



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

OCTOBER 2010

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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PREFACE

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) has a long, well established reputation for meeting the educational needs of a unique population of students and enabling them to lead productive and fulfilling lives. The mission of the WVSDB has been sustained for over a century. The school is held in high esteem by alumnus and the citizens of Romney and Hampshire County. Established by an Act of the Legislature on March 3, 1870, the school has enjoyed the support of the State for 140 years. The school is a treasure of history and represents a commitment by the people of West Virginia to provide for this unique and deserving population of students.

The school is operated by a superintendent and a staff under the supervision of the West Virginia Board of Education. Unlike public schools of the state that operate under a plethora of laws, rules and policies, the WVSDB has a small section of code requirements and is free to develop its own curriculum as prescribed by the State Board of Education (W.Va. Code §18-17-5) and programs as well as operating policies. This is the first education performance audit of record in modern times that has been conducted at the school. No unique and specific standards of performance for the school have been adopted as a format for conducting a performance audit. Therefore, certain assumptions about adherence to all sections of WV Code 18A and the policies of the West Virginia Board of Education for public schools may or may not be applicable. The format for this report follows basically the format for pre-K through 12 public schools with the assumption that similar structures and initiatives would be beneficial to the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind. The intent of this report is to provide information and recommendations to the State Board and the WVSDB that may be helpful in providing a thorough and efficient school.

INTRODUCTION

An announced (five days in advance) Education Performance Audit of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) was conducted on June 2-5, 2010. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was to investigate all aspects of the WVSDB consistent with accountability requirements of all West Virginia public schools and school districts. The Team reviewed school and district level high quality standards in accordance with appropriate procedures to make recommendations to the West Virginia Board of Education on such measures as it considers necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the high quality standards as required by W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies.

The Education Performance Audit Team interviewed the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind personnel including the superintendent, the director of personnel, finance official, finance employees, director of student living, director of special education, director of operations, principals, and other personnel. The Team examined documents including letters, faxes, and materials pertinent to the Education Performance Audit.

The first section of this report includes performance data for the schools comprising the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and observations about the high quality standards contained in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process For Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*. A section follows that lists the provisions contained in West Virginia Code Article 17 West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. This portion of the Education Performance Audit report examines the requirements specified in Sections §§18-17-1 to 18-17-9 of the Code and presents a commentary for each section.

This report presents the Education Performance Audit Team's findings regarding the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

**West Virginia Schools For The Deaf And The Blind
June 2 – 4, 2010**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

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

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EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

Best Practices

The Education Performance Audit Team commended the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind for the following best practices.

7.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.

Secondary School for the Blind

The high school science teacher at the School for the Blind reported conducting an analysis of the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs), then determining the best textbook for instruction. That teacher reported having current instructional materials and using a variety of textbooks including resource books by nationally recognized scientific authors.

Another teacher at the school reported having instructional materials in regular print, large print, and braille.

7.1.4. Instruction.

Preschool

1. There was evidence in one preschool teacher's class that some projects had been completed. The teacher was doing a nice science experiment with the whole class. The children were all instructed at the same time to do the same activities.
2. Two preschool teachers had evidence of Early Literacy and numeracy skills being taught. The children moved around the room and interacted with their peers and were involved in many different activities.

Secondary School for the Deaf

1. The teacher was hearing impaired and had been a student at the school prior to becoming a teacher. Four students were in the class and exhibited a range of hearing loss. The students were completing a vocabulary sheet on science terms they had been studying. The teacher used his presentation station, turning it on after the Team entered the room. He did a nice job making connections to students' experiences as he talked about vocabulary. The students seemed to have an understanding of the vocabulary. The teacher did a nice job showing students how to make a connection by locating Moundsville, WV on the Internet and then showing how close the school was located to the mound. Students were engaged in this lesson.

Overall

A consultant position evolved from the West Virginia Department of Education Special Education monitoring visit to the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB). The superintendent and special education director of the WVSDB held discussions regarding implementing a strong literacy plan across the school and the possibility of hiring someone to facilitate the work. The consultant has initial certification in speech/language and has a long history of working with students with hearing deficits. The consultant began February 2010 and has worked primarily with the School for the Deaf during the initial year (2009-2010). The following work has been accomplished thus far in a three year literacy plan implementation.

- Since February 2010, all teachers at the School for the Deaf were involved in reviewing and selecting core reading programs for grades K-12. Read Well was selected for the K-2 programmatic level. The teachers selected Language as the program for grades 3-12. This process involved researching available programs meeting requirements, involving teachers in bi-weekly meetings, and involving teachers in hearings from vendors and ultimately in voting for programs. The programs were selected and the consultant discussed the need to request a waiver of instructional materials and is moving toward the waiver request submission for State Board approval.

The consultant developed a plans/needs document for addressing language/literacy challenges at the WVSDB. The plan outlines the process the consultant used to facilitate this work, beginning by looking at each individual student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP) at the School for the Deaf. She was very thorough in this initial step, reporting that she often spent nearly two hours with each IEP in order to examine the knowledge of the students' needs beyond the hearing disability. The consultant began researching available programs that would prove effective for this student population and orchestrated presentations of the various programs for teachers so that they could be thoroughly informed before voting on a program to use. The consultant has also researched and made plans to include the Visual Phonics work performed by a West Virginia Department staff member in multisensory education to provide this for all teachers at the school. The consultant has been extensive in her research and efforts to search out all factors involved in building the infrastructure to support a strong, effective literacy program at the School for the Deaf. The same process will be initiated at the School for the Blind during the upcoming school year (2010-2011). This will be done as the consultant facilitates implementation of the new reading programs at the School for the Blind.

7.1.8. Instructional materials.

An intermediate level teacher was using an Interactive whiteboard and leading a discussion on how lakes are formed. That teacher asked high level questions that made the students think and generated more questions. The teacher used maps, charts, and graphs in presenting the lesson. The lesson was related to a field trip to the Trout Pond the following day.

Section I

PERFORMANCE DATA

This section presents performance data for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. It also presents the Education Performance Audit Team's findings.

5.1. Accountability. For the purpose of determining AYP for public school and county school district accountability, only the assessment scores of students who are enrolled in a public school for a full academic year will be included in the AYP calculation.

5.1.1. Achievement. Performance standards for adequate yearly progress (AYP) have not been established for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB). The following chart shows the comparison results for the WVSDB to other students with the same disability category in other West Virginia public schools.

Spring 2010 Testing - Students by Disabilities

	WVSDB			State		
	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient
Mathematics - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	18	83.33%	16.67%	155	61.29%	38.71%
Hard of Hearing	54	83.33%	16.67%	307	64.50%	35.50%
Reading - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	18	77.78%	22.22%	155	63.87%	36.13%
Hard of Hearing	54	90.74%	9.26%	306	75.82%	24.18%
Science - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	18	88.89%	11.11%	152	61.84%	38.16%
Hard of Hearing	54	85.19%	14.81%	302	74.50%	25.50%
Social Studies - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	18	72.22%	27.78%	153	53.59%	46.41%
Hard of Hearing	54	87.04%	12.96%	303	69.97%	30.03%

	WVSDB			State		
	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient
Mathematics - Alternate Assessment						
Blind and Partially Sighted	8	62.50%	37.50%	12	50.00%	50.00%
Hard of Hearing	7	71.43%	28.57%	12	41.67%	58.33%
Deaf-Blindness	5	100.00%	0.00%	5	100.00%	0.00%
Reading - Alternate Assessment						
Blind and Partially Sighted	8	87.50%	12.50%	12	66.67%	33.33%
Hard of Hearing	7	85.71%	14.29%	12	50.00%	50.00%
Deaf-Blindness	6	100.00%	0.00%	6	100.00%	0.00%

The following chart shows the number of advanced placement (AP) honors courses, and college credit courses offered at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. (WVSDB).

According to the superintendent of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB), students who wish to take Advanced Placement (AP), honors courses, and college credit courses may do so at Hampshire High School. No student was taking any academic or career/technical courses at Hampshire High School.

Recommendation

The Team recommended that the WVSDB encourage students to take more rigorous courses. If these courses are not available at The WVSDB, it is recommended that the principals, counselor, and secondary teachers encourage students to take these courses at Hampshire High School. The Team further recommended that the administrative staff initiate a procedure or cooperative agreement with the Hampshire County School District for students at the WVSDB permitting students to take courses at Hampshire High school that are not offered or available at the WVSDB.

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2009-2010			
High School	Number of AP Courses Offered	Number of Honors Courses Offered	Number of College Credit Courses Offered
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	0	0	0

The following chart provides college entrance testing information for the American College Test (ACT) and the advanced placement test (APT). The superintendent reported 13 students took the ACT and the average composite score was 13. The average composite score of all West Virginia students who took the ACT in 2010 was 20.7.

