



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

BIG CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

MCDOWELL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JANUARY 2010

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Big Creek High School in McDowell County was conducted November 17, 2009. 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 Improvement 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 – Don E. Chapman, Assistant Director, Office of Healthy Schools

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Bobby W. Meadows	High School Principal	Independence High School Raleigh County
Rachel D. Pauley	Middle School Principal	Beckley-Stratton Middle School Raleigh County
Clyde P. Stepp	High School Assistant Principal	Liberty High School Raleigh County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

60 MCDOWELL COUNTY
 Suzette Cook, Superintendent
525 BIG CREEK HIGH SCHOOL – Passed
 Stephen Tucker, Principal
 Grades 06 - 12
 Enrollment 241 (2nd month 2007-08 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2007-2008

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	44	50	50	100.00	56.81	Yes	Averaging	✓
White	42	47	47	100.00	57.14	NA	NA	NA
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	35	41	41	100.00	45.71	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	12	12	12	100.00	0.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	44	50	50	100.00	61.36	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	42	47	47	100.00	59.52	NA	NA	NA
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	35	41	41	100.00	51.42	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	12	12	12	100.00	0.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Graduation Rate = 83.6%

60 MCDOWELL COUNTY
 Suzette Cook, Superintendent
525 BIG CREEK HIGH SCHOOL – Passed
 Stephen Tucker, Principal
 Grades 06 - 12
 Enrollment 223 (2nd month 2008-09 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2008-2009

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	44	49	46	93.87	56.09	By Average	Yes	✓
White	41	46	45	97.82	57.50	NA	NA	NA
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	33	37	35	94.59	51.61	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	10	12	12	100.00	10.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	44	49	45	91.83	42.50	By Average	Confidence Interval	✓
White	41	46	44	95.65	43.58	NA	NA	NA
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Low SES	33	37	35	94.59	32.25	NA	NA	NA
Spec. Ed.	10	12	12	100.00	20.00	NA	NA	NA
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Graduation Rate = 95.1%

BIG CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

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
11	49	44	46	41	93.88	14.63	29.27	51.22	4.88	0.00	56.10

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
11	49	44	45	40	91.84	10.00	47.50	40.00	2.50	0.00	42.50

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

BIG CREEK HIGH SCHOOL

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2009-2010			
High School	Number of AP Courses Offered	Number of Honors Courses Offered	Number of College Credit Courses Offered
Big Creek High	5	1	0

AP Courses: AP English Language; AP Studio Art; AP US History; AP Probability and Statistics; AP Calculus

Honors Course: Honors English 11

Note: These courses were reported by the principal. The McDowell County Central Office reported four AP classes and 0 honors courses offered or taken.

No advanced placement (AP) courses were offered during the 2008-2009 school year; therefore no students took the examination as shown in the chart below. Big Creek High School offered AP courses during the 2009-2010 school year.

Big Creek High School	2008-2009
10 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0
11 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0
12 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0
10 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0
11 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0
12 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2007		
	Number of High School Graduates 2006-07	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
State	17,914	57.5%
McDowell County	270	38.5%
Big Creek High	49	40.8%

While the college going rate percentage for Big Creek High School was higher than McDowell County, it was significantly lower than the State average. Big Creek High School must implement programs and practices to address this deficiency and increase the number of students attending post-secondary education. Guidance counselors must be attentive to encouraging students to attend college.

Source: West Virginia College Going Rates By County and High School Fall 2007, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2008					
	1 st Time WV Freshmen Total #	English Total #	% in Developmental English	Mathematics Total #	% in Developmental Mathematics
State	8,073	1,275	15.79%	2,224	27.55%
McDowell County	76	22	28.95%	31	40.79%
Big Creek High	13	5	38.46%	5	38.46%

The percentage of students in developmental English and Mathematics was extremely high. Big Creek High School and McDowell County must take appropriate steps to dramatically lower this percentage.

Source: First-Time Freshmen, Previous Year WV High School Graduates in Developmental Courses by Type of Course Fall 2008 (census).

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Met Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Big Creek High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the all students (AS) subgroup in reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. It is noted that while special education students (SE) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored below the State's percent proficient level in mathematics and reading/language arts, this subgroup increased the percent proficient from that of the 2007-2008 WESTEST. It is further noted that all subgroups increased the percent proficient in mathematics on the 2008-2009 WESTEST2. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plans 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 11 – 43.90 percent in mathematics and 57.50 percent in reading. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided as reported by the principal.

1. Policy 2421 and Policy 5902.
2. Technology Updates.
3. Framing Your Success.
4. Using Excelsior and Acuity in the Classroom.
5. Data-Driven Decision Making.
6. Discipline with Dignity.
7. Strategies for Teaching in the Block.
8. School Team Strategic Planning.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Big Creek High School had undertaken initiatives for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The prominent initiative and activity included the following.

- 7.1.3. Learning environment.** Although the building was constructed in 1931, it was immaculate and educationally stimulating. While structural and maintenance issues existed, it was evident that staff and students took pride in the school. The building is scheduled to close at the end of the current school year.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

March 2006

- 5.1.14. Programs of study. Programs of study are provided in grades K-12 as listed in Policy 2510 for early, middle, and adolescent levels, including career clusters and majors. Note: Any changes approved by the West Virginia Board of Education pursuant to the agreed order in Tomblin v. Gainer dealing with vocational programs will also be included. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)

Theatre was not offered as an elective.

NONCOMPLIANCE. Theatre was not offered as an elective.

