



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

FOR

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

AUGUST 2012

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.

The report was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education October 2010. A West Virginia Department of Education Support Team was instituted and assistance was also elicited from a group of national and state experts that offered short and long term recommendations that could benefit the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB). Section VI includes the panel's recommendations and the OEPA's progress analysis of each recommendation.

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 Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) presented a report to the West Virginia Board of Education (October 2010) that described the OEPA's observations and recommendations for the WVSDB.

An Education Performance Audit Team returned to the WVSDB April 2-5, 2012 to assess progress of the WVSDB in addressing the recommendations from the October 2010 Education Performance Audit Report. The Progress Review Team interviewed the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind personnel including the superintendent, the director of personnel, finance official, director of special education, director of operations, special assistant to the superintendent, principals, teachers, and other personnel. The Team examined documents including letters, faxes, and materials pertinent to the progress review.

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. A final section contains recommendations provided by a national and state panel of experts representing educational and residential facilities and programs followed by a progress analysis of each recommendation.

This report includes the narratives from the October 2010 report followed by the progress noted by the Progress Review Team.

**West Virginia Schools For The Deaf And The Blind
April 2-5, 2012**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

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

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Jody Lucas	Treasurer/Chief School Finance Official	Cabell County Schools	Finance
Mike Pickens	Executive Director Office of School Facilities	WV Department of Education	Facilities

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.

7.1.4. Instruction.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Although the consultant who did the groundwork to establish the literacy program was no longer working with the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB), the Read Well and language programs were adopted and implemented by all schools. Extensive professional development and support were provided by Sopris Wes, who visited the schools at least once a month. The Team observed materials in braille being used. Visual phonics had been initiated and seemed to be working well as reported by the principal of the Secondary School for the Deaf. The speech therapist was becoming a trainer through training offered by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs.

Three technology integration specialist (TIS) candidates, two supported by the Special Education TIS project and one CTE were identifying appropriate assistive technology for students and teaching students computer and technology skills. The Team observed the special education TIS at the School for the Blind teaching students to create podcasts, which also served as a writing exercise. The special education TIS at the Elementary School for the Deaf was using Reflex math software with students in the computer laboratory. The TIS then used the Whiteboard and manipulatives to teach division of fractions using the Envision Math program (new mathematics adoption).

The program for students with multisensory disabilities had extensive lesson plans based on the extended standards. Lessons reflected the core curriculum areas and high expectations and were age and functionally appropriate. This program should be expanded to similarly functioning students observed in the life skills class at the School for the Blind who had multiple disabilities.

7.5.1. Parents and the community are provided information.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) operate an FM radio station on campus and students worked in the radio station under the supervision of the Manager/Engineer. The radio station is unique and few schools in West Virginia

operate an FM station and offer a broadcasting curriculum. The Team observed students developing the music play list, operating the technical equipment, developing public service communications, and performing other duties. The Team believed that the radio station was beneficial to the students at the schools and to the community. The radio station broadcasts local news and notifies the community of emergency or impending conditions. The Team recommended that the administration investigate ways to utilize the radio station more extensively to promote the WVSDA activities and programs and investigate the feasibility of broadcasting on the Internet to transfer information to students' parents and families who live in the various parts of West Virginia and neighboring states.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A chart depicting the WESTEST2 “Spring 2011 Testing – Students by Disabilities” and the “Alternate Assessment” for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) and other students with the same disability category in other West Virginia public schools follows a similar chart for spring 2010 testing. The data will assist WVSDB staff in curriculum and program planning to address student academic needs.

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%

	WVSDB			State		
	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient
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%

Spring 2011 Testing - Students by Disabilities

	WVSDB			State		
	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient
Mathematics - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	14	92.86 %	7.14 %	143	70.63 %	29.37 %
Hard of Hearing	31	93.55 %	6.45 %	280	79.64 %	20.36 %
Reading - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	14	92.86 %	7.14 %	143	69.93 %	30.07 %
Hard of Hearing	31	100.00%	.00%	280	82.50%	17.50%
Science - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	13	92.31%	7.69%	133	75.19%	24.81%
Hard of Hearing	24	83.33%	16.67%	252	80.95%	19.05%
Social Studies - WESTEST2						
Blind and Partially Sighted	14	92.86%	7.14%	143	71.33%	28.67%
Hard of Hearing	31	100.00%	0.00%	279	83.51%	16.49%

	WVSDB			State		
	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient
Mathematics - Alternate Assessment						
Blind and Partially Sighted	13	69.23%	30.77%	18	61.11%	38.89%
Hard of Hearing	**	**	**	**	**	**
Deaf-Blindness	**	**	**	**	**	**

	WVSDB			State		
	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Tested	Non-Proficient	Proficient
Reading - Alternate Assessment						
Blind and Partially Sighted	13	76.92%	23.08%	18	66.67%	33.33%
Hard of Hearing	**	**	**	**	**	**
Deaf-Blindness	**	**	**	**	**	**

* - Denotes fewer than 10 students tested.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

No Change. During the 2011-2012 school year, deaf and hard of hearing students enrolled at the Secondary School for the Deaf did not take courses at Hampshire Senior High School nor did they take virtual or advanced placement (AP®) classes.

Although the principal at the School for the Blind indicated Hampshire County School District has always been cooperative in allowing students to take classes, and sometimes send their students to the WVSDB, only one student attended Hampshire Senior High School in 2011-2012 to take German. Three students were enrolled in virtual Spanish, but two dropped the class. Spanish was being taught on the WVSDB

campus. A Hampshire Senior High School student comes to the WVSDB to take the class.

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

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP®), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2010-2011			
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

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP®), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2011-2012			
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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

No Change. The counselor reported that 17 students took the American College Test (ACT) in 2010-2011 and six students took the ACT examination in 2011-2012. The composite score was 13 each year.

No student took advanced placement (AP®) courses in 2011-2012; consequently, no student took the (AP®) examination. The superintendent indicated that (AP®) courses were available, but no student requested the class or was working at that level.

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

COLLEGE-ENTRANCE TESTING INFORMATION – ACT & APT 2010-2011					
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	17	13	0	0	0

COLLEGE-ENTRANCE TESTING INFORMATION – ACT & APT 2011-2012					
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	6	13	0	0	0

AP TEST TAKERS					
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
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).

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

NEEDS ATTENTION. Of the four students graduating from the West Virginia School for the Blind, one is going to a National Federation for the Blind (NFB) training program to develop independent living skills with the intention of attending community college. The counselor indicated that the other students will remain at home and possibly one student will work with a local workshop. It was expressed that families and foster parents that preferred to keep students at home could be a barrier to post-secondary opportunities. **The Team recommended that counseling and Outreach Services target this area to improve post-secondary education and independent living.**

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	11	33.33%

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

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2011		
School	Number of High School Graduates	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind	12	50%

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The preschool program at the West Virginia School for the Deaf included same-age peers enrolled in a Universal Preschool Program. Teachers were using the current preschool curriculum. The classroom was equipped with appropriate materials, furniture, and equipment.

The preschool program at the West Virginia School for the Blind was located in a separate facility across the campus and students had little or no opportunity for interaction and socialization with peers.

1. Teachers continued to have a foundational knowledge of the curriculum and the West Virginia Early Learning Standards Framework (WVELSF); however, a structure of staff development for teachers and supporting administrators must be established and completed to increase integrity in implementation of practice.
2. Pre-Kindergarten (P-K) students continued to attend music and gym classes as previously observed. All teachers working with Pre-K children must be included in a structure of staff development to implement standards during music and gym instruction and to ensure that all Pre-K activities meet curricular guidelines.

Overview – Preschool Program

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) preschool program consisted of four classrooms. Three Pre-K classrooms were located in the Elementary School for the Deaf and one Pre-K classroom was located in the School for the Blind. The Team conducted observations in each of the classrooms and all principals and teachers present participated. Administrators reported 21 children enrolled in Pre-K across all classrooms. Nine children were enrolled in Hampshire County's Universal Pre-K Program at the WVSDB.

All children who attended the School for the Deaf arrived on a staggered arrival schedule and reported to the bus room, which was adjacent to the main entrance of the building. One staff person was assigned to work in the room with a mixed-age group. **This staffing pattern did not meet adult-child ratios of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525.** Aides accompanied children from the bus room to breakfast. Teachers had planning time during the children's breakfast time.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The Elementary School for the Deaf was using a new mathematics curriculum. In addition, the staff researched supplemental curriculum to incorporate into daily mathematics instruction.

The Scott Foresman Envision mathematics program was adopted and the Team observed the program being taught using the Whiteboard and manipulatives in the Grade 6 mathematics class.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The science teacher identified materials and supplies appropriate to the instruction for the students. The teacher incorporated the West Virginia content standards and objectives (CSOs) into lesson plans. The principal monitored instruction to assure the curriculum was based on the CSOs.

Teachers across the campus reported using and implementing grade level West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs).

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The Team observed students engaged in instruction. Additionally, the Team did not observe games except for one math computer game which was an appropriate use of technology to build mathematics skills and the game was connected to the math curriculum (Elementary School for the Deaf). It was used part of the class period and the Envision lesson took place the rest of the period.

