends that county efforts to reduce the drop out rate extend to programs beginning as early as sixth grade to impact the necessary cultural change required to reverse the notion that dropping out of school is acceptable.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Schools did not convey “root cause” issues that contribute to the dropout rate except “economics, home situations”. No school involved former dropouts to identify reasons for dropping out of school. Only one school indicated drop out reduction programs in the sixth grade.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

When asked why students dropped out; students responded, “school is boring to them, their parents let them, they can get jobs without a high school diploma, they can take a class at the vo-tech center and get a job.” Through student interviews, there appeared to be a lack of high expectations for students to graduate from high school. No preventive measures could be identified by students for those who were considering dropping out of school.

However, students at Midland Trail High School indicated they could talk to the counselor, but she was rarely available. Students indicated, “a student has to take the initiative” to meet with the counselor.

Individual secondary school audits found that student counseling services were limited.

6.1. Curriculum

Finding(s):

1. Equitable access to Honors, AP or college courses were not available to students at all Fayette County High Schools. The number and diversity of these courses also severely limited opportunities for Fayette County students.
2. Strategies to increase the percentage of students taking AP exams and the number of students scoring 3 or higher on AP exams need to be implemented.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

Work with the WV Center for Professional Development (CPD) to arrange for certification of additional teachers in Advanced Placement in all content areas in all high schools. Use technology to link students in schools without Advanced Placement, Honors and college level courses to these courses in schools where the courses are offered. Require all high school principals to schedule a minimum of 4 AP courses in 2007-2008. Assemble current AP teachers and representative students to determine the support needed for increasing the number of students enrolled in AP and the number of students who score 3 or better on the exam; consult with CPD for assistance in developing a plan to address identified needs. Require all students enrolled in AP to take the exam and consider the payment of fees for all exams.

Contact the WVDE Office of Assessment for technical assistance in using all ACT data. Professional development in utilization of the ACT EPAS data and college readiness benchmarks will allow the teachers to use the Explore, Plan and ACT Assessment reports and college readiness standards to design curriculum that is aligned with the college readiness standards and to inform instructional practice in grades 6-12.

Issue(s):

Are plans in place to adequately address the need to improve mathematics at the high school level in Fayette County Schools?

Finding(s):

The implemented professional development and research-based instructional strategies did not adequately address the need to improve mathematics at the high school level.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendations:

Utilize the services of the Mathematics Science Partnership through RESA IV (Judy Pomeroy) and the West Virginia Department of Education (Lou Maynus) to develop a focused and manageable K-12 improvement plan for mathematics.

The goal would be to reduce the number of action steps and bring focus to a manageable number of data-based targeted steps in the current county 5-year plan. Identify and then prioritize the needs related to mathematics at each programmatic level and provide teachers at each programmatic level with targeted professional development. Develop a process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of that professional development in the classroom and the impact on student achievement.

This is another area where the ACT EPAS system can be used to identify needs in mathematics and provide clearly articulated direction for moving students to the next level of performance on the college readiness standards.

Improvement Consultant Team Finding(s):

The percentage of Fayette students in remedial college classes last year was 49.4% while the state average was only 35%. Strategies to decrease the number of college going students from Fayette County who enroll in any developmental college course needs to be implemented.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

Using the ACT EPAS system will allow the teachers to focus on individual student college readiness as early as grade 8 and to design instruction that is based on student need at each grade level. Professional development in the utilization of the information available from ACT will provide teachers with the direction needed to design quality targeted instruction in English, language arts and mathematics.

College readiness begins with high expectations in the middle grades. For guidance in quality standards-based unit and lesson design in reading, English Language Arts and math in grades 5-8, contact WVDE Office of Instruction to provide teachers with professional development related to units found on the WVDE website

<http://teachertools.k12.wv.us>. Algebra I standards-based units and the accompanying professional development will be available in the summer of 2007.

The WVDE Offices of Instruction, Special Education and Title I can also provide assistance in developing and delivering a tiered instructional model in reading, English Language Arts and math that will provide in-time intervention for all students.

Implementation of the College Transition courses in English and mathematics for students who do not achieve the college readiness benchmark on ACT in grade 11 (2008) will further assist those students in meeting that benchmark prior to graduation.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The number of Honors, Advanced Placement classes, and college classes has increased in all high schools. The district did provide one mathematics course (Calculus) online. Plans are being developed to expand the Cyberschool to students. At this time it is used for professional development so that more courses could be provided online. Expanding the mathematics offerings would provide additional opportunity to increase student performance in mathematics.

Fayette County School District has increased the number of AP courses offered. However, strategies to increase the percent of students scoring 3 or higher on an AP course exam needed to be implemented.

The number of college going students from Fayette County who were enrolled in development college courses decreased in English and other developmental courses. However, the percent of students in developmental mathematics increased. The Team noted that Fayette County had several postings for mathematics teachers and the only mathematics AP course offered was an online calculus course. The need to implement mathematics teacher recruitment, professional development, and research based instructional practices continues to be critical to improvement efforts.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

PROGRESSING/Mathematics achievement not shown. A process for monitoring and supporting the implementation of professional development in the classroom and the impact on student achievement, as recommended, had not occurred to the extent it was intended. Currently, professional development offerings were available to educators via the following link: <http://boe.faye.k12.wv.us/staffdev/>. However, the paper feedback from participants was collected and stored in a binder. The Team reviewed comments on the feedback forms. More than one person requested additional assistance and indicated a total “lack of understanding” of the content session that was delivered. The Team recommended that Fayette County develop a system for effectively reviewing and utilizing the data to plan for future professional development opportunities and conduct a needs assessment for the effectiveness of the professional development.

To date, January 21, 2009, a system for reviewing data collected from Professional Development offerings was not in place. While the county can monitor who is attending which session, there was no method established for reviewing the effectiveness of the Professional Development offered. When the OEPA Team reviewed feedback forms from August Professional Development, comments indicated teachers requested additional assistance. No system was in place to determine whether or not those teachers received additional assistance as requested.

While Professional Development opportunities had been provided to staff, mathematics scores continued to decline countywide. RESA IV, the West Virginia Department of Education, and county professional development sessions had been utilized by teachers. All Algebra I teachers had been trained on the online Algebra I course (TEACH 21). In addition, the MSP (Math Science Partnership) through RESA IV included mathematics training for secondary teachers. A system is in place for the Math Specialist and Director of Secondary Education to identify a subset of teachers to form a "core" group of professional development recipients.

The Team recommended that county office staff determine who is taking advantage of professional development offerings in mathematics and determine how it has impacted student achievement. (Are the right teachers taking advantage of the professional development?)

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED									
High School	Number of AP Courses Offered 2006-07	Number of AP Courses Offered 2007-08	Number of AP Courses Offered 2008-09	Number of Honors Courses Offered 2006-07	Number of Honors Courses Offered 2007-08	Number of Honors Courses Offered 2008-09	Number of College Credit Courses Offered 2006-07	Number of College Credit Courses Offered 2007-08	Number of College Credit Courses Offered 2008-09
Fayetteville High School	0	3	2	4	4	4	1	3	2
Meadow Bridge High School	1	3	4	9	7	5	0	0	0
Midland Trail High School	1	3	3	5	4	4	0	3	0
Mount Hope High School	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
Oak Hill High School	4	5	4	5	7	8	1	0	0
Valley High School	1	5	5	3	5	4	0	1	1

AP TEST TAKERS				
Fayette County	Year 2003	Year 2004	Year 2005	Year 2006
10 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
11 th Grade Test Takers (%)	3.1	4.6	5.7	7.8
12 th Grade Test Takers (%)	8.4	7.9	13.3	14.1
10 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
11 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	26.7	50.0	11.1	33.3
12 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	27.5	21.1	28.1	18.8

Note: Current data not available.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN WV PUBLIC COLLEGES IN FALL OF 2004										
	Number of High School Graduates	2006-07	Overall College Going Rate	2006-07	% in Developmental Mathematics	2006-07	% in Developmental English	2006-07	% in Any Developmental Course(s)	2006-07
State	17,871		58.0		30.0	57	17.2	35	35.0	64
Fayette	445	464	43.5	48	41.7	42.1	25.6	18.9	49.4	43.9

Note: Current data not available.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. Advanced Placement courses did not meet the required number of offerings at two high schools. One school did not offer honors courses and four of the six high schools did not offer college credit courses during the 2008-2009 school year.

6.1.12. Multi-Cultural Education

Issue(s):

Did all schools in Fayette County have Multi-Cultural Plans that were being implemented?

Finding(s):

The Team reviewed the county plan and a large number of school plans on file in the county office. The lack of evidence that a multicultural education program was implemented at Valley High School was not documented in the Valley High School report. Review of county multicultural plan and individual school plans on file at county office does not substantiate this finding.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Revision of Multicultural Education Plan

The Team reviewed the county multicultural education plans/revisions, dated January 2007 and March 2007. The Team also reviewed a folder that contained the written plan for each school in the county.

The Team was provided a folder for this standard. It included the following

- Fayette County Schools Multicultural Education Plan
- Individual school "6.1.12 Multicultural/Diversity/Tolerance School Implementation Form" submissions for January 22, 2007 – March 23, 2007; March 26, 2007 – June 7, 2007; and August 27, 2007 – October 29, 2007.
- Specifically noted in the audit report and reviewed in the Board Office files were forms for:
 - Oak Hill High School
 - Ansted Elementary
 - Fayetteville Elementary
 - Gatewood Elementary
 - Ansted Middle School
 - Nuttall Middle School
 - Fayetteville High School
 - Midland Trail High School

The examples of staff development sessions provided in Fayette County related to multiculturalism for 2007-2008:

- Working with Parents
- Working with Children with ADHD/Bipolar Disorder
- Managing Anti-Social Behavior
- “Bully for You!” One School’s Approach to Combat Bullying
- Self Mutilation in Adolescents; Causes, Prevention and Treatment
- Working with Limited English Proficient Students (Principals’ Meeting)

The Fayette County Schools’ Student Code of Conduct (Policy E-2) for 2007-2008 was included in the audit files at the Board office – this is a handbook presented to each student with what appears to be a “receipt” form in the front to acknowledge acceptance of the materials.

Fayette County did a commendable job of developing a county multicultural plan and implementing the plan in the schools.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Corrected. No further OEPA Team review was necessary.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

As evidenced in review of county and school plans, the team could not justify the finding cited.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The finding was at Oak Hill High School, not Valley High School as stated in the original report. The county had developed a good multicultural plan and schools were implementing the plan.

6.2.1. Unified county and school improvement plans

Issue(s):

Did the Fayette County School District’s Five-Year Strategic Plan address the curriculum issues identified in the county school system?

Finding(s):

1. The goals, objectives, and action steps of the Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan did not adequately address the declining performance of African American students in mathematics at the high school level.

2. The goals, objectives, and action steps of the Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan did not adequately address the achievement gap of African American students.
3. The goals, objectives, and action steps of the Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan did not adequately address the need to improve writing at all grade levels.
4. The goals, objectives, and action steps of the Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan did not adequately address the need to improve the county's graduation rate.
5. The need to improve the achievement of high school students in mathematics needed to be more adequately addressed in district plans and initiatives.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

The Improvement Consultant Team recommends revision of the Work Plan (Section VII) of the Five-Year Online Strategic Plan to address the curriculum issues 1, 2, 4, & 5. The team feels that the county has already adequately addressed issue 3.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

1. A review of Fayette County School District Five Year Strategic Plan and reviews of the district's high schools' five year plans indicated increased emphasis on improving mathematics achievement across all subgroups. Objectives and 5-year targets specific to subgroups were stated in the Goals, Specific Objectives and Performance Target section of the Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan. However, strategies specific to individual subgroups were not identified in the district or school work plans. Teacher interviews substantiated the conclusion as Team members were told, "Math is being addressed as a whole." Taking into account the fact that performance in mathematics by the African American subgroup declined at one high school, the plan should be adjusted to address specific subgroups.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. Performance results not shown. Strategies specific to individual subgroups were included in the county and schools' Five-Year Strategic Plans. While both the county and school Five-Year plans identified strategies specific to individual subgroups, the racial/ethnicity Black (B) subgroup percent proficient continued a measurable decrease in both mathematics and reading/language arts.

2. A review of Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan indicated that objectives and 5-year targets specific to subgroups were stated in the Goals, Specific Objectives and Performance Target section Plan. In the school system plan, the intent to provide Differentiated Instruction training was cited as a Learning Focused Strategy. However, strategies specific to individual subgroups were not

found in the district or school work plans. Action steps were broad, focusing on the entire student population. In school plans, the Persons Responsible section of each action step related to improved student achievement frequently listed so many persons that no one would have to accept responsibility.

A review of staff development schedules indicated that 1-day grade specific sessions on Differentiated Instruction were offered.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. The Team verified that strategies specific to individual subgroups were listed in the Five-Year Strategic Plan.

