



**Office of Education  
Performance Audits**

**INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT  
FOR  
RALPH R. WILLIS VOCATIONAL CENTER**

**LOGAN COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**JUNE 2014**

**WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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## INTRODUCTION

An unannounced Education Performance Audit of Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in Logan County was conducted on April 24, 2014. The Office of Education Performance Audits reviewed Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center during the Logan County Education Performance Audit. The purpose of the review was to assess the technical education center's compliance and progress with the high quality standards mandated by West Virginia Code §18-2E-5.

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Five-Year Strategic Improvement Plan, interviewed the principal, 16 teachers, and 44 students; observed 12 classrooms; and examined school records.

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Dr. Michelle Samples, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Career and Technical Instruction – Dr. Betty Sias, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Career and Technical Instruction – Nathan Taylor, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Career and Technical Instruction – Donna Wilkes, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Instructional Technology – Gloria Burdette, eLearning Program Assistant

## TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	County
Michael Cutright	Principal Fred W. Eberle Tech Center	Upshur County

## SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

### 45-701 RALPH R. WILLIS VOCATIONAL CENTER

David Adkins, Principal

### ACT WorkKeys Assessment

ACT WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system that helps employers select, hire, train, develop, and retain a high-performance workforce. This series of tests measures foundational and soft skills and offers specialized assessments to target institutional needs.

Successful completion of ACT WorkKeys assessments in Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information can lead to earning ACT's National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC). In West Virginia, recipients are awarded certificates of Platinum, Gold, Silver, or Bronze depending on their skill levels in Applied Mathematics, Reading for Information, and Locating Information. The certificate can complement diplomas, degrees, and resumés, and it gives job seekers an advantage in the interview process.

### Performance Data 2010-2013

Year	Number of Completers	WorkKeys Reading		WorkKeys Math		WorkKeys Locating Info		Performance Test	
		Required Level	RRWVC Level	Required Level	RRWVC Level	Required Level	RRWVC Level	Required Level	RRWVC Level
2010 - 2011	109	72	88	69	69	66	81	80	97
2011 - 2012	103	72	93	69	70	66	76	80	99
2012 - 2013	125	72	82	69	73	66	84	80	87

Source: Reported by school.

As indicated by the chart above, the number of completers at Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center increased from 109 completers in 2010-2011 to 125 completers in 2012-2013.

Although students exceeded the required level for reading on the WorkKeys by as much as 21 percent over a three year period, scores dropped 11 percent from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013. Scores for math increased slightly during the same period, raising from 70 percent in 2011-2012 to 73 percent in 2012-2013. For the past three years, students at Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center consistently scored at or above the required level in math. Similarly, the scores for locating information increased eight percent from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013. Students scored higher than the required level for locating information during the past three years. Performance test scores for the last three years showed students at Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center scored higher than the required level.

### Job Placement

Year	Positive Placement		Jobs in Field		Continuing Ed. In Field	
	Required Level	RRWVC Level	Required Level	RRWVC Level	Required Level	RRWVC Level
2010 - 2011	90	98	60	83	60	87
2011 - 2012	90	99	60	83	60	79
2012 - 2013	90	97	60	77	60	65

Source: Reported by school.

#### Positive Placement.

Positive placement for students completing programs at Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center exceeded the required level of 90 percent by seven to nine percent over the last three years. A slight decrease (two percent) was seen from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013.

#### Jobs in Field.

Students completing programs at Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center who were able to find a job in field exceeded the required level of 60 percent in each of the past three years. A decrease of six percent occurred from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013.

#### Continuing Education in Field.

Although the number of students exiting Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center who continued their education in field remained above the required level of 60 percent during the past three years, there had been a sharp decline for the school. In 2010-2011, the school was 27 percent above the required 60 percent; by 2012-2013, this number had dropped to a rate of only 5 percent above the requirement of 60 percent.

## PERFORMANCE DATA AND JOB PLACEMENT - ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data for Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center showed students typically demonstrated higher rates in the reading component of the ACT WorkKeys compared to mathematics. The school had sought to address this issue in the strategic plan by including a goal to increase ACT WorkKeys mathematics scores. Scores in mathematics and locating information had increased slightly from the previous year. Although still seven percent above the required level, student scores dropped 12 percent from the previous year on the performance assessment. The principal reported an accident involving several students the day of the assessment had affected scores.