Instruction was occurring during the Team's classroom observations. The Elementary School for the Deaf followed a daily schedule which provided opportunity for daily supplemental reading classes. Multiple assessments were given to determine students' current reading levels. *We Can and Read Well* were taught at the elementary level. Two classrooms were available to support students with cochlear implants at the Pre-K and Grade 1 levels. *Reading Counts*, an accelerated reading program, was implemented at the school and contained over 800 books. The science program, *Discovery Science*, was a hands-on program. The principal was planning a Writing Lab for the 2012-2013 school year. Wireless accessibility was available in 98 percent of the building.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Teachers across the campus reported using grade level West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) to strengthen the curriculum. Principals at the three schools were frequently in classrooms.

Three English/language arts teachers were employed at the Secondary School for the Deaf and a reading consultant provided support to the teachers one day a week. The schools were working on strengthening the curriculum, especially in reading/language arts through the literacy curriculum. **Students still need to be challenged in problem solving and higher order thinking skills.**

The teachers in the multisensory program had been working extensively to improve the program. The Team observed the group using iPods, a logical sequence of activities, and students were actively engaged.

The Team observed a classroom in the Secondary School for the Blind in which 17 year old students were performing a repetitive sorting activity, i.e., dropping objects into containers. These adolescents could be performing higher level activities. They would benefit from job skills and literacy skills.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Classrooms in the Elementary School for the Deaf were void of clutter and organized in a cheerful and inviting manner.

Classrooms at the School for the Blind were well organized and materials were accessible to students. The windows in the School for the Blind were covered with

various materials, some pinned together and layered, to diffuse sunlight; however, the window coverings were not appropriate for visually impaired students.

One preschool classroom was still extremely cluttered. Materials and equipment piled around the room were an obstacle for the children. Space constrictions made it difficult for staff and children to freely move around the room for elaborate play and impeded teaching and learning opportunities.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The multisensory classroom had been moved to another location which resolved the facility problems.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The security guards diligently checked the campus in the evenings. It was reported that the previous concerns regarding public presence in the parking lot and on campus had been successfully resolved.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The entrance door in the multisensory wing was the one closest to the supervisor's office that is outside the gate; however, it is located down the hall from the office. The Team recommended that a sign be posted to direct visitors to the office. The principal indicated this door is supposed to be open according to the access plan. The other doors were locked. The entrance door to each building was the only unlocked door. All doors will be secured by an access code for the 2013-2014 school year.

5. The Team visited the three dormitory facilities of the WVSDB. 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 WVSDB 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) will have a general security access (GSA) system installed by the summer 2012. The access project has been submitted for bids and was progressing through the purchasing process. The access system will be web based and staff will have different levels of access according to responsibilities and need.

In the interval, the WVSDB developed and followed a School Access Safety Plan for campus security. Four security guards ensure this plan is followed. The guards walk the exterior of each building three times during their shift and check that exterior doors are locked. After finishing each check, security guards electronically record locked or unlocked doors. The Team checked dormitory doors in the evenings and found that all exterior doors were locked.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The Team observed brailers; braille note takers; braille textbooks, including the new language program; and braille in math class being used by students in all classrooms visited. Additionally, Job Access with Special Education (JAWS) assistive technology for laptops was in use. The braille note takers also had online capability.

Braille signage had not been completely provided.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Each classroom in the Elementary School for the Deaf was fully equipped with auditory trainers and all teachers were wearing microphones. Every student wore hearing aids or other hearing devices to enable them to benefit from the sound system.

The Secondary School for the Deaf was not equipped with amplification systems. This is being considered as the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan is developed.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The young students residing at the School for the Deaf dormitory remained on the third floor of the dormitory. However, the Fire Marshal approved an evacuation plan and drills were conducted once a month. Staff is required to be proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate and interact with students and foster language and vocabulary development.

The bath time ritual for the younger children had been adjusted and children waiting for baths were involved in activities such as reading, playing board games, playing Wii, etc.

NEW ISSUE.

A majority of the students in the School for the Blind expressed disappointment in the conditions in the dormitory. Students stated activities were minimal for involvement and that little to no homework assistance was available. Students stated that the life skills activities to assist students in life after school were minimal.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. While dinner was still served cafeteria style, the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition, review reported that the program met the meal service requirements. The Team observed the evening meal and the meal included fruit bowls containing apple slices, grapes, etc., that young children could manage.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Secondary students in the School for the Deaf reported dissatisfaction with meals and food service. Specifically, students indicated the meals were tasteless, the same meals were served repeatedly, and at times the meals were insufficient. The students did indicate fresh fruit was provided daily. The Team noted that the dormitory students were preparing pizza during the evening of the Team visit. The Team recommended that the administration visit the dormitory during dinner and discuss these concerns with students.

NEW ISSUE.

The Team observed students at the School for the Blind during dinner. Elementary students needed assistance with dinner. Hot dogs were served and some students were only able to manipulate a portion of the hot dog. Furthermore, children experienced a hard time managing the food and one child required a change of clothes during dinner. The Team observed the adults eating while the students were struggling to eat their meal. The Team recommended that these students have dining assistance to enable them to eat dinner comfortably and enjoy their food. Meal time, including lunch, is an opportune time to work on life skills.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING.

Preschool - School for the Deaf

- The Team observed a classroom in the Preschool-School for the Deaf and the teacher was absent the day of the observation. A substitute teacher was working with six children during "center time." One child was absent. The daily schedule was posted in the classroom with times. The events on the schedule were reflective of the Creative Curriculum guidelines, but contained 11 transitions throughout the day. Physical education and music classes were scheduled weekly. The room contained various learning centers which included: House, sensory table, art, blocks, games, discover, and library/circle area. Various materials were available for child engagement during play. The aide was taking children individually to a name chart to identify their names. The substitute teacher was examining plastic snakes with the children to identify the types. She asked open-ended questions and provided information about snakes. The substitute provided extensive information through informal conversation with the children. **This illustrated excellent language development and modeled questioning with purpose.**
- Five children were enrolled in another preschool classroom in the School for the Deaf. The classroom was very small. The teacher reported that this room only had enough square footage to enroll six children in the class. The room was crowded with furniture and supplies. A teacher's desk was present at the

classroom entrance. Several centers were present that included: Blocks, house, sensory table with “Easter grass”, and an art table. Fine motor and science materials were included throughout the classroom. Organization of materials did not support independent cleanup after play; however, labels were present for organization or environmental print purposes. **The placement of the centers and contents restricted use of materials.** The Lincoln Logs were located in the house area. Children would not be able to play with other materials without interfering with building with the Lincoln Logs.

The teachers were working with the children. One teacher was interacting with the children building with the Lincoln Logs. One teacher was working with the children at the art table. All adults were positive and encouraging with the children. Staff was consistently engaged with the children.

A pictorial schedule was present. The schedule did not contain time frames. The teacher reported that children had regularly scheduled gym and music class. Children’s work decorated the classroom, illustrating their ongoing progress.

- Six children were enrolled in another preschool classroom in the School for the Deaf. The classroom was organized into centers. The centers and materials were labeled. The daily schedule was posted and represented pictorially, but times were not included. The schedule indicated that children attended music and gym classes regularly. The children were finishing center time to color Easter eggs during the Team’s observation. The children were divided into two small groups and were engaged in the activity for several minutes. Teachers were engaged with children throughout the egg coloring activities and asked questions that encouraged children to experiment with the materials.

Preschool-School for the Blind

Three children were enrolled in the preschool classroom at the School for the Blind; however, one child had not been attending due to the student’s health concerns. The preschool (Pre-K) area contained two separate classrooms with an adjoining door. The right classroom from the entrance also contained a separate section with an adult kitchen area. This area also contained the children’s house area for play. The classrooms were organized in centers. The centers reflected curricular guidance and included a circle area, computer area, and quiet (cozy) area in the far left classroom. Centers were also located in the classroom to the right that included: Sand and water tables, an art area, a math center, a music center, a discovery, and blocks. The schedule posted in the classroom indicated that children attended music and physical education classes regularly. The teacher had been employed two months. This teacher reported that she had not had curriculum or standards training. The classroom was set up by the long-term substitute teacher previously mentioned.

Each afternoon after rest this Pre-K class group joined the kindergarten class at the School for the Blind. The teacher reported that this allowed children the opportunity to

participate in large group or choice time. Children had the opportunity to interact with more children during this collaborative time.

Gross Motor/Outdoor Time

The Team observed all three classes at the School for the Deaf during Gross Motor/Outdoor Time. One class was on the large playground with several other classes. The substitute teacher and aide present were playing with children and assisting them in using the equipment. A climbing unit, balance beam, slides, swings, and spring riding toys were available for the children. **The playground had safety issues that included: Inadequate fall zones and inappropriate equipment for the Pre-K group.**

Two teachers' classes joined during gross motor/outdoor time. They were in a patio area that connected parts of the School for the Deaf. This area had a construction fence surrounding the concrete area to provide a barrier for the children. The children had trikes to ride and one rocky boat that seated two children. The children were moved to a larger playground area when staff changed to allow teachers to have a duty-free lunch.

