



INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

HARPERS FERRY MIDDLE SCHOOL

JEFFERSON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2011

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
Education Performance Audit Team	2
School Performance	3
Annual Performance Measures for Accountability	7
Education Performance Audit.....	8
High Quality Standards	8
Indicators of Efficiency	11
Building Capacity to Correct Deficiencies.....	12
Identification of Resource Needs	13
Early Detection and Intervention	14
Education Performance Audit Summary	15

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Harpers Ferry Middle School in Jefferson County was conducted April 6, 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 are declining 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 concentrated on the declining achievement and the subgroup 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 and Technology – Brenda Morris, Coordinator, Office of Instructional Technology

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Sherri Nash, Coordinator, Office of Career and Technical Accountability and Support

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Dennis J. Albright	Superintendent	Braxton County Schools
Ann M. Downs	Middle School Principal	Capon Bridge Middle School Hampshire County
Jeffrey A. Meadows	Middle School Principal	South Middle School Monongalia County
Jack L. Reger	Title I Director	Barbour County Schools
Thomas M. Wood	General Supervisor	Marshall County Schools

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

402 HARPERS FERRY MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Joseph Spurgas, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 427 (2nd 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
Mathematics								
All	409	426	424	99.53	62.89	Yes	Yes	✓
White	374	390	388	99.48	63.17	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	14	15	15	100.00	64.28	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	16	16	16	100.00	50.00	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	59	60	59	98.33	34.48	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Low SES	141	147	146	99.31	51.42	Yes	Yes	✓
LEP	13	13	13	100.00	23.07	NA	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	409	426	424	99.53	71.00	Yes	Yes	✓
White	374	390	388	99.48	72.84	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	14	15	15	100.00	50.00	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	16	16	16	100.00	50.00	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	59	60	59	98.33	36.20	Yes	No	✗
Low SES	141	147	146	99.31	62.14	Yes	Yes	✓
LEP	13	13	13	100.00	23.07	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 99.5%

37 JEFFERSON COUNTY
Susan Wall, Superintendent
402 HARPERS FERRY MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
Joseph Spurgas, Principal
Grades 06 - 08
Enrollment 425 (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	403	420	420	100.00	43.92	Yes	Yes	✓
White	371	384	384	100.00	44.20	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	17	19	19	100.00	29.41	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	11	13	13	100.00	54.54	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	54	58	58	100.00	7.40	Yes	No	✗
Low SES	134	141	141	100.00	29.85	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	403	420	420	100.00	43.92	Yes	Yes	✓
White	371	384	384	100.00	45.01	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	17	19	19	100.00	11.76	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	11	13	13	100.00	45.45	NA	NA	NA
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Multi-Racial	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Pacific Islander	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Spec. Ed.	54	58	58	100.00	5.55	Yes	No	✗
Low SES	134	141	141	100.00	29.85	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 99.7%

HARPERS FERRY MIDDLE 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
06	129	122	129	122	100.00	22.95	28.69	27.87	16.39	4.10	48.36
07	122	115	122	115	100.00	36.52	20.87	25.22	13.04	4.35	42.61
08	169	166	169	166	100.00	30.12	28.31	20.48	18.67	2.41	41.57

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	129	122	129	122	100.00	22.95	32.79	26.23	15.57	2.46	44.26
07	122	115	122	115	100.00	20.00	35.65	26.96	13.91	3.48	44.35
08	169	166	169	166	100.00	18.07	38.55	27.11	15.06	1.20	43.37

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	403	177	226
White	371	164	207
Black	17	5	12
Hispanic	11	6	5
Special Education	54	4	50
SES	134	40	94

Reading/Language Arts			
	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Proficient	Number Not Proficient
All	403	177	226
White	371	167	204
Black	17	2	15
Hispanic	11	5	6
Special Education	54	3	51
SES	134	40	94

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Achieved Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Harpers Ferry Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts. Harpers Ferry Middle School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. Although not large enough to constitute a subgroup for accountability the racial/ethnicity black (B) subgroup needs 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 6 – 51.64 percent in mathematics and 55.74 percent in reading; Grade 7 – 57.39 percent in mathematics and 55.65 percent in reading; Grade 8 – 58.43 percent in mathematics and 56.63 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 Harpers Ferry Middle School performed within the point range (504-422) for full accreditation status.

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

1. Five-Year Strategic Plan.
2. Literacy and Numeracy.
3. School Climate.
4. Policies and Procedures.

5. Harassment.
6. English as a Second Language.
7. Live Grades.
8. Technology.
9. Multiculturalism.
10. Health and Wellness.
11. School Website Update.
12. Classroom Performance System.
13. WESTEST2 Training.
14. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.

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)**

The school used students as office workers and student library workers. The Team observed that these students were disengaged from any educational activities for the entire period. West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) were not being addressed in any manner in these classes. Additionally, middle level students benefit from active participation in core and non-core classes as listed in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs*.

