

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

POINT PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL

MASON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

MARCH 2007

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Point Pleasant High School in Mason County was conducted on January 24, 2007. 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 persistently below standard 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 to meet the standard.

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Five-Year Strategic 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 – Sterling Beane, Coordinator, Office of Technology Instruction

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Charles Heinlein, CAG Liaison, Office of Title II - School and School System Improvement

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Anne Meadows, Coordinator, Office of Title II - School and School System Improvement

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Gary Higginbotham	Middle School Principal	Ravenswood Middle Jackson County
Joanne Hines	Middle School Principal	Cheat Lake Middle Monongalia County
Greg LeMaster	Middle School Principal	Hurricane Middle Putnam County
David Miller	Middle School Principal	DuPont Middle Kanawha County
Maria Miller	Middle School Teacher	DuPont Middle Kanawha County
Thomas Wood	High School Assistant Principal	John Marshall High Marshall County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

49 MASON COUNTY

Dr. Larry E. Parsons, Superintendent

502 POINT PLEASANT HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Roger Keefer, Principal

Grades 09 - 12

Enrollment 775 (2nd month enrollment report)

WESTEST 2005-2006

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	172	180	175	97.22	57.98	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	171	179	174	97.20	57.73	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	65	73	69	94.52	44.44	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	29	31	30	96.77	14.28	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	172	180	176	97.77	70.58	Yes	Yes	✓
White	171	179	175	97.76	70.41	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	65	73	70	95.89	54.68	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	29	31	31	100.00	24.13	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Graduation Rate = 79.5%**

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
10	180	172	175	169	97.22	11.24	30.77	48.52	7.69	1.78	57.99

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
10	180	172	176	170	97.78	6.47	22.94	35.88	24.12	10.59	70.59

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

Other Relevant Performance Data

2005-2006 Writing Assessment Distribution of Performance Across All Performance Levels Grade 10

	Total # Tested	% At Distinguished	% At Above Mastery	% At Mastery	% At Partial Mastery	% At Novice	% With No Score	% of Students at or Above Mastery	% of Students Below Mastery
STATE – WV	19235	6	21	52	17	3	1	79	21
MASON COUNTY	288	5	23	47	19	4	2	75	25
POINT PLEASANT HIGH	171	4	19	50	21	4	2	73	27

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Point Pleasant High School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement for the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup. In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education issued the school Temporary Accreditation status at the October 2006 State Board meeting.

Point Pleasant High School achieved AYP in the all students (AS) subgroup, the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroup, and the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroup in reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. It is further noted that the special education (SE) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored far below the State's percent proficient level in mathematics and reading/language arts. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plan and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery in both mathematics and reading: Grade 10 - 42.01 percent in mathematics and 29.41 percent in reading. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

Met Standard

5.1.4. Graduation Rate.

The graduation rate for Point Pleasant High School was 79.5 percent, which passed only by averaging. The county and school must be mindful of the significant decrease in student graduation rate from 85.5 percent in 2004-2005 to 79.5 percent in 2005-2006.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided.

1. SAS in School.
2. Five-Year Strategic Plan Workshop.
3. Evaluation Procedures.
4. WESTEST Analysis.
5. DiscoveryHealth.com
6. ACT Standards for Transition.
7. Mathematics Teaching Strategies I, II, and III.
8. Data Analysis.
9. Grade Quick Training.
10. Skills Tutor.
11. Inclusion.
12. Team Building.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Point Pleasant High School had undertaken initiatives for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The prominent initiatives and activities included the following.

- 6.1.2. High expectations.** One mathematics/computer teacher exemplified excellent teaching methods. In these classes, students used a great deal of technology; instructional strategies were varied and interesting, and she exhibited high expectations for all students.
- 6.1.6. Instruction in writing.** The staff took a proactive stance to address the low Statewide Writing Assessment scores by adjusting the English 10 classes to the spring semester to coincide with the Writing Assessment test. Writing across the curriculum was being stressed schoolwide to help ensure student success. Team teaching was also being implemented to address low test scores. The Team recommended that ongoing staff development be provided to ensure the proper implementation of this program.
- 6.1.11. Guidance and advisement.** The school had implemented an At-Risk Intervention Dropout Prevention Program in conjunction with Marshall University. This program identified at-risk students, provided specialized tutoring, held specific intervention meetings, and worked with students to ensure that they stay in school and graduate or receive a Graduate Equivalency Diploma (GED).