Curriculum/WV Pre-K Assessment System/Early Learning Standards Framework- WV ELSF (CSOs)

The principal at the School for the Blind shared that a new teacher had not been provided curriculum, assessment, or WV Early Learning Standards Framework (WV ELSF) training and that an expert was not available to assist in these trainings at this time. Each of the teachers and the principal at a School for the Deaf also indicated that formal training on the curriculum and WV ELSF had not been provided; however, they were trained on the WV Pre-K Child Assessment System, including the ELS. It was unclear how the partnership with Hampshire County School District included staff development of curriculum/assessment and WV Early Learning Standards and ensured that this process was supported. Note: The principal of the Elementary School for the Deaf was the campus Pre-K coordinator.

Observations/Feedback

An ECERS-R or other early childhood observation had not been completed this school year (2011-2012) in three of the four Pre-K classes. The ECERS-R was completed last school year in all four Pre-K classrooms. One teacher reported that the Creative Curriculum Implementation Checklist was completed in her classroom within the last three months by the Hampshire County Pre-K team, but the results were not shared with the teacher or classroom administration. **A system was not present to support continuous quality improvement.**

The Team reviewed lesson plans and found that the WV Early Learning Standards Framework-ELSF (Pre-K standards) were present in two of four lesson plans reviewed.

Teachers indicated they would like to have support in Pre-K lesson planning, curriculum, standards integration, and ongoing assessment.

Pre-K classroom teachers demonstrated basic understanding of the selected curriculum, but needed ongoing support in implementing the curriculum, the WV Early Learning Standards Framework, and WV Pre-K Child Assessment System, and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525 integration with Policy 2419. **One classroom must be analyzed at the School for the Deaf to ensure that 35 square feet of usable space is available per child and that the foundations of curriculum can be implemented adequately.**

The joint efforts of the Pre-K program at the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) and Hampshire County Pre-K must be strengthened to support the existing partnership and to maximize resources for the community, especially children enrolled through the Universal Pre-K program and children enrolled at the WVSDB. The administrator of the School for the Deaf must be provided support through participating on the Hampshire County Early Childhood Collaborative Team.

The West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Readiness, can assist in determining steps to strengthen the Pre-K program.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The Team did not have the opportunity to observe the Grade 4 class; however, the new literacy program connects to the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) and Next Generation West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) and reportedly was increasing achievement. The Team observed a student using this program in braille. New literacy materials were abundant.

Activities for four students in the life skills class could have been more purposeful. Expectations appeared low in contrast to high expectations and more varied activities based on the extended standards and activities observed in the multisensory wing.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Refer to 7.1.2 narrative for science. The Schools for the Deaf were using the newly identified reading series, *Language*, that included the basic reading components.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The Team observed improved instruction throughout the schools.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The entire staff is now obligated to be proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) to improve communication with students.

All schools were provided extensive professional development and support for the literacy program. Personalized Learning Specialists from RESAs 7 and 8 provided professional development and technical assistance for WVSD staff to analyze assessment data for instructional improvement. **Professional learning communities (PLCs) still need to be further developed.**

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.)

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Refer to 7.1.1. narrative regarding science instruction. Appropriate science supplies and materials had been purchased and were available for instruction at the Secondary School for the Deaf.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Although the Team did not observe instruction in writing, the opportunities for students to practice writing were provided in the computer class at the School for the Blind and integrated into the literacy program. A teacher at the Elementary School for the Deaf said they plan to provide more direct instruction in writing next year to continue to improve the program. Writing was taught within the new literacy program, but additional work in writing instruction will be added.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Technology was available. Computers were evident and available in all schools. High school students in both the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind were provided personal laptop computers.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The utilization of technology in delivering the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) had greatly improved.

The Team briefly observed a math class in the Secondary School for the Deaf in which a Whiteboard was being used and the class was instructed totally in American Sign Language (ASL).

Instruction was hampered at the School for the Blind when the teacher attempted a class activity and the classroom computers were too old for wireless access.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Students and staff reported that Internet access and wireless capability were available in the dormitories. Students residing in the dorm for the blind did not have access to a braille printer in the dormitory, but the school library was open after school three evenings a week to provide student access to braille printers.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. All classrooms in the Elementary School for the Deaf were equipped with technology. Technology included: Presentation stations, computers, Elmos, Whiteboards, and auditory trainers. The multisensory program (MSP) classrooms incorporated language boards, iPads, and other assistive technology devices.

Laptops were available to high school students and will extend down through the grades at the School for the Blind as funding becomes available. Grade 8 did not have laptops yet. Students in Grades 7-8 social studies class were attempting to get connected to the Internet using borrowed laptops without wireless connection to do their projects. The teacher was connected and had a Whiteboard and projector. However, Whiteboards may not always be beneficial for the students who are blind - iPads and iPod Touch have been piloted with some students. For students who are blind, the iPod has been easier to use; it has the same functionality and fewer mistakes occur. The iPad is effective for students who can use large print.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. New literacy materials had been purchased. The Team reviewed the financial budget for instructional materials and reported that a high portion of the budget was dedicated to instructional materials and equipment. The Team observed an abundance of instructional materials in classrooms.

It was reported that specialized personal assistive technology devices were available; however, students indicated some devices were “dead” or not charged; charge cords were not available; and personal devices were defective.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. A new Scott Foresman Envision mathematics program had been purchased and was being used.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. A procedure for requesting instructional materials was in place. The principal at the School for the Blind said teachers only needed to request materials and some did not get materials because they did not ask. According to the principal, now they should know to ask. The principal indicated that some large or more expensive items may not be readily available; however, even expensive technology will be ordered if it is needed for a student who is enrolled,

The Grades 7 and 8 social studies teacher borrowed updated social studies books from the Instructional Resource Center (IRC). When State approved materials are not available in braille and have to be brailled, the cost can be exorbitant. This becomes a concern as digital materials that are not textbooks replace approved textbooks. The school uses Prison Industries for braille materials which requires a great deal of time for Prison Industries to complete requests for braille materials. When materials need to be brailled at the WVSDB, it would be helpful if the WVSDB had the resources available to do this. The WVSDB did not have a dependable source for braille 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Course credit issues were being resolved for 2012 graduates.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. All students enrolled at the WVSDB met eligibility requirements.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. In the initial report, the counselor indicated that a great deal of work was being done with career readiness for the older students. That work has now been expanded to elementary students in both the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind. Career readiness for the elementary students focused on introduction to careers and the techSteps program.

The school implemented the Advisor-Advisee program for both the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind in Grades 5 - 12. The LINKS Program lesson plans were being used. Students used the College Foundation WV Program which allowed them to link to colleges in West Virginia based on their interest inventory. This program allowed them to make application for college online.

Developmental guidance was being implemented in all elementary classes in both the School for the Deaf and the School for the Blind.

Students in the School for the Blind visited Blind Industries in Cumberland, Maryland. Grade 8 students in the School for the Deaf went to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in New York for a math competition and campus tour. Students visited the following college campuses: Gallaudet University, Potomac State College, and Fairmont University.

RECOMMENDATION.

Because of the particular needs of the WVSDB student population, the schools and students would benefit from additional counseling support. Therefore, the Team recommended that the superintendent analyze these services and, if needed, recommend the addition of another counselor to the State Board of Education.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Instructional Day

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. It was reported that transportation remained an issue for students who reside in Hampshire County and attend the WVSDB. Most Hampshire County students are transported to the WVSDB on Hampshire County School District buses. When Hampshire County is not in session, county busses do not run, thereby, some local students are not transported to school and are absent. This was not an issue for students who reside in Berkeley and Mineral counties.

Snow /inclement Weather Days

NEEDS ATTENTION. The educational services provided in the dorms as indicated in the Internal Review Chart, 7.1.13, submitted by the WVSDB may not meet the Individualized Education Program (IEP) services stipulated in the students' IEPs.

PROGRESSING. According to principal of the School for the Blind, students from Hampshire County do not attend school when Hampshire is closed, not just for snow days, because Hampshire is responsible for transportation. If parents cannot bring the students to school, they miss. The WVSDB buses transport students from Berkeley and Mineral. Staff tried to coordinate calendars, but transportation was still a problem for Hampshire County's students.

Note: The superintendent of the WVSDB indicated that the transportation issue will be undertaken during the 2012-2013 school year.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Teachers and students were engaged in instruction.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. In preparing students for the job market, the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind offered to go to the communities where students reside to research potential career opportunities for them. The counselor indicated that in some cases, the family structure was not supportive of this. **This is an area that will require more effort from the WVSDB.**

Vocational/Technical Training

The WVSDB offered the following career/technical programs: ProStart, agriculture, mechanics, construction, graphic design, business management, and radio broadcasting. The Secondary School for the Deaf offered five career/technical programs and the School for the Blind offered two programs. The superintendent stated that a career track will be included in the curriculum. She also discussed plans for merging the career/technical programs into one location. The Team viewed these actions as an important step in enhancing the students' career/technical opportunities.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE.

The Five-Year Strategic Plan for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) had been developed and implemented for the 2011-2012 school year. The superintendent formed a planning committee to provide assistance with formulating the Five-Year Strategic Plan for the WVSDB to provide guidance in the operations of the Schools for the Deaf and the Blind. The planning committee included representatives of the school staffs, central office personnel, students, alumni, parents, community representatives, and principals of the three on-campus schools. The planning committee was divided into subcommittees with each subcommittee working on one of the six major areas of the strategic plan and writing action steps to implement the plan.

