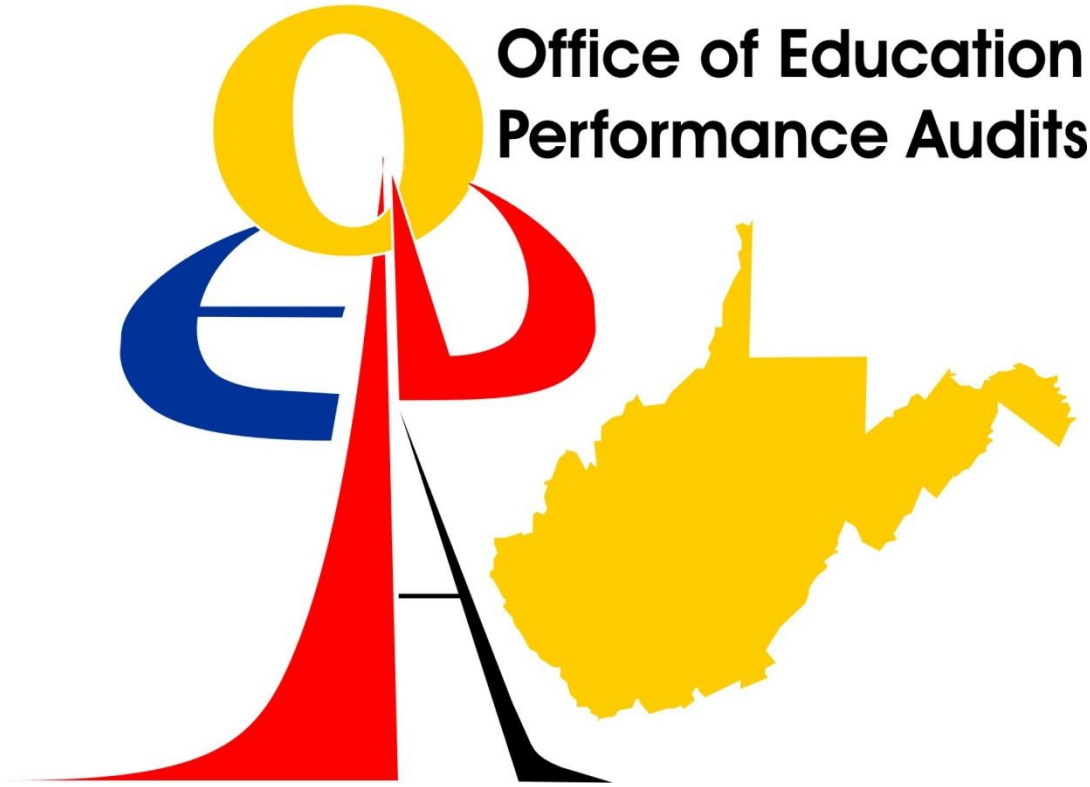

INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

NICHOLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

NICHOLAS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Nicholas County High School in Nicholas County was conducted February 11, 2014. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was two-fold. The primary purpose was to investigate the reason for performance and progress that are persistently below standard. Secondly, the purpose was to make recommendations to the school, school system, as appropriate, and West Virginia Board of Education on such matters 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 the principal, the assistant principal, 46 teachers, two counselors, and 171 students; conducted observations in 39 classes, as well as 6 advisory periods; and examined school records.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Michelle Samples, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Instructional Technology – Mark Moore, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Professional Preparation – Lori Buchanan, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs – Christina Chambers, Assistant Director

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Peggy Alexander	Coordinator – English Language Arts	Kanawha County
Scott Davis	Assistant Principal	Robert C. Byrd High School Harrison County
Allen Halley	Principal	Scott High School Boone County
Janice Hanlon	Director – Secondary Curriculum	Logan County
Lou Maynus	Assistant Superintendent	Kanawha County
Cindy Willis	Associate Superintendent Retired	Clay County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

62 NICHOLAS COUNTY
Beverly Kingery, Superintendent

501 NICHOLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL – SUPPORT
Kendra Rapp, Principal
Grades 9-12, Enrollment 736 (2nd month 2012-2013 enrollment report)

In 2013, West Virginia received waiver approval from certain federal rules and deadlines under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). West Virginia received approval to use its own accountability system which was developed to more effectively identify struggling schools and better direct resources to these schools (2013 ESEA Results). Every public school in the state is designated as a **SUCCESS, TRANSITION, FOCUS, SUPPORT** or **PRIORITY** school.