Since students did not take advanced placement (AP) courses, no student took the AP examination.

COLLEGE-ENTRANCE TESTING INFORMATION – ACT & APT 2009-2010					
ACT(American College Test)			APT (Advanced Placement Test) Test Takers		
Schools	Test Takers	Composite Score	Tenth Grade	Eleventh Grade	Twelfth Grade
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	13	13	0	0	0

AP TEST TAKERS					
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
10 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
10 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

The high school graduate overall college going rate for West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind was 7.6 percent.

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind Class of 2010 had a total of 12 graduates, 7 from the Secondary School for the Deaf, 4 from the School for the Blind, and one 1 from the Multisensory Program. Graduate post-secondary plans are presented below.

- College-4 graduates (Potomac State College, Shepherd University, and Marshall University). Three (3) students graduated from the School for the Deaf and 1 student graduated from the School for the Blind.
- Job Corps Program - 2 graduates from the School for the Deaf.
- Supported Employment - 3 graduates, e.g., Sheltered Workshop, Goodwill Industries (1 student from The School for the Deaf and 2 students from the School for the Blind).
- Assisted Living Program - 1 graduate from the Multisensory Program.
- Seeking employment - 2 graduates (1 from The School for the Deaf and 1 from the School for the Blind).

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2010		
School	Number of High School Graduates	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	12	33.33%

Source: Data provided by the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

Data for West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind's percent of students enrolled in developmental courses were not available.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2009					
	1 st Time WV Freshmen Total #	English Total #	% in Developmental English	Mathematics Total #	% in Developmental Mathematics
State	8,073	1,275	15.79%	2,224	27.55%
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	NA				

Section II

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

7.1. CURRICULUM.

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

Preschool

1. Preschool teachers were using Creative Curriculum 4th Edition and the WV ELSF (West Virginia Early Learning Standards Framework). The teachers seemed familiar with the curriculum and were using CreativeCurriculum.net to input ongoing progress data. The Team noted that the teachers needed continued professional development to apply this program. Teachers seemed to have the appropriate environments, but needed to have more training on how to include academic content into the activities. Their lesson plans were adequate.
2. Preschool children left the room to attend a music class with a music teacher. The teacher was not aware of the Pre-K West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) for music and movement.

Elementary School for the Deaf

Elementary teachers reported that they had adopted the Saxon mathematics program. This program is not on the West Virginia Department of Education approved list of instructional materials. If this program continues to be used, teachers need to conduct an analysis of the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) at each grade level to determine that all standards and objectives are adequately delivered. Supplemental materials may be necessary to fill instructional and learning gaps. The school will also need to apply for a waiver to use instructional materials that have not been approved by the West Virginia Board of Education.

Secondary School for the Deaf

The science teacher was asked about the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) and the teacher indicated he looked at them, but the content standards and objectives did not guide instruction.

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

Elementary School for the Deaf and Elementary Level School for the Blind

The Team observed few examples of enrichment and acceleration. Students in many classrooms were playing games. The games were education related, but required only low levels of thinking. For example, in a Grade 2 and 3 class, students were playing a *Famous Landmark* match game on the Interactive whiteboard; however, students were simply matching the pictures. There was no discussion about the landmarks or why they were important.

Secondary School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

Students at both secondary schools stated that the curriculum needed to be strengthened. No student interviewed indicated that the principal had been in the classroom for more than a couple of minutes.

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

Preschool

1. One classroom was extremely cluttered and at least half the room was used for storage. This consumed space that could be utilized for learning centers. The children were not able to move around the room for investigative activities. Team observations and interviews found little evidence that learning centers were being utilized in a quality manner.
2. The air conditioning system was inconsistent throughout the school. The multisensory room was very hot and a small fan was being used. The room did not have windows for air circulation. The Team was particularly concerned for the child with seizures. Additionally, several children occupied wheelchairs. The quality of instruction was limited when the classroom was so hot. This room was also very small and lacked room for the children to move around and have their own space. Different age children were in the classroom at different times. It was difficult to have continuity with content with the numerous transitions.
3. The campus was not secure in the evenings. It is common for the public to drive through the campus, park in the parking lot, and mingle with the students. Staff members indicated that this was a real concern for student safety.

4. The Team noted that all schools and facilities had at least one door and some had several doors unsecured during the school day. In particular, the Elementary School for the Deaf had multiple outside doors unsecured and most of the classroom doors were unlocked. Only a couple of classroom doors were locked.
5. The Team visited the three dormitory facilities of the WVSD. The Team entered the elementary dormitory for the visually impaired students and entered through an unlocked side or back door. The Team left through a different door which was held open by a brick. The Team was concerned about security measures for students and staff. While one of three security guards is on duty at all times, the campus has multiple buildings and it would seem impossible for one security guard to adequately cover the entire campus. It is recommended that the WVSD seek recommendations on improving security during the day programs and for the evening campus residents through measures such as the Safe Schools Plan. A Safe Schools Plan should be developed and presented to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval.
6. The School for the Blind did not have signs, emergency exit plans, master schedules, etc., in braille. For the most part, the school was organized like regular classrooms. Additionally, student work also did not reflect braille.
7. Secondary School for the Deaf. In a science classroom, some students wore personal amplification and the teacher signed and spoke. A classroom auditory system did not appear to be available for use. It would appear that a specialized school/program for students with hearing impairments would be equipped with a classroom auditory system to facilitate teaching and learning.
8. Dormitories. Two students residing at the School for the Deaf dormitory, ages three and five, were housed on the third floor. Both students exhibited both vision and hearing impairments. The Team was concerned about the emergency exit procedures, especially with the age of the students. Additionally, communication between students and house parents was impaired by the lack of signing skills. House parents were not fluent at signing which limited opportunities for strong language and vocabulary development/interaction.

The Team observed a high degree of wait time for the younger children during the bedtime ritual. Very young children were sitting on hard chairs while they were waiting their turn to be bathed. Activities were not prevalent for these students.

9. Cafeterias/Kitchens. The Team observed the evening meal (dinner) being served to the younger residents and the residents with multi-disabilities. Children received their meals on a cafeteria tray and sat at cafeteria tables for their meal. The dinner included fish and other items that were white. The only offering that was green was a small bowl of salad and bowl containing a few apples at the end of the

cafeteria line. The meal was unappealing to the Team and did not appear to fit the nutritional guidelines. Additionally, the dinner setting was very institutional and the Team felt that dinner could be adapted to a more home style setting and young children provided healthy choices, such as carrot sticks, celery sticks, fresh seasonal fruit cut appropriately for small students, etc.

10. Cafeterias/Kitchens. Secondary students indicated that the meals served were not sufficient to support their intake needs, particularly students participating in sports at Hampshire High School.

7.1.4. Instruction. Instruction is consistent with the programmatic definitions in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs* (hereinafter Policy 2510). (Policy 2510)

Preschool

1. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525, *West Virginia's Universal Access to Early Education System*, states that content should not be taught in isolation or with long periods of sitting. Research shows that young children do not learn by sitting. Two teachers had a lot of sitting and teaching in a large group. This method of teaching results in excessive down time for children waiting for their time. If learning centers were utilized more frequently, there would be more time for investigation and more child-child interaction and teacher-child interaction.
2. Policy 2525 states that no worksheets are allowed in the Pre-K curriculum. The Team observed evidence of numerous worksheets being used by two teachers. Little use was being made of learning centers and there was not much "choice time" for students.

School for the Blind

Three students in a Grade 4 class for students who are blind or have low vision had difficulty identifying alphabetical order when reviewing alphabetical sequencing with the teacher. The Team felt that Grade 4 students should have mastered this area in a much earlier grade.

Secondary School for the Deaf

1. Students were working with sentences they had written on the board. As a group, they were looking at the sentences and checking for errors. Sentences that students had written were simple sentences which contained subject and verb agreement errors as well as use of possessives instead of plurals.
2. The Team noted inconsistency in instruction based on the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs). One high school science teacher reported that students did not receive the same depth of knowledge of each of the sciences as students in other State high schools. For example, the

teacher estimated that students received approximately one-fourth the content of chemistry as in other schools. That teacher reported a need for up-to-date instructional materials. One set of books being used was 14 years old.

7.1.5. Instructional strategies. Staff demonstrates the use of the various instructional strategies and techniques contained in Policies 2510 and 2520. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf

The Team observed at both the Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf that there was little connection in lessons in some classrooms. For example, in an elementary history class the teacher was using an Interactive whiteboard and moved from a page about Benjamin Franklin to a page about the Oregon Trail. The lesson lacked correlation.

