



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

FOLLOW-UP EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

MOUNT VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

MCDOWELL COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

AUGUST 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Mount View High School in McDowell County was conducted January 30, 2013.

A Follow-Up Education Performance Audit was conducted April 14, 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

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)

Students were permitted to be student office aides throughout the school day. During the time that students were assigned to be office aides, no instruction or West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) were being addressed. Students basically performed errands for office personnel. This activity did not exhibit high expectations for students and was wasted educational time for the students.

Students were not being challenged with high quality instruction in at least 40 percent of the classes the Team observed. Time on task did not appear to be a priority in these classes and instruction was at the Depth of Knowledge Level 1. All students must be challenged with high quality instruction and time on task must be a high priority.

One middle school physical education class observed had an excess of 60 students in the gymnasium with three teachers. The classes were not organized, educational activities were minimal, and students were not adequately supervised.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. The Team interviewed teachers and observed classrooms and found students engaged in instruction. Improvement was noted, however, several classes still needed increased rigor in the instruction.

Students were no longer serving as office aides, and all students were scheduled into a full day of classes.

Additional professional development was provided addressing student time on task, Depth of Knowledge strategies, and classroom management. Professional development training included:

- **Training in use of the Depth of Knowledge Wheel to increase the rigor of classroom instruction. All teachers were provided one of the Wheels which they kept in their plan books and used as a constant reminder.**
- **Classroom Management Training.**
- **Effective Instructional Strategies Training.**
- **Improving Classroom Climate and Culture (Edwards Consultant Group).**
- **Strategies for Teaching Math (Edwards Consultant Group).**

- **Carnegie Math Training/Embedded in the classroom.**
- **Literacy Building.**

The Instructional Practices Inventory (IPI) will be used in the future to monitor student engagement during instruction and set goals to utilize more engaging instructional strategies. This plan was delayed by inclement weather and was planned for later in the year.

School administrators used E-Walks to monitor classroom instruction paying special attention to student engagement and high quality instruction that provides rigor to the classes and high expectations for the students.

Middle school physical education schedules were revised. The average physical education class was 23 students with the largest class having 40 students. Classes were organized with multiple educational activities.

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

The overall cleanliness of the building was lacking. Rest rooms were not supplied with soap and/or paper towels. Graffiti was evident buildingwide and every paper towel holder was ripped from the wall. These issues were cause for concern in the area of learning environment as they could negatively affect student pride and school culture.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. The overall cleanliness of the building improved. Floors were reasonably clean and trash free. Rest rooms were cleaned regularly, supplied with soap, and had electric dryers and/or paper towels. The school instituted an active program designed to improve student pride and school culture. Walls had been repaired and painted and teachers monitored the rest rooms during class change. More attention must be given to the cleanliness of the facility.

7.2. Student and School Performance

- 7.2.3. 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)**

Team members could not verify that all lesson plans had been checked by the administration at least one time per quarter. At least ten teachers' lesson plans did not reveal administrator reviews. One teacher (sociology) had lesson plans dated 2011.

This standard was also cited in the January 2010 Education Performance Audit report.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. School administrators designed a "Mount View Lesson Plan Checklist" document which contained the necessary components for an effective lesson plan. This document was used to record observations during classroom walkthroughs and to review lesson plans at least once every two weeks. School administrators held conferences (ten minute meetings) with staff members every two weeks at which time lesson plans and instruction were reviewed.

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)**

School rules were not adhered to by the staff. Team members noted students wearing hats in the building, cellular telephones being used, students out-of-class, dress code issues, etc., throughout the day of the Education Performance Audit. These issues were prohibited in the school rules; however, teachers were not enforcing the rules and Team members observed teachers in the area of these violations and not addressing students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. The Team interviewed teachers and students, observed students throughout the building, and noted the issues identified above had not been completely resolved. Teachers reported there was not a standard set of school rules which all teachers enforced. Discussions were held on this issue, but consensus was not reached by the faculty. Groups of teachers who had the same students in class had developed a set of class rules that they all enforced.

Subsequent to the review, the McDowell County Superintendent of Schools indicated the school's leadership team which included school administrators, teachers, and a counselor, attended training to address this issue. Templates were developed and the school leadership team will be actively involved in working to resolve consistent school rules, procedures, and expectations.

7.7.2. 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)

Extensive tobacco use was evident in all rest rooms in the building. A great deal of work is needed to curb tobacco use in the school.

This standard was also cited in the January 2010 Education Performance Audit report.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. School administrators and teachers reported tobacco use was still a problem. Teachers were stationed in rest rooms to monitor during class change and the problem was eliminated during this period of time. However, the problem remained during class as some students were in the halls and rest rooms during this time

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 Mount View 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.

