



INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

T. A. LOWERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

JEFFERSON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

FEBRUARY 2012

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of T. A. Lowery Elementary School in Jefferson County was conducted November 1, 2011. 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 declined 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.

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 – Matthew Dotson, Coordinator,
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TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Leslie Wade Armentrout	Elementary School Principal	Moorefield Elementary Hardy County
Paula J. Athey	Primary School Principal	Wiley Ford Primary Mineral County
Julie E. Mancini	Elementary School Principal	Big Elm Elementary Harrison County
Jeff A. Pancione	Elementary School Principal	Augusta Elementary Hampshire County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

37 JEFFERSON COUNTY

Susan Wall, Superintendent

209 T. A. LOWERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Passed

Kristen Martin, Principal

Grades PK - 05

Enrollment 732 (2nd month 2009-2010 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2009-2010

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
Mathematics								
All	268	292	288	98.63	52.65	Yes	Yes	✓
White	236	252	249	98.80	54.93	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	13	17	17	100.00	23.07	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	14	17	16	94.11	53.84	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	49	54	52	96.29	27.65	Yes	NA	✓
Low SES	93	107	105	98.13	35.16	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	268	292	288	98.63	40.53	Yes	Yes	✓
White	236	252	249	98.80	42.91	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	13	17	17	100.00	7.69	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	14	17	16	94.11	30.76	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	49	54	52	96.29	23.40	Yes	NA	✓
Low SES	93	107	105	98.13	21.97	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 98.6%

37 JEFFERSON COUNTY

Susan Wall, Superintendent

209 T. A. LOWERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Kristen Martin, Principal

Grades PK - 05

Enrollment 583 (2nd month 2010-2011 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2010-2011

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
Mathematics								
All	194	209	207	99.04	33.67	Yes	Confidence Interval - Averaging	✓
White	167	177	176	99.43	34.93	Yes	Confidence Interval - Averaging	✓
Black	11	13	12	92.30	0.00	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	10	11	11	100.00	50.00	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	42	46	44	95.65	17.07	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	86	93	92	98.92	32.55	Yes	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	194	209	207	99.04	39.37	Yes	No	✗
White	167	177	176	99.43	42.16	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	11	13	12	92.30	18.18	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	10	11	11	100.00	30.00	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	42	46	44	95.65	17.07	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	86	93	92	98.92	32.55	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 98.9%

T. A. LOWERY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class

Mathematics											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
03	72	66	71	65	98.61	32.31	50.77	4.62	7.69	4.62	16.92
04	76	70	75	70	98.68	31.43	31.43	27.14	7.14	2.86	37.14
05	61	58	61	58	100.00	17.24	34.48	24.14	13.79	10.34	48.28

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
03	72	66	71	65	98.61	33.85	20.00	23.08	18.46	4.62	46.15
04	76	70	75	70	98.68	40.00	34.29	14.29	10.00	1.43	25.71
05	61	58	61	58	100.00	25.86	25.86	20.69	22.41	5.17	48.28

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

The following charts show the actual number of students proficient and not proficient in mathematics and reading/language arts out of the number enrolled for the full academic year (FAY).

Mathematics			
	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Proficient	Number Not Proficient
All Students	194	65	129
White Students	167	58	109
Special Education	42	7	35
SES	86	28	58

Reading/Language Arts			
	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Proficient	Number Not Proficient
All Students	194	76	118
White Students	167	70	97
Special Education	42	7	35
SES	86	28	58

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Achieved Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

This is the 1st year that T.A. Lowery Elementary School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in one or more subgroups designated in 5.1.1. Achievement. T.A. Lowery Elementary School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the all students (AS) subgroup in reading/language arts and in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics. T.A. Lowery Elementary achieved AYP in the AS subgroup in mathematics and in the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval and/or averaging. T.A. Lowery achieved AYP in the SES subgroup in reading/language arts by safe harbors.

Although not large enough to constitute a subgroup for accountability the racial/ethnicity black (B), Hispanic (H), and special education (SE) subgroups need attention and plans for improved performance. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups, as well as all subgroups with low percent proficient and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery and novice in both mathematics and reading: Grade 3 – 83.08 percent in mathematics and 53.85 percent in reading; Grade 4 – 62.86 percent in mathematics and 74.29 percent in reading; Grade 5 – 51.72 percent in mathematics and 51.72 percent in reading. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

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

1. Anti-Bullying Training.
2. TechSteps.
3. Live Grades.
4. Strategies for Behavior Disorders.
5. Pre-K Symposium.
6. New Teacher/Mentor Support.
7. Destiny.
8. Cultural Diversity.
9. Team Building.
10. Kagan Cooperative Strategies.
11. School-Based Technology.
12. Speech Pathologist Meeting.
13. Fine Arts Festival.
14. American Sign Language II.

15. WESTEST2 Training.
16. Online IEP.
17. America Competes.
18. Special Education Classroom Strategies.
19. K-02 Music Seminar.
20. Early Learning Scale for Pre-K.
21. Reading for ESL Students.
22. STAR Assessment.
23. Compass Learning/Odyssey.
24. Everyday Math.
25. WVEIS Health on WOW.
26. Initial Smart Board Training.
27. 21st Century Learning.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

- 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 educational opportunities including enrichment and acceleration. (Policy 2510)**

Instruction in seven classes was not varied and did not challenge students to think at higher levels. Staff development was severely needed to assist teachers in providing a challenging and interesting 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)**

Six teachers did not vary instructional strategies. Teacher directed instruction was the predominant instructional strategy in these classes.