Five Year Strategic Plans for the three schools had been completed and continued to be a work in progress.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Developmental guidance was being provided by the guidance counselor. The counselor used the counseling log to document time spent counseling students. The counselor indicated that she devoted 75 percent of the work day in a direct counseling relationship with students.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. School for the Blind. The Team observed lesson plans that included the West Virginia 21st century content standards and objectives (CSOs). The literacy program also correlated with the CSOs. Lesson plans in the multisensory program were extensive and based on the extended standards.

Lesson plans were available in all classrooms in the three schools comprising the WVSDB.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Two RESA 8 Support for Personalized Learning Specialists provided training at the beginning of the year (2011-2012) and follow-up sessions later in the fall to analyze assessment data for instructional planning. The Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) was also being used (reported by Schools for the Deaf) to assess progress in the literacy program and staff stated that student progress was being demonstrated. The School for the Blind received training on Lexiles and attempted to use Acuity, but access had been a problem. The WVSDB staff was beginning to discuss and collect more data than in the past.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The WVSDB developed and implemented a policy on bullying and harassment and conducted training sessions on this policy.

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 (WVSDB) 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 WVSDB school and student needs.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING.

Budget

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) began budgeting by department in January 2012. West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Finance, personnel worked with the finance director to develop budgets by department and each director was provided on-line computer access to their allocations. This allowed the directors to view department budgets by category, expenditures to date, and remaining balance. Plans were in place to show committed funds (purchase orders) and effect on balances, but that data were not available at the time of the progress audit. That component was scheduled to be in place beginning July 2012. In the meantime, the finance director sends status of allocation via email to directors once purchase orders have been issued.

The finance director indicated that department directors were struggling somewhat with the new concept of site-based budgeting. The process was a great improvement over the central control system that had been in place for many years. Overall, the principals supported the process; however, some expressed frustration with the responsibility of purchasing custodian supplies and were concerned that the responsibility to budget for utilities would be placed on them. One principal said he had no historical base from which to project custodian or utility costs. **The WVSDB did not have a written purchasing procedures policy.**

All principals interviewed said instructional supplies were always provided when requested under the old budget system and with the new. One did describe this year (2011-2012) as "tight" in so far as getting what the school needed. The principal of the School for the Blind said some equipment needed was not always readily available through no fault of the school's budget, but because some equipment was unique and difficult to locate. According to information provided by the finance director, \$164,884.03 was spent for instructional supplies during fiscal year 2010, \$244,694.46 during fiscal year 2011, and \$191,247.77 as of March 2012. Expenditures for books and technology were not classified as instructional supplies and therefore not included in the aforementioned instructional expenditures. Several staff commented that the school had increased spending for technology over the past year.

Budget Development

The Team interviewed the superintendent to determine the budget development process and philosophy. The Team learned that the superintendent and finance director were working to fund each school an allocation based on enrollment. No good historical data were available to determine allocations to schools; however, a formula to allocate funds was described as a work in process. The superintendent indicated that the allocation for this year (2011-2012) was not adequate. According to the finance director, allocations were made mid-year so the bulk of funds had already been spent or obligated before the department directors became involved. A goal of both the superintendent and finance director is to make funds available very early next school year (2012-2013) and make the allocation method transparent.

Prior to this year (2011-2012), department directors had never been responsible for budgets. The superintendent plans to involve principals and the finance director in developing next year's budget and to align the budget with the needs and goals outlined in the WVSDS strategic plan.

COMMENDATIONS.

1. Most dental care for students was being provided by a grant identified as SMILE at no cost to the school. The grant bills student insurance and Medicaid if applicable; otherwise, the services are free to students. The finance director learned of this service from Ohio County Schools and is commended for bringing the idea to the school.
2. The Team commended the finance director for improving communication from the business office to department administrators. This communication of financial information was done by computer generated reports and email. This ensured that department administrators were informed about their budgets, orders, and balances.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. The Team recommended that the school administrative staff develop written purchasing policies and procedures and share the policies and procedures with all staff.
2. While the idea of site-based budgeting was commendable, the Team recommended that principals be required to budget only instructional related material. **The budget for maintenance, utilities, and custodian supplies should be part of maintenance director's responsibility.**

Pertinent Financial Allocation Facts.

- Budget of \$62,000 for door security system.

- Budget of \$225,000 for new telephone system.
- Budget of \$185,000 to architectural firm developing Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP).
- Total general fund budget of \$13,073,923 of which 84.8 percent was allotted for personnel.
- Physician service was provided by hourly contract rate with a local physician instead of a part time employee.
- The WVSDB followed Hampshire County School District's salary schedule except for the superintendent and assistant to the superintendent.

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 WVSDB 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 WVSDB 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 WVSDB that prior to the 2010-2011 school year, the WVSDB 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 WVSDB deemed students eligible as deaf who did not meet eligibility criteria in Policy 2419: *Regulations for the Education of Students with Disabilities*; and
- The WVSDB 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. All students originally in question either exited the school or their eligibilities were predetermined and now appropriately identified. At the time of the progress review one case was in federal court and the student was required to remain in the current placement until the case was resolved. Subsequent to the review, the District Court resolution upheld the parent petition and the student will remain at the WVSDB. At the advice of the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Legal Services, the WVSDB will not appeal the decision.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The following is a building by building assessment from the on-site progress review.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. The Americans with Disability Act (ADA) issues will be addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP) requiring all new renovations to be ADA compliant and all heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment to comply with current industry codes and standards. **The Team noted that the Administration Building will require major renovations.**

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. The storage issue had been corrected. **This building needs major heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) renovations and can only be addressed by the completion of the proposed CEFP.** Once the CEFP has been approved by the West Virginia Board of Education, it is essential that the plan be put into effect immediately.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. Consideration has been given to closing this facility or performing major heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) renovation identified by the proposed CEFP.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The staff, with assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Facilities, wrote a School Access Safety Plan (SAS). Due to major SAS renovations needed at this campus, a revised, scaled down SAS plan was written which first addressed the security of buildings where students study and live. The scope of this SAS scaled down plan has been identified and advanced to the bidding process and work is expected to begin and be completed in the summer 2012.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION. The areas of water infiltration will be corrected after the buildings are renovated based on the requirements of the proposed CEFP. **Three buildings on campus are severely structurally compromised (Blue and Gold Cafeteria, Central Supply, and the Bakery building).** For cost effectiveness and safety concerns, the director of operations and the superintendent should develop and implement a plan to relocate operations conducted within these buildings. This plan should include a thorough structure analysis by a certified structural engineer to consider if any of these buildings should be demolished or reevaluated for appropriate use as identified in the proposed CEFP.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. All mercury thermostats were replaced with non-mercury programmable types. An upgrade to the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, including controls, will be addressed in the proposed CEFP which will provide HVAC equipment and associated controls that comply with current industry codes and standards.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. An upgrade to the lighting system throughout this campus will be addressed in the proposed CEFP.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. An upgrade to the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system and controls will be addressed in the proposed CEFP, at which time a performance contract will be considered.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. A certified heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) technician was not on staff. The West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Facilities, can provide the training and testing to certify a HVAC technician at this facility. The WVSDB indicated the certification training will be scheduled.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The WVSDB enrolled in the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Facilities, statewide preventive maintenance program. This program will implement an automated work order system and a software based preventive maintenance process. This will address many of the maintenance issues.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Additional recommendations for corrective action

1. The WVSDB superintendent and CEFP committee should work closely with the CEFP architectural team and its consultant, who is deaf, to be proactive and involved with the CEFP process to assure that visionary concepts are adopted into the planned CEFP. The superintendent should consider updating the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) at the prescribed update presentation to ensure that the WVBE has a full understanding of the process and content of the CEFP.
2. Although the director of operations was doing a good job addressing identified maintenance tasks, system accountability was not possible with the facility's current preventive maintenance program. This facility was addressing this issue by adopting the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Facilities, statewide software based preventive maintenance program.

RECOMMENDATION.

The Team recommended that the director of operations have substantial input in the budgetary process, thus offering him management with accountability to be more effective and efficient in planning long term up-keep of this facility.

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 WVSDDB communicated with the community through the radio station, articles in the local newspaper, etc.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The superintendent prepared newsletters “Monthly Updates” on happenings at the school that were distributed to everyone on campus and to parents of all students. The school has developed a positive relationship with the local newspaper and articles are published weekly in the local paper about school activities. Bids have been finalized for a new interactive website. This website will have password protected pages for students and parents so both can access classroom activities, up-to-date homework assignments, etc. The superintendent created a Board of Advisors made up of alumni and parents to involve parents in important decisions affecting the school. For example, parents were surveyed for their input on the school calendar.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Schoolwide codes of conduct for students and employees had been disseminated and reviewed with staff and students. The culture of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) had improved measurably from the initial Education Performance Audit. Students and staff were positive and the organization functioned in a purposeful manner.