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

Teachers provided a list of professional development sessions they had attended and all had more than the 18 hours required. However, the WVSDDB did not have a system to determine the extent of implementation of the strategies and techniques applied and sustained from professional development. For example, the Team noted that training in Professional Learning Communities (PLC) had been provided and the Team asked how the PLC had been implemented. Teachers responded that they were already a PLC and collaborated on lessons frequently. While the Team observed a friendly, cooperative climate, the responses indicated that the teachers did not fully understand the PLC concept. In a PLC the teachers and administrators continuously seek and share learning and then act on what they have learned. If the PLC had been fully implemented the teachers would collaborate regularly on school improvement and not simply work together on specific lessons.

Secondary School for the Deaf

The Team observed instruction in a science classroom in which one teacher provided instruction for all secondary science classes. A special science curriculum was selected by the science teachers and instruction was built around the textbook. The curriculum consisted of 12 manuals separated in groups of three. This curriculum was used throughout science instruction for middle and high school students enrolled at the Secondary School for the Deaf. The teacher explained that minimal hands-on instruction occurred and the students did not participate in experiments for chemistry class. Science laboratories were available, but were not used for instruction. The teacher reported that funds were not allocated to provide equipment and materials to engage the students in scientific activities. Each student was provided a book/workbook which incorporated the textbook and worksheets.

The students seemed to enjoy the class and the teacher and were eager to communicate their pleasure with the class. (The students were preparing for an end-of-year banquet and were not following the normal routine.)

7.1.6. Instruction in writing. Instruction in writing shall be a part of every child's weekly educational curriculum in grades K through 12 in every appropriate class. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)

The Team saw very little evidence of instruction in writing.

7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The application of technology is included throughout all programs of study and students have regular access to library/educational technology centers or classroom libraries. (Policy 2470; Policy 2510)

Secondary School for the Deaf

The Grade 8 language classroom had one computer which was not being used. The classroom also lacked a presentation station.

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

1. The Team was told that the schools had a Technology Integration Specialist. The Team observed Interactive whiteboards being used; however, the utilization appeared superficial in most observations. The staff knew how to operate the whiteboards, but needed professional development and assistance on how to develop and deliver connected lessons based on the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) and lessons that provided meaningful learning requiring higher levels of thinking.
2. The dormitories lacked Internet access, except for one computer in the "community" area. Junior and senior students had been provided laptop computers; however, they were unable to use them for Internet access in the dormitories. The Team noted signs that stated "Internet Drop" which indicated plans for wiring. Students and staff said the signs had been in place for quite a while. The Team recommended that this valuable resource be provided for students.

Overall

Severe deficits existed with technology throughout the campus. Children with sensory disabilities benefit from advances in technology which may include, but are not limited to, netbooks, auditory trainers, sound field systems, wireless access (which was not available across the campus), kindles, laptop computers, iPods, and voice output devices.

7.1.8. Instructional materials. Sufficient numbers of approved up-to-date textbooks, instructional materials, and other resources are available to deliver curricular content for the full instructional term. (Policy 2510)

All principals interviewed stated to the Team members who reviewed administrative practices that their schools had all the materials needed. Team members who reviewed classrooms and interviewed teachers reported the following instances in which instructional materials had not been approved, were outdated, were inadequate, and/or were unavailable.

Secondary School for the Deaf

1. Language Class-Grade 8. Five students were in an 8th grade language class. The teacher said that she did not have many materials to work with and personally brought in materials for teaching the content.
2. A chemistry teacher indicated a need for up-to-date instructional materials. A set of books being used was 14 years old.
3. The chemistry classroom was equipped with tables, chairs, access to water, and sinks, etc. The teacher reported that funds were not allocated to provide equipment and materials to engage the students in scientific activities. A book/workbook which incorporated the textbook and worksheets was provided to each student.
4. Some students wore personal amplification and the teacher signed and spoke. There did not appear to be a classroom auditory system available for use.

Elementary School for the Deaf

Elementary teachers reported that they had adopted the Saxon mathematics program. This mathematics textbook program is not on the State approved instructional materials list for 2010-2011. Teachers should conduct an analysis of the content standards and objectives at each grade level to determine if all mathematics content standards objectives are being adequately delivered. Supplemental materials may be necessary to fill instructional and learning gaps. Furthermore, the school will need to apply to the West Virginia Department of Education for a waiver to use this textbook and include supplemental materials that will be used to deliver the mathematics content standards and objectives.

School for the Blind

One Grade 4 classroom was using a regular book for history. Students with blind or low vision did not have access to textbooks in this instance.

The Superintendent of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) stated that requests for instructional materials were never denied. The Team recommended that the administrative staff and principals be advised of this practice and develop a procedure for teachers to request necessary instructional materials to deliver the West Virginia CSOs effectively. It is further recommended that this procedure be communicated to teachers and that principals periodically monitor and ensure teachers have appropriate and up-to-date instructional materials.

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

It was difficult for the Team to determine that the programs of study were provided in grades K-12 as listed in Policy 2510 for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

The Team reviewed 2009 graduate transcripts and reported the following concerns.

1. Generally, there was no consistency in the sequence in which students took classes (specifically in order).
2. It was difficult to determine if classes were elective courses based on how they were identified on the students' transcripts.
3. Transcripts of many students reflected double credits (two credits for the same class).
4. Some transcripts contained WVEIS coding errors regarding "weights" of classes.
5. Students issued a "Modified Diploma" did not have actual credits assigned, except for five classes, and no core content classes had credits assigned.
6. Courses were not reflected on the transcript of one student who received a regular academic diploma.
7. An analysis of four student transcripts showed the following:
 - The student had the same class two times in one semester, the student was missing .5 PE credit, and a science credit was missing.
 - The student was missing .5 English credit. The student was taking Algebra II without having had Algebra I and the student took Applied Math I without taking Applied Math II, so it is considered an elective, not a requirement. Both Applied Math I & II are required (both semesters) to count as Algebra I. An Incomplete

(I) was listed as a final grade on the student's transcript. Credit was given a second time

- The student was missing 1.0 Math credit; the student was missing .5 Fine Arts credit; 1.0 credit listed on the transcript should only be reflected as a .5 Codes as Art I twice first semester 2006 and 2 Driver's Education second semester. This should not be reflected as a full 1.0 credit for each class, but that was recorded on the transcript.
- The student was missing 1.0 Fine Arts credit; the student had two history courses in one year (none in freshman year); the student had Introduction to Major and Career Preparation for 1.5 credits. They are the same class and only .5 credit should be reflected. The student had 1.5 credits for Desktop Publishing when only 1.0 credit should be allowed.

Recommendations

1. The Team recommended that senior students' transcripts be reviewed by staff at the State level for the 2010-2011 school year along with the school's plan of study. The Team further recommends that the West Virginia Department of Education and the schools' guidance counselor make certain the West Virginia and West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) requirements are met prior to a student graduating from high school.
2. Currently, some students are enrolled at the WVSDB in grades 5 through 12 are neither hearing impaired nor visually impaired and will be graduating with a regular diploma. The Team recommended that the WVSDB ensure these students, at a minimum, meet the graduation requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510.

7.1.11. Guidance and advisement. Students are provided specific guidance and advisement opportunities to allow them to choose a career major prior to completion of grade 10. (Policy 2510)

The guidance counselor indicated working a great deal with career readiness for the older students. The counselor planned trips for students to visit various places, i.e., colleges, possible work sites to fill out applications, Job Corps, etc. The counselor also signed the directions for the ACT PLAN/EXPLORE for hearing impaired students.

7.1.13. Instructional day. Priority is given to teaching and learning, and classroom instructional time is protected from interruption. An instructional day is provided that includes a minimum of 315 minutes for kindergarten and grades 1 through 4; 330 minutes for grades 5 through 8; and 345 minutes for grades 9 through 12. The county board submits a school calendar with a minimum 180 instructional days. (W.Va. Code §18-5-45; Policy 2510)

West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) practice of holding school open for instruction during county school closures has strong potential to have an adverse outcome on student achievement. Currently, the schools (WVSDB) were open for instruction when the county schools were closed. Consequently, dormitory students (a small number of the total student population) attended classes while non-dormitory students dependent on bus transportation to get to and from school were chronically absent during the 2009-2010 school year. Because teachers tended to suspend instruction during this time combined with the high number of student absences, the majority of students did not benefit from the mandatory 180 instructional days and make-up days were not provided.

The OEPA advised the WVSDB to develop a policy and submit it to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval providing that the WVSDB will close when the county schools are closed and snow make-up days will be added to the WVSDB calendar as done in all public school systems. A provision of the policy should include additional care of dormitory students during school closures.

Elementary School the Deaf

The Team observed that instructional time could be used more effectively as noted by the following example. When the Team entered one classroom, the teacher was in the floor with students tossing dice, which could be educational if students were conducting calculation. However, when the teacher saw the visitor, the teacher stood and said it was time to go downstairs for lunch. The observer went back to the same classroom in the afternoon. Four students were doing different activities at their desks. When the teacher saw the Team, the teacher walked across the room and turned on the whiteboard. One of the students commented, "Are we doing work now?" After a few minutes, the teacher said that the class was going to the computer laboratory. The Team went to the computer laboratory and waited for the class. When the class did not arrive, the Team was told the class had gone to the cafeteria for the soccer team pizza party.