- 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)**

While all teachers stated that students were not “punished” for not bringing materials to school, at least five teachers had posted materials lists on the school website for parents that were not clearly identified as “suggested”. When read, it was evident from a parent’s point of view that these were required materials lists.

- 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)**

Four teachers were not meeting the 315 instructional minutes. Activities that included rest room breaks, physical activity/recess, and preparation for the end of day occupied a portion of the designated instructional time.

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.**

Six teachers could not articulate the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan goals. The principal stated that she revised the plan with no assistance from the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), staff, or Local School Improvement Council (LSIC).

7.6. Personnel

- 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 identified the licensure issues listed in the chart.

Educator	Courses/Content Teaching	Certification/Status	Findings	Recommendations
Educator	2625, 3005, 4005, 4405, 4805, 6005, 7005	Math 5-9 Social Studies 5-9	Not certified to teach English 5, Science 5.	Apply for K-6 endorsement.
Educator	2630	Vocational Agriculture 07-12	Not certified to teach elementary or special education. OHI* designation does not appear in course codes.	Needs to apply for a permit for Elem K-6 and OHI*. Add in OHI* to the 6 th digit course codes unless these students are just being case managed.

OHI – Denotes Other Handicapped Impairment

- 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)**

Two new teachers stated that they were meeting as required with their mentors; however, the principal was not involved in any of the meetings. Another teacher did not have an assigned mentor last year (2010-11) as it was the teacher's first year in West Virginia schools, nor did the teacher have a mentor this year (2011-12).

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)**

While the principal was knowledgeable of the needs of the school and of the teachers and had implemented programs and practices, support and assistance are needed to guide the principal in implementing these items. The Jefferson County Central Office, RESA 8, the West Virginia Center for Professional Development, and the West Virginia Department of Education will need to be contacted to schedule assistance and support.

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 T. A. Lowery Elementary School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Jefferson 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 Jefferson 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.

A more extensive array of the curriculum delivery would be more effective and efficient with the application of varied instructional strategies. While there were teachers who varied instruction and challenged students, buildingwide staff application of these areas would greatly benefit students and increase student achievement. The principal stated that no mathematics based staff development had occurred this current school year. Given the low mathematics percent proficient, most notably at Grade 3 (16.92 percent proficient), students would profit from meaningful and sustained staff development provided to all teachers and then the practices implemented in classroom instruction.

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 T. A. Lowery Elementary 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 T.A. Lowery Elementary School and Jefferson County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the principal and central office staff must not only provide the assistance needed, but monitor that high quality curriculum delivery is implemented and all students are challenged to reach their highest potential. The Team recommended that the Jefferson County School System, Director of Instruction and the school administrator engage the Director of Instruction and the Professional Development Director at RESA 8 in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement of all students.

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.

19.1.5. Library/media and technology center. Copying equipment was not available.

19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas. The physical education facilities did not have provisions for two or more teaching stations and a data projector or 50 inch screen monitor. (Did not adversely impact program and student performance.)

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.

Given the achievement levels of students in mathematics and reading/language arts, T.A. Lowery Elementary School and Jefferson County must implement high yield instructional practices and curriculum that will improve students' achievement.

WESTEST2 percent proficiency in mathematics declined substantially from the 2010 assessment to 2011 (all students (AS) subgroup declined by 12.12 percent).

Reading/language arts percent proficient remained near the same levels. An examination of proficiency showed grade level and subject area early detection areas. These include mathematics at Grade 3 and reading at Grade 4.

This report identified specific areas in curriculum, instruction, and administrative practices directly related to student achievement. These included: High expectations and varying instruction, use of the instructional day for teaching, involvement in developing the school's strategic plan, and a void in staff development in mathematics.

Jefferson County must actively pursue assistance from RESA 8, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development to assist with school improvement efforts. Curriculum must be data-driven and instruction must be relevant to the curriculum and provide all students the opportunity to learn.

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

Education Performance Audit Summary

T. A. Lowery Elementary School's Education Performance Audit concentrated on the low student achievement. The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school.

The Team identified eight high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress.

They include the following:

- 7.1.2. High expectations.** (Instruction in some classes was not challenging.)
- 7.1.5. Instructional strategies.** (Some teachers did not vary instructional strategies.)
- 7.1.8. Instructional materials.** (Some teachers posted lists of materials on the school website.)
- 7.1.13. Instructional day.** (The required instructional time was not provided in some classes.)
- 7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans.** (The strategic plan was revised with no assistance from parents, staff, or LSIC.)
- 7.6.2. Licensure.** (Two licensure issues remained after the time provided for correction.)
- 7.6.4. Teacher and principal internship.** (Principal not involved in meetings of new teacher and mentor. One first year teacher in West Virginia did not have a mentor.)
- 7.8.1. Leadership.** (Principal needs to be provided guidance in implementing programs and practices.)

The Team noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and presented early detection and intervention issues.

Based upon the results of the Education Performance Audits and the revised strategic plan, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education direct T. A. Lowery Elementary School and Jefferson County to correct the findings in the report by the next accreditation cycle.