- 3.** Analysis of the West Virginia Writing Assessment evidenced a 9 percent gain at Grade 7 and a 10 percent gain at Grade 10. However, scores decreased 5 percent in 2007 after a 1 percent drop the previous year for Grade 4. The district plan states that a priority is continued focus on the West Virginia Writing Assessment in grades 4, 7, and 10. In the Work Plan section of the district plan, task 10 of the fourth action step stated that Writing Roadmap will be purchased and used. Otherwise, no change in writing instruction was noted. Individual elementary school plans address writing achievement with statements such as "Writing Workshop will be continued in K-4." Individual schools need to analyze past instructional writing strategies to determine which were effective, discontinue strategies that were not improving student performance and implement research based strategies to improve writing performance.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. Literacy Specialists were utilized for writing strategy implementation in all grades. Since the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) purchased Writing Roadmap for the entire state, Fayette County did not need to purchase the program.

- 4.** A review of Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan indicated that one action step was to provide time, training, technology assistance, and resources that are preventive and punitive so that the graduation rate will improve. However, the first task under that action step was to continue the Strive for Five incentive program to combat poor attendance. Observations and interviews at the school level indicate that the Strive for Five incentive program is not active. Students at one high school said that they did not know what Strive for Five was.

A review of individual high school strategic plans showed that the plans did not address the graduation rate adequately. Two of the high schools did not address the graduation rate as an action step. One school's action step stated that 100% of eligible students would be encouraged to register to vote and 80% of seniors would graduate. Any class reaching the goal would be provided an incentive trip to an

amusement park. No other tasks were identified. The staff should investigate and implement research based strategies to increase the graduation rate.

In the district plan, task 6 under the action step to increase the graduation rate states that students and parents will be held accountable for truancy in magistrate court. District administrators do not have authority in magistrate court. They can petition the court to address truancy issues.

5. A review of Fayette County School District's Five-Year Strategic Plan and reviews of the district's high schools' five year plans indicated increased emphasis on improving mathematics achievement across all subgroups. Objectives and 5-year targets were stated in the Goals, Specific Objectives and Performance Target section of the Fayette County School District Five-Year Strategic Plan. Each high school's work plan addressed mathematics achievement.

The school district has implemented the following strategies:

- Numeracy coaches have been employed with extended contracts to provide teacher support and mathematics professional development.
- Advanced Placement calculus has been added to the curriculum in most high schools.
- Professional development was provided in developing computational fluency, Learning Focused Math K-12, Technology/Standard Math K-5, Standards Math 6-8, and Investigations Math.

The countywide K-12 mathematics plan was not widely known or applied in the county schools.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

COMPLIANCE. A review of Fayette County School District's Five-Year Strategic Plan and review of the district's schools' five-year plans indicated increased emphasis on improving mathematics achievement across all subgroups.

A recommendation made in December 2008, from the West Virginia Department of Education School Improvement Support Team, was to eliminate numeracy coaches and employ secondary curriculum specialists. Fayette County has since employed secondary curriculum specialists; two of whom have strong mathematics content knowledge. They are utilized to assist the administration and teachers with data analysis.

6.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews

Finance

Issue(s):

Does the county school system have adequate purchasing and payment procedures and structures in place?

Finding(s):

Purchasing practices and procedures in the Fayette County School System do not always comply with the procedures prescribed in State Board Policy 8200, "Purchasing Procedures for Local Education Agencies." Purchases are often made prior to obtaining approval; blank purchase orders are distributed throughout the school system to be completed by the various departments initiating the purchase, which causes them to be issued out of numeric sequence; and confirmation of the receipt of goods or services is not always being submitted to the business office prior to payment being made.

It was also noted that the capital asset inventory system is not being maintained on a current basis, as required by State Board Policy 8100 and the Procedures Manual for the Capital Asset Management System issued by the WVDE, Office of School Finance.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that the Fayette County School System revise its purchasing policies, practices and procedures to ensure that they comply with State Board Policy 8200.

A more structured purchase requisition system should be implemented by the beginning of the 2007-08 fiscal year that outlines the proper procedures to be followed in obtaining approval for all purchases; that allows for purchase orders to be controlled at a central location and issued in sequential order; that directs vendors to submit their invoices directly to the business office; and that establishes a method for confirming the receipt of the purchased items prior to payment being made. Confirmation could be accomplished by requiring designated individuals at each location where goods and services are received to submit a signed receiving report or bill of lading to the business office, or the business office could route a copy of the invoice to the receiving location for confirmation of receipt prior to payment being made. Some county boards have found this method to be more efficient.

It is also recommended that procedures be established to ensure that the receipt and disposal of all capital assets are recorded in the capital asset management system in a timely manner.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

1. Inadequate Purchasing Procedures

- Beginning on July 1, 2007 any invoice received for payment which did not have a properly approved purchase order issued prior to the purchase is now being approved by the superintendent. A form has been developed in the finance office which is signed by the treasurer and forwarded to the superintendent for his approval before it is paid. **The reviewer was told the superintendent was sending a letter to the employee who made the purchase. The reviewer was unable to confirm this.**
- The treasurer held training sessions with secretaries and administrators to train them on the new procedures. The reviewer examined copies of training materials.
- The county began implementing the E-School Mall software system for purchases. The software is a purchase requisition and purchase order system which addresses the issues cited in the audit with regard to control over purchasing. At this time, the central office and all high schools are trained and using the system. On November 30, 2007 training is scheduled for eleven additional schools. Training is scheduled on January 18, 2008 to complete the project.
- For the locations which are not currently utilizing the E-School Mall software, steps have been taken to correct the previous issues.
- The Team checked several paid invoices for both the manual system and the new automated system and found that purchase orders are now being issued prior to the purchase. They are logged in and being checked for: valid vendor, W-9, proper account code, proper approvals, and also noted receipt of goods was required prior to payment of the invoice.
- Purchase orders are not being prepared by the person receiving the goods.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT PROGRESSING.

1. Inadequate Purchasing Procedures._ Since Purchasing Policies and Procedures had been found to have been an issue in the past, the Team selected a small sample of checks written during the current year (July 1 – November 17, 2008) for testing to determine if the issues had been corrected. The Team noted the following items during this review process.

Purchasing Procedures (Fayette County Board of Education Policy A-36) approved 9-17-07 stipulates that West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8200 is adopted and will be followed. The Team reported the following inadequate purchasing procedures.

- Items indicated with “*” did not have a purchase order issued or an “Accounts Payable Direct Pay Authorization” form. This appeared to be in direct violation of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8200.
- Purchase Orders were not issued for the following invoices:

• Leland O’Neal CPA	9-16-08	\$ 2,091.00
• Leland O’Neal CPA	9-03-08	\$ 3,977.00
• Sharon Pack, PT	9-11-08	\$ 1,170.00
• Deanna Stafford	9-10-08	\$ 4,450.00
• Medbrook Medical Assoc.	8-21-08	\$ 3,640.00
• FarmPlan	10-3-08	\$ 9,287.10*
• Brandy’s Sunoco, Inc.	11-3-08	\$ 18,326.48*
- Vendor issued credit cards.
 - Fayette County Board of Education Policy A-35 indicated that the authorized credit card users are limited to the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent, Treasurer, and Central Office Directors. Testing revealed that the Wal-Mart credit card was being utilized almost exclusively by persons not authorized in policy.
 - West Virginia Consumer sales tax is routinely charged on vendor issued credit cards. The Fayette County Finance Department appeared to file the necessary paperwork to have the tax removed. However, the Team found one instance where the tax charged was missed and paperwork had not been completed to correct the issue.
- The Fayette County Board of Education had adopted a procedure, whereby, if an invoice came through without a properly issued purchase order an “Accounts Payable Direct Pay Authorization” form was completed by the treasurer and submitted to the county superintendent. (The usage of this alternate form is in no way a substitute for an authorized purchase order as required under West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8200.) The superintendent would then authorize the check to be issued by signing the form and returning it to the treasurer. According to the review, the superintendent had been keeping a copy of these forms in his office and had held discussions with the directors in charge. It appeared that this process had been going on since October 2007. When the superintendent was questioned about the timeline for the usage of these forms he indicated that it would not be indefinitely, but had no formal timeline in mind for discontinuing this process. The Team also questioned if the directors who seemed to have the most issues were formally documented (i.e., annual goal setting or reprimand). The county superintendent indicated that one director had been reprimanded for noncompliance. In reviewing the personnel file, the OEPA Team did not discover any reprimand or the issue included as an annual goal for this director.

- Potentially unallowable cost:
Gaylord Opryland Resort – charged each room a daily resort fee of \$13.11. Total resort fees paid were \$ 419.52. This resort fee more closely resembled a personal entertainment fee rather than necessary lodging fee. (The Team consulted the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Finance as well as the Office of Title II and School Improvement (that provided the funding) and both concurred with the Team.)
- Fayette County Board of Education policies pertaining to Finance had been revised but not updated in the Finance Department's policy book.

2. Inadequate Fixed Asset Accounting

- The reviewer found that the county had contracted with Industrial Appraisal to conduct a physical inventory of the county's capital assets. The reviewer was told the inventory has been completed at this time and the county is waiting on a data upload into the WVEIS system.
- The reviewer found procedures had been written for additions, deletions, bar coding and transferring of capital assets. Forms had also been developed for this purpose.
- **The reviewer found that the procedures and forms are not in use at this time. The county is waiting on the upload to be completed so they have a starting point in their database.**

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE.

- The fixed asset data had been uploaded into WVEIS. It appeared that asset additions for FY 2008 had been entered into WVEIS fixed asset management system.
- The fixed asset procedures and forms had been included in the Principals' Handbook for Fayette County Schools. It is the intention of the treasurer to provide instructions to the school secretaries at the next training session.

3. Organizational Structure

- **It was originally reported that a purchasing director is not employed by the county to help resolve many of the issues related to purchasing and fixed assets. This has not occurred and it does not appear to be in their future plans.**
- The reviewer was told the superintendent was updating the job description of the Director of Operations but was unable to confirm this.
- The responsibility of the annual school audits was assigned to the business office under the supervision of the treasurer.

OEPA November 2008 Review

PROGRESSING. A Purchasing Director had not been employed. The Director of Operations was no longer in charge of purchasing. A restructuring occurred, whereby, an additional service person was added to the Finance Office and one was decreased from the Director of Operations. The premise behind the restructuring was to bring all finance related tasks (including purchasing) under the Finance Department and under the direct supervision of the treasurer.

4. Failure to Properly Use Substitute Calling System

- The reviewer examined a memorandum dated September 11, 2007 requiring the proper use of the Calling System and also interviewed a secretary responsible for monitoring the Calling System. It appeared that the system is currently being utilized.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. No additional procedures were warranted.

5. Fair Labor Standards Act Policy

- A policy had been adopted by the Board on August 6, 2007 and implemented in October 2007.
- Since the policy had just been implemented, the Team was only able to review one pay period in October. The Team did find the time sheets were being submitted properly to payroll and a brief review and discussions with the payroll clerk revealed that they appear to understand the proper method for calculating and paying overtime.

The Team also reviewed the financial audit performed by the state auditor's office for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006. Many of their findings related to the issues previously discussed which would not have been corrected at the time of this audit and many will not be corrected until the fiscal year 2007-2008 audit.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. It appeared as though overtime was being calculated on service personnel; however, the Team found an instance where the employee was being compensated at a rate different from the classification of which they were employed. The personnel section of this report also relates to this matter and contains additional information.

In at least one instance, overtime was calculated and paid to an employee for a time period that was outside the current period being processed (10-1-08 to 10-15-08). A

mismatch of timesheets occurred since this overtime was being paid on a separate timesheet from the employee's regular time.

In at least two instances (Finance and Personnel Departments) personnel worked and were paid for overtime which had not been properly preauthorized by their supervisor.

Inadequate Control of Superintendent's Signature Stamp.

Per the Treasurer and Superintendent's Secretary, the superintendent's signature stamp is now only used by a very limited number of staff and the initial of the person using the stamp can be found next to the stamp signature.

OEPA November 2008 Review

PROGRESSING. No additional procedures were completed; however, the OEPA Team noted that the signature stamp was routinely used on the Fayette County Board of Education Meeting Minutes.

Federal Pell Grants Not Presented on County Financial Status.

This was corrected on the 2006-2007 statements.

OEPA November 2008 Review

COMPLIANCE. No additional procedures were warranted.

Lack of Centralized Personnel Department, All Employees were not on Certified List, Inadequate Support for "Extra Pay", Years of Experience Incorrect on Certified List.

The Personnel Department is now centralized.

Employees are now being issued a contract for extra assignments and it is filed in their personnel file.

The reviewer found that the personnel department is working with the payroll office to assure that any employee receiving pay is also recorded on the certified list.

The reviewer found that the issue concerning years of experience on the certified list not being in agreement with the years credited with for pay purposes has not been addressed. Employees that have been given credit for years of experience for pay purposes for which the state will not reimburse are not being adjusted on the certified list.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT PROGRESSING. Since there had been issues in the past with the certified list, all employees listed were cross-referenced to the 10/31/08 payroll run. The Team noted the following items:

- The certified list indicated 73 Bus Operator positions employed by the Fayette County Board of Education. However, the actual number of bus operator positions for the board was 72. Bus operators qualify for state aid funding.
- A bus operator whose certification was suspended in January 2008 for two years was reflected on the 10/20/08 final certified list. Refer to the personnel/certification section for additional information on this irregularity.
- The certified list indicated 66 Cafeteria Managers and/or cooks employed by the Fayette County Board of Education. However, the actual number of these types of positions for the board was 65 per the Food Service Director which included all vacancies. These positions qualify for state aid funding.
- The certified list indicated 57 custodians employed by the Fayette County Board of Education. However, the actual number of these types of positions for the board was 56 per the Service Personnel Seniority List (No vacancies had been filled and/or posted since the date of the seniority list). These positions qualify for state aid funding.

