



FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

HARTS PK-8

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Harts PK-8 in Lincoln County was conducted October 24, 2012.

A Follow-Up Audit was conducted February 4, 2014. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the follow-up review 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.”

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Carroll Staats

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

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Patricia Lucas, Superintendent

103 Harts PK-8 SCHOOL – New Configuration

Deborah Dingess, Principal
Grades PK-08, Enrollment 465

In 2013, West Virginia received waiver approval from certain federal rules and deadlines under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). West Virginia received approval to use its own accountability system which was developed to more effectively identify struggling schools and better direct resources to these schools (2013 ESEA Results). Every public school in the state is designated as a **SUCCESS, TRANSITION, FOCUS, SUPPORT** or **PRIORITY** school.

Harts PK-8 was a new configuration, combining Harts Primary and Harts Intermediate schools 2012-2013. Schools that do not have the required three years of data were not given a designation status for the 2013-2014 school year.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

- 7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The application of technology is included throughout all programs of study and students have regular access to library/educational technology centers or classroom libraries. (Policy 2470; Policy 2510)**

The Team noted minimal technology use throughout the building and could not verify that technology was being used on a regular basis. Teachers and students could not articulate technology being used at least weekly for each student.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Follow-Up Team reviewed lesson plans, interviewed the school principal, assistant principal, and teachers, and conducted classroom observation to evaluate the technology use in the school. The Team observed various forms of technology (iPads, computers, Elmos, Smartboards, document cameras, etc.) being used by teachers and/or students in every room visited. Students in Grades PK-5 were scheduled into the computer labs for 30 minutes twice a week (and may be taken into the lab by teachers more often) to work with programs such as, Odyssey, WV Writes, Tech Steps, etc. Students in Grades 6-8 used the middle school lab for programs such as, Carnegie Math, Odyssey, WV Writes, Tech Steps, Read 180, etc. Lesson plans revealed that technology was used extensively throughout the year.

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.**

Only one teacher interviewed could clearly articulate the goals and action steps of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan. All teachers must be aware of the needs of the school as determined by the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan and what is occurring in the individual classrooms to ensure that the school is meeting these goals.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team verified the staff was involved in writing the school's "new" Five-Year Strategic Plan this year, 2013-2014. Teachers discussed the Five-Year Strategic Plan and were knowledgeable of the goals and action steps. All teachers interviewed articulated what they did in their classrooms to achieve the school goals.

- 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)

At least two-thirds of the lesson plans could not be followed by a substitute teacher. Teachers were using unit plans that had the information that was to be covered; however, there was no break-down as to the days that it was to be covered and which day it was to be covered.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team found the lesson plans were complete and easy to follow. Plans were modified to identify activities for each day of the week. Most teachers also had a "substitute information file" with class information and emergency lesson plans which they kept in their classroom for substitute teachers. Many teachers reported when they were absent they sent additional information and directions to the school to be distributed to the substitute teacher. Two substitute teachers in the school the day of the follow-up visit reported plans were easy to follow.

7.6. Personnel

- 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)

While there were four new teachers in the building and these teachers were meeting with their mentor, the principal was not involved in any of the meetings and was not aware of the contents of these meetings. The principal must be aware of what is going on in the meetings and must be providing information to the mentor teacher in assisting to improve the efforts of the new teacher.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Records documented topics and attendees to monthly Professional Support Team meetings for new teachers (four new teachers). The principal was an active member of the Professional Support Team monthly meetings. Interviews confirmed the monthly meetings were taking place and were thought to be of great value.

RECOMMENDATION

7.1.12. Multicultural activities. None of the teachers were aware of a school Multicultural Plan. The principal had a copy of the plan; however, teachers could not discuss the plan. The Team recommended that the principal provide teachers a copy of the plan and cover the information contained in the plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The school's multicultural plan was on the school and county webpages. Teachers were aware of the location of the plan and how to access it. The multicultural plan and implementation of multicultural activities was discussed during staff meetings.

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 Harts PK-8 in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Lincoln 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 Lincoln 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.

It was evident that the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was not being utilized to guide the curriculum. Only one teacher could clearly articulate the goals and action steps of the plan and the various activities that were being used to meet these goals.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The school had a new Five-Year Strategic Plan written in the new format provided by the Office of Education Performance Audits. The school staff was knowledgeable of its contents and their responsibilities in its implementation. The Team verified the action steps were implemented in classrooms. The strategic plan appeared to be a working document and was the guiding instrument for school improvement.

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 Harts PK-8 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 Harts PK-8 School has the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies; however, there will need to be a great deal of work dedicated to proper implementation of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan. The principal may need to contact the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Improvement, to aid in this endeavor.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The school staff dedicated their efforts to improve in all the areas cited in the Initial Education Performance Audit Report and effectively addressed all the areas cited. The faculty prepared a new strategic plan which was used to guide school improvement.

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.

It was evident that the principal and staff were aware of the needs of the school and individual students and teachers were providing high quality instruction. Students were kept on task with interesting and engaging instruction. All curricular decisions must be firmly grounded in proper data analysis and the needs of the school as defined in the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The high quality instruction continued and the Team observed interesting activities with high student engagement in all classrooms. The school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was a fluid document and was used by staff to guide instruction and improve student achievement.

Education Performance Audit Summary

Based upon the results of the Education Performance Audit, it is recommended and a motion is requested to approve the report.