



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

LENORE K-8 SCHOOL

MINGO COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Lenore K-8 School in Mingo County was conducted March 21, 2013.

A Follow-Up Education Performance Audit was conducted May 7, 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

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

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)**

A majority of the middle school teachers who taught more than one class of the same subject did not differentiate between the classes. One set of plans was developed and all the classes were kept at the same pace with no regard to individual class differences. This practice did not allow for different learning abilities, schedule changes, etc.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The classroom pace remained about the same, but the lesson plans were adjusted to provide differentiated instruction based on the student needs. The Team reviewed lesson plans that indicated how the original lesson plans were changed to meet the individual needs of students. Initial plans were developed, but once implemented, they were modified to address student needs for remediation or acceleration.

7.2. Student and School Performance

- 7.2.2. Counseling services. Counselors shall spend at least 75 percent of the work day in a direct counseling relationship with students, and shall devote no more than 25 percent of the work day to counseling-related administrative activities as stated in W.Va. Code §18-5-18b. (W.Va. Code §18-5-18b; Policy 2315)**

The Team could not verify that the counselor was spending at least 75 percent of the work day in a direct counseling relationship with students. The Team was provided counseling logs for November (68 percent student counseling), December (65 percent student counseling), and January (68 percent student counseling).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team interviewed the principal and counselor and reviewed counseling logs maintained electronically on the West Virginia Department of Education website. Logs reflected 75.47 percent of the counselor's time was spent in a direct counseling relationship with students through April 2014.

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 Lenore K-8 School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Mingo 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 Mingo 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 Lenore K-8 School principal and staff had conducted a thorough and complete data analysis and had implemented high quality professional development to improve student achievement. Student achievement showed great gains in mathematics from the 2010-2011 school year to the 2011-2012 school year. A strong focus had been placed on reading/language arts during the 2012-2013 school year to increase student achievement. All teachers were aware of the needs of their students and the areas indicated in the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan that were pertinent to student achievement. The principal must ensure that curriculum delivery is meeting the needs of all students based on different learning abilities in the middle school and buildingwide.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Staff continued analyzing student achievement data and adjusting classroom instruction to meet student needs. Even with the emphasis placed on reading/language arts during the 2012-2013 year, the reading/language arts scores on the WESTEST2 did not show increased student achievement.

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 Lenore K-8 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.**

Lenore K-8 School demonstrated the capacity to increase student achievement in mathematics and to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment. The school is challenged to make equal gains in student achievement in reading/language arts. Assistance from the Mingo County Central Office and State agencies must continue to be solicited to aid teachers in classroom curriculum delivery where needed.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Staff identified reading as the instructional focus for the 2012-2013 school year; however, student achievement did not increase. With the addition of Title I assistance this school year, improvements in student achievement in reading/language arts are expected. RESA 2 provided an additional staff member one day a week to work directly with classroom teachers on instructional strategies. Support continued from the Mingo County Central Office staff.

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*)

The Facility Team identified facility resource needs which are presented in the Mingo County School System Report under 7.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews.

Lenore K- 8 School (Grades PK - 8)

The roof top heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems were 11 years old and have a total life expectancy of 12 to 15 years. These units were generally in poor condition and were dirty inside. Hail had damaged most of the condenser coils on the rooftop equipment, which caused poor heat transfer and lower efficiency. Poor temperature control in classrooms was a common complaint. The poor temperature control was due to the design of the HVAC system and current controls. A single zone thermostat typically controlled the temperature in multiple classrooms on different floors of the building. The zone thermostats for most second floor classrooms were located in a classroom on the ground floor which tended to overheat the second floor classrooms in the cooling seasons. All thermostats were locally controlled 7-day programmable units.

The time and day were incorrect on many thermostats and the scheduling function was not used. Many thermostats were in the HOLD mode which bypassed any energy conservation programming that may be present. Fan controls were set to the AUTO mode which reduced the amount of outside air that should be provided to the classrooms and caused poor indoor air quality. The scheduling function on the thermostats was not utilized to place the facility in unoccupied mode during holidays or snow days.

The exterior lights were on during daylight hours. Excessive litter and trash were prevalent around the facility, playground, and football field. The playground basketball hoops had been broken off. A number of landscaping issues around the facility needed to be addressed. The Team observed community members placing personal trash bags into the school's dumpster. The security gates were not secured in the open position and were swinging freely in the wind. Vehicles were parking in lawn areas and other areas not intended for vehicle traffic, consequently, causing ruts and bare places in the lawn.

Storage rooms throughout the facility were cluttered. A storage space on the second floor served both as a storage area and special education play area. Return grilles for the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) units had an excessive build-up of dust that restricted air flow to the HVAC units. The Mechanical Rooms needed to be cleaned. Piping repairs in the Boiler Room had not been reinsulated. The backflow preventer and domestic hot water mixing valve showed evidence of long term water leakage. Items listed on the Annual West Virginia School Building Authority (SBA) Facility Review checklist were not being addressed; many of the findings were repeated findings from previous SBA reviews. Numerous cracks in the brick walls needed to be repaired to prevent water infiltration into the building. This site had significant energy savings potential that should be explored.

School Facilities Resource Needs Evaluation Checklist

- The site was not stable, well drained, and free from erosion.
- The site did not have sufficient solid surface parking for staff and visitors and individuals with disabilities.
- The music area was not located away from quiet areas of the building and lacked adequate materials and equipment specified.
- A teachers' dining area was not provided.
- An auditorium facility did not exist.
- Science facilities were not located with easy access to outdoor activities or isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building.
- The Art Room lacked some of the equipment specified.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The following changes were made:

- The timer on the outside lights was reset to reflect the night time hours.
- The gate was locked during non-school hours to control traffic (vehicular and foot).
- The removable basketball hoops were installed as needed.
- Landscaping was renewed.
- The dumpster was no longer used by the community and the gates were locked to prevent this occurrence.
- The parking area was covered with gravel.
- Storage rooms were cleaned.
- HVAC return grilles were cleaned.
- The Mechanical Room was cleaned.
- Ditch work was completed to help drain the grounds.

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 administration and teachers of Lenore K-8 school had utilized student and school data, coupled with the goals in the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan, to determine the needs of the school and the professional development necessary to increase student achievement. Through student progress monitoring, staff saw a need to increase attention given to reading/language arts curriculum and instruction. Consequently, they have participated in professional development specific to student needs based on data analysis and applied this training to classroom instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Efforts to increase student learning and achievement continued through strategic planning, professional development, and progress monitoring.

Education Performance Audit Recommendation

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