The Student Code of Conduct was included in the Student and Parent Handbook which was distributed to all students and parents. The Employee Code of Conduct was included in the Employee Handbook and distributed to all employees. During the “Policies and Procedures” update August 2011, the Employee Code of Conduct was addressed with the staff. All employees signed a form verifying they received and understood the information. Teachers discussed the Student Code of Conduct with students at the beginning of the school year. Records of student discipline were not kept on the WVEIS computer system.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed student results from the administration of the spring 2011 Fitness Gram which showed the results for all students in the schools. The Fitness Gram was administered by the schools’ 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 (WVSDB) 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The Team reviewed progress in hiring practices of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) and reported that the agency followed the provisions of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a, in part.

1. Interview matrices reflected verbiage and criteria of W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Criteria listed in W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a (c & d) were used in the selection of the most qualified applicant.

2. Hiring practices, such as duration of job postings and seniority rights for school personnel, were stated in the Employee Handbook.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The hiring process, including procedures which were outside W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a, were in the Employee Handbook. Examples of procedures used outside §18A-4-7a included: 1. Not all professional positions were posted within 20 working days of the position openings; 2. Positions are open to external applicants only when there are no internal applicants; and 3. When an applicant is not selected, the job is reposted.

3. Available positions were posted on the Internet and in the local newspaper.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The WVSDDB continued to post vacant positions on the school website 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The WVSDDB extended teacher recruitment efforts that included: Flagler College, St. Augustine, FL; Kent State, Kent, Ohio; Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT-NTID) National Institute for the Deaf, Rochester, NY; Gallaudet University, University for Deaf, Washington, DC; and Pittsburgh Educational Recruitment Consortium, Monroeville, PA.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE.

- Two full-time health providers (a medical doctor and a dentist) employed by WVSDB retired June 20, 2011. Both were employed as substitutes and worked on an as needed basis at an hourly rate of pay.
- A medical doctor had been contracted. The contract indicated an hourly rate of \$225, not to exceed \$25,000. The dentist position had not been posted. Students' dental needs were being met by the Smile Clinic. The mobile clinic comes to the school every six weeks. Services are free to the school. Parents of students who are Medicaid eligible are billed for services provided.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The employment of personnel at the WVSDB is somewhat complicated as procedures are implemented from West Virginia Board of Education Policies 5202 and 5310 and W.Va. Codes §§18A-4-7a, 18-17-8, and 18-17-9. The West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Legal Services, is developing personnel policies and procedures for the WVSDB. A policy manual for personnel written specifically for the WVSDB will be helpful in ensuring correct implementation of school personnel policies and laws.

COMMENDATION.

The organization of the personnel files was exemplary. Each individual personnel file was comprehensive and organized in separate compartments by category (contracts, academic documentation, medical documentation, required hiring documents, evaluations, etc.). Documents were easily located and identified.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Effective July 1, 2012, with the implementation of the school's communication policy, every job description will require a specific sign language and Braille fluency level. Staff will have two years to obtain the fluency level or will be placed on an improvement plan for a six month period to obtain the fluency level.

- Course codes were entered inappropriately and made it difficult for the Team to determine the content of instruction in the classroom.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. RESA 8 worked with the school secretaries and principals on entering course codes in WVEIS.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

IN PROCESS. The collaboration plan with certified hearing impaired (HI) and visually impaired (VI) teachers was implemented during the 2010-2011 school year, but was not currently in place (2011-2012). As per the principal, the vocational teacher has several years of experience at the school, has a high fluency level in HI and VI, and meets communication needs of the students. According to the principal, to assign a certified HI or VI teacher to the vocational classes would take a certified HI or VI teacher away from a class and students where the teacher is needed and place him/her in a class where the teacher is not needed. However, the principal stated that he will comply by reassigning certified HI or VI teacher to the vocational classes.

- Vocational classes continued to be coded special education (6th position exceptionality), however, teachers were not certified in special education.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. This was a coding error in WVEIS and will be corrected. The section of this report on licensure indicates correction of coding.

- The Driver's Education teacher was a substitute and paid hourly; the position was not posted.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The Driver's Education position was posted May 31, 2011 as a long-term substitute position. The teacher did not hold American Sign Language (ASL) endorsement; however, has a high level of sign language fluency. A certified co-teacher will be assigned to the position.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

NONCOMPLIANCE. The athletic director continued to evaluate coaches. The athletic director stated that he completed the education and training in evaluation skills through the Center for Professional Development (CPD); however, he did not hold an administrative certificate issued by the State Superintendent of Schools as required by W.Va. §18A-2-12. The superintendent of the WVSDB indicated that this situation will not continue in 2012-2013.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The personnel director stated that an HI job posting, which was filled with an applicant with VI authorization, had been reposted and filled by an applicant with the correct certification.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. All VI teachers are required to take a three hour semester course in Introductory Braille. All HI teachers are required to take a three hour semester college course in American Sign Language (ASL).

- A long-term substitute was placed in the music classroom without endorsement and no waiver was requested for content or exceptionality.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. A full-time certified teacher had been employed.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The position was posted June 20, 2011 and assigned as an Orientation and Mobility Specialist/classroom teacher. The teacher has a permanent license in Elementary Education K-6 and VI. The teacher also completed an Orientation and Mobility Program.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The teacher was fully certified in multi-categorical.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. According to the director of special education, every child enrolled at the school and shown in the December Child Count Report has a primary eligibility of vision or hearing impaired and/or both, except one child whose primary disability is communication disorder (Speech/Language Therapy). This one child's placement at the school was in litigation and the child was attending the school on a "stay put" order. Children who did not meet the eligibility requirements were exited from the school.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Posting was cancelled.

SUMMARY – PERSONNEL

It appeared that all noncompliances listed above had been addressed and progress has been made as the majority of the noncompliances were corrected or were in the process of being corrected.

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	Obtain or renew if eligible administrative certification if evaluating professional employees as coaches.

Progress Report
August 2012

				professional staff.	
	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	If teacher is/could work with primarily blind children, the teacher needs braille competency.

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				not passed Braille 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

OEPA Follow-Up WV School for the Deaf and Blind April 4, 2012

County-School	Educator Name	Courses/Content Teaching	Certification/Status	Findings	Recommendations
097-602 School for the Blind	No findings				
097-601 WV School for the Deaf- Elem	Educator	3002-MATH 2 0 F-DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 02 4002-ENG LA 2 0 F-DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 02 4802-DEVL P READ 2 0 F- DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 02 6002-SCIENCE 2 0 F-DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 02 7002-SOC ST 2 0 F-DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 02 7653-LRN SKILLS 0 F- DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 02 7821-PLANNING 0 F-DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades: 7829-TEACHER DUTY 0 F- DEAF/HARD OF HEARING Grades:	22 Professional Teaching Certificate 4202 -Hearing Impaired Grds: 0K- 12 Exp: Permanent 59 Permanent Authorization 4202 - Hearing Impaired Grds: PK-AD Exp: Permanent	Teacher is not properly certified to teach Elementary content.	This teacher needs to be placed on a permit for elementary education to teach the core subjects. Could this be a co-teacher who just holds the exceptionality certification? If so, needs to be coded correctly. There is no waiver on file with OPP for this teacher.
097-501 WV School for the Deaf-- Secondary	No findings				

PROGRESS REVIEW - APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING.

- It appeared that certification errors will be corrected with the identification of co-teachers, proper coding, and a request for a waiver.
- As per the personnel director, West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) employed a professional personnel (special assistant to the superintendent) who did not hold a West Virginia license/certification. The position was posted without the requirement of a license/certification. State Code §18A-1-1(d) states “Other professional employee“. . . means that person from another profession who is properly licensed and is employed to serve the public schools. . . .”

RECOMMENDATION.

The Team recommended that the WVSDB request a waiver to State Board Policy 5202. When working with special needs students (in this case HI and VI), the content teacher must hold both the content area certification and the special education certification (HI and VI). If they do not, collaboration of the content teacher and special education teacher is required to meet certification requirements for the course taught. At the WVSDB, many content area teachers have a high level fluency in HI and/or VI. In some cases, these content teachers have a higher level fluency than the certified special education teacher who may be newly certified in learning sign language or Braille, are on a permit, etc. If this competency in HI and VI communications of the content teacher can be verified and documented, the Team recommended that the superintendent request a waiver to West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5202 to exempt WVSDB from the required collaboration of the regular teacher and the special education teacher.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind administration reviewed evaluation policies. All professional personnel were evaluated in accordance with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. A WVSDB policy was prepared that established procedures and timelines for service personnel evaluations as specified in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5314. Administrators and supervisors who evaluate personnel were trained on the evaluation procedures and administrative

guidelines. Evaluations were submitted to the personnel office as they were completed and the personnel office maintained a checklist to record evaluations as they were submitted.

The Team reviewed a randomly selected sample of personnel files and evaluations with the following results.

Teachers.

PROGRESSING. All teacher evaluations reviewed by the Team met all requirements of WVBOE Policy 5310 and the WVSDB evaluation policy except for the following.

1. One teacher, Secondary School for the Deaf, had one full evaluation consisting of an evaluation and three supporting observations and one partly completed evaluation consisting of one evaluation and only one supporting observation for the 2010-11 school year.
2. One first year teacher, School for the Blind, had only one observation and no evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year.
3. One first year teacher, School for the Blind, had no observations or evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year.

