



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

BURCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MINGO COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Burch Elementary School in Mingo County was conducted March 19, 2013.

A Follow-Up Education Performance Audit was conducted May 6, 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

RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1.2. High expectations.** The Team observed one Grade 1 teacher spraying students in the face with water from a spray bottle during a spelling game when the students misspelled a word. This practice has the potential to be emotionally harmful to students and does not foster an environment of high expectations. The Team recommended that this practice must be discontinued immediately to ensure the physical and emotional well-being of students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The principal immediately scheduled a conference with the teacher to discuss this situation. The teacher said this practice was learned while student teaching in another state. The teacher was directed to cease any such practices at this school and advised only “best practices” would be used at Burch Elementary School. The problem did not occur again.

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 Burch Elementary 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.

During interviews, the principal and all teachers could clearly discuss the process of evaluating formal and informal student data and how this data were used to guide the classroom curriculum. The teacher leadership team was highly effective and the faculty exhibited characteristics of being organized, highly motivated, and working to ensure that all students achieved at the highest levels. The principal must continue to monitor classroom instruction and ensure that all teachers exhibit high expectations for all students and that all curriculum weaknesses are addressed through high quality professional development.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The principal continued to monitor instruction and provide excellent leadership. The Team found that Burch Elementary School continued to implement best instructional practices.

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 Burch 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.**

Burch Elementary School has the capacity to correct the deficiency found at the school. The principal must remain vigilant of any issues that may negatively affect the learning environment. Assistance from the Mingo County Central Office and various State agencies must continue to be elicited to ensure that the teachers continue to receive the support, programs, and materials to deliver a high quality curriculum.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The deficiency identified in this report was effectively eliminated. Teachers received instructional support, programs, and materials and delivered a high quality curriculum.

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.

Burch Elementary School (Grades PK - 4)

The Burch Elementary School site is scheduled to be closed and consolidated into the existing Burch Middle School if funding can be secured for a classroom addition.

Major issues with the current site included: Location, mechanical equipment, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessibility. The facility is located adjacent to a road that heavy equipment frequently uses. This traffic created loud sounds and potential hazards for the site. The mechanical equipment used for the heating and cooling did not provide adequate outside air ventilation, resulting in poor air quality. Window air conditioners and other heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment created excessive noise levels in the spaces. The site was not handicapped accessible and would require extensive modification to meet ADA accessibility guidelines.

Lighting levels in most classrooms were low due to an excessive number of lamp failures. Open wall penetrations in the plumbing of the student rest rooms needed to be sealed. The boys' rest room toilets did not have privacy partitions or stall doors. Student rest rooms did not have exhaust fans. The server rack in Room 123 created excessive noise levels and with the noise levels of the window air conditioner and additional portable air conditioner, noise levels greatly exceeded acceptable values. General carpet conditions were poor in most spaces. Several classrooms had stained or moldy ceiling tiles. A rear exterior door for the custodian space was not secure which allowed unrestricted access to the facility. Energy conservation measures, such as, reducing the night temperature set points for the heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment over night or during holidays and snow days were not practiced at this site. This site had significant energy savings potential that should be explored.

Facilities Resource Needs Evaluation Checklist

- The site was not large enough for future expansion.
- The site was not removed from hazards and undesirable noise and traffic.
- The site was not well drained.
- The site was not suitable for special instruction needs.
- The site was not well landscaped. Sidewalks were not adequate with curb cuts and correct slopes.
- Kindergarten areas were not adequate for 50 ft²/student.
- The music area was not located away from quiet areas of the building. The Music Room did not have adequate storage and lacked adequate materials and equipment.
- The physical education space did not have provisions for two teaching stations or a data projector/50" screen monitor.
- The food service area lacked some of the equipment specified.
- The Art Room lacked most of the equipment specified.
- The health services area lacked some of the equipment specified.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. School Building Authority (SBA) funding was awarded to Mingo County to make the necessary building additions to Burch Middle School to permit this building to be closed. The students will be transferred and Burch Elementary School will be closed as soon as the building additions are completed.

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.

Under the guidance of the principal, the staff at Burch Elementary School had disaggregated the formal and informal student data and was using the results to target student weaknesses. The Team observed excellent classroom instruction and high quality student work and determined that all curricular decisions were firmly grounded in research based practices and the needs of the students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The practices listed above continued at Burch Elementary School.

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.