With regard to positive placement and jobs in field, statistics for students from Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center were above required levels; however, continuing education in field dropped from 87 percent in 2010-2011 to 65 percent in 2012-2013. Although these statistics were affected slightly by an increase in positive placement, this still indicated a need for the vocational center to develop a means of surveying graduates to determine reasons for not continuing education in field and to use this information to reflect upon the programs and services provided by the center.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were attended by the principal during the 2013-2014 school year as reported by the principal.

1. Principal Academy (3 days).
2. Changes in School Law.
3. Social Media.
4. Policies and Procedures (Provided at RRWVC).
5. Teacher Evaluations (Provided at RRWVC).
6. Principal Staff Development.
7. October Principal Meeting – Strategic Planning.
8. Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) Walkthrough Training for Principals.
9. Principal Training.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided to staff during the 2013-2014 school year as reported by the principal. The number of attendees for each session is provided also.

1. Policies and Procedures (17).
2. Test Data Analysis (16).
3. Teacher Evaluations (15).
4. Staff Development Council Meeting (1).
5. Classroom Management Strategies for New Teachers with Chelonnda Seroyer (3).
6. Formative Assessment Grades 5-12 Man Area (1).
7. Support for Personalized Instruction Logan Area 5-12 (2).
8. Man High Policies and Procedures (2).

9. Man High Teacher Evaluations (2).
10. New Teacher Academy Session 2 (3).
11. SmartBoard Training 5-12 Man Area (2).
12. Advanced iPad Grades 5-12 Man Area (1).
13. Supporting the Common Core through Literacy (2).
14. Aides Training School Year 2013-2014 Logan Chap (1).
15. SmartBoard Training 5-12 Logan Area (1).
16. Formative Assessment Grades 5-12 Logan Area (1).
17. Special Education Best Practices for New School Year 2013-2014 (1).
18. Standards Based IEP Writing, Next Generation Standards, Objectives and Essential Elements for Secondary Schools and Vocational (1).

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

### COMMENDATION

The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center had undertaken positive school improvement initiatives. The prominent initiatives and activities included the following.

**7.1.2. High Expectations.** The Team determined Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center exhibited a culture of high expectations when it was chosen to pilot the Simulated Workplace project in one program, and the staff made the decision to implement the program schoolwide. The Team also concluded the availability of certifications by the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER) was an example of high expectations. It was evident from Team observations and interviews with staff and administration that the staff wanted to see students develop valuable workplace skills that would enable them to find employment following completion of programs.

All students interviewed expressed admiration and respect for their respective program instructors. “We work hard, but we have fun learning,” stated one student. Teachers expressed pride in their instruction, indicating that when students seek employment, the skills they take with them are a reflection of the instruction they received; it was evident teachers were vested in the students and their success. As one student stated, “We do it until it is perfect.” It was clear students understood the high expectations of their teachers were also an expression of caring. In reflecting on one teacher, a student said, “[The teacher] doesn’t just like us, he loves us. [The teacher] believes in us.”

## **EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

### **Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.**

**7.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives. The curriculum is based on the content standards and objectives approved by the West Virginia Board of Education. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The Team reviewed lesson plans and discovered three teachers were not utilizing the current content skill standards (CSS) for planning and delivery of instruction; they were instead using outdated content standards and objectives. These teachers were unaware of the change in standards.

**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)**

The Team observed two teachers were using instructional strategies that were not highly engaging for students. During a 30-minute classroom observation, one teacher read from the textbook and students highlighted in their texts as they followed along. In another classroom, there was extended time between activities, and students could not complete an assignment because sufficient materials had not been prepared for them.

## **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.**

The principal reported that he, along with another director at the center, prepared the strategic plan with input from “a couple of teachers”. He indicated no set committee worked in developing the plan, but the same people always worked on it. Teachers reported a different process in the development of the plan, citing that teachers were assigned to committees to develop specific sections of the plan. Due to reported inconsistencies regarding the plan’s development, the Team concluded involvement in creating the plan was limited. Neither the principal nor the teachers could explain why the current strategic plan did not contain professional development for the three goals listed. One teacher stated that individual ideas were shared with the principal.

**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. (W.Va. Code §18A-2-12.(i); Policy 2510;)**

The Team did not find evidence of principal feedback in seven teachers' lesson plans. If plans contained feedback, it was limited to a check mark and signature of the principal or the comment, "Good job". No corrective feedback was provided that would strengthen instruction. The Team determined at least three teachers' plans did not contain sufficient detail for a substitute teacher to follow. Two teachers were utilizing plans which dated from 2009-2010; evidence of correction fluid was seen in one teacher's plans to conceal dates. One teacher reported the lesson plans reviewed by the principal were in the principal's office; however, during the administrative interview, the principal could provide no examples of reviewed plans.