Other issues with the Certified List of Employees were attributed to the hiring and certification process. The personnel section presents additional findings related to the Certified List.

Bonds of the Board's Officials not on File with County Clerk.

This has been corrected.

OEPA November 2008 Review

CORRECTED – after the November 2008 Review. Corrected during the Progress Review; however, **issues existed with bonds filed with the County Clerk at the time of the OEPA November 2008 review.** The bonds were not currently recorded with the County Clerk for the recently hired treasurer and the new board president.

Explanation. The past treasurer was suspended 9/4/08 and officially terminated 10/17/08. The interim treasurer was appointed 10/30/08 and made application for bond 11/3/08. The treasurer's bond was received 11/13/08. The interim treasurer had obtained the current bonds for the board president and the superintendent and was in the process of cutting a check to record all three. It was anticipated that the bonds will be recorded by 11/21/08. Note: Documents were received that the bonds were recorded with the County Clerk after the November 2008 Review.

Other Board Member Issues:

W.Va. Code §18-5-4 (e) indicates that Board Members are not to be compensated for more than 50 meetings and that the compensation may not exceed \$160 per meeting (50 x 160 = \$8000). One board member received \$8,160.00 in Board Compensation during the FY 2008 fiscal year. Note: Fayette County submitted an explanation that an error in overpayment of the board member occurred which is being refunded to the county.

Expenditures Which Exceeded the Board's Budget at the Legal Level.

Reports have now been developed by the treasurer to review and monitor this situation on a monthly basis. However, the treasurer indicated it may not eliminate all instances due to timing issues with closing out the fiscal year. Consequently, an audit of 2006-2007 will likely see report findings.

OEPA November 2008 Review

CORRECTED – after the November 2008 Review. The 2007 financial audit indicated this issue (Expenditures which exceeded the board's budget at the legal level) had not been corrected.

Bank Balances Exceeded Depository Bond or Collateral Coverage

There has been discussion with the bank on this issue. It occurred with a school account and has not been fully resolved at this time.

OEPA November 2008 Review

CORRECTED after the November 2008 review. The Fayette County Board of Education had an account with United Bank which was unsecured. The account had a balance of \$909,544.07 as of 10/31/08. Collateral was being pledged by bank as of 11/19/08 per an email received this day after this was identified by the OEPA Team during the Follow-up Education Performance Audit.

Organizations Improperly using County Federal FEIN

The county contacted each bank for a list of accounts opened under the Boards I.D.

Letters were sent to schools and organizations informing them they must correct the accounts and not allow it in the future.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT CORRECTED. Three accounts still remained with the Fayette County Board of Education's FEIN (three scholarship accounts with checking and savings accounts for

each). The county superintendent provided the list in February 2008 with the Fayette County Board of Education's attorneys. At the time of the November 2008 review, the accounts remained with the Fayette County Board of Education's FEIN.

Failure to get Competitive Bids and Maintain Control of Change Orders

A staff member has recently assumed these duties. The treasurer is currently reviewing purchasing orders and related bids on non-construction purchases.

The staff member is now handling all construction bids. She is new but appears to be aware of the changes which need to be made in this area.

Selection of Architects

There has not been a selection of an architect made since this staff member has been responsible. However, the Team checked a file for the selection of the architects at the new Oak Hill Elementary School currently under construction and found documentation of

- proper expression of interest,
- proper interview team and interviews of these firms, and
- scoring records resulting from the interviews.

The process appeared to be correct.

OEPA November 2008 Review

CORRECTED. No additional procedures were warranted.

Lack of Policy for Final Payment of Construction Contracts

The staff member is now requesting a release from the West Virginia Tax Department and providing it to accounts payable prior to payment. A copy of an internal e-mail demonstrated this process.

OEPA November 2008 Review

CORRECTED. No additional procedures were warranted since no projects had been completed and therefore no final payments had been issued.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Additional Finance Finding

1. Bank Reconciliations
Bank reconciliations should be performed at least monthly between the bank statement and the general ledger maintained in WVEIS. The purpose of which is

to ensure that all monies are accounted for properly and to provide internal controls, which would timely detect a banking or other error so that it could be remedied in a timely fashion. Reconciliations between the bank and WVEIS did not occur on a monthly basis in a timely manner. The last time a reconciliation of this type was completed was for the month ended June 30, 2008.

FINANCE SUMMATION

The Team found the treasurer to be well organized with a notebook outlining the findings from the previous review. Included in this notebook were action plans for correction of these findings and documentation to support the actions which had been taken to date. It did appear that a great deal of effort has been spent in trying to correct the deficiencies. Policies and procedures have been developed and have begun to be put in place for many of the areas including various training sessions.

Since many of these actions have just recently been developed, and put in place it is not possible to test the result of these changes extensively. However, Team reviewers observed and tested where possible.

The Team observed, that adequate policies and procedures have been developed, that if fully implemented and followed, will resolve many of the issues. It will take a while now for staff to learn and apply these procedures.

The first good test of this will come with the audit of the 2007-2008 fiscal year since this is when most of these were put in place.

OEPA November 2008 Review – Finance Summary

The findings regarding Fayette County School District's fiscal operations indicated that many of the OEPA Team, the Improvement Consultant Team, and the financial auditors' findings had not been corrected and new findings emerged.

Facilities

Issue(s):

Is the Fayette County School System CEFP adequate to address the facilities issues in the schools of Fayette County? Given the number of schools and a declining enrollment, can the Fayette County School System effectively and efficiently deliver the curriculum to all students?

Finding(s):

1. The current CEFP reflects twenty-two schools with fifteen facilities below the optimum utilization rate of 85%. After a review of the data in the CEFP and the annual updates, the data must be further examined for accuracy.
2. It appears from earlier findings that several small high schools in Fayette County do not offer the state curriculum with appropriate AP, Honors, Dual Credit and elective courses.
3. Fayette County has received funding from the School Building Authority for renovations to Fayetteville High School, Oak Hill High School and for a new facility consolidating Oak Hill Elementary, Oak Hill East Elementary and Scarbro Elementary.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

The county school system shall review the CEFP to verify the accuracy of the school facilities utilization data. The school system shall also review and amend the CEFP to determine the number of schools the school system can effectively and efficiently operate while addressing: delivering the state intended curriculum to all students, safety and security and operational efficiency issues in using older buildings, the busing of students in the county and the possibilities of working with adjacent counties to better serve Fayette County students.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Any major or extensive amendments to the Fayette County School System Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan have not been addressed with the West Virginia Department of Education Executive Director of School Facilities.

Ansted Elementary School

The facility is heated with a coal furnace and cooled with window air conditioners. Several classrooms showed elevated carbon dioxide levels. There were several stained ceiling tiles or plaster throughout the facility. The restroom vents throughout the facility were obstructed with dust. The playground is adequately equipped for grade school aged children, but did not have an adequate safety surface covering. It is possible to enter this facility and bypass the office.

Danese Elementary School

Danese Elementary School consists of two buildings: the main classroom building (building 1) and the art/music building (building 2). The building is fully carpeted which is showing signs of wear and should be replaced.

Building 1

There were several areas of stained tiles throughout the building. The electrical boxes in the building were unlocked and accessible to the students. The bathroom vents between the Kindergarten and 2nd grade rooms were removed due to constant roof leaks. The kitchen area bathroom vent was not drawing and the faucet was dripping. The rooftop mechanical equipment is original to the building and is at the end of its useful life.

Building 2

This area is heated with ceiling mount heater fans.

Divide Elementary School

Divide Elementary School is one building; however, there is one classroom that is only accessible from the outside of the building and has no access to the interior of the school. This room is currently used one day per week as a gifted room. At the time of the visit, there are plans to change the use of this room. The room is accessible by a cement walkway with no railing. There were several classrooms with elevated carbon dioxide levels suggesting that the current ventilation is not adequate for the facility. The facility is carpeted throughout that is showing wear and needs replaced with tile. The facility is heated with a coal furnace and cooled with window air conditioners. Several areas have stained ceiling tiles. The playground is adequately equipped for grade school aged children, but did not have an adequate safety surface covering.

Fayetteville Elementary Summary

Fayetteville Elementary consists of two buildings. The upper building houses grades K through 1 (Building 1). The lower building houses grades 2 through 6 (Building 2).

Building 1

The boiler and mechanical rooms have not been well maintained. The pumps and piping were rusted. Several electrical panels were obstructed. However, the boiler passed inspection on August of 2007. Air conditioning is provided by window air conditioning units located in each classroom. The mechanical system in the K-1 building does not meet current ventilation standards. When entering through the main entrance the office is the first door to the left. To enter the building you must walk past the office door. However, it would be possible for someone to enter and bypass the office. The students must walk down an uncovered black top pathway to access the playground at the lower building. Staff members are also required to walk between buildings utilizing the black top pathway. Tree roots are beginning to push through and compromise the black top in one area. Students must also walk down a hill to access the football field. The onsite kitchen does not provide the student meals. Meals are brought in from another facility. The health department has verified the temperature of the meals is acceptable when they arrive at the elementary school. Gas fired appliances are in the kitchen and a carbon monoxide detector should be installed.

Building 2

This building has an older boiler that has recently been inspected. The air conditioning is provided by window units located in the classroom. This building does not have a mechanical ventilation system and does not meet current ventilation requirements. Individuals can enter the building without walking past or into the office area. A sewage odor permeated the teacher work area. There are no exhaust fans in this area or the accompanying restroom. During the walkthrough carbon monoxide of 4 parts per million was detected in the kitchen area. The kitchen area does not have a carbon monoxide detector. This needs to be installed. The cooks were instructed to initiate a maintenance request to resolve the carbon monoxide issue. Some of the restrooms showed signs of poor custodial and maintenance care. The carpeting in this building is old and shows signs of wear. The carpet should be replaced with tile. The playground is adequately equipped for grade school aged children, but did not have an adequate safety surface covering. A few of the sidewalks around the building are damaged.

Gatewood Elementary School

This is an old building that is located in close proximity to the highway. The air conditioning is provided by window air conditioning units. The heat is provided by an antiquated coal fired boiler. Both systems provide poor temperature control and do not meet current ventilation and temperature control standards. The carpeting throughout the building is old and in need of replacement. Some of the playground equipment did not have adequate safety covering beneath the equipment.

Gauley Bridge Elementary School

The rooftop mechanical equipment is original to the building and is at the end of its useful life. The classroom areas are carpeted that should be replaced with tile. The electrical boxes were unlocked and accessible to students. The kitchen exhaust fan switch is located above the gas range and can only be turned on using a broom handle or other item to reach the switch. The roof was repaired this past spring. A drain was blocked to prevent leaks in the classroom beneath. However, the roof was not built back to level at that drain, meaning water accumulates and pools at the site of the former drain. The facility site is smaller than the required five acres with no room for expansion.

Meadow Bridge Elementary School

Meadow Bridge Elementary School consists of two buildings: the main classroom, gymnasium and cafeteria building (building 1), and the band and art rooms (building 2). The building is located very close to the road. All access doors were kept locked from the outside except the main access that is located around the back. This entrance is very hard to locate if a person is not knowledgeable about the school and it is possible to enter this building and bypass the office.

Building 1

The main building is heated with a combination of a coal furnace and unit ventilators in some rooms. Window air conditioners are in the rooms for cooling. The grills on most of the unit ventilators were broken in spots allowing objects to be introduced to the units. Several areas throughout the facility had stained ceiling tiles. Four classrooms were added recently and are heated and cooled with roof top units controlled by Casto Trane of Charleston. Electrical cabinets throughout the facility were unlocked and accessible to students.

Building 2

This building has been part of the facility for over 25 years. Students must cross a small span (>20ft) of blacktop, uncovered, to reach this building. The guidance room is located between the band and music room. The only building restroom is located in the guidance office and the door for the restroom drags on its hinge when opening, marking the floor. This building has its own heating and cooling units and has intercom and fire alarms attached to the main building system.

Mount Hope Elementary School

Mount Hope Elementary School was built in three stages. The main classroom structure was completed in the 1920s, the gymnasium was added in the 1950s and the rooms over the gym were completed in 1977. The facility is under one roof and students are not required to walk outside to reach any of the other areas. The facility is heated with a gas furnace located in the former coal furnace room. An outside access door to the furnace room was not locked from the outside and the area could be accessed at anytime. The kitchen and cafeteria are located on the bottom level next to the furnace room. The kitchen roof has been leaking for some time. The water damage to the kitchen dry storage room ceiling and walls has been allowed to remain and signs of mold growth are on the ceiling tiles. There is also corrosion on the dishwasher. The area over the gymnasium is heated with unit ventilators. This area consists of one main room separated into three areas: art, Title 1, and Computer Lab, and two rooms with permanent walls. The main building has asbestos tiles on the floor. According to the asbestos report the tiles are damaged with potential for further deterioration. The boys' restroom exhaust fan was severely obstructed by dust; the girls' restroom did not have a fan. The front entrance to the school is not used as the main entrance and it is possible to enter the school and bypass the office. The playground is adequately equipped for grade school aged children, but did not have an adequate safety surface covering.