School Administrators.

COMPLIANCE. All school administrators in the random selection had complete and current evaluations.

Professional Support Personnel.

PROGRESSING. All professional support personnel in the random selection had been evaluated except the Education Specialist for Residential Programs who had no evaluation for the 2010-2011 school year.

Coaches.

PROGRESSING. No 2010-2011 year evaluations were found for a coach (who coached three sports: track, swimming, and cheerleading). Coaches had been evaluated by the athletic director who did not hold an administrator certification. The principals and athletic director are now working as a team in evaluating coaches.

Service Personnel.

PROGRESSING. Two persons in maintenance had no evaluations for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 school years. All other service personnel evaluations reviewed met all requirements of WVSDB policy.

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

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. While the first year teachers were meeting with their mentors as required and were meeting the required timelines, the principal of the School for the Blind stated that he was not involved in any of these meetings as required by W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. Students reported that they knew the superintendent, were comfortable with her, and enjoyed her company. They also said the superintendent was visible on campus.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. An AIDS Education policy had been adopted and published in the Student and Parent Handbook and in the Employee Handbook.

The school administration reported that a WVSDB policy manual had been prepared and was being submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. An up-to-date Student and Parent Handbook was provided to all students and parents in August 2011.

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 WVSDDB develop and implement policies according to the requisites of State Board policies.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. A school policy manual containing the essential policies for the WVSDDB was prepared and submitted to the West Virginia Department of Education and reviewed by the State Board's Legal Services. The policy manual will be submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education for the State Board's approval. The development of a comprehensive policy manual is an ongoing task and other policies will be prepared and included in the manual as needs arise.

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 (WVSDDB) 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

NO CHANGE. The superintendent indicated that the administrative staff for the WVSDDB has been realigned, which streamlined responsibilities rather than reducing the number of administrators. At the time of the progress review the number of administrators remained the same. The superintendent stated that the administrative staff organization was under study.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The director creating the concern among the administrative staff regarding the administrator's duties and influence was no longer a member of the staff.

The superintendent has involved administrative staff in schoolwide projects and decision-making that has led to a more harmonious working relationship among staff members. The administrative staff was working much better as a team with the expectation that this will continue and even get better.

Staff morale appeared to have improved. Principals reported an increased satisfaction in the schools' leadership and direction.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. A Five-Year Strategic Plan had been developed and implemented.

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.)

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The WVSDB established instructional study teams and teachers were involved in multiple aspects of site-based leadership.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The superintendent reported that staff had experienced extensive professional development on using the West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) to guide the curriculum and instruction. The staff worked hard to become knowledgeable of the CSOs and was using the CSOs to guide the curriculum and classroom instruction. Principals reviewed lesson plans regularly to ensure the CSOs were being followed.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. According to the superintendent, professional development on using technology effectively and efficiently (Whiteboards, acuity assessments, WV Writes, etc.) was provided to assist the staff on ways to use technology in the classroom. The school employed three Technology Integration Specialists (TIS) who worked with teachers in classrooms on technology skills and strategies to increase technology application to enhance instruction. The classroom application of instructional technology had improved greatly.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs, worked with the WVSDB to draft admissions procedures. These were being finalized and the procedures were being reviewed by West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Legal Services, and possibly the West Virginia Board of Education.

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) for students attending the WVSDB were reviewed to ensure all students attending the school meet the eligibility requirements. Students who did not meet the eligibility requirements were returned to their home schools.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

COMPLIANCE. The WVSDB staff, under the leadership of the superintendent, prepared a policy manual which contained the essential policies to operate the school. The proposed policy manual was reviewed by West Virginia Department of Education staff and is ready to be presented to the West Virginia Board of Education for approval. The policy for the evaluation of service personnel is one of the new policies that has been prepared and currently being used. The policy manual will be updated with other policies as the need arises.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. Two students were involved in job-shadowing and one student took German at Hampshire County High School. No student at the Schools for the Deaf and the Blind participated in Advanced Placement (AP®) classes at Hampshire County High School.

One student from Hampshire County High School attended the WVSDB 30 percent of the day (School for the Blind). The principal said that Hampshire County was cooperative. The preschool program students at the WVSDB included students from Hampshire County. The WVSDB and Hampshire County will need to improve preschool collaboration.

10. The three schools and multisensory program that make up the WVSDB 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. School staffs were trained in using the West Virginia 21st century content standards and objectives (CSOs) to guide curriculum and classroom instruction. The administrators reported and the Team concurred that as the school staffs collaborate on implementing the CSOs, the curriculum alignment and connections from grade to grade will improve. The superintendent provided opportunities for all the school staffs to work together through bi-monthly staff meetings and additional administrative staff meetings.

The literacy program was consistent at all schools.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

PROGRESSING. The Teams reviewed the three schools comprising the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind and found that the principals were visible in classes, had evaluated teachers, and were interacting with students.

Teachers expressed a great deal of concern about the leadership of the School for the Blind. At least nine of the school's sixteen teachers (56 percent) stated that they did not believe the principal was receptive to their problems and issues and the principal did not take an active role in the school. Teachers stated that the principal was not effective in dealing with discipline and was away from the building extended amounts of time with no way to be contacted in an emergency. Student discipline issues were reportedly given back to the teachers to handle. This principal retired June 30, 2012. It will be essential for an administrator of this school to be involved with and committed to this school.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The student enrollment for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and Blind was 122 on the date of the OPEA Audit Follow-Up review (April 3, 2012).

No study had been done to determine the capacity of the school as it exists today.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) committee remained the “admissions committee” to admit students to the WVSDB. The IEP Committee operated within the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2419.

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 WVSDDB based on the criteria in State Board of Education Policy 2419.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSDDB followed the criteria of 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Remained the same.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The superintendent reported all students enrolled at the WVSDDB in 2011-2012 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The superintendent worked with the West Virginia Department of Education, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Student Support Services, to estimate the amount of tuition that would be required for out-of-state students. In the event an out-of-state student applies to enroll at the WVSDB, the amount of tuition required will be reviewed again at that time and a recommendation on the amount of tuition will be made to the West Virginia Board of Education.

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 WVSDB 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.)

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Remained the same.

§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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Preschool. The classroom rosters for 2011-2012 showed a student enrollment of 23 pre-school students.

Post-secondary. No students were 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

No student enrolled in pre-school classes or in post-secondary classes was 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Remained the same.

§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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2510 prescribes the courses of study for elementary, middle, and high schools in West Virginia. WVSDB followed the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510 for its courses of study.

§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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Remained the same.

- 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The administration of the Outreach Services has been restructured. The part time parent coordinators were replaced with full time Outreach coordinators (from birth to 21) who will work from the WVSDB and regional home bases under the direction of the superintendent of the WVSDB. The remainder of the Outreach process will remain the same.

§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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The sale of a small section of land to the City of Romney was approved and the land was sold. Funds from the sale of the property were deposited in the Land Fund.

§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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

- According to interviews with the personnel director and a review of personnel files, a first year employee receives a letter of a job offer signed by the superintendent, which is pending until approved by the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE). This letter serves as a contract for the first year of employment. A probationary contract is issued for year two and year three. A continuing contract is issued with the fourth year of employment. The probationary and continuing contracts are signed by the appropriate individuals.
- Substitute teachers and other professional substitute personnel receive a job offer letter for initial employment signed by the superintendent. The individual has continuous employment unless his/her name is removed from the substitute list due to not fulfilling the requirements of number of days worked. Substitute personnel do not receive contracts.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

- Teacher contracts included the signatures of the teacher, superintendent (WVSDB), President, West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE), and elected secretary of the WVBE.
- Contracts for contracted services (medical doctor) were signed by the individual contracted and the Director of Finance.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Randomly selected teacher contracts complied with the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-17-8 as stated above.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

West Virginia Code §18-17-8 was followed this year (2011-2012) in the dismissal (non-renewal) of a teacher. The procedures, outlined in W.Va. Code §18-17-8, were inadvertently deleted from the Employee Handbook this year (2011-2012), but will be added in the handbook issued for 2012-2013.

§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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Employment is based upon need as determined by the department heads and principals and approved by the superintendent.

W. Va. Code §18-17-9 was followed in the dismissal of four service personnel (two aide/child care workers and two child care workers).

2. Employment procedures.

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

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Employment procedures were included in the Employment Handbook. The handbook was exemplary and included several State and West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind policies.

3. Written contracts of auxiliary and service personnel per §18-17-9.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

- The WVSDB uses W. Va. Code §18-17-9 in issuing contracts to auxiliary and service personnel. Annually issuing continuing contracts was discontinued.
 - Substitute auxiliary and service personnel receive a job offer letter for initial employment signed by the superintendent. Substitute personnel do not receive contracts.
- 4. Termination procedures of auxiliary and service personnel per §18-17-9.**

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

W. Va. Code §18-17-9 was followed in the recent dismissal (effective at the end of the 2011-2012 school year) of four service personnel employees.