- 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)**

Science was not being instructed with 50 percent minimum active inquiry, investigation, and experimentation in all classes. One science teacher stated that the rate in her class was approximately 35 percent. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2520.3 – *21st Century Science K-8 Content Standard and Objectives for West Virginia Schools*, states, “Students will engage in active inquiries, investigations, and hands on activities for a minimum of 50 percent of the instructional time to develop conceptual understanding and active inquiry science activities research/laboratory skills.” The teacher gave no specific

reason for the amount of instruction not being at least 50 percent of the science 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)

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

7.1.12. Multicultural activities. Multicultural activities are included at all programmatic levels, K-4, 5-8, and 9-12 with an emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance for racial, sexual, religious/ethnic harassment or violence. (Policy 2421)

When asked about the different kinds of multicultural activities in the school, teachers only discussed a few activities. It was not evident that teachers were providing sufficient opportunities to expose students to other cultures.

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.

Teachers stated that the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was completely written by the principal with minimal teacher input. Teachers indicated that they wanted to have input in developing the strategic plan, but that it was not possible.

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)

The guidance counselor could not verify that at least 75 percent of the work day was spent in a direct student counseling relationship. The counselor estimated approximately 60 percent of the work day was spent in student counseling time. The counselor was involved in WESTEST2 administration duties and stated that this impeded the amount of counseling time available for 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)

Ten teachers' lesson plans were either nonexistent for any time other than the current week or did not have enough material to be followed by a substitute teacher.

- 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)

While Grade 6 teachers clearly discussed the WESTEST2 student data, the Grades 7 and 8 teachers could not discuss data analysis and using the data to identify and assist students who performed below mastery or to increase achievement of students at mastery or above. WESTEST2 data analysis could not be verified through the Grade 7 and 8 teacher interviews.

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)

Due to low student percent proficient and the number of deficiencies found at Harpers Ferry Middle School the Team determined that the principal would benefit from guidance in leadership relative to the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510 and seeing that the requirements are in place. Assistance from the Jefferson County Central Office administration, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA 8 needed to be provided to assist the building administrator in the operation and management of the school.

RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1.3. Learning environment.** One custodian closet that contained cleaning chemicals was unsecured. The Team recommended that the cleaning chemicals be secured from student access.

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 Harpers Ferry Middle 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.

WESTEST2 and other data analysis must be the basis for curriculum decisions made at the school level and in the classrooms. The principal must ensure through classroom observations, teacher evaluations, and staff development that curriculum and instruction are based on the students' needs as determined by performance data.

The instructional strategies in classrooms needed to be engaging to promote student active involvement and maintain interest.

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 Harpers Ferry Middle 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 staff and administration showed potential to develop capacity to correct the deficiencies found at the school. The principal must take a more active role in the Harpers Ferry Middle School curriculum implementation as indicated by teacher interviews.

The Office of School Improvement will be contacting the school regarding the necessary revisions and providing assistance through the West Virginia Department of Education Statewide System of Support.

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 school site was not 11 usable acres.
- 19.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** The administrative office area did not include an adequate reception/waiting area and administrative personnel were not provided sufficient work space and privacy.
- 19.1.3. Teachers' workroom.** A teachers' work area of adequate size was not provided.
- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The physical education facility did not have provisions for two or more teaching stations, a display case, and a data projector or 50 inch screen monitor.

- 19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science facilities did not have a sink, hot and cold water, gas, AC and DC current, compressed air, sufficient laboratory workspace, or main gas shut-off.
- 19.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not provided.
- 19.1.15. Health service units.** A health service unit of adequate size was not provided and there were no curtained or small rooms with cots or a work counter.

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 the special education (SE) subgroup and the low scores of the racial/ethnicity black (B) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups, Harpers Ferry Middle School and Jefferson County must examine inequities in achievement and develop and implement programs and practices that will improve achievement. 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. Effective instruction and a content rich curriculum are necessary to improve student achievement.

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 nine high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress.

- 7.1.2. **High expectations** (students used as office and library workers. Students not engaged in educational activities during this time).
- 7.1.4. **Instruction** (science not instructed with 50 percent active inquiry and experimentation).
- 7.1.5. **Instructional strategies** (nine teachers did not vary instructional strategies; predominantly teacher directed).
- 7.1.12. **Multicultural activities** (multicultural activities not discussed by teachers).
- 7.2.1. **County and School electronic strategic improvement plans** (teachers did not have input in developing Five-Year Strategic Plan).
- 7.2.2. **Counseling services** (counselor estimated 60 percent of day spent student counseling; administrative duties affected counseling time).
- 7.2.3. **Lesson plans and principal feedback** (ten teachers' lesson plans nonexistent except for week of audit or did not have enough material to be followed by a substitute).
- 7.2.4. **Data analysis** (Grades 7 and 8 teachers could not discuss data analysis to assist students to learn).
- 7.8.1. **Leadership** (low percent student proficiency and number of findings indicated principal needed guidance in leadership).

The Team presented one recommendation (7.1.3. Learning environment – Custodian closet unsecured), noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Harpers Ferry Middle School's Education Performance Audit concentrated on the declining performance and progress and the subgroup that did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this initial report to guide Harpers Ferry Middle School in improvement efforts.

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 Harpers Ferry Middle School and Jefferson 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.