Rosedale Elementary School

This is an old building that shows numerous signs of poor or a lack of maintenance. The carpet is old and worn and in need of replacement. The restrooms do not have exhaust systems. The current mechanical system does not meet current ventilation standards. There were several stained tiles throughout the facility. The roof was not accessible during the visit, but the Team observed numerous indications in the interior of the building that the facility needs a new roof. A very noticeable musty odor

permeated the building. The crawl space did not have a vapor barrier. Standing water was also in the crawl space. Several pieces of the piping did not have insulation or the insulation was falling. The crawl space was full of trash and debris. The down spouts did not adequately channel water away from the building. The current condition of the crawl space posed a potential indoor air quality hazard to the building occupants. The roof drain pipes routed through the building were not well maintained and appeared to be leaking. The boiler that provides heat has passed inspection, but had not been well maintained. The exterior of the building is in need of painting. Numerous stained ceiling tiles were prevalent throughout the facility.

Valley Elementary School

The rooftop mechanical equipment is original to the building and is at the end of its useful life. The access grates on the side of the unit closest to the road were missing. Several areas of stained ceiling tiles existed throughout the facility and in some cases were molded. The classrooms had shared restrooms; the vents in these restrooms were obstructed by dust. The school is constructed in a “pod” style with no permanent division between the rooms in each pod. The Computer Lab and Title 1 rooms are in a central area, open to the halls. The water fountains in the classrooms were not 100% functional. The playground is adequately equipped for grade school aged children, but has a broken latch on the gate closest to the side parking area.

Ansted Middle School

Ansted Middle School consisted of three buildings: the main classroom building (Building 1), the cafeteria (Building 2), and the gymnasium and band building (Building 3). There is a contract with Casto Trane of Charleston for the heating and ventilation of the room. It is possible to enter this facility and bypass the office.

Building 1

Several classrooms showed elevated carbon dioxide levels. The facility is heated with a coal furnace and cooled with window air conditioners and ceiling fans. Most classrooms had the air conditioner running to help maintain a comfortable temperature level in the classrooms. Stained ceiling tiles were prevalent throughout the facility.

Building 2

The cafeteria has unit ventilators and a roof top unit. The return grills on the ventilators were very dusty. Areas of the ceiling showed mold growth and stained tiles from moisture. There are signs of consistent leaks from either the roof or the ceiling ducts.

Building 3

The restroom exhaust vents were obstructed by dust.

Collins Middle School

This is an older facility that shows signs that indicate poor or a lack of maintenance. The staff reported the building had not been painted since 1989. The gym floor is worn and needs repaired. The carpeting in the building is old and worn and needs to be replaced. Some of the rooms have air conditioning provided by window units. The facility does have new boilers and a new chiller. However, the current mechanical system does meet current ventilation standards. There are five buildings on campus. Most of the buildings can be accessed via a covered walkway, but a few cannot. The restrooms do not have exhaust systems. Some of the sidewalks are cracked. The playground does not have adequate safety covering under the playground equipment.

Nuttall Middle School

Nuttall Middle School consists of three buildings. The main classroom building (Building 1), the band room (Building 2), and the gymnasium/cafeteria (Building 3). Nuttall Middle School is very old and showed signs of not being maintained during its life.

Building 1

The floor tile throughout the building is asbestos and should be replaced. According to the asbestos report, the tile is damaged with potential for further deterioration. The computer lab has a working sink against one wall that is not currently used; however, there is an electrical cord for the TV draped across the sink. The auditorium is in disrepair with several broken seats. Electrical boxes throughout the building were unlocked and accessible to students. The fan room did not have a shut off for when the door was opened. There were filters that had fallen out of the track and others that had deformed during operation.

Building 2

The band room is located approximately 200 feet from the main building. Part of the walkway is paved, part is gravel. No part of the walkway is covered. Several stained tiles were in this room. This room is heated with two gas units. A stale odor penetrated the room; the carbon dioxide, temperature and humidity levels were all within normal range.

Building 3

This building is heated with a coal furnace. Windows in the boys' locker room were broken and both locker rooms showed signs of neglect. Water was pooled in the furnace room and it was stated that water is almost always present in this room.

Fayetteville High School Summary

It is possible to enter this building and bypass the office. The air diffusers throughout the building were beginning to collect dust. There were also a few stained ceiling tiles throughout the facility. The facility is in need of a new roof. The rooftop mechanical equipment is original to the building and is at the end of its useful life. These units need

to be replaced with new units that can meet current ventilation and temperature control standards. The carpeting in the auditorium is old and should be replaced with new flooring.

Meadow Bridge High School

Meadow Bridge High School consists of two buildings: the main classroom facility (Building 1) and the new gymnasium (Building 2). The main entrance to the building is very hard to locate and it is possible to enter this building and bypass the office.

Building 1

The building is heated with a coal furnace and cooled by window air conditioners. There are two classrooms and the library that have a roof top unit controlled by Casto of Charleston. There are no controls to the roof top unit in the building; any changes must be called into Charleston. The restroom vents were not working during the visit and the covers were obstructed with dust. There were several areas with stained ceiling tiles that had been allowed to remain in place. Hot meals are not served at the high school; the students cross to the elementary school (approximately 25 ft) for hot meals and return when finished. A few classrooms had elevated carbon dioxide levels.

Building 2

The new gymnasium has several interior rooms. The referee's dressing room had stained and molded tiles. There is an electrical room in this building and the panels within do not have the required 36 inches of clearance.

Midland Trail High School

Midland Trail High School is one of the newer schools in Fayette County. The building seems to have been well maintained. There were stained and missing ceiling tiles in a few areas of the school. The restroom vents were not working at the time of the visit and were very dirty. There was also a strong sewage odor in the women's restroom.

Mount Hope High School

Mount Hope High School had several classrooms with elevated levels of carbon dioxide and stained ceiling tiles that have been allowed to remain in place. The original structure is heated with a gas furnace and cooled with window air conditioners. The additions have a combination of roof top units and unit ventilators. There are two classrooms located in a separate building that have their own heat pumps. The restroom vents throughout the building were obstructed by dust and not working. The girls' restrooms in the facility are kept locked at all times with the exception of the restroom near the counselor's office. Students must obtain a key from the teacher, if one is available. The restrooms in general are in disrepair and need serious attention to the ceilings, floors, and utilities. Several classrooms and hallways have carpet that is old and worn that should be replaced. There is a chemical storage room off the science room that has an exhaust fan, but it is not used. It is strongly suggested that it be used

at all times; especially as a class is taught in this room (only every other semester). Lights in restrooms and custodial closets were out throughout the building. Several classrooms had tables and other furniture in front of the registers. The family sciences room did not have any stove exhaust vents; the class was taught every other semester. The “new” addition, consisting of a boys’ and girls’ restroom, the Behavior Disorder counselor, and rooms 214, 219, 218, and 220, has one roof top unit for all of these rooms. The Behavior Disorder counselor’s office vent was covered with a file folder because the room over heats/cools. The technical education room did not have 36 inch clearance in front of the electrical panels and clear walkways from hall to class area. The girls’ locker room was very dirty. The floors had a buildup of dirt around the floor drains, the ceilings had several areas of stained tiles, the room had been painted, but was not done neatly, with over paint on trim, ceiling, and adjoining walls. The boys’ locker room had peeling paint in the shower area. The mechanical room nearest the locker rooms did not have 36 inch clearance in front of the electrical panels and had a bad belt on one of the motors.

Oak Hill High School Summary

It is possible to enter this facility and bypass the office. There are numerous roof leaks and areas of water infiltration throughout the facility. Water infiltration into a facility can pose numerous indoor air quality issues. This facility is in need of an entire new roof. Staff reported that the new addition has had a roof patch. At the time of the visit the new roof was leaking again. The rooftop mechanical equipment is original to the building and is beyond its intended life cycle. This equipment should be replaced. The boilers are also original to the building but appear in fairly good shape and have recently passed inspection. During the visit carbon dioxide levels were within the acceptable ranges, but it is questionable that the mechanical system meets the current ventilation and temperature control standards. There were numerous electrical panels located in the hallway that were unlocked and accessible to students. Several rooms contain carpet that is worn out and in places is held together with duct tape. This carpet needs to be removed and replaced with a floor application that meets the rigors of a high school. The kitchen staff indicated that they do not have adequate cold storage available to handle the current meals being served. The restrooms were dirty. Several toilets appeared to be backed up during the visit. There were numerous ceiling tiles that were missing. There were several stained tiles that appear to have been left in place for quite some time.

Valley High School

Valley High School showed elevated levels of carbon dioxide in most of the classrooms. The classroom returns and restroom exhaust vents were obstructed by dust throughout the facility. Several areas had stained tiles and a few lights that showed signs of moisture being present. Lights were covered in a few places. Electrical panels throughout the building were unlocked and accessible to the students. The Auto Body room had electrical panels that were not easily accessible. Room 107 had a stove and vent; however, the vent was not working. This facility is located with a river on one side

and railroad tracks on the other side. Evacuation for this facility is accomplished by walking along the tracks several blocks to a trestle where it is possible to cross under the tracks, then the students are required to cross WV-60, a four lane highway, to reach a safe area. The same is true for (Valley Elementary School). The site does not meet the minimum requirements of 15 acres +1 acre for each 100 students over 800. The counselor's office does not have the required 100-125 sq. ft. There is no stage or auditorium area.

Fayette Institute of Technology

Stained ceiling tiles were in one area of the building. Other than the stained ceiling tiles, the interior of the building was very clean and well maintained. Due to age, the Team recommended considering the replacement of the mechanical system and roof.

OEPA November 2008 Review

PROGRESSING. Staff members from the West Virginia Department of Education Office of School Facilities performed a walkthrough of Fayette County's schools to assess the progress of facility improvements identified in the OEPA report.

Fayette County has made progress in resolving some of the issues identified in the OEPA report. New roofs had been installed at Fayetteville High School and Oak Hill High School. Danese Elementary has had two new rooftop heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) units installed. Rosedale Elementary has had a new vapor barrier installed and the water leaks under the building had been addressed. A new roof had been installed on the band building and a handicap ramp was installed to the gymnasium at Nuttall Elementary. The water infiltration issue in the basement of Ansted Middle had been addressed and two classrooms had been remodeled. Several classrooms at Valley High School had been remodeled. Painting has been performed at Ansted Elementary, Nuttall Middle School, Mount Hope High School, Meadow Bridge High School, and Valley High School.

Progress had been made in improving several facilities. There is still a tremendous amount of work that needed to be performed countywide. Fayette County's maintenance director reported some initiatives that they plan to address within the next year.

- Valley Elementary School and Midland Trail High School are scheduled to have the roofs replaced in the summer 2009.
- The maintenance department is going to continue replacing dated carpet with floor tile countywide.
- New River Elementary will be open for the 2009-2010 school year. This will close Oak Hill East End Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, and Scarbro Elementary which will help to free up some maintenance resources.

- Funding had been requested from the West Virginia School Building Authority (SBA) to build a four room classroom addition at Valley Elementary and was approved December 2008.
- Funding had also been requested from the SBA to build a new high school to replace four high schools: Midland Trail High School, Oak Hill High School, Mount Hope High School, and Fayetteville High School. The county will have to have supporting funds at the county level to fully fund the proposed project.

Fayette County has hired an architectural firm for the new Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). The County maintenance director also reported that the Fayette County School District plans to run a maintenance bond in 2009 that will be used to fund extensive updates and countywide school remodeling.

Personnel

6.6.1. Hiring

Improvement Consultant Team Finding(s):

The Team found that due to a lack of established personnel procedures and processes, personnel files were not maintained properly and lacked the proper documentation in the following areas:

1. Letters of recommendation from principals for filling positions were not in files.
2. Board minutes to verify winning applicants were not in personnel files to verify who was hired for positions.
3. Supporting documentation/matrices were not used/maintained to verify applicants' qualifications for filling professional positions as required by §18A-4-7a.
4. Personnel files did not provide documentation/matrices for consistent screening of applicants or documentation/matrices for interviewing applicants.
5. Personnel files for positions that were filled by less qualified/experienced applicants, did not provide documentation to support/verify that the more qualified/experienced applicants rejected, accepted another position, withdrew from consideration, etc.
6. Files for positions that had qualified applicants declining employment/transfer, did not include documentation to verify/support why the position had been reposted.
7. Reference to confidential information regarding qualified applicants not hired was not noted in files.
8. A position was not reposted to support a substitute who was scheduled to be fully certified in December; however, the substitute did not pass the Praxis test.

