



FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

MIDWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

LINCOLN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Midway Elementary School in Lincoln County was conducted October 24, 2012.

A Follow-Up Audit was conducted January 27, 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.

43 LINCOLN COUNTY

Patricia Lucas, Superintendent

212 MIDWAY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – PRIORITY

Don Davis, Principal

Grades PK-06, Enrollment 307

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.

The West Virginia Accountability Index (WVAI) designated Midway Elementary School a Priority School. The school is among the lowest performing in the state based on the number of students at or above mastery on the WESTEST2. West Virginia identified a number of priority schools in 2013, those falling among the bottom 5 percent of Title I school performance, proficiency rates for the prior three years with a greater emphasis on 2011-2012 assessment data. Priority schools are those with the lowest performance on the state's general and alternate assessments.

Priority schools, due to their significant need, will not be eligible to exit Priority status until the end of the third year. A school must meet the following criteria to exit Priority status.

1. The school is no longer among the bottom 5 percent of Title I school performance.
2. The school demonstrates successful implementation of school turnaround strategies.
3. The school must demonstrate for the two most recent years that students in the all subgroup are meeting the Annual Measureable Objectives (AMO) or students in the all subgroup are demonstrating adequate growth in the distance between observed growth and target growth.

Designation Status for Midway Elementary School.

Designation:	PRIORITY	Next Year's Target:	42.2588
Index Score:	23.9132	Met at least 50% of targets in Mathematics and Reading:	YES
Index Target:	36.8573	Met Participation Rate Indicator:	YES
Met Index Target:	NO		

Supporting Data

Proficiency (40% of the index score)	7.03
Achievement Gaps Closed (20% of the index score)	6.26
Observed Growth (15% of the index score)	3.75
Adequate Growth (20% of the index score)	2.00
<u>Attendance Rate (5% of the index score)</u>	<u>4.86</u>
Total Accountability Index (out of 100)	23.91

The West Virginia Accountability Index targets are set for each school to reach progressively higher performance on a defined set of data. Schools have an overall score based on multiple components of student and school performance. All schools were required to meet the same end point, thus defining school-specific trajectories requiring higher rates of improvement for lower performing schools. Targets comprised of the five components listed above are set with a goal of all elementary schools in West Virginia reaching 74.6679 by 2020. Proficiency targets are set at 75 percent for all students in all subgroups by 2020.

Midway Elementary School did not achieve the Accountability Index Target. Considering the achievement target, a steep trajectory exists between all subgroups and the proficiency target of 75 percent.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

- 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 hands-on investigation and experimentation in all classes. Science instruction mostly involved textbooks and worksheets. 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 research/laboratory skills.” Teachers gave varying answers to the degree of hands-on science activities, but the majority of teachers stated that it was approximately 20 percent of the time. No specific reason was given for this lack of instruction and it was reported that there were plenty of materials available for science instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team conducted observations, reviewed lesson plans, and interview teachers. The Team verified at least 50 percent of the science curriculum included investigative, hands-on, or experimental activities. In most classes the hands-on instruction and experimentation exceeded 50 percent.

- 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)

At least 50 percent of the instruction in the building observed consisted of lecture. This half of the staff did not vary instructional strategies during the classroom observations and the Team noted a moderate number of students becoming disengaged in the educational process during the observational periods.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Staff received additional training in effective classroom instruction and techniques to vary instructional strategies. Additional training in conducting and interpreting results of the Individual Practices Inventory (IPI) was also provided. Teachers were involved with administering this process four times a year and leading discussions with the staff concerning the results. The IPI was embedded in the county staff and principal classroom walkthroughs. The staff credited the use of the IPI process for improving instruction throughout the school. Additional trainings in Marcia Tate Strategies, APL Strategies and Bill Daggett Strategies were also provided. The Team conducted observations, reviewed lesson plans, and interviewed teachers. The Team observed teachers using multiple strategies and varying instructional activities every 10 to 15 minutes in their instruction. All students were actively engaged in the lessons and appeared to be learning.

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)

Minimal technology was observed to be used throughout the day by students. There were computers still in their boxes and it was reported by teachers that many of the computers that were set up were inoperable.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school completed two stationary computer labs. A portable computer lab was ordered earlier this year and just recently arrived but was not assembled as of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit. All classrooms had Smartboards and Elmos and all teachers had iPads.