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standard (5.1.1. – SES).

6.1. Curriculum

6.1.5. 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 did not observe varied instructional strategies in all classes. Instruction in many of the classes observed relied upon direct instruction with worksheets and whole group instruction.

The physical education classes had little to no instruction evident. Many students were observed playing basketball, sitting in the bleachers, sleeping, etc.

Several teachers the Team observed did not keep students on task the entire class period. Instruction ended 10-15 minutes before the end of the class period in several classes. Many students were observed who were not on task or engaged in the learning process.

6.1.8. 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)

The Team found that some teachers were requiring materials for students to provide for classes. This was inconsistent with a free and appropriate public education provided by West Virginia Code. The county is urged to check practices at all schools within the county to assure that students are not required to purchase required materials that should be provided by the county and/or school.

6.2. Student and School Performance

6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan. A Unified County Improvement Plan and a Unified School 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 stated that all teachers were given a copy of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan; however, most teachers were unaware of the components of the plan. Some of the teachers listed to have helped develop the plan told Team members that they were not involved in the process. It is imperative that all teachers know the goals and objectives of the plan and use the plan to guide the curriculum to ensure student achievement.

- 6.2.3. 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)**

Several lesson plans had not been checked by the administration at least two times as of the date of the audit. Some teachers did not have lesson plans for the class and others were teaching lessons not reflected in the plans. In consideration of the student achievement below standard, low graduation rate, students not actively engaged in academic classes, and lack of a variety of instructional strategies, the principal needed to review lesson plans and provide written feedback to improve instruction.

- 6.2.4. 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)**

Through teacher interviews and classroom observations, the Team did not observe a system for analyzing, interpreting, and using student performance data to identify and assist students who are not at mastery in achieving approved State and local Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). According to the principal, ACT PLAN results were not being used. In view of the achievement levels in the various subgroups and the declining graduation rate, the analysis of performance data was particularly important so that curriculum and instruction could be adjusted to improve student achievement.

6.5. Administrative Practices and School Community Relations

- 6.5.2. Codes of conduct. The county and schools implement, investigate, and monitor the code of conduct for students and the code of conduct for employees. (W.Va. Code §18-2E-5; Policy 4373; Policy 5902)**

A proactive discipline plan was not in place to deal with student discipline issues. Many students reported that numerous fights were a frequent occurrence and that harassment occurred on a regular basis. It is essential that the administration develop and implement a plan to ensure student safety that is aligned with the West Virginia Student Code of Conduct.

6.7. Safe, Drug Free, Violence Free, and Disciplined Schools

- 6.7.2. Policy implementation. The county and schools implement: a policy governing disciplinary procedures; a policy for grading consistent with student confidentiality; policies governing student due process rights and nondiscrimination; the Student Code of Conduct policy; the Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment, and Violence policy; an approved policy on tobacco use; an approved policy on substance abuse; and an approved policy on AIDS Education. (W.Va. Code §18A-5-1 and §18-8-8; Policy 2421; Policy 2422.4; Policy 2422.5; Policy 4373; Policy 2515)**

Smokeless tobacco use was evident in the male rest rooms.

6.8. Leadership

6.8.1. 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)

Given the number and types of deficiencies found at the school, it was evident that the leadership of the school needed assistance from the Mason County administration and the West Virginia Department of Education. It is imperative that the school's administration take a strong lead in dealing with the various issues and take the necessary steps to correct these deficiencies. The principal had been in the position one semester at the time of the Education Performance Audit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.3. Learning environment. The rest rooms were dirty. Toilet paper and paper towels were strewn on the floors and toilet paper had been soaked in water and thrown on the ceilings. The Team recommended that all rest rooms be thoroughly cleaned.

The Team observed several intercom interruptions during the fourth block. The Team recommended that daily announcements be limited to designated times at the beginning and end of the day.

There was no active student council at the school. Some students indicated that they did not have input regarding the school's plans as they pertain to curriculum or discipline. The Team recommended that students be given a voice in some of the areas of school and that an active student council be developed.

6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The school did not have an active technology committee to develop the Five-Year Technology Plan. One computer teacher was responsible for developing the plan, conducting staff development, and providing technology support. The Team recommended that the school develop a technology committee to assist the teacher in developing the school's Technology Plan and in technology support.

6.1.12. Multicultural activities. While a Multicultural Plan and several multicultural activities were in place at the school, many teachers did not have a copy of a Multicultural Plan or were aware of the plan. The Team recommended that all teachers be provided a copy of the school's Multicultural Plan so that all components of multicultural activities are implemented as intended by Policy 2421.