9. It was determined that not posting the Assistant Superintendent's position was based on legal advice of the Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love law firm.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

1. A system of procedural rules for personnel hiring and file documentation requirements should be developed/implemented.
2. Personnel files should include the following:
 - a. Copy of the job posting,
 - b. Copy of the job description for the position posted,
 - c. Copy of the Board minutes showing employee hired,
 - d. Documentation/matrices to verify/support the screening, interview and recommendation letters for the position filled,
 - e. Number of times/dates positions posted,
 - f. Documentation to verify the transfer, denial, acceptance of another position, etc., and
 - g. Reference to confidential information regarding qualified applicants not hired should be noted.
3. All positions should be posted separately.
4. Any position filled with an applicant on a permit should always provide proper documentation to justify/support the placement and document the number of times/dates the position has been posted.
5. Individual school master schedules should include itinerant teacher assignments.
6. A consistent/required number of times a position will be reposted needs to be identified and followed.
7. Any transfer of personnel should be documented in files with letters/board minutes, etc.
8. With the resignation/retirement of the supervisor in the personnel office pending, a careful screening/hiring process should be conducted to ensure that new employees hired in the Office of Personnel be experienced in the area of personnel/evaluation processes with exemplary organizational skills.
9. A consistent legal process for the hiring of personnel during the summer months should be developed and must include board approval.
10. Procedures should be developed to clarify itinerant teacher scheduling and home school placement.
11. The position of Assistant Superintendent should be posted since the Superintendent's contract has been renewed.
12. In the future, all positions including Assistant Superintendent positions for full time employment of only one or two years should be posted with the appropriate requirements.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The Team observed progress in the correction of findings documented during the previous OEPA visit regarding personnel practices and procedures. Additionally, it is noted that the Director of Personnel and staff have attended several workshops and trainings offered by the WVDE, RESA, private providers, and the WV School Personnel Association that focused on practices and procedures regarding school personnel.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Findings:

1. The Fayette County School system lacks a consistent practice for the number of times a vacancy is posted prior to hiring the most qualified applicant.
2. The Team found that the Fayette County School System did not follow W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (l). Employees were allowed to transfer after the fifth day prior to the first day of instruction to positions held by substitute teachers holding proper endorsement/s for the assignment/s without notifying the WV State Board of Education of the transfer. (Reference: Fayette County Board Agenda requests for personnel changes occurring on September 4, 2007, and October 1, 2007.)
3. The Team found that the Fayette County School System did not follow W.Va. Code §18A-4-15 (Employment of service personnel substitutes) and §18A-4-7a (Employment, promotion and transfer of professional personnel; seniority).
4. Elementary classroom position vacancies are posted without being classroom grade specific (Example: [P140-07] A teacher was transferred from Elementary Education K-6 teacher at Fayetteville Elementary School to Elementary Education K-6 teacher at Fayetteville Elementary School).

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Recommendations:

It is the recommendation of the OEPA Team members that:

1. A consistent practice that delineates the number of times a vacancy is reposted be identified and followed.
2. The Fayette County School System adhere to W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (Employment, promotion and transfer of professional personnel; seniority).
3. The Fayette County School System monitor the recently implemented automated calling system for substitute professional and service personnel to ensure compliance with State Code. The county directors could not substantiate that the automated call system meets the requirements set forth in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a and §18A-4-15.

4. Elementary position vacancies be posted with the specific classroom grade identified.

OEPA November 2008 Review

PROGRESSING/NOT CORRECTED. While many of the serious personnel hiring findings of the initial Education Performance Audit had been corrected, new findings were reported and a few previous findings remained.

* - Denotes Finance related findings presented in the Finance section.

1. ***Finding:** Employees on approved leave of absences were identified on the current certified list.

Correction: The Long-Term Substitutes, employed to fill the respective employees on leaves, are to be identified on the current certified list.

2. ***Finding:** The Team identified a service employee who had a suspended license to work in the public schools of West Virginia listed on the current Fayette County certified list. The suspension was effective for two years beginning January 2008.

Correction: Personnel holding suspended licenses are not to be identified on the current Fayette County certified list.

3. ***Finding:** Employees granted approved leave for multiple school years were identified on the current Fayette County certified list.

Correction: Names of employees granted approved leave for multiple school years are to be removed from the current Fayette County certified list.

4. ***Finding:** The Team identified terminated and retired staff listed on the current Fayette County certified list.

Correction: Names of terminated and retired employees are to be removed from the current Fayette County certified list. (Example: A custodian identified on the current Fayette County certified list had been inactive since 9-30-97.)

5. **Finding:** Some vacancies were posted as Long-Term Substitute positions.

Correction: The Fayette County School System must discontinue posting vacancies as Long-Term Substitute positions.

6. **Finding:** The Fayette County School System employed a staff member for a position for one year only. However, employment continued without appropriate board action.

Correction: Fayette County Schools must discontinue the practice of posting vacancies for one year only and follow West Virginia Code regarding staff employment and reduction in force.

7. **Finding:** The Fayette County School System continued the employment of a classroom teacher beyond the three school months West Virginia Code allows for the completion of the certification process.

Correction: The Fayette County School System must terminate the teacher's contract. The county may employ this individual as a substitute teacher and obtain proper certification according to West Virginia Code.

8. **Finding: Mentors.** Beginning teachers had been assigned to an employed mentor for participation in the beginning teacher internship program. The Team found that some of the employed mentors had not completed the two or four day required trainings offered by the West Virginia Center for Professional Development. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b. Beginning teacher internship.)

Correction: Properly trained mentors are to be employed and assigned to beginning teachers.

9. **Finding: Postings.** Job postings for elementary teaching vacancies did not identify the specific grade levels. **This was noted on the OEPA Six Month Progress Report and still occurred during the November 2008 Review.**

Correction: Job postings for elementary teaching vacancies should be posted grade specific to ensure properly credentialed employees are assigned to the positions.

Additional Finding.

10. Interim chief financial official (CFO) began working in the position 9-5-08. Signature authority was granted to the official 9-5-08 without Fayette County Board of Education action. The following details the dates of issues related to this new employee.

Employed 10-30-08

Bonding applied 11-3-08

Bonding received 11-13-08 (not currently recorded at the Court House)

Form 38 to be submitted

OEPA November 2008 Review Additional Comments.

1. The Fayette County job description for the Director of Operations/Child Nutrition position included two distinct roles and responsibilities. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4321, Section 11.3. states, "The employment of a full-time School Nutrition Program Director at the county level is strongly recommended."

2. The Team found that, on several occasions, the Director of Personnel had to request documentation which should have been a part of the employees' personnel files from various central office departments. The personnel office could operate more efficiently if the other departments provided the information to be contained in the personnel files. Refer to the summary statement at the end of this report which discusses internal communication and cooperation.

6.6.2. Licensure

Issue(s):

Did the Fayette County School System follow the licensing requirements of W.Va. Code §18A-3-2 and WV Board policy 5202?

Finding(s):

The team found that the Fayette County School System did not consistently follow the licensing requirements of W.Va. Code §18A-3-2 and WV Board of Education Policy 5202. Several teachers were assigned to courses and did not have the appropriate licensure for the assignment, as evidenced in the WVEIS Master Schedule. In addition, teachers were hired for job vacancies as posted, however, were not assigned to the courses at the school building level, as per the job posting.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

The team recommends the Fayette County School System develop an accountability measure that ensures all teachers hold the appropriate licensure as required in W.Va. Code §18A-3-2 and WV Board of Education Policy 5202. A system that tracks a posting for a position, the appropriately licensed applicants for the position, the employee and his/her certification(s) and the courses to which the employee is assigned to teach must be in place.

In addition, the team recommends the Fayette County School System identify a consistent means of monitoring that teachers are appropriately licensed after being hired by the Fayette County Board of Education. The team recommends the Fayette County School System utilize appropriate resources to ensure all building level administrators are appropriately trained in the input of course data in the WVEIS Master Schedule, as to avoid miscoding in the WVEIS system.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The following chart identifies the concerns of the Team members during this visit regarding certification and assignment (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2; WVBE Policy 5202). Chart 1 lists the concerns identified by the Team through the utilization of the master course schedules for each school that were submitted by the county, the WVDE Information System (WVEIS), and the WVDE certification database.

Chart 1

Licensure Issues

Educator	Site #	Position	Current Assignment	Current Certification	Concerns
No Findings	001 Central Office				
No Findings	201 Ansted Elementary				
No Findings	204 Danese Elementary				
Educator	206 Divide Elementary	Educator	Kindergarten	Expired Professional Teaching Certificate, No pending application	Valid WV licensure not found in certification database
Contracted Speech Language Pathologist , no name provided	206	Contract Staff	Speech Language Pathology	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	208 Fayetteville Elementary	Educator	Title I Reading	Elementary Education, Language Arts	Certification does not match course assigned
Educator	208	Educator	English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	210 Gatewood Elementary	Educator	Grade 2	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	210	Educator	Music	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	211 Gauley Bridge Elementary	Educator	Title 1 Reading	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database

No Findings	215 Meadow Bridge Elementary				
Educator	217 Mount Hope Elementary	Educator	Speech Therapist	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
No Findings	219 Oak Hill East End Elementary				
Educator	223 Rosedale Elementary	Educator	Collaborative Teacher , English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	224 Scarbro Elementary	Educator	Grade 1	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	224	Educator	Severe Profound Multi-Categorical Special Education	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	224	Educator	Title 1 Reading	Social Studies, Elementary Education	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	224	Educator	Speech Therapist	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	225 Valley Elementary	Educator	Kindergarten	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	225	Educator	Grade 3	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	225	Educator	Collaborative Teacher, English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	225	Educator	Title I	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	301 Ansted Middle School	Educator	Spanish Science-Cats	Biological Science General Science	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	301	Educator	Developmental Reading Language Arts Career Exploration	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database

Educator	302 Collins Middle School	Educator	American Sign Language	Hearing Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	302	Educator	Collaborative Teacher, English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	302	Educator	Social Studies, Collaborative Special Education	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	302	Educator	Social Studies, Collaborative Special Education, no population identified	Biological Science	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	302	Educator	Library Science, Collaborative Special Education with no population identified	English, School Library Media	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	302	Educator	Collaborative Special Education with no population identified	Elementary Education, Multi- Categorical Special Education	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	307 Nuttall Middle School	Educator	Spanish. Develop Reading. English/Language Arts	Multi-Subjects K-8	Certification does not match assigned course (Spanish)
Educator	307	Not available	Not available	Language Arts, Vocational Home Economics, Pre-Vocational Services	No courses assigned to this staff member
Educator	501 Fayetteville High School	Educator	Health, Physical Education, Library, Developmental Guidance	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	501	Educator	Collaborative Teacher, English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course

Educator	501	Educator	College English 101	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	501	Educator	College Transition	Multi-Categorical Special Education, English, Biological Science, Social Studies	No personnel record, assigned course without county board action/employment
Educator	503 Meadow Bridge High	Educator	Technology, Keyboarding and Information, Computer Applications	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	504 Midland Trail High School	Educator	Math, Social Studies, English/Language Arts, Science-CATS	Expired Professional Teaching Certificate	Renewal of WV licensure to become valid
Educator	504	Educator	English/Language Arts, STEPS, Life Connect	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	504	Educator	Developmental Math	Expired Professional Teaching Certificate	Renewal of WV licensure to become valid
Educator	504	Educator	College Transition	Multi-Categorical Special Education, English, Biological Science, Social Studies	No personnel record, assigned course without county employment
Educator	504	Educator	College Transition	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	505 Mount Hope High School	Educator	Behavioral Disorders	Long-Term Sub Permit – Social Studies Elementary Education	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	505	Educator	Science-CATS, Biology	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database

Educator	506 Oak Hill High School	Educator	Spanish	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	506	Educator	Collaborative Teacher, English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	506	Educator	Physically Handicapped/ Orthopedically Impaired	Elementary Education, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	506	Educator	Co-Teaching, Population served not identified on master schedule	Specific Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Behavioral Disorders, Vocational Home Economics	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	506	Educator	Music , Choir	N/A	WV licensure not found in certification database
Educator	506	Educator	French, Civics, Counselor	Counselor	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	506	Educator	College Transition	Multi-Categorical Special Education, English, Biological Science, Social Studies	No personnel record, assigned course without county employment
Educator	507 Valley High School	Educator	Collaborative Teacher , English as a Second Language	Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	507	Educator	Physically Handicapped/ Orthopedically Impaired	Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	507	Educator	Alternate Education	Health/ Physical Education Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course

Educator	507	Educator	Speech, Oral Communication	English French	Certification does not match assigned course
Educator	507	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Severe Profound Handicapped, Mentally Impaired, Safety Education, Health Education, Physical Education	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	507	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
No findings	701 Fayette Institute of Technology				

The Team members found positions filled with properly certified teachers for the students being served and the courses assigned, however, the position assignment codes entered into WVEIS do not match the credentials held by the teachers. Chart 1A identifies the data entry concerns found by the Team members. The Team recommends that the Fayette County School System’s WVEIS designee receive technical support for data entry and coding.

