



**Office of Education  
Performance Audits**

**FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR**

**RIPLEY HIGH SCHOOL**

**JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**JULY 2010**

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Ripley High School in Jackson County was conducted April 2, 2009.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Ripley High School in Jackson County was conducted May 24, 2010. The purpose of the follow-up was to verify correction of the findings identified during the original Education Performance Audit. The review was in accordance with West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 which specify that a school that meets or exceeds the performance and progress standards but has other deficiencies shall remain on full accreditation status and a county school district shall remain on full approval status for the remainder of the accreditation period and shall have an opportunity to correct those deficiencies. The Code and policy include the provision that a school “. . . does not have any deficiencies which would endanger student health or safety or other extraordinary circumstances as defined by the West Virginia Board of Education.”

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

This section presents the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability and the Education Performance Audit Team's findings.

### 35 JACKSON COUNTY

Blaine C. Hess, Superintendent

### 502 RIPLEY HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Todd Layhew, Principal

Grades 09 - 12

Enrollment 979 (2<sup>nd</sup> month 2006-2007 enrollment report)

### WESTEST 2006-2007

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
<b>Mathematics</b>								
All	220	226	221	97.78	71.88	Yes	Yes	✓
White	218	224	219	97.76	71.62	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	75	78	75	96.15	54.16	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	35	35	35	100.00	25.71	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	220	226	221	97.78	75.11	Yes	Yes	✓
White	218	224	219	97.76	74.88	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	75	78	75	96.15	55.55	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	35	35	35	100.00	20.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

\*\* -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 89.6%**

**35 JACKSON COUNTY**  
Blaine C. Hess, Superintendent  
**502 RIPLEY HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement**  
Todd Layhew, Principal  
Grades 09 - 12  
Enrollment 964 (2<sup>nd</sup> month 2007-2008 enrollment report)

**WESTEST 2007-2008**

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
<b>Mathematics</b>								
All	232	238	233	97.89	69.73	Yes	Yes	✓
White	230	236	231	97.88	69.46	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	84	87	84	96.55	58.02	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	26	26	24	92.30	29.16	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	232	238	233	97.89	73.24	Yes	Averaging	✓
White	230	236	231	97.88	73.00	Yes	Averaging	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	84	87	85	97.70	59.75	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	26	26	25	96.15	24.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

\*\* -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 86.4%**

**35 JACKSON COUNTY**  
Blaine C. Hess, Superintendent  
**502 RIPLEY HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement**  
Todd Layhew, Principal  
Grades 09 - 12  
Enrollment 997 (2<sup>nd</sup> month 2008-2009 enrollment report)

**WESTEST 2008-2009**

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
<b>Mathematics</b>								
All	222	225	217	96.44	57.47	Yes	Yes	✓
White	219	222	214	96.39	57.34	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	66	66	61	92.42	44.26	By Average	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	24	25	23	92.00	22.72	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
<b>Reading/Language Arts</b>								
All	222	225	218	96.88	44.65	Yes	Yes	✓
White	219	222	215	96.84	43.86	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	66	66	61	92.42	24.59	By Average	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	24	25	23	92.00	9.09	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

\* -- 0 students in subgroup

\*\* -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed  
Graduation Rate = 79.6%**

## ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

### Below Standard.

#### 5.1.1. Achievement.

Ripley High School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts for two consecutive years. Ripley High School achieved AYP in the all students (AS) and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups in reading/language arts only by averaging, and in the SES subgroup in mathematics by application of the confidence interval. It is further noted that the special education students (SE) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored far below the State's percent proficient level in mathematics and reading/language arts. A measurable gap in student achievement existed between the SES subgroup and that of the AS and W subgroups. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plans and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery in both mathematics and reading: Grade 10 – 30.26 percent in mathematics and 26.75 percent in reading. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education-Performance Based Accreditation System* in Section §126-13-6 provides:

6.1. A system of points on an index will be used to assess and weigh annual performance measures for state accreditation of schools and approval of school systems that gives credit or points on an index to prevent any one measure alone from causing a school to achieve less than full accreditation status or a school system from achieving less than full approval status: Provided, That a school or school system that achieves AYP is eligible for no less than full accreditation or full approval status, as applicable, and the system established pursuant to this subsection shall only apply to schools and school systems that do not achieve AYP.