7.1.14. Alignment with job market opportunities. The technical and adult programs in the school are aligned with first local, and then state, then national job market opportunities. (Policy 2510)

Secondary School for the Deaf

Teachers in the School for the Deaf reported that three of seven graduates were going to college. However, the other students were not planning to attend a technical school nor had jobs. Some teachers reported that they were concerned about the lack of student preparation for the job market. One teacher said that at one time several more vocational programs were offered.

7.2. STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE.

7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans. An electronic county strategic improvement plan and an electronic school strategic improvement plan are established, implemented, and reviewed annually. Each respective plan shall be a five-year plan that includes the mission and goals of the school or school system to improve student or school system performance or progress. The plan shall be revised annually in each area in which the school or system is below the standard on the annual performance measures.

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

The schools did not have a Five-Year Strategic Plan in place to guide the curriculum nor did the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDE) have a system wide strategic plan in place.

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

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

1. Developmental guidance was not being provided by the guidance counselor. Principals reported that the teachers were working on developmental guidance; however, the guidance counselor was not involved in this process.
2. The counselor interviewed stated that developmental guidance was done with Grades 3 and 4 for nine weeks using the set program. She did not work with these students on any routine schedule other than this time. The counselor did not have any time or established schedule for classroom guidance.
3. The guidance counselor stated that she spends 50 percent of her time directly with students.
4. The guidance counselor indicated that she does not have a typical schedule, that each day presents its own things to work with and that she works with groups of students around issues that arise, i.e., conflict resolution, bullying, etc. She also will work for small periods of time with individual students.
5. Part of the counselor's time was stated to be helping with parent services. The counselor also performs functional behavior assessments and attends Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings.

7.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback. Lesson plans that are based on approved content standards and objectives are prepared in advance and the principal reviews, comments on them a minimum of once each quarter, and provides written feedback to the teacher as necessary to improve instruction. (Policy 2510; Policy 5310)

Secondary and Elementary Schools for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

Lesson plans were incomplete in at least 90 percent of all classes in the three schools. Additionally, the Team noted that no correlation existed with the lessons and the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs). The lesson plans did not include enough information to instruct the entire class period and a substitute teacher would not be able to teach from the lesson plans. Furthermore, there was no indication that the principals had reviewed the plans and provided written feedback as necessary to improve instruction.

7.2.4. Data analysis. Prior to the beginning of and through the school term the county, school, and teacher have a system for analyzing, interpreting, and using student performance data to identify and assist students who are not at grade level in achieving approved state and local content standards and objectives. The county, principal, counselors, and teachers assess student scores on the American College Test and the Scholastic Aptitude Test and develop curriculum, programs, and/or practices to improve student and school performance. (Policy 2510)

The principals talked about the WESTEST2 data, yet it was difficult to determine the level that data were being used for assisting students.

7.3. ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION.

7.3.1. Alternative education. Alternative education programs meet the requirements of Policy 2418. (W.Va. Code §18-2-6 and §18-5-19; Policy 2418)

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind did not have an alternative education program. Students reported that bullying occurred and the Team recommended that the central office investigate instituting an alternative program for students who demonstrate severe behaviors. Students reported that it was self regulated.

7.4. REGULATORY AGENCY REVIEWS.

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

1. Finance

An OEPA audit of the accounting practices was not conducted as the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDDB) had undergone a recent State audit. However, the Team believes that an OEPA Team needs to review the agency's budget and method of determining the WVSDDB school and student needs.

2. Special Education

Eligibility: WV School Laws, Article 17, West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind, states "The schools shall be maintained for the care and education of the *deaf youth* and *blind youth* of the state." The WVSDDB received a Special Education Compliance Monitoring in October 2008 and an OEPA visit in June 2010. As a result of the Special Education Monitoring, the WVSDDB was cited for enrolling students who did not exhibit a primary handicapping disability of deafness or blindness. In a letter of November 2009, the WVDE notified the WVSDDB that prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the WVSDDB must transition ineligible students, grades K-4, to public schools. During the OEPA visit in June 2010, the Team found eligibility concerns continued to exist. These concerns included:

- As recently as the past school year, 2009-2010, the WVSDDB deemed students eligible as deaf who did not meet eligibility criteria in Policy 2419: *Regulations for the Education of Students with Disabilities*; and
- The WVSDDB was advertising for a position for teacher of Autism. A student was enrolled at the Elementary School for the Deaf who was identified as autistic but was not identified as deaf or hearing impaired as a primary handicapping disability.

3. Facilities

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) and interviewed the director of maintenance and operations, the schools' superintendent, and facilities and maintenance staff. A narrative of the Team's observations follows.

Administration Building

The Administration Building was one of the oldest buildings on campus. It housed all the administration offices for the school as well as a full apartment that is available for the superintendent or visiting guests. The building has a combination of window air conditioning units and ducted residential air conditioning. The building was not accessible according to the requirements of the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The concrete steps at the front of the building on the south side were crumbling with exposed rebar and needed to be repaired. During a later exit interview, it was noted that the steps had been repaired.

Elementary School for the Deaf

This school was exclusively equipped with window air conditioners. These units were loud and vibrated within the window frames. A heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) upgrade should be considered for this building to improve ventilation with special attention given to the ambient noise level of the system. On the lower level of the school, near the old bowling alley, the end of the hall is used for storage of desks, chairs, and other furniture items. This area is adjacent to the crossover to the cafeteria that is used by the elementary hearing impaired students and the multi-handicapped students. Proper storage should be found for these items and the hall kept clear to the end.

School for the Blind

The air conditioning units for this facility had completely failed due to a power surge. The school compensated by using temporary spot coolers that vent through the window. While providing adequate cooling, these units did not address ventilation.

Overall

The campus was not securable. With over one dozen buildings, spread over a large campus, there was no real way to secure the entire campus. Each building had at least one door, the primary entrance and egress, which was unlocked and accessible from the outside. The Team recommended that secure entrance options, such as keyless entry, be examined for this campus. For buildings that are open to the public, such as the physical education facility, the Team recommended that a posted schedule be maintained for public hours and school hours. Signage throughout the campus should

be used to direct visitors to the administration building. Security cameras located on campus at main vehicle access points and building entrances should be considered.

The Crisis Response Ready-Reference Guide included 49 pages that contained lengthy repetitive scenario responses. The Team strongly recommended that this guide be simplified. This guide should be reviewed multiple times throughout the year with all new staff and full-time, part-time and temporary staff.

The campus grounds were well maintained and did not present any tripping hazards. Ground maintenance requires three maintenance workers three days to keep the grass cut and trimmed during the growing season. The maintenance workers also perform snow removal.

Overall, the buildings were clean with no housekeeping issues. Only a few storage or custodian rooms were unlocked throughout the campus. These areas should be locked at all times to prevent student access to chemicals or other hazards.

The pointing on several of the brick buildings on campus needed immediate attention. Most problems were located along roof lines and could pose a hazard if bricks become loose and fall. All brick exterior buildings should be carefully examined and a priority list established to begin work on fixing the problems. The integrity of the building exterior is essential in preventing water infiltration that causes efflorescence and mold. While efflorescence is not harmful, mold is. Areas of stained ceiling tiles were prevalent throughout the campus which indicated water infiltration from the roof or leaks from water lines in the ceiling. The source of the water infiltration must be found and repaired and the ceiling tiles replaced. Mold growth can occur within 48 hours if the moisture is not removed.

The HVAC systems throughout the campus were antiquated and did not provide sufficient ventilation with the exception of the resource center. A complete HVAC upgrade is needed in all other buildings on campus. Mercury-based thermostats were located throughout the campus. The use of mercury thermostats is prohibited due to the hazardous nature of the material. The expense involved with a mercury spill can quickly reach into the thousands of dollars range. The Team recommended that all mercury thermostats be removed and replaced with stand-alone programmable digital units or a global DDC control system. A building automation system would be a great benefit to the school. It would enable programming of schedules to reduce the heating and cooling demands in buildings when unoccupied, such as the dormitories during class hours and class buildings during evening and nights. This will result in savings on utilities and provide a more even thermal environment for the staff and students.

The lighting throughout the campus is almost exclusively T12. This type of fluorescent lighting will be phased out of production over the next few years with ballast first, followed by the bulbs. A complete lighting upgrade is needed. Exterior lights were on during the day. The exterior lights needed to be scheduled or turned off during the day.

There are many opportunities for energy savings throughout the campus. An HVAC upgrade that includes a building automation system and a complete lighting upgrade would realize a large portion of these savings. The Team recommended that a performance contract be pursued to include both these needs. Other funding sources should be pursued as well. It is currently unknown which buildings use the most energy. The energy should be tracked through the information on utility bills and used when evaluating renovation/replacement projects.