6.2.2. Counseling services. There was no organized plan in which the guidance counselors meet with senior students to provide information on testing and post-secondary education needs. Several senior students reported that they had not met with a counselor to determine the necessary steps for the future. This was an area of frustration for many of the students. The Team recommended that the guidance counselors develop a plan in which they can meet with senior students to discuss what they need for their future after graduation.

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 Point Pleasant High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Mason 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 Mason County or the accreditation status of the schools.

7.1.1. 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.

The Five-Year Strategic Plan needed to be effectively implemented and applied to result in improved student, school, and school system performance. All teachers needed to be aware of the major components of the plan and implement the action steps to work toward improved student achievement.

An effective means of analyzing the various forms of data needed to be developed. While many types of data were available for teacher use, it was evident that the available data were not being used to its fullest extent.

Instructional time was not being used in all classrooms for instructional purposes. Many teachers did not demonstrate the importance of time on task and student engagement throughout the entire class period. The administration must take steps to ensure that all teachers keep all students on task and engaged in the learning process.

The available resources, i.e., instructional time, data, the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan, curriculum, etc., were not being used efficiently or effectively for student performance.

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 Point Pleasant High School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.5. Instructional strategies.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instruction (304) 558-5325 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389
6.1.8. Instructional materials.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instruction (304) 558-5325 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389
6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan (Five-Year Strategic Plan).	West Virginia Department of Education Office of School and School System Improvement (304) 558-3199
6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of School and School System Improvement (304) 558-3199
6.2.4. Data analysis.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Student Assessment Services (304) 558-2651 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389
6.5.2. Codes of conduct.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Legal Services (304) 558-3667

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.7.2. Policy implementation.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Healthy Schools (304) 558-8830
6.8.1. Leadership.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Professional Development (304) 558-0539 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389

- 16.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county Unified 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 Five-Year Strategic Plan was not used for building capacity of the school for improved performance as it was not developed collaboratively and was not known by teachers. Capacity needs to be developed to improve student and school performance through a strong Five-Year Strategic Plan that is comprehensive, targets low performing subgroups, contains specific research-based activities, is implemented schoolwide, and is monitored periodically to assess effectiveness.

- 16.3.11. Ensuring that the needed capacity is available from the state and local level to assist the school or school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies.**

Provided that the school fails to achieve AYP or show progress in the subgroups on the 2007 WESTEST, the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) recommends that the West Virginia Department of Education school improvement team provide assistance to this school.

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.

17.1. 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 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.

- 17.1.1. School location.** The school location was not well landscaped.
- 17.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** The administrative office area did not include an adequate reception/waiting area.
- 17.1.3. Teachers' workroom.** The teachers' workroom was not of adequate size and communications technology was not available.
- 17.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms.** All classrooms did not have communication technology, adequate storage, and were not located near related educational areas and away from disruptive noises.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility was not of adequate size, did not have access to natural or artificial light, and did not have adequate storage. The following equipment and materials were not provided for the art facility: Two deep sinks, hot and cold water, counter space, chalkboards and bulletin boards, display facilities, outlets, mechanical ventilation, and black-out areas. The music facility was not of adequate size. The physical education facilities did not have a display case.

- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science facilities were not of an adequate size or located with easy access to outdoor activities and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building. The following equipment and materials were not available in all science facilities: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, AC and DC current, air vacuum, sufficient laboratory workspace, fire extinguisher, blanket, emergency showers, and darkening provisions.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** The food service area was not convenient to a service drive for delivery and removal of wastes. A chalkboard and bulletin board were not available. A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not provided.

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 is recommended that Point Pleasant High School pursue assistance from the Mason County central office, RESA II, and the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) to increase student achievement in all areas. Given the low performance in all of the subgroups and the declining graduation rate, it is imperative that programs and practices be implemented immediately in order to address these issues.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
49-502 Point Pleasant High	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.5; 6.1.8; 6.2.1; 6.2.3; 6.2.4; 6.5.2; 6.7.2; 6.8.1	5.1.1 (SES)	May 31, 2008

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified eight high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress to meet 5.1.1 Achievement for the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup. The Team presented four recommendations, noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Point Pleasant High School's Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and progress standards related to student and school performance in the area of deficiency (5.1.1 SES). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Point Pleasant High School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report and a May 31, 2008 Date Certain to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).