The West Virginia Accountability Index (WVAI) designated Nicholas County High School a Support school. The majority of student groups have not met the annual academic goals in mathematics and reading/language arts; and the school has not reached its goals in attendance or graduation rates, student academic growth, and learning gaps between student groups. The school must show progress in student achievement each year to maintain or improve this designation. A school's designation is determined once a year based on prior school year data, including WESTEST2 results.

Designation Status for Nicholas County High School.

Designation:	SUPPORT	Next Year's Target:	55.1249
Index Score:	43.2964	Met at least 50% of targets in Mathematics and Reading:	NO
Index Target:	52.358	Met Participation Rate Indicator:	YES
Met Index Target:	NO		

Supporting Data

Proficiency (35% of the index score)	8.79
Achievement Gaps Closed (20% of the index score)	5.69
Observed Growth (5% of the index score)	1.41
Adequate Growth (10% of the index score)	2.50
Graduation Rate (30% of the index score)	24.91
Total Accountability Index (out of 100)	43.30

The West Virginia Accountability Index targets were set for each school to reach progressively higher performance on a defined set of data. Overall scores were based on multiple components of student and school performance. All schools were required to meet the same end point, thus defining school-specific trajectories requiring higher rates of improvement for lower performing schools. Targets comprised of the five components listed above were set with a goal of all high schools in West Virginia reaching 71.7260 by 2020. Proficiency targets were set at 75 percent for all students in all subgroups by 2020.

Nicholas County High School did not achieve the Accountability Index Target for the 2012-2013 school year (52.36). Considering the index target of 55.12 for 2014 and the proficiency target of 75 percent by 2020, with a current index score of 43.30, Nicholas County High School has a steep trajectory to achieve both short term and long term targets.

Given the components that comprise the Accountability Index, Nicholas County High School was 10 percent to 29 percent below the State average for points attained on four of the five items (Proficiency, Achievement Gaps Closed, Observed Growth, and Adequate Growth). The school (83 percent) exceeded the state average for graduation rate (80 percent) by earning 24.91 percent of 30 possible points.

As the Accountability Index information shows, fifty percent of the school's subgroups did not meet the established targets in mathematics and reading. The Office of Assessment has created line graphs depicting the annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for math and reading, which can be accessed for each subgroup with a cell size of 20 or more students, through the year 2020. These charts may be viewed on the My School's Performance webpage provided by the West Virginia Department of Education (http://wvde.state.wv.us/esea/performance/). Observed proficiency in mathematics for the low socioeconomic status subgroup at Nicholas County High School was 24.24 percent compared to the 44.92 percent set on the annual measurable objectives (AMO) trajectory. This same subgroup experienced similar results in reading, with an observed proficiency score of 21.21 percent compared to the trajectory score of 36.72 percent. Trajectory projections for math and reading language arts next year are 49.22 percent and 42.19 percent, respectively. The white subgroup observed proficiency rate in mathematics was 40.49 percent compared to the trajectory score of 51.64 percent. The white subgroup also fell below the AMO trajectory in reading with a score of 36.19 percent compared to 46.87 percent. Trajectory projections for math and reading language arts next year for the white subgroup are 55 and 51 percent, respectively. The largest gap between observed proficiency and trajectories are seen for the special education subgroup. Observed proficiency for this subgroup in mathematics was 3.13 percent, while the trajectory score was 18.75 percent. Similarly, in reading, this subgroup experienced an observed proficiency score of 3.13 percent as compared to 15.62 percent. Trajectory scores for the upcoming school year for the special education subgroup are 26.79 percent in math and 24.11 percent in reading.

NICHOLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
Grade-Level Proficiency Data
School Year 2013

Grade-Level and Subgroup		Mathematics			Reading/Language Arts		
Grade	Group	Participation	Non-Proficient	Proficient	Participation	Non-Proficient	Proficient
11	White	> 95%	59.51%	40.49%	> 95%	63.80%	36.20%
11	Black	> 95%	>95%	< 5%	> 95%	<5%	> 95%
11	Special Education	> 95%	>95%	< 5%	> 95%	>95%	< 5%
11	Low Socioeconomic Status	> 95%	75.76%	24.24%	> 95%	78.79%	21.21%
11	Total	> 95%	59.76%	40.24%	> 95%	63.41%	36.59%

Graduation Rate = 83.03%

The chart, Grade-Level Proficiency Data for School Year 2013, depicts participation, non-proficient, and proficient percentage rates by grade level and subgroup for mathematics and reading/language arts. As the chart depicts, all subgroups exceeded the 95 percent participation rate; however, achievement performance varied among subgroups. The white subgroup (40.49 percent) had the highest proficiency rate in mathematics, followed by the low socioeconomic status subgroup (24.24 percent). Both the black and special education subgroups had proficiency rates less than 5 percent. The proficiency rate for all students in mathematics was 40.24 percent.