Chart 1A

Educator	Site #	Position	Current Assignment	Current Certification	Correction needed
Educator	307 Nuttall Middle School	Educator	Multi-Categorical-Special Education, Developmental Reading 7-8, English/Language Arts 7-8	Multi-Subjects K-8, Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disabilities, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry

Educator	501 Fayetteville High School	Educator	Collaborative Multi- Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disabilities, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	501	Educator	Collaborative Multi- Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disabilities, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	501	Educator	ProStart I and II, Culinary Nutrition, Bake Pastry	Vocational Home Economics, Math thru Algebra 1	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	503 Meadow Bridge High	Educator	Multi- Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disabilities, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	503	Educator	ProStart I and II, Culinary Nutrition, Bake Pastry	Vocational Home Economics, Math thru Algebra 1	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	504 Midland Trail High School	Educator	Multi- Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disorders, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	505 Mount Hope High School	Educator	Multi- Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mental Retardation	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	505	Educator	Multi- Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired, Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry

Educator	505	Educator	Hospitality Industry, Culinary Nutrition, Food Mgt, ProStart	Vocational Home Economics, Math thru Algebra 1	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	506 Oak Hill High School	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired, Multi-Subjects K-8	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	506	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Multi-Subjects K-8, Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	507 Valley High School	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Social Studies, Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	507	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired, Social Studies, Physical Education	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	507	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	507	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry

Educator	507	Educator	Multi-Categorical Special Education	Specific Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, Mentally Impaired, Social Studies	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry
Educator	507	Educator	Culinary Nutrition, ProStart	Vocational Home Economics, Math thru Algebra 1	Certification does not match assigned course, confirm WVEIS data entry

OEPA November 2008 Review

PROGRESSING

1. The Team found two violations of (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5202). These were most often examples of individuals hired into a content area for which they did not hold proper certification. As a result, a First-Class/Full-Time Permit or Out-of-Field Authorization is required.
2. The chart reflects three teachers who were teaching Advanced Placement (AP) courses, but had not been approved by the College Board.
3. The Coaches Database needed updates, but was being used effectively.

Chart 1A

Licensure Issues

Site #	Position	Current Assignment	Current Endorsement(s)	Correction(s)
020-301	Educator	80170T	Multi-Categorical	Needs to complete Form 26 Math No pending applications as of January 30, 2009
	Educator	80170T 4805T	Multi-Cat K-AD	Submit Form 1A for Reading/Specialist No pending applications as of January 30, 2009

020-501	Educator	6121-1 AP Bio	Biology	Has been submitted to College Board, but not yet approved No documentation as of January 30, 2009
020-506	Educator	3031-S AP Calc AB	Math	No verification of College Board Approval No documentation as of January 30, 2009
020-507	Educator	3031-0 AP Calc AB	Math	No verification of College Board Approval No documentation as of January 30, 2009

Recommendations

Upon selection of candidates to a position, if the certification is not already held, these suggestions are made:

1. Before Fayette County Board of Education approval, verify 25 percent of a program with college or university or certification in a different area.
2. The paperwork (Form 1-1A) should be in hand before Board approval.
3. If approved, send to college for official signature (If an online school, contact the West Virginia Department of Education for university contact information).
4. Keep a log or database of those on permit/out-of-field authorizations and send letters in mid-spring to remind them of renewal requirements.

Advanced Placement (AP) course teachers should be approved by the College Board before being allowed to teach the course. Students may not be eligible for AP credit if the teacher is not approved.

The Coaches Database should be updated after each county board meeting or at the beginning of each athletic season.

6.6.3. Evaluations

Improvement Consultant Team Finding(s):

The Team found that there was a lack of accountability/monitoring processes to verify that personnel were being evaluated as required by §18A-2-12, Policy 5310 and Policy 5314.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that a monitoring/accountability tracking system be developed to verify that all personnel are being evaluated as required by §18A-2-12, Policy 5310 and Policy 5314 and that the evaluations are placed in personnel files according to required timelines.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The Team reviewed a random sampling of personnel records of teachers currently employed with zero to three years of teaching experience through the 2006-07 school-year. The purpose of the review was to verify that required observations and evaluations were being conducted as mandated by State Code and WVBE policy.

Sampling of Evaluations for 2006-07 included:

1. Educator, Rosedale Elementary
 - a. Incomplete evaluation
2. Educator, Rosedale Elementary
 - a. Incomplete evaluation
3. Educator, Fayetteville Elementary
 - a. Evaluation outside timeline
4. Educator, Oak Hill High School
 - a. Evaluation outside timeline

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT CORRECTED. The Team reviewed a sampling of personnel records in the various personnel categories for the 2007-2008 school year to verify that policy guidelines were being implemented as required by West Virginia Board of Education and Fayette County Board of Education policies.

The review produced the following results:

1. Administrators. The Team reviewed eight (8) school administrators' evaluations. The evaluations met all requirements.

2. Teachers. The Team reviewed 16 classroom teacher evaluations.
 - a. Fourteen (14) evaluations met all requirements.
 - b. One (1) evaluation, Special Education teacher, Valley High School, had an observation dated 10-25-07 which was after the evaluation was completed on 10-24-07.
 - c. One (1) teacher, Mount Hope High School, had only one evaluation with two observations for the 2007-2008 school year. As a third year teacher the teacher should have had two evaluations and six observations.

3. Athletic Coaches. The Team reviewed 12 coaches' evaluations.
 - a. Eight (8) evaluations met all requirements.
 - b. Two (2) coaches had no evaluations for the 2007-2008 school year.
 - c. One (1) coach, Football Coach at Ansted Middle School, had an observation dated 10-22-07 which was after the evaluation was completed on 10-12-07.

4. Professional Support Personnel. The Team reviewed nine professional support personnel evaluations.
 - a. Three (3) evaluations met all requirements.
 - b. One (1) person, Counselor, Fayetteville High School, with 6+ years of experience had goals established for the 2007-2008 school year but had no narrative evaluation completed.
 - c. One (1) person, Speech Pathologist, Rosedale Elementary, with 6+ years of experience was last evaluated in May 2002. This professional should have been evaluated every three years (2005 and 2008).
 - d. One (1) person, Counselor, Collins Middle School, with 4-5 years experience was last evaluated in the 2005-2006 school year. This professional should be evaluated each year until six years of experience is reached.
 - e. One (1) person, Counselor, Mount Hope High School, had an evaluation for the 2007-2008 school year; however, it was completed 10-22-2008, almost four months after the 06-30-2008 timeline when the evaluation should have been completed.
 - e. One (1) person, School Nurse, Central Office, with 1-3 years experience only had one of the two required evaluations completed for the 2007-2008 school year.
 - f. One (1) person, Athletic Trainer, Oak Hill High School, was evaluated using a coach's evaluation form rather than the required professional support personnel evaluation form.

5. Service Personnel. The Team reviewed 29 service personnel evaluations covering all service personnel classifications.
 - a. Twenty-five (25) evaluations met all requirements.
 - b. One (1) person, Secretary at the Bus Garage, had an evaluation for the 2007-2008 school year but had no observations to support the evaluation.

- c. One (1) person, Secretary, Bus Garage and Attendance, was last evaluated in 2003-2004. Policy requires that service personnel be evaluated every two years.
- d. Two (2) personnel, Cook, Rosedale Elementary School and Bus Operator, were last evaluated in 2005-2006. Policy requires that service personnel be evaluated every two years.

6.6.4. Teacher and Principal Internship

Improvement Consultant Team Finding(s):

The team found the Fayette County School System does not have a consistent system in place for the assignment of mentors to teachers and principals. The team found, specifically, two teachers who were not assigned a mentor at all; however the teachers were employed the previous academic school year (2005-06).

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

The team recommends Fayette County School System develop an accountability system that identifies new employees who are in need of a mentor. It is recommended that Fayette County school system consistently follow this practice to ensure mentors are assigned in a timely manner.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

The Team observed that W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies are being followed.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT CORRECTED. The Team reviewing certification/licensure found two of the employed mentors had not completed the required training.

6.7.2. Policy Implementation

Issue(s):

Does the Fayette County School System have all appropriate policies updated and available to employees?

Findings:

As with most county boards, the Fayette County Board of Education itself has, for the most part, not engaged in an extensive policy audit, although, over the years, the board

has acquired some policy “revision” work from various sources, including the law firm of Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

1. Complete, as soon as possible, a policy audit concentrating on a) “required” statutory and state Board of Education policies initially, (b) followed by more extensive policy revision as necessary or warranted.
2. Once the audit is completed, provide county board members training in the role and function of policy, policymaking, including most critically effective policymaking operations and processes and training relating to a) policymaking per se and the county board’s role, b) monitoring and oversight as relating to policy, c) program evaluation as can be undertaken by a corporate board via an effective policy approach to governance.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Both the superintendent and assistant superintendent have verbally verified that these have been completed (10-30-07).

Board training was conducted by Dr. Howard O’Cull on May 15, 2007 and May 29, 2007 (documents provided by the superintendent).

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

1. The Team reviewed the original findings and reported the following.
 - Alternative Education. County policy outdated; State Board Policy 2418 effective 08/14/00; County policy D-12 was dated 01/21/97.
 - FC Policy D-12 (Alternative Education) was adopted January 21, 1997, and revised on March 5, 2007.

OEPA November 2008 Review

CORRECTED. Overall the Fayette County Board of Education policies were current with W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies. A few policies needed minor language/revision and are listed in this section. Policies posted on the website and official printed policy manual also needed to reflect all current policies.

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy D-12 was revised 03/05/07 and again 11/05/07. The policy was current with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2418 which was effective 08/14/00.
- E-22 Student Substance Abuse (2004)
- FC Policy E-22 revised February 23, 2007.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy E-22 was replaced with Policy A-28 as a combined “Substance and Tobacco Control” policy. See next item for follow-up.
- A-28 Tobacco Control (2000). There is a declared policy in the 2006-2007 Student Handbook; however, the Fayette County Policy Manual contains this outdated policy.
- FC Policy A-28 revised February 23, 2007.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy A-28 was renamed “Substance and Tobacco Control” and adopted 05/05/08. This policy was current with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2422.5, *Substance Abuse and Tobacco Control*.
- B-24 Annual Recommendation of School Personnel by Principals ... (1993) refers to county policy #B-40 which did not exist;
- Fayette County Policy B-24 is still in the original form as noted in the January 2007 audit report; this policy still refers to Policy B-40 which is once again not found in the policy manual provided to the review team.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy B-24 no longer existed per the policies the Team reviewed online at <http://boe.faye.k12.wv.us> under Policies nor contained in the printed copy of the county policy manual.
- G-5 Guidelines for Administering Medication in Schools (1994)
- FC Policy G-5 was adopted December 20, 1994 and revised on March 5, 2007.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy G-5, now entitled “Medication Administration” per their website, was being formatted for the website. The revised policy was adopted by the Fayette County Board of Education 03/05/07. The Team reviewed a printed copy of the Fayette County Board of Education policy and reported that it corresponded to West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2422.8, *Medication Administration Policy*. (Note: Policies were listed on the county website that could not be referenced through the website [being formatted for electronic access]. They were listed in black print. These policies were found in the printed policy manual.)

- D-13 Course Credit by Testing (1998) refers to instructional goals and objectives as well as the 10% grading scale; now utilizing content standards and objectives and the state uniform grading scale.
- FC Policy D-13 was adopted April 6, 1998, and revised on February 23, 2007; county policy now references Content Standards and Objectives as well as the state uniform grading scale; FC Policy D-9 (Adolescent Education 9 – 12 Graduation Requirements for Programs of Studies Around Career Clusters and Majors: revised August 6, 2007), Policy D-10 (Middle Childhood Education 5 – 8: revised July 2, 2007) and Policy D-11 (Elementary Childhood Education – PreK through 4: revised September 19, 2005) all contain the state uniform grading scale.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Fayette County Board of Education Policy D-13 “Course Credit by Testing” was revised 02-23-07 and again 05-19-08. The policy was aligned with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, Section 5.6.8.c. which states, ‘A county may develop tests for the purpose of moving students more quickly through the curriculum by “testing out.” See Section 13.2. for other methods of acceleration.’

It should be noted that Fayette County Board of Education Policy D-13 states:

Senate Bill 300 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510 require county boards of education to adopt policies which allow students to “test out” of classes and receive credit for these courses. These local policies must specify the conditions and requirements which set forth this process.

West Virginia Board of Education policy no longer “requires” testing out, but states that counties “may” develop tests.

2. Other policies that raise concern (age of policy, citations, etc.).

- B-30 Substitutes in Areas of Critical Need and Shortage (2004) cites that this policy shall be effective for the school year 2004-2005 and may be renewed annually by the Board (renewal of this policy is not referenced in the policy “adopted/renewed” section).
- FC Policy B-30 was revised March 19, 2007; the reference listed above has been replaced with “This policy shall be effective for the school year 2006-2007 and may be renewed annually by the Board.” Renewal of this policy is dated March 19, 2007, with no reference to the current school year.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy B-30 was revised 03/19/07, 12/17/07, and 09/02/08. Section 4 “Effective Date” currently states, “This policy shall be effective for the school year 2008-2009 and may be renewed annually by the FCBOE.”
- E-2a Procedures for Suspension/Expulsion of Handicapped Students (1984); #E-6a Alternative Adult Diploma Program (1988).
- FC Policy E-2a Discipline of Students with Exceptionalities (new name) was revised June 25, 2007; State Board Policy 2419 (Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities) was revised with an effective date of September 11, 2007 – although the county policy is verbatim from the state policy (pages 85+), the county policy adoption date (June 25, 2007) needs to reflect local adoption after state policy effective date (September 11, 2007).