The index showed that Ripley High School performed within the point range (633 – 542) for full accreditation status.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided as reported by the principal.

1. English Programs of Studies.
2. Accelerated Reader.
3. Writing Training.
4. WESTEST Interventions.
5. Cognitive Tutor.
6. Acuity Training.
7. West Virginia Science Teachers Association Conference.
8. National Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Conference.
9. Edline.
10. WESTEST Data Disaggregation.
11. Webquest Introduction to Teach21.
12. Thinkfinity.
13. Curriculum Prioritization.
14. Pacing and Unit Development.
15. Jackson County Technology Academy.
16. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Principal's Academy.
17. Lezotte Strategies.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**BELOW STANDARD.** The 2008-2009 school year was the third consecutive year that Ripley High School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts. Achievement declined sharply in both mathematics and reading/language arts from the 2007-2008 school year to the 2008-2009 school year. The graduation rate declined from 86.4 percent in 2008 to 79.6 percent in 2009.

A new principal was placed at Ripley High School for the 2009-2010 school year. The Team collected information, conducted observations, and interviewed school staff and found that the principal had a clear vision of the direction for the school to increase student achievement. Ripley High School met the standards of Policy 2320 and the West Virginia Board of Education granted the school Full Accreditation status in December 2009.

## **EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

### **HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS**

**Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.**

#### **7.1. Curriculum**

**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)**

Four teachers were not varying instructional strategies. Lecture was the main instructional strategy in those classes.

#### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** Three of the four teachers originally cited were not present the day of the follow-up Education Performance Audit; however, the principal provided a clear and concise plan for ensuring that all teachers will vary instructional strategies and maximize student time on task.

#### **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.**

At least 50 percent of the staff could not articulate the goals of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

#### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**COMPLIANCE.** All teachers interviewed discussed the goals and action steps of the Five-Year Strategic Plan and described how the goals were being incorporated into the classroom curriculum.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.** The declining and low WESTEST scores were indicative that the curricular content was lacking. Other data, including advanced placement test (APT) percentage of students with a 3 or higher on AP exams and the percentage of students enrolled in developmental courses in college, also pointed to a weakness in curriculum. The Team recommended that Jackson County curricular staff be a presence at Ripley High School to closely and consistently monitor curricular practices, student and staff engagement, and a rigorous curriculum for students.

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.** The Jackson County curricular staff had been an active presence in the school and provided curricular and instructional support.

**7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** While technology was being used and the Team observed a waiting list for the computer laboratories, the Team believed that the access to the computer laboratories was not what was in the best interest of the school based on the school data. For example, the English and mathematics classes were not given priority in scheduling for the computer time. Electronic whiteboards were not adequately mounted; therefore, teachers reported that they were not using them. Teachers said they had requested staff development on using the whiteboards. The Team recommended that priority be given to the classes that are directly affected by adequate yearly progress (AYP).

### **FOLLOW-UP REVIEW**

**RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.** Priority for the computer laboratories was given to the classes directly affected by adequate yearly progress (AYP). The electronic whiteboards were mounted, teachers were provided staff development on using the whiteboards, and the Team verified that teachers used the whiteboards in instruction.

## INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY

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

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Ripley High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Jackson County is obligated to follow the Indicators of Efficiency noted by the Team. Indicators of Efficiency shall not be used to affect the approval status of Jackson County or the accreditation status of the schools.

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

The school's Five-Year Strategic Plan must be a driving force that guides the school's curriculum and all teachers must apply the goals and action steps of the plan for improved student achievement. It is essential that the plan be communicated to staff to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable of action steps and apply the plan.

The administration must ensure that all teachers are varying instructional strategies regularly. This may be done through classroom walkthroughs, teacher observations, and supported through targeted staff development.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The Five-Year Strategic Plan was a driving force for the school. The new principal regularly monitored whether teachers varied instructional strategies. The administration and teachers must continue to employ high quality, research-based instruction to ensure that all students receive the necessary instruction to increase achievement.**

## **BUILDING CAPACITY TO CORRECT DEFICIENCIES**

West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 establishes that the needed resources are available to assist the school or school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies identified in the assessment and accountability process. To assist Ripley High School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

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

The Team determined that the Jackson County curricular staff must be actively involved with Ripley High School to correct the identified deficiencies and improve student performance.