With regard to reading language arts, the black subgroup had the highest proficiency rate with 95 percent, followed by the white subgroup (36.20 percent). The low socioeconomic status subgroup achieved 21.21 percent proficiency, while the special education subgroup again had a proficiency rate of less than 5 percent. The proficiency rate for all students in reading language arts was 36.59 percent.

NICHOLAS COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
Growth Model School Level Summary
Results by Sub-Group

***Note:** Numbers below represent those students who have at least 1 prior consecutive WESTEST 2 score.*

Low	between 1-34th percentile
Typical	between 35th-65th percentile
High	between 66th-99th percentile

Subgroup		Mathematics 2013					Reading/Language Arts 2013				
		Low	Typical	High	Median Percentile	Percent Proficient	Low	Typical	High	Median Percentile	Percent Proficient
All Sub-Group	School	212 (41%)	152 (30%)	150 (29%)	42.0	41.8%	186 (36%)	171 (33%)	156 (30%)	46.0	47.5%
	County	786 (37%)	645 (30%)	693 (33%)	48.0	46.9%	679 (32%)	686 (32%)	748 (35%)	51.0	50.6%
	State	51,165 (35%)	45,256 (31%)	50,057 (34%)	50.0	45.1%	50,484 (35%)	45,076 (31%)	50,227 (34%)	50.0	48.8%
Black Sub-Group	School	*	*	*	22.0	14.3%	*	*	*	68.0	57.1%
	County	*	*	*	22.0	27.8%	*	*	*	69.0	44.4%
	State	2,677 (37%)	2,180 (30%)	2,303 (32%)	47.0	32.1%	2,581 (36%)	2,216 (31%)	2,308 (32%)	48.0	38.5%
White Sub-Group	School	206 (41%)	148 (29%)	148 (29%)	42.0	41.6%	183 (37%)	169 (34%)	149 (30%)	45.0	47.1%
	County	771 (37%)	634 (30%)	680 (33%)	48.0	46.8%	672 (32%)	678 (33%)	724 (35%)	51.0	50.5%
	State	47,034 (35%)	41,704 (31%)	46,085 (34%)	50.0	45.7%	46,584 (35%)	41,462 (31%)	46,170 (34%)	50.0	49.2%
Spec.Ed Sub-Group	School	39 (46%)	26 (31%)	19 (23%)	36.0	6.8%	39 (46%)	26 (31%)	19 (23%)	36.0	13.6%
	County	161 (43%)	106 (28%)	107 (29%)	39.0	19.0%	134 (36%)	118 (32%)	120 (32%)	46.0	15.9%
	State	7,956 (43%)	5,628 (31%)	4,781 (26%)	41.0	18.3%	7,406 (41%)	5,488 (30%)	5,291 (29%)	43.0	16.1%
Non-Spec.Ed Sub-Group	School	173 (40%)	126 (29%)	131 (30%)	46.0	48.6%	147 (34%)	145 (34%)	137 (32%)	48.0	54.1%
	County	625 (36%)	539 (31%)	586 (33%)	50.0	53.2%	545 (31%)	568 (33%)	628 (36%)	52.0	58.5%
	State	43,209 (34%)	39,628 (31%)	45,276 (35%)	51.0	49.6%	43,078 (34%)	39,588 (31%)	44,936 (35%)	51.0	54.2%
LSES Sub-Group	School	122 (48%)	77 (30%)	54 (21%)	35.0	25.6%	99 (39%)	83 (33%)	71 (28%)	42.0	34.4%
	County	487 (39%)	379 (30%)	387 (31%)	45.0	40.3%	406 (33%)	399 (32%)	440 (35%)	51.0	44.2%
	State	26,545 (38%)	21,619 (31%)	22,119 (31%)	47.0	37.5%	25,763 (37%)	21,435 (31%)	22,576 (32%)	47.0	40.8%
Non-LSES Sub-Group	School	90 (34%)	75 (29%)	96 (37%)	53.0	58.2%	87 (33%)	88 (34%)	85 (33%)	51.0	60.8%
	County	299 (34%)	266 (31%)	306 (35%)	52.0	57.8%	273 (31%)	287 (33%)	308 (35%)	51.0	61.3%
	State	24,620 (32%)	23,637 (31%)	27,938 (37%)	52.0	58.1%	24,721 (33%)	23,641 (31%)	27,651 (36%)	52.0	62.5%
Male Sub-Group	School	117 (43%)	81 (30%)	72 (27%)	40.0	41.5%	105 (39%)	78 (29%)	86 (32%)	45.0	38.4%
	County	436 (39%)	320 (29%)	356 (32%)	46.0	46.7%	379 (34%)	342 (31%)	381 (35%)	50.0	43.3%
	State	27,113 (37%)	22,439 (30%)	24,615 (33%)	48.0	44.3%	27,485 (37%)	22,259 (30%)	24,047 (33%)	47.0	41.0%
Female Sub-Group	School	95 (39%)	71 (29%)	78 (32%)	46.0	42.0%	81 (33%)	93 (38%)	70 (29%)	46.0	57.6%
	County	350 (35%)	325 (32%)	337 (33%)	50.0	47.2%	300 (30%)	344 (34%)	367 (36%)	52.0	58.5%
	State	24,052 (33%)	22,817 (32%)	25,442 (35%)	51.0	45.9%	22,999 (32%)	22,817 (32%)	26,180 (36%)	52.0	56.9%