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 WVSDb 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The quality of the curriculum had improved with the new literacy program and the new mathematics program. The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDb) will need to continue the renewed emphasis on curriculum and instruction with demonstrated results of improved student achievement.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSDb was developing a ten-year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). This process will allow consideration of educational opportunities that are consistent with national trends of schools serving the visually and hearing impaired populations. Multiple uses of certain facilities and thoughtful consideration of facilities currently used for the same purpose will enable the WVSDb to operate schools more effectively and efficiently.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The student enrollment for 2011-2012 was 122 in Grades Pre-K through 12. The additional positions that were being discussed and posted during the 2010 Education Performance Audit were not filled. The superintendent has worked closely with the West Virginia Department of Education, Deputy Superintendent, in preparing job descriptions and reviewing staff positions needed. The number of administrative personnel remained the same as during the original Education Performance Audit.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

- According to the personnel director, the superintendent will review, analyze, and evaluate all vacant positions to determine if the position is needed. This will include vacancies in administration and principal positions.
- Personnel changes were made in medical and dental personnel to provide student services, yet be cost effective.

A new organizational chart was in place for the WVSDB; however, the number of administrative positions remained the same.

The WVSDB no longer employed a doctor and a dentist and the services supplied by these two positions were provided through contracted services.

While the organizational chart had been revised, the same number of administrators were employed. **The Team sees a need for a staff member to be responsible for the curriculum of the schools.**

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

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

According to the personnel director, contracts of four service personnel (two aides/child care workers and two child care workers) and one professional personnel (teacher) were not renewed for the 2012-2013 school term. As vacancies occur due to retirements or resignations, the superintendent and the appropriate administrator will review the need for the position (professional and service) and eliminate positions as appropriate.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The organizational structure of the WVSDB was a prominent part of the CEFPP discussion and will continue as the plan evolves. It appeared that instructional units will remain differentiated because of instructional strategies and certifications required of teachers of the two populations (VI and HI). The CEFPP will proceed to consider facilities that can accommodate common needs of both populations, for example, a media center, library, cafeteria, and residence halls. Students and their associated personnel would not be designated by population.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The personnel director indicated that the Outreach Services program (Birth-5) which includes Ski-Hi and Insite was revised to maximize instructional and support services to schools. Originally the program had five full-time positions and 70 part-time positions (parent advisors). All parent advisors were terminated and the positions will be eliminated. Of the five full-time Outreach positions, three individuals have retired. Individuals holding the other two positions plan to transfer. The program will then be redesigned with six regional full-time positions (three deaf/three vision). These positions have been posted along with one full-time internal position. The new Outreach Services program will serve students PreK-12 statewide.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The director of personnel indicated that a newly developed organizational structure put in place by the new school superintendent had been positive and far reaching, specifically in the area of school communication. The superintendent has been well received and is highly respected among staff. She exudes a professional, yet friendly rapport with staff members who seemingly appreciate her efforts to improve the school climate for all personnel. The superintendent has significantly improved the overall operation of the WVSDB. Staff members noted improvements in the short time (July 1, 2011 to April 3, 2012) the superintendent had been at the WVSDB. The staff looks forward to future improvements for students, staff, and advancing the WVSDB to a world class facility.

Further retirements and the right personnel for the vacated position(s) will lead to continued greater staff satisfaction and new personnel commitment to the WVSDB.

The superintendent has transformed the WVSDB in the short time she has served in the position.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

All kitchen staff members (cooks) perform duties of a cafeteria manager and were, in turn, so classified. As vacancies occur, positions will be evaluated to determine if they are needed. Only those determined to be needed will be posted and filled. All cafeterias will be combined into one for the 2012-2013 school year. This should result in greater effectiveness and efficiency in the food service program.

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 WVSDDB will need to examine current ways of operating and develop the capacity to target resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSDDB developed a Five-Year Strategic Plan that guided the operations of the schools to serve the students who are blind and students who are deaf or hard of hearing. The Outreach Services was reorganized with the expectation that parents, children, and schools will be provided better service. A large Strategic Planning Committee was working with the superintendent to determine the school's direction in the next ten years as the committee prepares the school's Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP) and makes recommendations for possible reorganization of the WVSDDB.

The CEFP development is an opportunity to examine the configuration of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDDB) and restructure the schools according to educational settings of comparable facilities throughout the nation. Many of the current WVSDDB facilities have significant issues that can only be resolved through the CEFP. The development and implementation of the CEFP will resolve the extensive facility problems, provide an educational environment that supports 21st century learning, and move the WVSDDB into a new direction while sustaining its origin.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

2. The System of School Support and the Superintendent of the WVSDB develop a timeline for addressing the issues noted in this report.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

3. The System of School Support and the Superintendent of the WVSDb provide written, data based reports that specify degree of progress.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The policy manual was under review by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Legal Services.

- 4.2. The WVSDb restructure and reorganize the current organizational chart to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the WVSDb.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 4.3. The WVSDb update job descriptions of administrators and clearly delineate duties and responsibilities.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 4.4. The WVSDb function as a professional learning community in which mutual cooperation, emotional support, and personal growth are demonstrated.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 4.5. The WVSDb strengthen the curriculum and instructional practices to improve student educational opportunities and achievement.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. A new literacy program and a new mathematics curriculum were in place.

- 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 collaboratively 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 WVSDDB 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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. A Safety Access Plan (SAP) had been developed. The WVSDDB was developing the CEFP.

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.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

This report details a Progress Review conducted April 2012 of the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind.

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 West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

This will be examined as Policy 2320 undergoes revision.

SECTION VI

WEST VIRGINIA SCHOOLS FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND

National and State Experts for the West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) Followed by an OEPA Progress Analysis of the WVSDB's Action Regarding the Short Term and Long Term Recommendations of the Committee of Experts.

December 2010 Report

A team of national and State experts in educational programs and residential facilities for the visually impaired and hearing impaired examined all aspects of the WVSDB to provide recommendations for improvement. This section includes the December 2010 Team of Experts Short and Long Term Recommendations followed by an OEPA status report on each recommendation.

Short and Long Term Opportunities Suggestions

Short Term:

1. Revise the organizational chart to have more of a hierarchy of reporting to the Superintendent. It was evident to the three experts that strong leadership was needed from the Superintendent of the Deaf and Blind School and a school leadership team identified by the Superintendent.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The organizational chart was revised and will be undergoing another revision.

2. Create from existing staff a person designated to lead the curriculum and instruction efforts. Examine the staffing needs of the school and decide which positions are to be retained and which ones should be reduced. Additional positions should only be added after staff reductions are identified.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A person from the existing WVSDB staff was designated to lead the curriculum and instruction efforts and filled the position from February 2011 until September 2011 and then left the WVSDB. The leadership role in curriculum and instruction efforts was assigned to the three principals of their respective school. The OEPA Team concurs with the recommendation that a person needs to be designated to lead curriculum and

instruction. The Team further believes that this individual must possess the credentials, background, knowledge, skills, and beliefs for the position. The Team appreciates the superintendent's cautious approach in this critical position.

It is recommended that the superintendent make another attempt to fill this position.

3. Begin to gather multiple sources of data to illustrate the progress or lack of across various programs and initiatives. Publish a brochure that provides transparent data regarding the Schools for the Deaf and Blind. Example: 138 full time students on campus. 138 served through Outreach services and another 1200 through WVU clinics, 600 students that are deaf or blind in the public schools of West Virginia, 190 staff. In addition, the school should welcome accountability and be judged by the common state standards in the area of curriculum and instruction. The school must also constantly monitor its progress on the state standards and compare its progress to other like schools in the nation.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSDDB gathered data from multiple sources (WESTEST, Acuity, WV Writes, etc.). The school now uses the common state standards (West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives) in the areas of curriculum and instruction. The WVSDDB monitors progress on the State standards with the Acuity benchmarking tests.

4. Request permission for an advisory council to be established to provide regular oversight, progress monitoring and serve as a liaison to the West Virginia State Board of Education. Membership of this body should have representation from the State Board, WVDE, school employees, local stakeholders and some elected officials.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A Board of Advisors for the WVSDDB was selected and awaiting West Virginia Board of Education approval.

5. The expansion of shared services with the LEA (Hampshire County) should be expanded in the areas of management of programs, Career and Technical Education, Transportation, and instructional programs. Example: Currently an ASL class is done with Roane County schools.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Some shared services with Hampshire County Schools were taking place, but the superintendent was proceeding slowly and systematically to get the WVSDDB in order before undertaking major efforts to expand shared services.

6. The expansion of shared services with the LEA (Hampshire County) should be expanded in the areas of program management, Career and Technical Education, transportation, instructional programs and professional development. Example: Currently an ASL class is done with Roane County schools. In addition; the Hampshire County School System and the Deaf and Blind School will develop a long term plan to share top level administrative personnel (See Item 3 under long term).

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Some shared services with Hampshire County Schools were taking place, but the superintendent was proceeding slowly and trying to get the WVSDDB in order before making major efforts to expand shared services.

7. The budget should be broken down into three categories: Instructional services, residential services, and support/administrative services. Expenditures could be easily analyzed to determine significant trends and to better forecast impending costs that are on the horizon.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A budget for the WVSDDB had been developed. Twenty-nine cost centers were being used to organize accountability data on how money was being spent rather than using just three categories.