The school did not have a HVAC specialized maintenance worker on staff and was considering hiring for this position. Because of the numerous HVAC systems that are on campus, a maintenance contract should be considered. An HVAC company may be able to provide expertise on each of the systems that a single employee may not be able to provide. If this option is considered, careful attention should be spent on the requirements, such as response time to calls, preventive maintenance on the equipment, and the technicians providing detailed lists of equipment and work provided on each visit. Even with a service contract, someone on staff should be designated to follow up on the work done for accountability. All options should be fully explored. All custodian and maintenance staff, including the director of operations, should be required to have continuing education to learn about new products and procedures as the demands in school facilities change.

The facility did not have an automated work order system or a preventive maintenance program. Seven maintenance workers communicate by radio. Principals of each school submit paper work orders to the maintenance shop. An automated system would reduce redundancy in the system and allow principals to check the status of a work order. A preventive maintenance program is vital to the longevity of the mechanical systems on campus. It should include at least all HVAC equipment, any dust collection systems, domestic hot water systems, lighting, and grounds equipment. Preventive maintenance programs are available commercially or a program can be developed in-house.

7.5. ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

7.5.1. Parents and the community are provided information. Staff members provide parents and the community with understandable information and techniques for helping students learn.

The principals indicated that it was difficult to communicate with parents of students who lived throughout the State. Communication with local parents was less troublesome. The schools sent newsletters monthly and attempted to make telephone calls. The WVSDB communicated with the community through the radio station, articles in the local newspaper, etc.

7.5.2. Codes of conduct. The county and schools implement, investigate, and monitor the code of conduct for students and the code of conduct for employees. (W.Va. Code §18-2E-5; Policy 4373; Policy 5902)

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

1. Teachers and the schools' principals could not discuss any schoolwide codes of conduct or school rules, procedures, and expectations. The Team could not determine that teachers were operating under formal rules for the classrooms; however, rules were clearly defined for the dormitories. The Team at the administrative level observed that the WVSDDB had copies of the Student Code of Conduct and the Employee Code of Conduct.
2. The Team reviewing the schools and the Team reviewing the administrative level reported significant incidents involving students as well as numerous incidents by personnel at all levels which indicated that the superintendent must review both codes of conduct with administrative staff and the principals must review the codes of conduct with school staff and the Student Code of Conduct with the students. Furthermore, expectations must be clearly stated and the codes implemented, investigated, and monitored. It would be advantageous if the superintendent reviewed the codes of conduct periodically with the affected persons.

7.5.4. Physical Assessment. The school participates in the appropriate statewide physical assessment program.

According to the principal, the fitness gram was administered. The schools had a physical education teacher.

7.6. PERSONNEL.

7.6.1. Hiring. County boards follow hiring practices set forth in W.Va. Code. (W.Va. Code §§18A-4-7a, 18A-4-8, and 18-2E-3a)

The Team reviewed hiring practices of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDDB) and reported that the agency followed the provisions of Chapter 18A. School Personnel. of the *West Virginia School Laws* regarding the hiring of public school personnel.

1. Interview matrices reflected verbiage and criteria of W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a.
2. Hiring practices, such as duration of job postings and seniority rights for school personnel, were stated in the Employee Handbook.
3. Available positions were posted on the Internet and in the local newspaper.
4. In addition to meeting the posting requirements for positions, the school had participated in job fairs seeking to recruit teachers. The school has had some success recruiting at Frostburg State University while career fairs offered by other

post-secondary institutions were less productive. According to administrative personnel, the school is often at a disadvantage in attempts to attract teachers since nearby states frequently offer hiring bonuses, other West Virginia counties have higher salary schedules, and because teachers coming to the school are required to obtain additional training to best communicate with the students.

The Team observed the following discrepancies in hiring practices.

The unusual arrangement of the school providing board for students resulted in the school employing (on a 10-month contract) a medical doctor and a dentist. These two health providers are paid an annual salary for their services. Since they are considered employees of the school, the OEPA Team operated on the premise that they were subject to the same policies as other employees. Neither job descriptions nor personnel evaluations were contained in their personnel records. While medical and dental services are obviously needed, the Team recommended that the WVSDB explore the possibility of obtaining these services through a contractual/consultant arrangement rather than through the present employer-employee arrangement.

7.6.2. Licensure. Professional educators and other professional employees required to be licensed under West Virginia Board of Education policy are licensed for their assignments including employees engaged in extracurricular activities. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2; Policy 5202)

The Team found numerous violations of (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2 and WVBE Policy 5202). The chart explains the certification issues the Team observed through a detailed review of the certified list, WVEIS Master Course Schedule, and the WVDE Certification.

- First year Teachers of the Deaf may not be fluent in American Sign Language (ASL) or Signing in English and Teachers of the Blind may not have competency in braille.
- Course codes were entered inappropriately and made it difficult for the Team to determine the content of instruction in the classroom.
- Vocational courses were required to implement a collaboration plan with certified HI or VI teachers, as appropriate, during the 2009-2010 school year; the school did not comply.
- Vocational classes continued to be coded special education (6th position exceptionality), however, teachers were not certified in special education.
- The Driver's Education teacher was a substitute and paid hourly; the position was not posted.
- The Athletic Director was originally hired as teacher/athletic director. A valid administrative certificate had expired, but the individual continued to evaluate professional teachers employed as coaches.

- The HI job posting was filled by an individual who did not obtain HI out-of-field authorization, but did obtain VI authorization. The position should have been reposted.
- Teachers working with Deaf/Blind students held one certification or the other, but had not met the school's competency requirement in braille to communicate with those students.
- A long-term substitute was placed in the music classroom without endorsement and no waiver was requested for content or exceptionality.
- A teacher was hired for a full-time elementary teaching position and taught kindergarten class half day. The teacher worked as an occupational mobility position for the remaining half-day to fulfill a practicum requirement.
- A teacher continued to hold a Multi-Categorical permit, although not assigned to multi-categorical classes because WVSDB gave this teacher preference in the hiring matrix for holding a permit.
- The counselor assigned to the school with PK students, held only K-12 authorization; the teacher needs to apply on a Form 42 to work with PK students.
- As of June 4th, it was indicated that children K-4 identified as Communication Disordered (Speech/Language Therapy) Autistic could remain at the school; these students' primary eligibilities for special education were not identified as deaf or blind.
- The WVSDB posted a Teacher of Autism position to serve a child who was not eligible as Deaf or Blind and should not remain at WVSDB.

West Virginia Schools for the Deaf & Blind- June 1-4, 2010

County-School	Educator Name	Courses/Content Teaching	Certification/Status	Findings	Recommendations
501	Educator	31102F 31112F	Math 9-Adult HI Administrative	Assigned to teach course 301102F & 31112F, these course codes are invalid.	Change to correct course code (Algebra II co-taught with ME Davis).
	Educator	80172F Collab. Teach with T. Brothers 80172F Collab. Teach with T. Brothers for Newsletter 18572F 18332F 80212 Comp. Spec. Coordinator	Graphic Arts	Teacher is not certified in special education, courses should not reflect a 6 th position exceptionality.	For collaborative courses use 8015 and for content courses a collaborative teacher should be assigned who is certified in Hearing Impaired. **Required collaborative program that was to be implemented 2009-10 was not**.
	Educator	14292F Desktop Publishing 14292F Desktop Publishing	Business Ed. HI	Principal identified the course as Yearbook and Newsletter.	Please correct course codes.
	Educator	68112F Driver's Ed. 78212F	Driver's Ed. HI	Substitute who is paid hourly. Job had not been posted.	Long-term positions should be posted.
	Educator	80052F Athletic Director	Health PE HI	Job posting was for both teacher and athletic director. Did hold administrative in 1990s, but not currently. He does coaching evaluations for professional staff.	Obtain or renew if eligible administrative certification if evaluating professional employees as coaches.

	Educator	01342F 02142F 02122F 01122F 76272F 78292F	Voc. Ag. Production & Management Horticulture Produce Ornamental Horticulture Pre-Vocational Environmental	Teacher is not certified in special education, courses should not reflect a 6 th position exceptionality.	Content courses should have a collaborative teacher assigned who is certified in Hearing Impaired. **Required collaborative program that was to be implemented 2009-10 was not**.
	Educator	76272F 18252F 18272F 76032F 78092F 78212F	General Building Construction	Teacher is not certified in special education, courses should not reflect a 6 th position exceptionality.	Content courses should have a collaborative teacher assigned who is certified in Hearing Impaired. **Required collaborative program that was to be implemented 2009-10 was not**.
601	Educator	76360E 78210E	Out-of-Field Authorization for VI	Job Posting required HI.	Teacher is not certified for the job posting requirement and should obtain permit for HI or re-post position.
	Educator	66010E 66030E 66070E 66080E 66000E	HI PE	Teacher is working with Deaf/Blind, some students may be primarily blind, but teacher has not passed Braille Competency Test.	If teacher is/could work with primarily blind children, the teacher needs braille competency.
	Educator	32022F 32052F 32012F 32002F 32020E	Art	Teacher is working with Deaf/Blind, some students may be primarily blind, but teacher has not passed Braille	If teacher is/could work with primarily blind children, the teacher needs braille competency.

