



**INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT**

**FOR**

**RIPLEY HIGH SCHOOL**

**JACKSON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**JUNE 2009**

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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## INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Ripley High School in Jackson County was conducted on April 2, 2009. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was to investigate the reasons for performance and progress that are persistently below standard and to make recommendations to the school and school system, as appropriate, and to the West Virginia Board of Education on such measures as it considers necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the standard.

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Five-Year Strategic Improvement Plan, interviewed school personnel and school system administrators, observed classrooms, and examined school records. The review was limited in scope and concentrated on the subgroups that failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Allen D. Brock, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Vickie Baker, Coordinator,  
Office of Assessment/Accountability

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Beth Cipoletti, Coordinator,  
Office of Assessment/Accountability

## TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Don P. Bower	Assistant Superintendent	Mason County Schools
Cathi L. Bradley	Elementary School Principal	Elk Elementary Center Kanawha County
Athanasia P. Butcher	High School Principal	Gilmer County High School Gilmer County
Michael F. DeRose	Junior High School Assistant Principal	Van Devender Junior High School Wood County
Ryan K. Haught	Assistant Director	Mid-Ohio Valley Technical Institute Pleasants County
Jean A. Mewshaw	Junior High School Principal	Edison Junior High School Wood County
Dana Snyder	High School Principal	Lincoln County High School Lincoln County Schools

### 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%**

## Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class

<b>Mathematics</b>											
<b>Class</b>	<b>Tested Enr.</b>	<b>FAY Enr.</b>	<b>Tested</b>	<b>FAY Tested</b>	<b>Part. Rate</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Below Mastery</b>	<b>Mastery</b>	<b>Above Mastery</b>	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
10	238	232	233	228	97.90	6.14	24.12	42.11	21.93	5.70	69.74

<b>Reading</b>											
<b>Class</b>	<b>Tested Enr.</b>	<b>FAY Enr.</b>	<b>Tested</b>	<b>FAY Tested</b>	<b>Part. Rate</b>	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Below Mastery</b>	<b>Mastery</b>	<b>Above Mastery</b>	<b>Distinguished</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
10	238	232	233	228	97.90	5.26	21.49	35.53	25.88	11.84	73.25

Enr. - Enrollment  
 FAY - Full Academic Year  
 Part. - Participation

<b>NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2008-2009</b>			
High School	Number of AP Courses Offered	Number of Honors Courses Offered	Number of College Credit Courses Offered
Ripley High	12	12	4

Advanced Placement Courses: AP English Language, AP English Literature, AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Environmental Science, AP Calculus, AP Government/Politics, AP U.S. History, AP World History, AP Psychology, AP Art, and AP Statistics (every other year).

Honors Courses: English 9, English 10, English 11, Physical Science 9, Biology, Chemistry, Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, World History, 20/21<sup>st</sup> Century.

College Credit Courses: College English 101, College English 102, British Literature 261, College Algebra 126.

Ripley High School offered students a significant number of higher level courses.

<b>ADVANCED PLACEMENT TEST (APT) (COLLEGE BOARD)</b>					
Ripley High	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Test Takers (%)	5.5	14.3	0.8	17.2	40.0
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Test Takers (%)	17.8	21.2	71.6	50.6	44.4
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	*NA	*NA	*NA	0.0	50
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	*NA	*NA	*NA	41.9	20.4
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	48.6	47.7	80.7	33	38.5

\*NA – Not Available.

Ripley High School's percent of advanced placement (AP) test takers with a score of 3 or higher was slightly low. The principal and teachers needed to implement instructional rigor in the AP classes to increase the percentage of students scoring 3 or higher on the AP exams.

<b>ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2007</b>		
	Number of High School Graduates 2006-07	Overall College Going Rate
State	17,914	57.5
Ripley High	224	58.5

Source: West Virginia College Going Rates By County and High School Fall 2007, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

Ripley High School's overall college going rate was relatively consistent with the State's average.

<b>HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSE FALL 2005</b>			
	% in Developmental Mathematics	% in Developmental English	% in Any Developmental Course(s)
State	30.3%	15.6%	34.1%
Ripley High	33.3%	15.1%	36.6%

Source: Performance of High School Graduates Enrolled in Public Colleges and Universities, Fall 2005. (December 2006) West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

Ripley High School had a higher percentage of high school graduates enrolled in developmental mathematics than the state, a slightly lower percentage enrolled in developmental English than the state, and a higher percentage enrolled in any developmental course than the state.



## 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 Plan 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.

## **EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

### **INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS**

**The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Ripley High School had undertaken initiatives for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The prominent initiatives and activities included the following.**

- 7.1.3. Learning environment.** The school environment was positive and educationally stimulating. The staff and students displayed a great deal of respect for one another and worked in harmony.
- 7.1.9. Programs of study.** The Team commended the high number and diverse Advanced Placement (AP), honors, and dual credit classes taught at the school.
- 7.1.11. Guidance and advisement.** The Team commended the LINKS (Learning Individualized Needs Knowledge and Skills) program used by the counselors. This program provided training for students in decision making, stress/anger management, goal setting, leadership, conflict resolution, and career planning. The program assisted students in identifying and addressing his/her unique academic, career, and personal/social needs.

## 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.

#### 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.

## 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.
- 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).

## 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.

## 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.

### **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.

### **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**

## **Education Performance Audit Summary**

The Team identified two high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress to meet 5.1.1 Achievement.

They include the following:

7.1.5. Instructional strategies.

7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans.

The Team presented three commendations, two recommendations, noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Ripley High School's Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and progress standards related to student and school performance. The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Ripley High School in improvement efforts. Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5, the school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report.

Section 17.10. of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 states:

If during an on-site review, a school or county board is found to be in noncompliance with one or more standards, the school and county electronic strategic improvement plans must be revised and shall be submitted to the West Virginia Board of Education within 30 days of receipt of the draft written report. The plans shall include objectives, a time line, a plan for evaluation of the success of the improvements, a cost estimate and a date certain for achieving full accreditation and/or full approval status as applicable.

Based upon the results of the Education Performance Audit, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education direct Ripley High School and Jackson County to revise the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan within 30 days and correct the findings noted in the report by the next accreditation cycle.