8. Clearly define and communicate eligibility criteria to all parties in the organization as well as outside entities.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Eligibility criteria were clearly defined and distributed to all parties.

9. Examine the budget for travel for the bi-monthly trips home to determine a cost analysis of providing such transportation and the cost for fewer “goings home” if funds become restricted.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A cost analysis was done, and the school calendar for the 2012-2013 school year has six fewer “home goings”. This was done as a cost savings matter.

10. Request permission to develop a marketing campaign to convey the services and programs available to all state residents.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

New brochures were prepared and distributed. A contract was established for the construction of a new interactive website. The superintendent prepared and distributes the newsletter, Monthly Updates, to staff and parents.

11. Conduct regular (weekly) administrative staff meetings to establish a clear line of communication, as well as to utilize staff to complete the policy manual process.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The superintendent meets with the entire administrative staff bi-weekly and meets with principals on the intervening weeks.

12. Finish PK work by January (from pg. 4) of Strategic Response Document.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The preschool was moved from the second floor to the first floor.

13. All administrators need training in how to effectively evaluate personnel (WVBE Policy 5310) with regard to writing and implementing improvement plans for educators...perhaps contact Phil Brown.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

During the opening of staff meetings in August 2011, administrative staff was provided training on implementing West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 to effectively evaluate personnel.

Long Term:

1. Strategic Planning: Engage a facilitator for a strategic planning effort that would examine internal data across all organizational functions and external trends in this area of educational providers. Include membership from the school administration, faculty and service personnel, local stakeholders, elected officials and experts that can advise regarding the opportunities available in this educational setting across the nation. Be sure that accreditation requirements and the CEFP, are an integral part of this process.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A Strategic Planning Committee was formed to guide efforts in gathering information about programs and future program needs that will be used in preparing a ten-year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP).

2. Building Utilization: Engage an architect or similar qualified professional to study the educational and service usage of the current facilities to determine the cost effectiveness of the present usage and to make recommendations regarding such future usage.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

An architectural firm was contracted to study the usage of the current facilities and cost effectiveness of continuing to use existing facilities. This information will be provided to the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP) Committee to guide recommendations for preparation of the CEFP.

3. Collaborative Agreements: The Superintendent of the Hampshire County School System and the Superintendent of the School for the Deaf and Blind have agreed to sign a written Memorandum of Understanding which will identify specific services they will share beginning next year. These services will include but not be limited to educational programs for students, busing of students, professional development of staff, facilities, purchasing, and any other joint ventures which will provide students better educational services. In addition a long term plan will be developed to share top level administrators in such a manner that the school systems will be more efficient and effective in their use of funds and services for the students served. Develop and expand collaborative agreements with vocational rehabilitation, the Hampshire County School System, and PART C providers of IDEA. Example: Currently an ASL class is done with Roane County schools.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

Some of these services were shared between the WVSBD and Hampshire County Schools, but a Memorandum of Understanding had not been developed or signed.

4. Emerging Trends: Immediately examine emerging trends(although part of the strategic planning process) to determine if any financial unrecognized expense or staffing issues could result in the next two fiscal years. (multi-sensory costs per student exceed 150,000 per year: estimate).

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The superintendent was examining trends in education for determining the future direction of the WVSD. Some of the areas being studied included realigning the staff to better serve students and cut costs, replacing the aging bus fleet, and the increasing food cost and using State contracts in purchasing to reduce costs.

5. Professional Development Schools: Examine the development of a professional development school for students that are enrolled in programs for the deaf and blind in other state colleges and universities as well as our own.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSD was developing a Center for Excellence for Teaching and Learning which will work in cooperation with colleges and universities providing sites for student teaching experiences, practicums, etc. Five professional development activities were planned for the summer 2012.

6. Outreach Services: Determine the core purpose for this service and then begin to train outreach providers regarding the philosophy of serving students across the state and providing information regarding the services of the WVSD. Approximately 500 students across the state need services for deafness or blindness. Currently 5 personnel on staff across state with 70 parent advisors.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The part time coordinators were replaced with five full-time coordinators who will work with parents of students in grades preschool to 12 and ages birth to 5 and county school systems to provide information about services offered by the WVSD.

7. American Sign Language Certified: All staff should be certified in American Sign Language. This provision currently exists but the monitoring of such agreements to obtain certification needs to be a priority. This requirement should be placed in the strategic plan and the requirement carefully monitored to make sure all staff members comply with the requirement.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A school communication policy was developed which requires all staff to become proficient in American Sign Language (ASL) to enhance communications between staff and students.

8. Staff with Deaf and Blind: Hire more staff that are either deaf or blind to serve as teachers, but more important; as role models of success. There exists a possibility of 12 retirees this year. Include administrators of each respective school in the

recruitment and hiring process. Additionally, a national search should be conducted via online job postings.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The school targeted personnel recruiting to higher education institutions that prepare teachers to teach a discipline and have training in working with deaf and/or blind students.

9. Pay Scales: Examine pay scales of the WVSDDB in comparison to Hampshire County Schools.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A study has been completed on salaries paid by WVSDDB and Hampshire County Schools and pay equity has been established between the two systems.

10. Resource Center for Entire State: possibility to conduct evaluations and screenings for LEA's. Conduct summer programs for deaf and blind currently served in LEA's. Conduct parent trainings and information sessions.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

A Resource Center – State Diagnostic Center – was established to conduct evaluations and screenings for LEAs and functioned until October 2011 at which time the psychologist working at the center left. The center was not active at the time of the OEPA Progress Review.

11. Credit Recovery: offer credit recovery in the summer for Deaf and Blind students.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSDDB had not pursued a credit recovery program.

12. Extended School Year: investigate possibility of this option.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

The WVSDDB provided a two week extended school year for students in the multisensory program from across West Virginia. A one week summer school was provided for other groups of students.

13. Enrichment Weekends: for deaf and blind and parents across state.

PROGRESS REVIEW – APRIL 2012

An Enrichment Weekend was held March 23 – 25, 2012 and 20 families with young children (less than age 5) attended.

SUMMARY – JULY 2012

The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) has undergone a massive transformation after the release of the October 2010 Education Performance Audit Report. A renewed atmosphere, appearance, and culture had been restored at the administrative building and throughout the schools. This is ascribed to a new superintendent, employed July 1, 2011, who is visionary and leading the WVSDB's evolving programs and structure consistent with national facilities of similar purpose and mission. In this endeavor, the superintendent remains true to the statutory and fundamental principles on which the WVSDB was based.

Progress Indicators

The WVSDB demonstrated substantial progress in the following areas.

1. **Climate and Culture.** Personnel changes and expectations for professional demeanors and interactions brought about purposeful activities and harmonious relationships.
2. **Budget/Finance.** A detailed budget was developed and each administrator has authority and accountability for their funds.
3. **Curriculum and Instruction.**
 - Adopted literacy and mathematics programs.
 - Provided abundant instructional materials.
 - Improved curriculum and instruction.
 - Various technologies applied in instruction.
 - Teachers were actively instructing and students were engaged.
 - West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) were being used to guide the curriculum.
4. **Facilities.**
 - Developed Security Access Plan.
 - Instituted campus security procedures.
 - Actively developing Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP).
5. **Policy Manual Development.** A policy manual had been developed.
6. **Personnel.** Major personal areas had been corrected. Evaluations had been completed in accordance with WVBOE Policy 5310.
7. **Five-Year Strategic Plan.** A strategic plan was developed and in place.
8. **Leadership.** The administration and staff were working better as a team.

On-going Improvement Indicators

1. Curriculum.
 - Strengthen the curriculum and challenge students in problem solving and higher order thinking skills.
 - Prepare graduates with the skills to succeed in post-secondary education and/or skills for the job market.
 - Preschool program needs support.
2. Facilities.
 - Implement the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP). The resolution of many facility issues will depend on completion and approval of the CEFP and procuring funding for the projects.
 - Dormitory for the Blind – Provide assistance with meals for younger residents, orchestrate more activities for older residents, provide greater assistance with homework, and provide more life skills to prepare students for independent living.
3. Finance. Develop Purchasing Procedure Policy.
4. Guidance and Counseling. Strengthen the working relationship with parents and the communities and assist in promoting students' and parents' expectations for employment and post-secondary education opportunities.

OEPA Recommendation

The OEPA recommends that The West Virginia Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (WVSDB) proceed with the work instituted by the superintendent of the WVSDB and show improved student achievement and improved enrollment at the end of the 2012-2013 school year.

It is further recommended that:

1. The 10-year Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP) be completed during the 2012-2013 school year and the WVSDB begin the implementation phase of the CEFP.
2. A Director of Curriculum for the WVSDB be assigned who possesses the skills and qualifications essential to the position. This would be included in the organizational chart that is undergoing development.

It is advised that in following this recommendation, the superintendent secure the most qualified person for this position even if it involves reposting and recruiting.

3. The OEPA conduct an Education Performance Audit during the 2014-2015 school year to ascertain that progress noted in this report has been sustained and extended, student preparation for post-secondary education and/or employment has improved, student achievement has improved, enrollment has increased, and curriculum and instruction continue to be challenging.