## **7.6. PERSONNEL.**

**7.6.3. Evaluation. The county board adopts and implements an evaluation policy for professional and service personnel that is in accordance with W.Va. Code, West Virginia Board of Education policy, and county policy. (W.Va. Code §18A-2-12; Policy 5310; Policy 5314)**

Self-reflections and goals were incomplete for three teachers listed on the status report generated from the Online Educator Evaluation System. One teacher was on leave, and the other two were instructors in the licensed practical nursing (LPN) program. The principal indicated he was uncertain whose responsibility it was to evaluate the two LPN instructors.

A random review of student learning goals established by teachers revealed goals were not always measurable or based upon specific classroom content. The Team determined that teachers could benefit from professional development in the area of writing data-based goals related to their specific content.

## **7.7. SAFE, DRUG FREE, VIOLENCE FREE, AND DISCIPLINED SCHOOLS.**

**7.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations. School rules, procedures, and expectations are written; clearly communicated to students, parents, and staff; and enforced. (Policy 2510; Policy 4373)**

The Team determined safety issues existed in two classrooms. In one classroom students were not wearing safety glasses at all times while in the equipment area. In another classroom poor lighting was found in the shop area. At least 50 percent of the lights were either burned out or not working. The principal reported new lighting had been purchased and would be installed during the summer 2014. Students were also observed not wearing safety glasses.

## 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)**

In reviewing the list of professional development for staff provided by the principal, it was evident the three most highly attended sessions were Policies and Procedures (17 attendees); Test Data Analysis (16 attendees); and Teacher Evaluations (15 attendees). The first two sessions were provided on August 15, 2013, and the third session was provided on August 16, 2013. Of the 23 sessions listed, these were the only three provided at the school. As stated under Standard 7.2.1., *County and School electronic strategic improvement plans*, professional development offerings were not listed in the school's strategic plan for the three goals stated. The Team concluded the principal needed to enhance leadership by increasing professional development provided to staff on site. The Team recommended a survey for professional development be conducted with staff so a meaningful plan could be developed that supports teachers.

The principal provided a list of 17 classrooms visited during the school year for official walkthroughs. According to the computerized list provided, walkthroughs were conducted during the months of November, February, and April. Based on this information, along with the lack of constructive feedback in teachers' lesson plans, the Team determined the principal needed to increase visibility in classrooms and increase his knowledge base regarding career and technical education to provide meaningful feedback to teachers, thereby developing his role as an instructional leader.

## 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 Team assessed as requiring more efficient and effective application.

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Logan 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 Logan County or the accreditation status of the school.

**8.1.4. Administrative practices. The school district assesses the assignment of administrative personnel to determine the degree managerial/administrative services provided schools establish and support high quality curriculum and instructional services.**

The assistant principal at Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center had recently retired, and a former administrator from one of the county high schools (also retired) was currently substituting. Given the principal was still developing his knowledge of career and technical education, by his own admission, the Team concluded it is vitally important the assistant principal hired have a strong background in curriculum and instruction relative to career and technical education. This person could support the teaching staff and aid the principal in strengthening his knowledge base.

## **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 Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center 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 principal shared that he had experience at both elementary and high school programmatic levels; however, the area of career and technical education was new to him. He reported he had had a mentor at one time from Huntington whom he could contact with questions. Most of the mentoring, as reported by the principal, occurred via telephone. While the principal reported he had attended all career and technical education conferences sponsored by the West Virginia Department of Education, the Team determined he needed continued support from the appropriate staff at the central office, including working closely with individuals capable of modeling administrative practices necessary at the career and technical education level. If this is not available at the county level, the Team recommended the principal receive assistance from a career and technical director in Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) 2.

## **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*)

**None identified.**

## **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.

**None identified.**

## EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT SUMMARY

Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center'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 center. The Team submits this initial report to guide Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center in improvement efforts. Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5, the center has until the next accreditation cycle to correct any deficiencies noted in the report.

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

7.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.

7.1.5. Instructional strategies.

7.2.1. County and school electronic strategic improvement plans.

7.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.

7.6.3. Evaluation.

7.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations.

7.8.1. Leadership.

The Team presented one commendation (7.1.2. High Expectations), noted an indicator of efficiency (8.1.4. Administrative Practices) and offered capacity building resources.

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 Ralph R. Willis Vocational Center and Logan County to revise the center's Five-Year Strategic Plan within 30 days and correct the findings noted in the report by the next accreditation cycle.