The Team recommended that the Jackson County School System Superintendent and the school administrator contact Dr. Karen L. Huffman, Assistant to the State Superintendent, West Virginia Department of Education, Division of Educator Quality and System Support at 304-558-3199 to arrange a School Support System for correcting the deficiencies and improving student and school performance.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The Team believed that the school administration has the capacity to ensure that student achievement will increase through high quality instruction and varied instructional strategies.**

## IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCE NEEDS

A thorough and efficient system of schools requires the provision of an adequate level of appropriately managed resources. The West Virginia Board of Education adopted resource evaluation as a part of the accreditation and evaluation process. This process is intended to meaningfully evaluate the needs for facilities, personnel, curriculum, equipment and materials in each of the county's schools and how those impact program and student performance.

**19.1. Facilities, equipment, and materials.** Facilities and equipment specified in Policy 6200, Chapters 1 through 14, are available in all schools, classrooms, and other required areas. A determination will be made by using the Process for Improving Education (W.Va. Code §18-2E-5) whether any identified deficiencies adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program if it is below the West Virginia Board of Education standards due to inadequacies or inappropriate management in the areas of facilities, equipment, and materials. The Education Performance Audit Teams shall utilize an assessment instrument for the evaluation of school facilities which generally follows the requirements of Policy 6200. Note: Corrective measures to be taken in response to any identified resource deficiency will of necessity be subject to the feasibility of modifying existing facilities, consideration of alternative methods of instructional delivery, availability of funding, and prioritization of educational needs through Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plans and the West Virginia School Building Authority. This policy does not change the authority, judgment, or priorities of the School Building Authority of West Virginia who is statutorily responsible for prioritizing "Need" for the purpose of funding school improvements or school construction in the State of West Virginia or the prerogative of the Legislature in providing resources. (Policy 6200 and *Tomblin v. Gainer*)

According to the items checked in the School Facilities Evaluation Checklist, the school was below standard in the following areas. The principal checked and the Team confirmed the following school facility resource needs.

- 19.1.1. School location.** The site was not large enough for future expansion, was not removed from undesirable noises, and the recreational areas were not separated from streets or parking.
- 19.1.6. Grades 9 through 12 computer laboratory.** The computer laboratories were not adequate in size and adequate work stations (20) were not provided and at least 4 shared printers.
- 19.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms.** Storage was not adequate in all classrooms.
- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility was not adequate in size and did not have black-out areas.

- 19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science facilities were not adequate in size, were not located with easy access to outdoor activities, and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building. The following equipment and materials were not available in all science facilities: sink, hot and cold water, gas, DC current, air vacuum, ventilation fume hood, sufficient laboratory workspace, balance cases, and main gas shut-off.
- 19.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** Speakers and distance learning capabilities were not provided.
- 19.1.14. Food service.** The food service area could not accommodate 3/8ths of the student body. A teachers' dining area was not provided. Food and non-food storage was not adequate. A locker/dressing room was not provided.
- 19.1.16. Grades 7-12 vocational.** The Family Consumer Science facility and the Career Technical Education facilities were not of adequate size.

### **FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION**

**The following equipment/materials had been provided following the original Education Performance Audit. The other facility resource needs remained as previously identified.**

- 19.1.6. Adequate computer work stations and at least four shared printers.**
- 19.1.11. The science facilities were located with easy access to outdoor activities and were isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building; sink; hot and cold water; gas; DC current; air vacuum; ventilation fume hood; sufficient laboratory workspace; balance cases; and main gas shut-off. New science laboratory facilities had been added at the school.**

### **EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION**

**One of the most important elements in the Education Performance Audit process is monitoring student progress through early detection and intervention programs.**

The School Support System presented under the Capacity Building Section will be an invaluable resource in guiding school improvement

### **FOLLOW-UP TEAM SUMMARY**

**The Team believed that Ripley High School was progressing in providing high quality instruction. The principal had a clear vision and the ability to guide teachers to improve student achievement.**

### SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
35-502 Ripley High	Full Accreditation			

#### Education Performance Audit Summary

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the Full Accreditation status of Ripley High School.