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy E-2a, Procedures for Suspension/Expulsion of Handicapped Students, was not listed with the online policies, but was included in the printed policy manual with an “adopted” date of 06/25/07. The Associate Superintendent said that the printed copy should have been removed from the policy manual since the Board rescinded it 10/01/07.
- FC Policy E-6a Adult Basic Education Program (new name) was revised October 1, 2007.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy E-6a (Alternative Adult Diploma Program) was revised 10-01-07.
- E-6b Special Education Requirements for Graduation (1986) ... e.g. policy references “Standard and Alternative Learning Outcomes Curriculum Guide”.
- This county policy no longer exists

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy E-6b, Special Education Requirements for Graduation, no longer existed as confirmed by the Team reviewing the online policies and the printed policy manual.
- I-4 Fire Drills (1988) ... does not match current “fire exit drill safety report” on the Office of State Fire Marshal web site.
- FC Policy I-4 revised April 2, 2007 to reflect current requirements

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy I-4 was updated 04/02/07 and 05/19/08. Although the language for the dates that school fire drills will take place were very specific, they did not align with the information (found under "Misc. Forms and Information"/"School Fire Drills Sheets") on the State Fire Marshal's website (<http://www.firemarshal.wv.gov/inspection/Pages/default.aspx>).

Current Fayette County Board of Education Policy reads:

- 2.1. Fire drills are to be conducted at each school according to the following schedule:
 - a. TWO (2) the first week of school
 - b. ONE (1) the second week of school
 - c. ONE (1) the fourth week of school
 - d. SIX (6) spread over the remainder of the school year.

The School Fire Exit Drill Safety Report that is to be submitted to the State Fire Marshal's Office was attached to the county policy. This sheet did not match the one currently posted on the State Fire Marshal's website as listed below.

The State Fire Marshal webpage with the School Fire Exit Drill Safety Report (http://www.firemarshal.wv.gov/Documents/SCHOOL%20FIRE%20DRILL%20REPORT_S.pdf) states:

Two (2) fire exit drills shall be conducted during the first thirty (30) days of the school term and one (1) additional fire exit drill each month school is in session. During the winter months of December, January & February fire exit drills may be deferred, if there have been at least six (6) fire exit drills conducted before the drills have been deferred.

- 1998 – Policy D-13 Course Credit by Testing – references unweighted grade point average outdated – references instructional goals and objectives K – 6 High School – Grading scale – not same as WVBOE – approved
- FC Policy D-13 revised February 23, 2007; now reflects "Content Standards and Objectives"; now reflects the WVBOE uniform grading scale

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy D-13 was updated 05/19/08.
- Policy Manual revisited regarding old; no long relevant, or unnecessary policies adopted, e.g. June 6, 1972 Policy E10 Emergency Plans; February 28, 1984

Procedures for Suspension/Expulsion of Handicapped Students E-2a F4;
December 14, 1982 Bus Discipline F4

- FC Policy E10 (Emergency Plans) revised March 19, 2007

November 2008 Follow-Up Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy E10 was revised 03/19/07.
- FC Policy E-2a (Discipline of Students with Exceptionalities) revised June 25, 2007; however, concern is noted that county revised policy adopted after state policy adoption date even though county policy is verbatim from state policy (see above with FC Policy E-2a)

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy was adopted 06/25/07 and a copy was in the printed policy manual, but it was not listed in the online version. This policy was rescinded by the Fayette County Board of Education 10/01/07 and staff reported that it will be removed from the printed policy manual.
- FC Policy F4 (Bus Discipline) remains same as during original OEPA audit – county policy adopted December 14, 1982; WV State Policy 4336 (West Virginia School Bus Transportation Policy and Procedures Manual: effective May 20, 2004) was revised well after county policy was adopted in 1982; county policy references to state code are questionable since applicable state code has been changed since 1982; county policy references FC Policy E2 (Discipline Code) which is now “Student Code of Conduct”

OEPA November 2008 Review

- This policy was no longer in the online policy list nor in the printed copy of the county policy manual. This policy was rescinded by the Fayette County Board of Education 06/16/08.
- West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4321. Effective November 17, 2003 – Standards for School Nutrition – County Policy H-1 Food Service Program adopted 6-1-89.
- FC Policy H-1 (Food Service Program) revised February 5, 2007.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy H-1 was entitled, Delivery of Child Nutrition Program, as adopted by the Fayette County Board of Education 02/05/07 and 06/16/08.

- County Policy H-2 Sale of Soft Drinks in High Schools. September 3, 1996 W.Va. Code 18-2-6A. The sale of healthy beverages and soft drinks in schools was amended in 2005.
- FC Policy H-2 (Sale of Healthy Beverages and Soft Drinks in Schools) revised February 5, 2007; county policy language is verbatim from current WV §18-2-6a.

OEPA November 2008 Review

- Fayette County Board of Education Policy H-2 was entitled “Sale of Healthy Beverages and Soft Drinks in Schools” (revised 02/05/07). The Team found this policy in the printed policy manual and listed, but it was not available at this time through the web-based policy link.
- FC Policy A-13 (Fair Labor Standards Act) was adopted August 6, 2007, and revised October 15, 2007. The method of calculating overtime (policy page 4 – “Weighted average method” and “Separate rates method”) has been questioned. The superintendent verbally responded that the policy originally had the “Weighted” method but that this method would cause seasoned bus drivers (and some other groups) to lose about \$300 per pay. He has met with these groups today (the day of the follow-up audit) and, through mutual agreement as defined in the policy, would use the “Separate” method so they would not be adversely affected. New hires and certain other categories would use the “Weighted” method.

OEPA November 2008 Review

The policy remained as reviewed and adopted 10/15/07.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

New Concerns

1. FC Policy A-26 (Drug-Free Workplace Policy) was adopted October 14, 1991, while WVBOE Policy 1461 (Drug-Free Workplace) was effective February 1, 1993.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Fayette County Board of Education Policy A-26 was revised 12/17/07.

2. FC Policy B-40 (Employee Evaluations) was most recently revised March 16, 1993, while WVBOE Policy 5310 (Performance Evaluation of School Personnel) was effective September 11, 2006.

OEPA November 2008 Review

NOT CORRECTED. Fayette County Board of Education Policy B-40 remained as revised on 03/16/93; Current policy was found in the printed policy manual but was not listed in the online list of current policies. This policy was rescinded on 07/19/04 and should be removed from the printed policy manual.

3. Suggest reviewing FC Policy D-7 (Honors and Advanced Education) to clean-up some of the language within the policy (e.g. referencing CTBS achievement test, Honors Senior Math, etc.).

OEPA November 2008 Review

Fayette County Board of Education Policy D-7 was revised 04/01/08.

4. FC Policy F-7 (Special Transportation of Handicapped Students) was adopted December 14, 1982, while WV BOE Policy 4336 (West Virginia School Bus Transportation Policy and Procedures Manual) was effective May 20, 2004; WV BOE Policy 4336 contains Section 5: Regulations for Transporting Students with Disabilities Requiring Special Transportation; FC Policy F-7 should be reviewed for alignment with WV BOE Policy 4336.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Fayette County Board of Education Policy F-7 was revised 06/16/08.

5. FC Policy I-5 (Bomb Hoax) should be updated to accurately reflect the language in WV Code §61-6-17.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Fayette County Board of Education Policy I-5 was not in the printed policy manual or listed in the online version of the policy manual. It was moved to "Superintendent's Directives" as Policy J-5.

Additional policy concerns raised during November 2008 Follow-Up Review.

1. Fayette County Board of Education Policy D-11, Elementary Childhood Education/Pre-K through 4, was not current with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510 for the elementary level programmatic charts. County policy was revised 03/03/08 while State Board Policy 2510 was revised effective 07/07/08. The State Board policy has some language change in this area.
2. Fayette County Board of Education Policy E-8, Student Attendance, Section 16, needed to be reviewed and include language changes of West Virginia Board of

Education Policy 2510, effective 07/07/08, regarding a full instructional day for all four years for high school students (and the viability of early graduation).

3. The Team reviewed the following policies in paper format (printed policy manual) since they were not available online. The Associate Superintendent indicated that several policies in printed form had not been reformatted to date for electronic publication.
 - a. A-10, Utilization of Taping Devices (revised 11/02/92).
 - b. A-21a, Parent Involvement in Education (PIE) (adopted 07/02/90). The county policy references West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2200 (revised/adopted 07/01/08). This policy must be reviewed and revised given the new State Board Policy 2200.
 - c. A-22, Classroom Visitation and Observation (revised 10/03/89).
 - d. A-25, School Board Policy Process (revised 06/04/07). Refer to concern below in Item 5.
 - e. A-32, Racial, Sexual, Religious-Ethnic Harassment/Violence (revised 02/20/03); West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2421, *Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment and Violence Policy*, (effective 01/16/97). Fayette County Board of Education policy was current with State Board policy.
 - f. B-3, Out-of-State Educational Meetings (revised 01/04/93).
 - g. B-7, Fayette County Professional Staff Development Council. A copy of the policy located in the printed policy manual was dated 09/05/06, but was not available to view online even though it was listed as a policy online at the website. The Associate Superintendent indicated that the printed copy was being formatted for electronic access.
 - h. E-2, Student Code of Conduct (revised 07/16/07). The county policy was current with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4373, *Student Code of Conduct* (7/1/03).
 - i. E-10, Emergency Plans (revised 02/19/07), was aligned with WV Code §18A-5.42 & §18A-5.43 (1995).
 - j. E-13, Procedures for the Collection, Maintenance and Disclosure of Student Data (revised 12/14/82). West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4350, *Procedures for the Collection, Maintenance and Disclosure of Student Data* (effective 09/18/03). The Fayette County Board of Education policy needed to be reviewed since the State Board policy was revised in 2003.
 - k. E-25, Valedictorian/Salutatorian (revised 11/21/05).
 - l. E-27, 504 Policies and Procedures (adopted 03/03/87). The policy was found in the printed policy manual and was listed online, but it was not available electronically for review. The Fayette County Board of Education policy needed to review Policy E-27 given revisions to federal law/regulations and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2419 since 1987.
 - m. F-12, Location of Parked Buses (adopted 08/21/06), local policy.
 - n. G-5, Medication Administration (revised 03/05/07). West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2422.8 (adopted 07/01/04). The county policy aligned with West Virginia Board of Education policy.

- o. H-2, Sale of Healthy Beverages and Soft Drinks in Schools (revised 02/05/07). Fayette County Board of Education policy aligned with and directly quoted current WV Code §18-2-6a.
- 4. Fayette County Board of Education Policy A-25, School Board Policy Process (revised 06/04/07), Section 5. The Review of Board Policies. states: “5.1. **Outdated, Unnecessary, and Ineffective Policies.** After a period of three years from the date of the Board’s approval or last modification of a policy, the Superintendent shall notify the Board if the policy is out of date, seems unnecessary, or has proven ineffective, or whether it is in need of modification or repeal for any other reason.”

This policy illustrates that the Fayette County Board of Education **now** has a process in place to review its current policies on a cyclical basis.

- 5. Fayette County Board of Education Policy A-3, Notice and Conduct of Meetings; Decorum and Order for Board of Education Meetings. Section 3.6 (b) of this policy states:
 - Persons or delegations desiring to come before the Board after going through the proper channels shall contact the Superintendent’s office prior to the time of a Board meeting and schedule an audience before the Board. Notice of all audiences scheduled shall, if possible, be included on the agenda delivered to members of the Board by the Superintendent.

WV Code §6-9A-3 states:

Except as expressly and specifically otherwise provided by law, whether heretofore or hereinafter enacted, and except as provided in section four [6-9A-4] of this article, all meetings of any governing body shall be open to the public. Any governing body may make and enforce reasonable rules for attendance and presentation at any meeting where there is not room enough for all members of the public who wish to attend. This article does not prohibit the removal from a meeting of any member of the public who is disrupting the meeting to the extent that orderly conduct of the meeting is compromised: Provided, That persons who desire to address the governing body may not be required to register to address the body more than fifteen minutes prior to time the scheduled meeting is to commence.

County policy states that those desiring to come before the county board to contact the Superintendent’s office prior to the time of a Board meeting while W.Va. Code states that persons who desire to address the governing body may not be required to register to address the body more than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the time the scheduled meeting is to commence.

6. The following policies were rescinded by the Fayette County Board of Education on the date indicated as verified by the Team review of the Official Fayette County Board of Education Minutes of meetings.
 - a. A-29, Evaluation of Administration by Subordinates, rescinded 10/01/07.
 - b. A-33, Assignment of School Staff, rescinded 02/19/08.
 - c. E-2a, Discipline of Students with Exceptionalities, rescinded 10/01/07.
 - d. E-14a, Schedule Changes, rescinded 03/17/08.
 - e. E-14b, Acceptance of Credits Outside the School Curriculum, rescinded 05/19/08.
 - f. E-23, Male-Female School Social Relationships, rescinded 10/15/07.
 - g. F-3 rescinded 06/16/08; replaced by F-2, Transportation Policy and Procedures (06/16/08).
 - h. F-4 rescinded 06/16/08; replaced by F-2, Transportation Policy and Procedures.
 - i. F-6 rescinded 06/16/08; replaced by F-2, Transportation Policy and Procedures.
 - j. F-8 rescinded 06/16/08; replaced by F-2, Transportation Policy and Procedures”
 - k. F-10 rescinded 06/16/08; replaced by F-2 “Transportation Policy and Procedures.
 - l. B-24, Annual Recommendation of School Personnel by Principals, rescinded 03/19/07.
 - m. E-6b, Special Education Requirements for Graduation, rescinded 03/05/07.
7. (Bomb Hoax) was changed to J-5 (Bomb Hoax) on 12/18/07. The Associate Superintendent said that I-5 was never a policy and was moved to the Fayette “County Superintendent Directives” section of the online policies.