November 17, 2009

COMPLIANCE. Theatre was offered and being taught.

November 2009

7.1. Curriculum

- 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)**

At least half of the teachers were not properly using the West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs). Training had not been provided for implementing the CSOs.

- 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)**

The Team observed students sleeping in at least three different classes for excessive amounts of time without being redirected by the teachers.

- 7.1.3. Learning environment. School staff provides a safe and nurturing environment that is conducive to learning. (Policy 2510)**

At least four teachers were not varying instructional strategies. Lecture was the predominate instructional strategy in those classes with very little student interaction.

- 7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The application of technology is included throughout all programs of study and students have regular access to library/educational technology centers or classroom libraries. (Policy 2470; Policy 2510)**

The Team observed a lack of technology was being used in the school. The Team only observed two classes using technology on the day of the Education Performance Audit. The school website had not been updated since 2006.

- 7.1.9. Programs of study. Programs of study are provided in grades K-12 as listed in Policy 2510 for elementary, middle, and high school levels, including career clusters and majors and an opportunity to examine a system of career clusters in grades 5-8 and to select a career cluster to explore in grades 9 and 10. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The following classes were not available, as required in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510.

1. Physics (not offered due to lack of a certified teacher.)
2. US Studies to 1900 was not listed on the WVEIS master schedule; however, the class was listed on the school's schedule. This was a possible miscode on the WVEIS master schedule and the Team recommended that the course code be corrected if this is the case.

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.**

A review of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Organizational Effectiveness and

Leadership, revealed weaknesses in the school's plan. The school must contact the Office of Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership to discuss the areas of weakness and develop a plan to address the methods of correction.

- 7.2.4. 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)**

WESTEST 2 data had not been distributed to teachers as of the date of the Education Performance Audit. All teachers needed to be given this information as soon as possible to plan curriculum delivery to identify and assist students who are not at grade level.

7.5. Administrative Practices and School-Community Relations

- 7.5.2. 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)**

Tobacco use (both smokeless and cigarettes) was rampant in all rest rooms.

7.6. Personnel

- 7.6.4. Teacher and principal internship. The county board develops and implements a beginning teacher internship program and a beginning principal internship program that conform with W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b and 2d; Policy 5899; Policy 5900)**

One beginning teacher was not meeting with her mentor on a regular basis.

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)**

Teachers could not discuss any schoolwide rules, procedures, and expectations. There was no handbook for student behavior and no disciplinary rules identified for the school. A disciplinary procedure form was not filled out when a student was suspended.

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)

Due to the number of deficiencies found at Big Creek High School, the Team determined that leadership needed to be developed at the principal and classroom levels. McDowell County needs to take an active role with this school and seek assistance from RESA 1 and the West Virginia Department of Education to guide the principal in school operation and management.

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 Big Creek High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. McDowell 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 McDowell 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.

Although this is the last year for Big Creek High School due to consolidation with laeger High School, the issues found by the Education Performance Audit must be corrected. A majority of the issues found have the potential to be transferred to the newly constructed building and negatively influence student achievement. A Follow-up Education Performance Audit will be conducted at the new school to verify that the issues in this report have been corrected.

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 Big Creek High 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 had serious concerns regarding the school's capacity to correct the deficiencies found at the school. The number and degree of problems in this report will be difficult to correct unless intense assistance in the form of staff development, direct on-site guidance, and monitoring be provided by the county.

The Team recommended that the McDowell County School System Superintendent and the school administrator contact Dr. Karen Huffman, Assistant Superintendent, Division of Educator Quality and System Support at 304-558-3199 to arrange a School Support System for correcting the deficiencies and improving student and school performance.

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 was not 15 acres plus one acre for each 100 students over 800 and was not large enough for future expansion.
- 19.1.3. Teachers' workroom.** The teachers' work area was not adequate and did not provide access to communication technology.
- 19.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** Adequate space was not available. Electronic card catalogs, automated circulation capacity, on-line periodical indexes, and other materials that are adequate for general reading and reference were not provided.
- 19.1.6. Grades 9 through 12 computer laboratory.** The computer laboratories were not adequate in size.

- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have a ceramic kiln. The physical education facilities did not have Internet access, instructional technology equipment, or a data projector or 50 inch screen monitor.
- 19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science facilities did not have AC and DC current, compressed air, or main gas shut-off.
- 19.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** Speakers, projector, and broadcast capabilities were not available.
- 19.1.14. Food service.** A teachers' dining area, locker/dressing room, lavatory, chairs, and toilet were 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.

Big Creek High School would likely maintain the course of its performance level if it were not for the closure of the school at the end of the 2009-2010 school year. It is imperative that the central office monitor progress through the remainder of the year and provide assistance for the staff at the newly consolidated high school.

The School Support System presented under the Capacity Building Section will be an invaluable resource in guiding school improvement.

Education Performance Audit Summary

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

They include the following:

- 7.1.2. High expectations.
- 7.1.3. Learning environment.
- 7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.
- 7.1.9. Programs of study.
- 7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans.
- 7.2.4. Data analysis.
- 7.5.2. Codes of conduct.
- 7.6.4. Teacher and principal internship.
- 7.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations.
- 7.8.1. Leadership.

The Team presented one commendation, noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Big Creek High School'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 school. The Team submits this initial report to guide Big Creek High School in improvement efforts.

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 Big Creek High School and McDowell County to revise the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan within 30 days and correct the findings noted in the report.