



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

FORT ASHBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

MINERAL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Fort Ashby Primary School in Mineral County was conducted February 20, 2013.

A Follow-Up Audit was conducted March 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

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)**

Instruction in one Grade 1 classroom was severely lacking and was at extremely low Depth of Knowledge levels. The classroom organization was minimal and the teacher had very limited knowledge of the expectations of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320. The principal had addressed this issue and was currently working on the situation. Subsequent to the Education Performance Audit and the release of this report, the situation was resolved.

One Grade 1 teacher left four students in the care of a high school mentoring student for 10 to 15 minutes. All students must be supervised at all times by a Mineral County Board of Education employee who is certified to supervise students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The first teacher cited was no longer employed at Fort Ashby Elementary School.

The second teacher cited, along with the entire faculty, were provided training regarding supervision requirements for students. While the school still had high school students mentoring, they were never left alone to supervise students.

- 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)**

A majority of instruction observed by the Team was teacher-directed instruction. While all students were engaged in the learning process, it is imperative that all teachers vary instruction frequently to ensure a greater level of student interaction and interest.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team verified teachers were provided county-based professional development targeting strategies to vary instructional practices and increase student engagement. Support was provided from the central office via an academic coach who worked with teachers in classrooms and in small groups on strategies to vary instruction. Incorporation of strategies was monitored through administrative walkthroughs and lesson plan reviews. The Team observed a

variety of strategies in both lesson plans and classroom instruction, and noted increased student engagement during classroom observations.

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 Fort Ashby Primary School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Mineral 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 Mineral 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.

The principal must ensure that a variety of instructional practices are implemented in all classes and that all teachers provide high quality instruction that is challenging to students. The principal needs to elicit assistance through the Mineral County Board of Education, RESA 8, the West Virginia Center for Professional Development, and the West Virginia Department of Education to improve the application of various instructional strategies throughout the school.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The Team observed classrooms and found high quality instruction in all classrooms with students actively participating in the lessons. The new principal, central office personnel, and RESA 8 personnel provided extensive staff development to support teachers in expanding instructional strategies and providing high quality instruction that would challenge all students.

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 Fort Ashby Primary 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 determined that the principal and staff have the capacity to correct the deficiencies identified in this report. Additional assistance may be needed from outside education agencies and the superintendent of Mineral County Schools to correct the high quality standards identified in this report. However, the Team believed that the capacity of staff can be developed to improve the teaching and learning process.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The principal and faculty worked together to improve the school instructional program and increase student achievement. The Team determined the teaching and learning processes had improved. Deficiencies identified in the audit report were corrected.

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 did not have five usable acres. (Did not adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change

- 19.1.3. Teachers' workroom.** A teachers' workroom of adequate size was not provided. (Did not adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change

- 19.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** Fort Ashby Primary School did not have a centralized library; therefore, there were no computer work stations, capacity for on-line research, electronic card catalogs, automated circulation capacity, on-line periodical indexes, copying equipment, other material for general reading and reference, and space for technology. (Adversely impacted and impaired the delivery of a high quality educational program).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The school had a 30-station computer lab which was used daily by students. There were also two mobile computer labs available for use in classrooms. There were classroom libraries in all classrooms. High capacity copy machines were available to the staff in the staff workroom.

- 19.1.9. Grades K-12 remedial.** All remedial areas were not adjacent to general instructional areas. (Did not adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change

19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas. The art facility did not have two deep sinks, hot and cold water, counter space, mechanical ventilation, a ceramic kiln, or black-out areas. The music facility did not have music chairs with folding arms, music stands, a podium, or acoustical treatment. The physical education facility did not have a drinking fountain. (Did not adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change

19.1.14. Food service. A teachers' dining area of adequate size was not available. A locker/dressing room was not available. (Did not adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change

19.1.15. Health service units. A health services unit of adequate size was not provided. The school did not have curtained or small rooms with cots, a toilet, a lavatory, refrigerator with locked storage, and a work counter. (Adversely impacted and impaired the delivery of a high quality educational program regarding student health and safety).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

No Change

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.

The principal had instituted high quality professional development to aid classroom teachers in implementing the classroom curriculum. A majority of teachers were challenging students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

High quality professional development continued and teachers implemented new strategies they learned. The Team observed challenging instruction taking place in all classrooms.

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.