				Competency Test.	
602	Educator	36710C 36010C 36040C 36030C 36200C 36060C 36050C	Long-Term Sub Permit English, FACS, Social Studies, Multi-Cat	Long-term sub permit does not reflect Elementary or Music.	Waiver was not requested by the superintendent to the State Superintendent of Schools.
	Educator	80150C Collaborative but actually teaching sound system 15332C 15312C 15332C	Broadcasting Technology	Teacher is not certified in special education, courses should not reflect a 6 th position exceptionality.	Content courses should have a collaborative teacher assigned who is certified in Vision Impaired. **Required collaborative program that was to be implemented 2009-10 was not**. May need to demonstrate braille competency.
	Educator	18272C	Building Construction	Teacher is not certified in special education, courses should not reflect a 6 th position exceptionality.	Content courses should have a collaborative teacher assigned who is certified in Vision Impaired. **Required collaborative program that was to be implemented 2009-10 was not**. May need to demonstrate braille competency.
	Educator	32112C	Art HI	Teacher has not passed Braille Competency Test.	Teacher needs braille competency.

	Educator	48000C 40000C 60000C 70000C 80170C (1/2 day)	Elementary VI	Teacher is assigned to collaborate ½ day. She is actually being paid for completing a practicum under J. McBride Orientation Mobility.	Teacher should be coded correctly. If a position is half-time orientation mobility, it should be posted.
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Note. Several instances are listed in which a teacher had not passed the Braille Competency Test. The competency test is a requirement of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) for employment.

16 of 53 (approx. 32%) teachers are employed on either an Out-of-Field Authorization or First-Class/Full-Time Permit. The following charts are included to show personnel who hold certificates that allow them to teach but do not have authorization in the field or exceptionality in which they are teaching.

Out-of-Field Authorizations (original)

WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	07/23/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	07/23/2009	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	01/26/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	01/26/2009	06/30/2010	120000
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	08/18/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	08/18/2009	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	08/18/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	08/18/2009	06/30/2010	580180
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	06/03/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	06/03/2009	06/30/2010	580180
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	07/01/2009	06/30/2010	4117 - Deaf & Hard of Hearing	PK-AD	07/01/2009	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	08/18/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	08/18/2009	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-1 Out-of-Field Authorization	03/05/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	03/05/2009	06/30/2010	580180

Out-of-Field Authorizations (renewal)

WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-2 Out-of-Field Authorization	08/17/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	12/06/2008	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-2 Out-of-Field Authorization	07/01/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	11/25/2008	06/30/2010	580180
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-2 Out-of-Field Authorization	08/17/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	12/23/2008	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	52-2 Out-of-Field Authorization	07/01/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	05/18/2008	06/30/2010	580100

First-Class/Full-Time Permit (original)

WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-1 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	03/27/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	03/27/2009	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-1 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	07/19/2009	06/30/2010	4117 - Deaf & Hard of Hearing	PK-AD	07/19/2009	06/30/2010	580100
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-1 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	01/08/2009	06/30/2010	4202 - Hearing Impaired	PK-AD	01/08/2009	06/30/2010	000000
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-1 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	01/29/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	01/29/2009	06/30/2010	580180

First-Class/Full-Time Permit (renewal)

WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-2 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	07/07/2009	06/30/2010	4203 - Visually Impaired	PK-AD	08/06/2008	06/30/2010	580180
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-2 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	07/01/2009	06/30/2010	4115 -Multi-Categorical (LD, BD, MI)	0K-06	08/22/2007	06/30/2010	580070
WV School for Deaf/Blind	Educator	81-2 First-Class/Full-Time Permit	07/01/2009	06/30/2010	4115 -Multi-Categorical (LD, BD, MI)	05-AD	08/22/2007	06/30/2010	580070

7.6.3. Evaluation. The county board adopts and implements an evaluation policy for professional and service personnel that is in accordance with W.Va. Code, West Virginia Board of Education policy, and county policy. (W.Va. Code §18A-2-12; Policy 5310; Policy 5314)

Administrative Level Review

A random review of professional evaluations disclosed the following.

Evaluations were not conducted on all teachers as prescribed in West Virginia Code and the Employee Handbook in effect at the time. Evaluations had lapses in time which were not in compliance with State Board policies or school policy. A policy regarding improvement plans was in effect but the personnel director was not aware of any teachers currently on improvement plans.

A random review of support personnel evaluations disclosed the following.

Of those reviewed, evaluations were completed according to West Virginia Code and West Virginia Board of Education policy.

A random review of coaches' evaluations disclosed the following.

Office of Education Performance Audits team members were given some coaches' evaluations for the 2009-2010 school year; however, a check of those coaches' personnel records for previous coaching evaluations revealed no evaluations on file for one coach and none since 2002 for another coach.

A random review of service personnel evaluations disclosed the following.

Evaluations were not conducted on a consistent basis. The Employee Handbook (p. 24) defines the frequency of observations and evaluations and states that service personnel are to be evaluated at a minimum of one time per year. One randomly pulled child care worker's file contained an annual evaluation for each year from 1991 to the present; however, one secretary's personnel file contained no evaluations from the 1991-1992 school year until the 1997-1998 school year, no evaluations were found for 2001-2002, 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and none since the 2005-2006 school year. A teacher's aide file contained no evaluations since May 2001. The school needs to develop a plan to ensure evaluations are conducted consistent with W. Va. Code and the West Virginia Board of Education policies.

School Level Review

School for the Blind. The Team reviewed completed evaluations for teachers at the School for the Blind. While evaluations had been completed, no observations had been conducted as a basis for the evaluations.

Elementary and Secondary Schools for the Deaf. The schools had neither observations nor evaluations. One of the principals suggested that the Team see the superintendent for the evaluations. As the instructional leader, the principal is to evaluate staff and should have been able to provide the observation and evaluations completed upon request.

7.7. SAFE, DRUG FREE, VIOLENCE FREE, AND DISCIPLINED SCHOOLS.

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

Secondary School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind

1. Numerous students in both secondary schools stated that they were not able to speak with the schools' principals or the central office administration. The learning environment was negatively affected by this issue. Students reported that they did not have a voice in student government. However, the WVSDB superintendent indicated that a student representative served on a committee relative to school needs.
2. Students stated that discipline needed to be enforced more consistently.
3. The student handbooks were outdated and the school rules, procedures, and expectations in addition to the school system's requirements needed to be updated and distributed annually.

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

West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (Administrative Level)

A conversation with the personnel director indicated that the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) had not adopted an AIDS Education policy. The Team did not find an AIDS Education policy in either the Employee Handbook or the Student Handbooks.

West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (School Levels)

The Student Handbooks for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind (WVSDB) were two years old. Current handbooks needed to be developed and distributed each year.

Overall

The WVSDB superintendent indicated that the schools operated from the West Virginia Board of Education adopted policies. Some State Board policies require school systems to develop their own policy guidelines and timelines, such as the personnel evaluation policy. Other policies including Policy 2510 and Policies 2520 were not being followed. It is essential that the WVSDB develop and implement policies according to the requisites of State Board policies.

7.8. LEADERSHIP.

7.8.1. Leadership. Leadership at the school district, school, and classroom levels is demonstrated by vision, school culture and instruction, management and environment, community, and professionalism. (Policy 5500.03)

1. The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) had an administrative staff consisting of: 1 Superintendent, 8 directors, 3 principals, and 3 coordinators. This is a high number of administrators for the small student enrollment of 163 students for 2009-2010. Additionally, the principals are year-round employees.
2. Discontent was apparent among the administrative staff concerning the duties and influence of one of the directors. The school superintendent should work with the staff to resolve any issues and ensure the staff works more as a team. Additionally, administrative relationships showed high levels of disharmony with much internal animosity and lack of systemic alignment. The Team observed that this situation has evolved over many years and will require time and healing to establish a harmonious administrative environment.
3. The WVSDB did not have a Five-Year Strategic Plan. The superintendent reported she was told by a former State Department of Education staff member responsible for strategic plans when they attended the training session for the Five-Year Strategic Plan that the requirement to have such a plan did not apply to the WVSDB. The superintendent said the annual Special Education Plan was used at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind (WVSDB) in lieu of the Five-Year Strategic Plan.