Each class was scheduled into the computer labs two days a week. Additional computer lab time was available throughout the week as needed. Teachers reported students used computers in classrooms for supervised independent study. Programs such as Odyssey, Tech Steps, WV Writes, etc. were utilized in classrooms and in the computer labs. Staff reported equipment was repaired quickly when needed. The Team observed all equipment in working order and being used by either teachers or students all classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.3. Learning environment. There were doors to the outside and gates around the building that were unsecured. There was one custodian closet that was unsecured with cleaning chemicals in it. The Team recommended that all perimeter doors and gates be secured for student safety and that all custodial closets be secured to prevent students from gaining access to the cleaning chemicals.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Gates were operating properly. Doors were all operational and were electronically locked. The custodian closets were also locked.

7.1.6. Instruction in writing. While writing across the curriculum was occurring daily, there was minimal feedback that the Team observed that was given to the students. The Team recommended that students receive regular feedback on writing assignments to inform students of the weaknesses in their writing skills.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Teachers were provided a workshop with Bill Linville on descriptive feedback on writing. The school had an “Author’s Spotlight” bulletin board which spotlighted student writing. Teachers were provided follow-up material used to implement strategies learned in the workshop. The chapter on effective feedback in Jan Chappries’ book, *Seven Strategies of Assessments for Learning*, offered teachers ideas on providing students feedback on their writing.

7.1.12. Multicultural activities. While there was a school Multicultural Plan, there were minimal multicultural activities being implemented buildingwide. Most teachers stated that they were waiting on the counselor to develop these activities. The Team recommended that all students be provided information on a variety of cultures to broaden their knowledge of cultures outside Lincoln County, West Virginia, and the Unites States.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. All teachers were required to develop and deliver a lesson with multicultural activities at least monthly and note the activities in their lesson plans. The county provided suggestions for multicultural activities on the website.

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 Midway Elementary School 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.

A lack of a variety of instructional strategies was directly related to the lack of growth in student achievement. It is crucial to vary instructional strategies often to ensure student attention and to teach to the variety of learning modalities. While lecture is a viable learning strategy, lecture at these grade levels has a low level effectiveness. This, in conjunction with an absence of other research-based instructional strategies, will result in continual low student performance.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Midway Elementary School staff recognized the urgency in improving instruction and increasing student achievement. Teachers attended professional development programs on instructional strategies and activities to improve classroom instruction. They were observed implementing these activities and strategies learned in the professional development sessions. Students were observed to be interested in and actively engaged in the lessons. Everyone anticipates improved student achievement for the current school year (2013-2014).

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 Midway 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 highly questioned the school's ability to correct the deficiencies found at the school. The new principal must actively and aggressively monitor classroom instruction and ensure that all students are actively engaged with high quality instruction with a wide variety of instructional strategies. Student performance will continue to decline if this issue is not eliminated immediately.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The principal spent time in classrooms daily and monitored classroom activities through weekly lesson plan reviews. The principal and county office staff conducted classroom walkthroughs and used the principles of IPI for discussion with teachers. The Team observed all classrooms and found teachers effectively utilizing a variety of instructional strategies, changing them often to keep students actively engaged in learning. Students were attentive and appeared to be involved in the material being taught.

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.

Midway Elementary School is likely to maintain the course of its performance levels if it does not receive continuous and sustained interventions. The principal must solicit assistance from the Lincoln County Central Office, RESA 2, the West Virginia Center for Professional Development, and the West Virginia Department of Education to address declining student achievement and improve instructional delivery.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The principal reported receiving valuable service from the county office, RESA 2, the West Virginia Center for Professional Development (CPD), and the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE). The Lincoln County Central Office staff responded to all requests made by the principal. Requests included: Additional computers and computer labs, staff development programs, new writing program, and building maintenance and repairs, etc. RESA 2 provided training in Support for Personalized Learning (SPL), retraining on the Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) process, and West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) training for the principal. Numerous trainings provided by the CPD included: Beginning Principals' Academy, Beginning Teachers' Academy, Mentor Teacher Training, training on the new personnel evaluation system, and training on the Common Core State Standards. The WVDE provided support on-site weekly through the Priority Schools Improvement Project to improve instruction.

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.