The Follow-up Education Performance Audit Team found a lack of consistency in what the county provided as the “official” printed Policy Manual for Fayette County Schools and the online policies. The Team found a lack of continuity between the new online list of policies and the printed policy manual.

It should be noted that the references above by the November OEPA Team to the “written policy manual” was the manual provided the Team for review along with the online policies on the Fayette County Board of Education website.

6.8.1. Leadership

Issue(s):

Were the W.Va. Code and Fayette County Board policies and appropriate procedures followed by the Fayette County Board of Education in conducting school board business?

Finding(s):

The county board, based on various interviews of members, appears to have followed various norms, customs and practices relating to the larger, more complex issues of meeting management.

In addition, it does appear that there have been some concerns among Board members on how Board meetings should be conducted and what the “legal” business of the Board is.

Improvement Consultant Team Recommendation(s):

1. Given that the Fayette board appears to be divided both in terms of temperament and philosophy, some training may be necessary relative to general meeting management, namely because divided board “division” often manifests itself in terms of questions regarding “how” meetings are conducted, especially in terms of delegation reception. It should be stressed that no amount of training is likely to cure board division – nor should it in that such division may be a sign of health, vigor of individual philosophy and a yearning for accountability. That having been noted, training can and should occur in terms of meeting management, especially in terms of effective corporate board operations, county board executive sessions, and how to handle personnel issues that may arise in meetings or which may be placed on county board agendas.
2. Given the corporate nature of school boards, some training should also occur relative to board roles and functions, including the role of the county board president as presiding officer.

OEPA Six Month Progress Report

Finding: This was a previous (November 2006) finding.

Discussion: Research indicates that strong leadership is necessary for good school districts and schools to achieve high levels of student performance. In the past Fayette County Schools lacked strong district leadership because of strained relationships between the superintendent and board of education. Since November, 2006 OEPA review, the new superintendent and new board (4 new members) have enjoyed much more amicable relations and have begun to focus on more substantive school improvement issues.

The good news:

1. Central Office administrators in the past cited lack of leadership from the board level as one of the greatest barriers to reform and improvement for the Fayette County School System. The superintendent now reports that the Board listens better, all the members care about the kids, the Board does much less micro-managing, and has become more positive and proactive.
2. Board members reported greater confidence in the superintendent and central office staff; reported the Board-Superintendent Relationship as good; reported improved communications; speak of academic improvement, curriculum change, cooperation, facility improvements, fiscal responsibility, and possible further consolidation decisions.

The not so good news:

1. Board of Education minutes reflected some evidence that more still needs to be done in this area: August 6, 2007 a member leaves their position at the board table, addresses the public and publicly criticizes the administration, demanding that they “move ahead” on an issue.
2. A board member publicly makes the accusation that legal opinions are being gathered and used to “stack the deck” against him.
3. Some board members appear unclear regarding their role in certain finance and personnel matters. Discussion at the November 5, 2007 meeting indicated a lack of understanding of the most basic features of the financial reports.

Recommendation:

The finance training prepared and delivered to Fayette County Board of Education at the October 10, 2006 board work session needs to be repeated. Those materials were exceptional in content, organization, and clarity.

Conclusion:

System leadership has improved since the November 2006 Office of Education Performance Audit visit. Most notably policy and personnel practices have greatly improved. Board members are more supportive of the superintendent and central office personnel. Board members appear to be more willing to focus on substantive issues rather than “grandstanding”. Board members still need more training in the areas of finance and personnel law.

The superintendent who was hardly a presence in the November 2006 board meeting, assumed an appropriate leadership/advisory role in the observed November 5, 2007 board meeting.

Anecdotal Concern: In speaking with the superintendent and all five board members on November 5, 2007, none knew what the June 30, 2007 end-of-year financial balance was.

OEPA November 2008 Review

In the analysis of the school system leadership, the Team examined the original “Issue” stated by the West Virginia Board of Education Improvement Consultant Team.

“Were the W.Va. Code and Fayette County Board policies and appropriate procedures followed by the Fayette County Board of Education in conducting school board business?”

The Team examined the Fayette County Board of Education agendas and minutes from April 24, 2008 to the present (November 2009), and interviewed the five board members and the Fayette County Superintendent of Schools.

Findings

- 1. According to the board minutes (July 11, 2008; August 4, 2008) and interviews, two board members had acted outside W.Va. Code in conducting school board business. Specifically contacting Leland O’Neal, CPA regarding performing a financial audit and an agreed salary.**
- 2. May 19, 2008 minutes recorded that a board member remarked that the meeting should be numbered as Meeting No. 56 and not 55, since a quorum of the Board met at the Fayette County Court House on Friday, May 16, 2008, as required by State Code to canvass the special levy election. Thereupon, it was moved by a board member and seconded by a board member to change the meeting number to 56 instead of 55. The superintendent said he was not certain that a quorum of the Board being present at the Courthouse to canvass the levy election could be declared an official Board meeting but that he would check further into the matter. The motion to change the meeting number to 56 and to pay any eligible Board members for their attendance carried 4 to 1.**

W.Va. Code §6-9A-3 requires any meetings of the board of education to be announced in advance of the meeting.

Two issues included: 1. Meetings must have advanced notice and 2. Meeting Number 55 did not have official board minutes.

3. Upon the election of two board members, the board voted to reopen Nuttall Middle School which was closed the end of the 2007-2008 school year. Although this action may have been legal, it disrupted the educational system and set a series of actions in motion regarding rescinding personnel and facility work. Other county schools were affected by personnel placement and facility efforts directed at Nuttall Middle School.
4. Numerous entries in the Fayette County Board of Education minutes presented discord among the members of the board of education.
5. The county superintendent and at least two board members indicated that the board has good relations among themselves and with the county superintendent. The Fayette County Board of Education has begun a plan to construct a high school that will combine four high schools. If this plan comes to fruition, the Fayette County Board of Education will need to be united in its efforts and unite the county.

Central Office Staff Leadership

The Team noted that during the review, it was very difficult to find a direct answer from individuals questioned. On several occasions, the team was told data did not exist, for example: minutes from curriculum meetings were not available initially, but the next day, the Director of Federal Programs was able to provide notebooks containing several 'handwritten' documents/notations supporting meetings did occur.

The overall observation in working with the central office staff is that there is no unified form of effective communication between divisions of operations. The recommendation is that the Superintendent and Associate Superintendent develop a system of record keeping, preferably electronic, so that information is readily available and accurate data may be retrieved in a timely manner as well as communicated throughout the Fayette County school system, to ensure successful implementation of all initiatives and programs.

SUMMARY

The following includes the eight broad findings and recommendations developed by the Improvement Team for the Fayette County School System. The Office of Education Performance Audits summarized the implementation of the Fayette County School System in correcting the findings. This narrative is based on results of the Fayette County Six Month Progress Report of December 2007 and the November 2008 Education Performance Audit.

1. The Fayette County School System must develop and implement appropriate employment hiring procedures to ensure that all employees are selected, placed and evaluated according to state law.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Team reported that the Fayette County School System still had a few hiring and personnel evaluation issues. Overall, progress was reported.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Many of the serious personnel hiring findings of the initial Education Performance Audit Report had been corrected; however, new findings were reported, and a few previous findings remained. Personnel evaluations were not always conducted according to West Virginia Board of Education policy and state law.

2. The Fayette County School System shall revise the county strategic plan to address the curriculum and instruction issues identified in this document.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Team reported that the Fayette County School System's Five-Year Strategic Plan was revised and indicated increased emphasis on improving achievement across all subgroups. However, the Team found that strategies specific to individual subgroups were not identified in the district or school work plans. Practices observed in the schools also supported that achievement strategies were addressed as a whole rather than taking into account the specific needs of subgroups.

OEPA November 2008/January 2009 Review

The Team found evidence of the subgroups mentioned in the county Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Subgroups were a focus in the Strategic Plans at the secondary schools; but high expectations were not evidenced at the school level, as noted in student

interviews, individual School Team observations, and interviews with principals, teachers, and parents.

3. The Fayette County School System shall establish fiscal policies, structures and procedures that ensure compliance with State Board Policy 8200.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Fayette County School System had revised its purchasing policies, practices, and procedures to comply with the State Board Policy 8200. However, the Team reported a few issues that had not been completed or could not be substantiated since many of the financial corrective actions have just recently been developed and put in place.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Fiscal policies, structures, and procedures continued to prevail that did not comply with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8200, *Purchasing Procedures for Local Educational Agencies*.

4. The Fayette County School System shall implement identified strategies to increase the graduation rate and improve the level of success for students who enter college.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Fayette County School System graduation rate improved by 3.35 percent. The secondary schools had not implemented strategies to improve the graduation rate.

The number of Advanced Placement, honors, and college courses had increased in the high schools. The number of college going students who were enrolled in developmental college courses decreased in English while the percent in developmental mathematics increased.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Graduation data showed the Fayette County School District declined in student graduation rate from the 2006-2007 school year to the 2007-2008 school year.

No additional emphasis was evidenced on increasing the number of students scoring a 3 or higher on the AP tests.

While a “plan” was in place, as noted in the Five-Year Strategic Plan, student achievement continued to decline. The Team questioned that the plan was reaching implementation level in all schools.

5. The Fayette County School System shall review and amend the CEFP to ensure that school facilities are effectively and efficiently utilized and that the intended curriculum is delivered in all county schools.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Fayette County School System is beginning the process to establish committees to develop the Ten-Year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). Any major or extensive amendments to the Fayette County CEFP have not been addressed with the West Virginia Department of Education, Director of School Facilities.

The school facilities in Fayette County are substandard, outdated, and do not create a learning environment for 21st Century skills. Most facilities require major renovations to provide a basic, safe, and healthy, environment for students and staff.

Most schools have extended the life of HVAC systems, roofs, and major mechanical items for basic school operations. This coupled with the health and safety issues and poor infrastructure for curriculum delivery is draining Fayette County of fiscal resources. Even a new roof funded at Oak Hill High School is leaking and still problematic. Yet to be addressed is the under-utilization of many schools leading to inefficiency. The CEFP needs to be modified to assure that the curriculum can be delivered, safety and security issues addressed, and that building maintenance including HVAC systems is upgraded. Serious attention needs to be given to determine if the county can continue to operate over 20 schools given their budget and student population. The greatest challenge will be to deliver an effective curriculum if six high schools are maintained for approximately 2,000 9th through 12th grade students.

OEPA November 2008 Review

The Fayette County School System was in the process of reviewing and amending the CEFP. Some significant facility improvements have been made, but a long term process must ensue for the facilities to be effectively and efficiently utilized to deliver a 21st Century curriculum.

6. The Fayette County School System shall establish appropriate licensing procedures for all employees.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Team reported several personnel with licensure issues. Discrepancies and data entry errors are being reviewed for accuracy from the initial match of personnel with certification. It appears about 20 certification issues will remain.

OEPA November 2008 Review

Appropriate licensing procedures were in place, with only five personnel identified for licensure issues.

7. The Fayette County Board of Education and the County School Superintendent shall have all county policies reviewed to ensure compliance with federal laws, state statutes, and State Board policies.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

The Team reported that the Fayette County School System reviewed and revised or rescinded policies noted by the original Education Performance Audit. The Team, however, did note some new concerns regarding county policies. These should be easily updated/revised.

OEPA November 2008 Review

County policies were in compliance with federal laws, state statutes, and State Board policies with a few exceptions.

8. The Fayette County School Board and County Superintendent will work with the executive director of the State School Boards Association to complete the training identified for understanding the role and function of a school board member and the guidelines that govern the appropriate administration of school board meetings.

OEPA Report (December 2007)

Board training was conducted by the executive director of the School Boards Association May 15, 2007 and May 29, 2007.

The Fayette County School Board will need continued training for understanding the role and function of a school board member and comply with the guidelines that govern appropriate administration of school board meetings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many of the original noncompliances have been corrected during the past two years in the Fayette County School System. It is troubling, however, that some issues have not been resolved and new issues are emerging. The personnel issues originally cited have been diminished, but not entirely eliminated. Personnel evaluation problems linger. Financial irregularities continue to be present. There seems to be a resolve to improve school facilities, but much work is still needed. Student achievement is being addressed with many initiatives being introduced and a great deal of assistance being given by the West Virginia Department of Education and RESA IV; however, overall achievement and increased graduation rates have not yet materialized. Although the county is not in an emergency situation, progress needs to be monitored and the county needs to be held accountable to eliminate the remaining noncompliances. It is recommended that the county be upgraded to Conditional Accreditation with a Date Certain of October 31, 2009 to resolve remaining noncompliances.