4. A Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) with a modified membership, a Faculty Senate, a Reading Literacy Team and a modified Curriculum Team were operating at the school. (Their effectiveness or ineffectiveness was not confirmed by site teams.)
5. The superintendent reported the curriculum for the school is as required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, and the content standards and objectives (CSOs) guide the curriculum content. However, OEPA school teams observing classrooms expressed concern regarding the CSOs guiding curriculum. Classroom observations and a random review of student transcripts showed that all the required CSOs and programs of study were not being provided.
6. The school technology director reported the following improvements in the technology programs this year (2009-2010): 20 additional Internet drops were added; 20 computers with Windows 98 Operating Systems were updated to XP/Vista Operating systems; 20 laptop computers were purchased for teacher use; 29 laptop computers were purchased for the juniors and seniors; 12 classroom presentation stations were purchased and were being installed as teachers were trained; and 25 digital cameras were purchased for the classrooms. The Team reported that application of technology was not being utilized in education effectively or efficiently in most cases.
7. The Director of Special Education and Compliance reports student eligibility for attendance at the Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) is determined by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) that is developed cooperatively between a county and the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. This process is currently being analyzed to ensure only eligible students are admitted to the School for the Deaf and Blind. At the time of the OEPA review, students with additional disabilities other than vision and hearing impairments continued to be enrolled at the WVSDB.
8. The WVSDB did not have a policy manual, other than an Employee Handbook and stated that the WVSDB follows West Virginia Board of Education policies. Some State Board policies direct local school systems to develop certain policies, for example, the evaluation of service personnel policy, and it seemed the WVSDB did not have such policies in place.
9. There appeared to be very little collaboration between the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) and Hampshire County Schools in areas that could prove beneficial for students (such as career/technical education or academic classes). While students participated in sports in areas not offered by the WVSDB, students did not attend any classes or programs in the local county school system.

10. The three schools and multisensory program that make up the WVSDDB showed little collaboration in curriculum among the schools. Additionally, the Team observed that the curriculum showed little alignment or connection from grade to grade within each school.
11. Principals in each of the three schools needed to be visible in classrooms to conduct classroom teacher observations as the basis for teacher evaluations, provide feedback to improve instruction, interact with students, and ensure that the school operates effectively and efficiently.

Section III

W.Va. Code Article 17. West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind

This section examines the Sections of West Virginia Schools Laws for the foundational rules established by the West Virginia Legislature for the operation and management of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

§18-17-2. Admission and record of applicants; special programs and services.

1. Schools' capacity.

The Team was not provided a definite student capacity for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB). According to an employee, at one time the school student enrollment was 315. The student enrollment for (2009-2010) was 163 and staff reported sufficient capacity to serve additional students.

2. Admissions Committee.

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) committee determines eligibility for admission; therefore, the "admissions committee" is the IEP committee for each student with a constantly changing membership based upon the county from which the student would be coming.

3. Process of admissions, criteria, etc.

The school had five (5) outreach coordinators who cover the State and take referrals from parents and/or county school systems or others for children who may meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB). The outreach coordinator meets with parents of potential students and provides them information about the school and answers questions. A special education eligibility committee in the potential student's county of residence is formed by the local county board of education and determines the eligibility of the student to attend the WVSDB based on the criteria in State Board of Education Policy 2419.

4. Record of all applicants with the dates of their admission and discharge; age, post office/ address; names of parents or guardians; degree.

The Team reviewed the Student Registry for the School for the Deaf and Blind from the opening of the school in the 1800s through 2010. This registry showed the names of enrollees, admission dates, discharge dates, age, names of parents, etc.

5. Number of deaf or blind youth not a resident of West Virginia, their costs, and how costs are paid.

The superintendent reported that all students enrolled at the WVSDDB were residents of West Virginia.

§18-17-3. Tuition, board and clothing of pupils; indigent clothing fund.

1. Tuition for out-of-state students.

The superintendent reported that no students from out-of-state attended the WVSDDB and if students enrolled from outside West Virginia, they would be required to pay tuition. The amount of tuition to be charged would be determined by the West Virginia Board of Education at the time an out-of-state student applied for enrollment.

2. When not otherwise provided with clothing, they shall be furnished by the institution while they are pupils there.

- **The superintendent shall make out an account in each case against the county where the pupil receiving clothing reside at the time - not to exceed \$75 per annum.**
- **Account shall be sworn to by the superintendent and countersigned by the business manager and shall be transferred by the superintendent to the auditor of the State, who shall forward a copy to the clerk of the county court (co-commission) of such county.**
- **The county clerk shall, at its next levy term, provide for payment of the same and cause the payment directly to the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind to be deposited.**

The superintendent reported that the school provides for students who may have clothing needs. The WVSDDB does not submit to the State Auditor an “account” for each county for students enrolled at the schools who need clothing provided by the WBSDB. (It appears the county clerks can be invoiced for reimbursement in the amount of \$75/student for students whose parents cannot or do not provide required clothing for them.)

§18-17-4. Period of attendance; special admission.

- **Pupils may continue until completion of the prescribed course of study, which the condition and progress of the pupil may justify.**
- **After all applicants age 5-23, inclusive, who are deaf and blind working toward completion of a high school diploma have been enrolled, if there are additional accommodations the superintendent on record of admissions committee, may enroll other deaf and blind pupils who are of**

pre-school, and second are post-secondary students up to age 23 who have completed the requirements for high school graduation, and upon such terms that state board may prescribe, but it shall be distinctly understood that such persons shall withdraw from the institution in order of their admission to make room for new applicant between the age prescribed in section 2 [18-7-2] ages 5-23.

1. Number in pre-school and post-secondary students.

Preschool. The classroom rosters for 2009-2010 showed an enrollment of 26 preschool students.

Post-secondary. The superintendent reported the school has no students enrolled in a post-secondary program.

2. Students required to withdraw due to new applicants.

No students have been required to withdraw due to new applicants.

3. Vocational education or other educational services provided for students beyond age 23.

No services are provided beyond age 21.

§18-17-5. Course of instruction.

The course of instruction in the institution shall be prescribed by the state board with the advice of the superintendent and shall be as extensive in the intellectual, musical, vocational, and prevocational departments as the capacities and interests of the pupils may require.

The course of instruction for the WVSDB was reported to be West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510.

§18-17-6. Registration of deaf and blind by assessors.

1. The required reports per §18-17-6 of the names of all deaf persons and blind persons under 18.

The superintendent reported the receipt of lists of students who are blind or have low vision or students who are deaf or hard of hearing in counties from the county assessors are very sporadic. One county (Wood) sends a report each year. Most county assessors usually do not send reports.

- 2. What is the process used to communicate with the parents or guardians of all deaf persons and blind persons mentioned in the assessor's report, with a view of their admission as pupils into said school?**

Parents or guardians of students who are blind or have low vision and students who are deaf or hard of hearing are contacted by the outreach coordinators and are provided information about services available. If it is thought the persons might be eligible for enrollment at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and the parents or guardians are interested in such enrollment, the process of determining eligibility as outlined in State Board Policy 2419 is begun.

§18-17-7. Sale of lands; application of proceeds.

The school is now in the process of selling a small section of land to the City of Romney. The proposed sale has been submitted to the appropriate State agencies for approval. All funds received from the sale of property go into the Land Fund. Monies from this fund may only be used for building projects or the purchase of land.

§18-17-8. Continuing Contract established; dismissal and suspension procedures.

- 1. All teachers have a contract with the State Board of Education before entering their duties.**

Randomly selected personnel files all contained contracts with the State Board of Education.

- 2. Review teacher's contracts for salary, signature of teacher, and president and secretary of the State Board of Education.**

All randomly selected personnel files contained contracts with the State Board of Education, and all contained three signatures – those of the teacher, the State Board President and the office secretary for the State Board. A technical issue in the provisions of W.Va. Code §18-17-8 is that the "secretary of the state Board of Education" refers to one of the appointed State Board members assuming the office of Secretary for a year who also signs the State Board minutes or the secretary employed by the State Board. The employed secretary signature is the one which appeared on all contracts.

- 3. Terms of teachers contracts per §18-17-8.**

All randomly selected contracts complied with the requirements of W.Va. Code §18-17-8. It appears the school actually exceeds the legal requirements by issuing and obtaining signatures on all contracts (even continuing contracts) on an annual basis. W.Va. Code indicates contracts issued after three years of successful employment are continuing contracts and notice is required if an employee will not be reemployed. The school's choice to annually prepare continuing contracts

requires additional staff time but may yield benefits beyond the scope of this audit. The minimum legal requirements are met; the annual issuance of continuing contracts is over and above State requirements.

4. Suspension or dismissal of teachers subject to provisions of §18-17-8.

Procedures for discipline of teachers including suspension and dismissal are outlined in the Employee Handbook and are consistent with W.Va. Code §18-17-8.

§18-17-9. Employment of auxiliary and service personnel; dismissal and suspension procedures.