While the staff at Mount View High School has had an abundance of high quality staff development from the McDowell County Central Office, RESA 1, the West Virginia Center for Professional Development, and the West Virginia Department of Education, the underlying issue throughout the building was a lack of high expectations. Students were not challenged in a large number of classrooms, time on task did not appear to be a priority in all classes, and school rules were ignored by staff. These issues, coupled with the inexperience of the building's three new administrators, have the potential to foster lower student achievement. While the Team observed pockets of excellent teaching and learning, this effort was not pervasive on a significant scale. There did not appear to be a great deal of pride in the school as evidenced by the uncleanliness of the building, student behaviors, and the lack of a challenging curriculum.

In order to increase the graduation rate, the school had implemented a plan to identify at-risk students early through a check of attendance rates, failing classes, and discipline records. Credit recovery programs are available to students. At-risk students are paired with the administrative support team, with collaboration with outside groups (Upward Bound, Gear Up, Greater Appalachian, and College Summit) for added support. The administration stated that they believe that these steps will ultimately raise the graduation rate to the required levels and make students more successful academically.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Mount View High School had a new principal this year (2013-2014). The new principal and the two assistants were working diligently to find ways to improve the school. The Team observed improvement in the areas cited in the Initial Education Performance Audit Report; however, much work remains to be done. Curriculum rigor improved with virtual classes and Advanced Placement classes, but the rigor and expectations in many classes were not at grade level. The graduation rate increased from 69.0 percent in 2012 to 70.1 percent in 2013, but was still below the State target.

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 Mount View 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 questioned the school's capacity to correct the issues of high expectations. While the three new administrators appeared knowledgeable of the school's needs and were enthusiastic about guiding the school, Mount View High School has had a history of achievement issues. It is important that all staff utilize the professional development that is being provided and work vigorously to increase expectations of students and self and challenge students to do their best work.

Findings presented in this Education Performance Audit Report are similar to previous reports. Consequently, Mount View High School has not demonstrated the capacity to improve student performance.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Even though expectations for staff and students showed improvement, the school continues to require support and professional development. Turnover in school administration was a problem. The current administrative team voiced plans to remain at the school for a while. Continuity of programs is needed to sustain improvements. The school lacked qualified teachers, especially in math and science. To date, five mathematics positions are open. Retention of teachers remained a problem.

The school system delivered high quality professional development which provided staff the skills to increase expectations and provide more effective instruction. On-going, embedded professional development is needed as teachers commit to improving their skills.

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 McDowell County School System Report under 7.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews.

Mount View High School (Grades 9 – 12)

Painting has improved the aesthetics of many of the areas in this school. The art facility was not adequate in size and lacked most of the items specified. The gymnasium lacked display cases and data projectors. The science facilities were not adequate in size and lacked most of the items specified. The auditorium area did not have broadcasting capabilities.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Broadcasting was available in the auditorium. The school received a grant that will provide some materials and equipment for the science facilities.

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.

Mount View High School has been below standard 5.1.1 Achievement for the four previous years. The school has a May 31, 2013, Date Certain to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) for Full Accreditation. If the school does not meet the achievement standard for Full Accreditation by the Date Certain, the school will be recommended for Low Performing status and the ensuing consequences in W.Va. Code §18-2E-5(n)(6).

It is further noted that the graduation rate at 69.0 percent is another early detection area and must also show improvement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Students demonstrated minimal gains on the 2013 WESTEST2 in reading/language arts, but scores declined in mathematics. With five mathematics teaching positions open, it will be challenging for the school system to obtain certified teachers in mathematics for the 2014-2015 school year. A further consequence of substitute teachers or teachers on long term permits in mathematics will make it difficult for Mount View High School to realize improved growth in mathematics assessment scores. The OEPA noted this situation is not unique to McDowell County School System.

Valiant efforts were made to keep students in school and improve their attendance. A slight improvement of 1.1 percent (69.0 percent to 70.1 percent) was seen in the graduation rate.

Education Performance Audit Summary

Two findings from the original Education Performance Audit had not been corrected.

7.7.1 School rules, procedures, and expectations.

7.7.2 Policy implementation.

Two findings had been partially corrected.

7.1.2 High Expectations.

7.1.3 Learning Environment.

One finding (7.2.3. Lesson Plans) had been corrected.

Mount View High School was designated a PRIORITY school by the West Virginia Accountability Index. As such, the school is receiving support from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Improvement.

Based upon the results of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education directed Mount View High School to correct the remaining findings and completely correct the partial compliance findings by a May 30, 2015 Date Certain.

The OEPA will conduct another follow-up review during May 2015 to determine that improvement efforts have been sustained and the remaining standards have been corrected. Failure to substantially correct the standards will lead the OEPA to recommend extraordinary circumstances exist and the West Virginia Board of Education invoke the provisions of W.Va. Code §18-2E-5.(1)(3).

The OEPA further recommends that Mount View High School and McDowell County be directed to revise the school's strategic plan with the assistance of the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Improvement.