1. Process for identifying needs for auxiliary and service personnel.

Per interview with the personnel director, principals notify the superintendent of the needs for auxiliary and service personnel and the superintendent determines the employment needs and placement. The personnel director indicated there has recently been more intermingling of staff and activities between the School for the Blind, the Elementary School for the Deaf, and the Secondary School for the Deaf.

2. Employment procedures.

Policies addressing employment procedures are covered in the Employee Handbook and are within the legal requirements of W.Va. Code.

3. Written contracts of auxiliary and service personnel per §18-9-7.

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) indicated it follows W.Va. Code §18A. Contracts for service personnel did not follow the sample contracts for service personnel as stated in W.Va. Code §18A-2-5; however, W.Va. Code §18-17-9 specifically addresses employment of auxiliary and service personnel at the school and provides some latitude in the form the contract may take. Service personnel contracts appear to address the legal requirements of a binding contract but do not conform to the style shown in W.Va. Code §18A-2-5. As with teachers' contracts, it appears the school actually exceeds the legal requirements by issuing and obtaining signatures on all contracts (even continuing contracts) on an annual basis. W.Va. Code indicates continuing contracts issued after three years are continuing contracts and notice is required if an employee will not be reemployed. The school's choice to annually prepare continuing contracts requires additional staff time but may yield benefits beyond the scope of this audit.

4. Termination procedures of auxiliary and service personnel per §18-9-7.

Procedures for discipline of teachers including suspension and dismissal are outlined in the Employee Handbook and are consistent with W.Va. Code §18-17-8. The most recent termination at the school was in 2007 and records indicated the outlined procedures were followed.

Section IV

8.1. INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY.

8.1.1. Curriculum. The school district and school conduct an annual curriculum audit regarding student curricular requests and overall school curriculum needs, including distance learning in combination with accessible and available resources.

The Team was concerned about the quality of the curriculum and academic rigor. It appeared that the traditional methods of operating may have limited the WVSD in moving forward with curriculum, instruction, and practices that enhance student proficiencies. Several programs and practices presented in this report need to be examined to increase the rigor and relevance of the curriculum.

8.1.3. Facilities. Schools are operated efficiently, economically, and without waste or duplication, and the number and location of schools efficiently serves the student population. (W. Va. Code §18-9D-15 and §18-9D-16 (d))

The Facility Section in this report details methods for energy savings and efficient operations. The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind has the capacity to serve more students than the current enrollment. The school needs to serve more students through the education program to operate more effectively and efficiently. The administration may want to consider out-of-state students (with tuition required) and enhancing the curriculum to increase student enrollment.

8.1.4. Administrative practices. The school district assesses the assignment of administrative personnel to determine the degree managerial/administrative services provided schools establish and support high quality curriculum and instructional services.

The Team believed the direct student services were appropriate to support high quality curriculum and instructional services. However, the Team's analysis of administrative staff revealed a high number of personnel for a small number of students. For example, three full-time school principals were employed year round for approximately 163 students for the 2009-2010 school year. During the Education Performance Education Audit, a position was being posted for an additional one-half time principal/one-half time dormitory director. The Team recommended that prior to establishing any position, the need for the position be justified to and approved by the West Virginia Board of Education.

The WVSDB also employs the following director positions: Dormitory Life Programs (2 directors), Health; Business and Finance, Operations, Special Education and Compliance, Special Services, and Personnel. The Team believed that the administrative staff, with the exception of the Buildings and Grounds staff, could be utilized more effectively and efficiently. This organizational structure has been in place for many years and through several WVSDB superintendents. To improve effectiveness and efficiency of administrative personnel, the school should examine the organizational structure and analyze the most effective approach in using administrators. Compared to county boards of education, the number of administrative staff, including principals, is high.

A long term practice of the WVDB has been to employ a doctor and a dentist. In looking at the services of these individuals, this may not be the most effective and efficient method of providing these services.

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

1. The school has not had a reduction in force in recent years in spite of declining student enrollment. Teachers are occasionally transferred between the School for the Blind and the Schools for the Deaf, but none has been terminated due to declining student enrollment.
2. The current organization of the school and the differences in the specific communication needs of teachers (whether located at the Schools for the Deaf or the School for the Blind) complicate the school's ability to maximize personnel in the most efficient manner.
3. The WVSDB will need to examine the assignment of administrative personnel and determine the degree to which instructional and support services provided to the schools are maximized.
4. The current organizational chart positions the principals and five of the eight directors at a lateral level operationally. In actuality, the organization and management of the WVSDB is not consistent with the organizational structure. This may have contributed to internal expressions of dissatisfaction. A state of disharmony was prevalent among the administrative staff. These real or perceived issues must be resolved through a clearly delineated organizational structure that describes roles and responsibilities of each administrative staff position. This structure should be submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval.
5. The WVSDB employed eight "cafeteria managers" and operated two separate kitchens/cafeterias for 163 students in 2009-2010. These resources may be utilized more effectively and efficiently through a different assignment and use of personnel and facilities.

Section V

CAPACITY BUILDING

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

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind has a greater capacity to serve students who are blind or have low vision and students who are deaf or hard of hearing than is currently being realized. The resources are available that include personnel, space, and fiscal to provide mechanisms for a state of the art educational system. Entities that may need to be reorganized to maximize student performance include the use of time, utilization of space, and the utilization of administrative staff. The WVSDB will need to examine current ways of operating and develop the capacity to target resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process.

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND SUMMARY

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) was originally organized in 1870 by West Virginia Code and operated according to the concepts and premise of the Code. All public schools in West Virginia have undergone significant restructuring and transformation in all aspects of education reform. By another section of West Virginia School Laws (§18-2E-5), the public schools have been under close scrutiny since the inception of accountability (1982).

Unlike the traditional public schools, the WVSDB has not prepared for or undergone an accreditation review or an education performance audit. Consequently, the WVSDB's educational system operated differently from the public school rules and regulations that govern public school accountability.

The Education Performance Audit was a new experience for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB). In auditing the schools, the OEPA applied the high quality standards in Policy 2320 as they were relevant to the WVSDB's specialized programs. The agency and schools were not prepared for the accountability process since the purpose, organization, and services provided by the WVSDB are independent in existence and function than prescribed for public schools. Yet, the WVSDB is compelled to move from its traditional approach of educating students to one that is connected to 21st century skills and a rigorous curriculum.

The Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) recommends that this draft report be used for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the WVSDB in all areas.

It is the recommendation of the Office of Education Performance Audits that:

1. A System of Support be established to guide the WVSDB in establishing a thorough and efficient education system that meets the needs of students who are blind and have low vision and students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
2. The System of School Support and the Superintendent of the WVSDB develop a timeline for addressing the issues noted in this report.
3. The System of School Support and the Superintendent of the WVSDB provide written, data based reports that specify degree of progress.

4. Specific actions to create the desired school system for the WVSDB include the following:
 - 4.1. The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) develop a policy manual and present the manual to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval. A careful analyses needs to be made regarding which general education statutes and policies of the West Virginia Board of Education for PK-12 schools are applicable and appropriate.
 - 4.2. The WVSDB restructure and reorganize the current organizational chart to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the WVSDB.
 - 4.3. The WVSDB update job descriptions of administrators and clearly delineate duties and responsibilities.
 - 4.4. The WVSDB function as a professional learning community in which mutual cooperation, emotional support, and personal growth are demonstrated.
 - 4.5. The WVSDB strengthen the curriculum and instructional practices to improve student educational opportunities and achievement.
 - 4.6. Legislative Rule provides that each county school district maintain and update annually a Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP) to be eligible for School Building Authority (SBA) funding. This Plan is a ten year comprehensive plan that describes in detail what the county, (in this case the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind) is planning to do with their buildings and facilities over the next ten years. This plan works collaborately with the curriculum and instruction of the institution to ensure that the building, which is the tool to deliver the instruction, can offer the most efficient and productive learning environment.

Without outside funding from the SBA, the WVSDB would need to fund these projects with in-house monies. The local in-house monies are probably not sufficient to provide adequate buildings for current standards.

In addition, all counties are required to submit a School Access Safety (SAS) plan to the SBA for approval to be eligible for SBA funding. This funding mechanism is part of the governor's initiative to implement safety into schools. This plan can also be used as a tool to budget and schedule the work over a multi-year time period.

The West Virginia Department of Education, (Office of School Facilities), can assist the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind with the development of the CEFP and the SAS.

5. Finally, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that after the West Virginia Department of Education has provided assistance and support, a comprehensive Education Performance Audit be conducted of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind in September 2011.

Additional Recommendation

An additional recommendation to the W.Va. Board of Education would be to include the West Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind in the State accreditation program as well as the annual performance measures of student performance, attendance, participation rate, and graduation rate in the next revision of W.Va. Board of Education Policy 2320.