***Note:** Schools are those schools that have at least a 4th grade.*

*Denotes cell size <20.

The chart, Growth Model School Level Summary Results by Sub-Group, identifies the percent proficient in each subgroup for Grades 9 through 11 compared to the county and the State averages. In addition, subgroup growth is examined and determined to be low (red cells), typical (yellow cells), or high (green cells) based on previous performance.

Mathematics. As depicted in the chart above, all subgroups demonstrated typical growth in mathematics with the exception of the black subgroup, which had a cell size of less than 20 students. The percent proficient for all students in mathematics in Grades 9 through 11 was 41.8 percent. The most significant differences in proficiency existed between the special education subgroup (6.8 percent) and non-special education subgroup (48.6 percent), making for a 41.8 percent gap. The low socioeconomic status subgroup (25.6 percent) and non-low socioeconomic status subgroup (58.2 percent) also demonstrated a significant gap of 32.6 percent.

Reading/Language Arts. All subgroups demonstrated typical growth in reading/ language arts except for the black subgroup, which, as noted previously, had a cell size of less than 20 students. The percent proficient for all students in reading/language arts in Grades 9 through 11 was 47.5 percent. The largest gap in proficiency (40.5 percent) occurred between the special education subgroup (13.6 percent) and the non-special education subgroup (54.1 percent). Another significant gap in proficiency (26.4 percent) existed between the low socioeconomic status subgroup (34.4 percent) and non-low socioeconomic status subgroup (60.8 percent). Additionally, a proficiency gap of 19.2 percent existed between the female subgroup (57.6 percent) and the male subgroup (38.4 percent).

ACT PLAN Assessment Results

The ACT PLAN® is designed to provide Grade 10 students with measures of their attainment of knowledge and complex critical thinking skills acquired in the early years of high school. Assessment results assist students, parents, and educators in decision-making about educational career plans, interests, and high school course work plans. The test covers four content areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning. The composite score is the average of the scale scores from the four areas.

ACT PLAN® results provide Grade 10 students with an indication of their educational progress within the context of their post-high educational and career plans. The results from the PLAN® can be used to make selections in students' coursework to help ensure that they are prepared for their postsecondary plans. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510: *Assuring the Quality of Education – Regulations for Education Programs* requires students to choose career majors and to create the second part of their individual student transition plans establishing a career major by the end of Grade 10. Results from PLAN can be used by Grade 10 students to develop their individual transition plans for grades eleven through post-secondary.

The ACT PLAN® serves as the midpoint measure of academic progress in ACT's College and Career Readiness System, and ACT® researchers found that test scores are good predictors of success on related Advanced Placement® courses.

Below is a summary of ACT PLAN® trend data over the last three years. Scores in all areas (English, mathematics, reading, and science) for Nicholas County High School were slightly lower for the 2012-13 school year compared to the previous year. All scores for the 2012-13 school year were also lower than those for both the county and State. As compared to the benchmark scores (indicated below), Nicholas County High School students' scores consistently exceeded the benchmark set for English all three years, although only by a slight margin (0.9 percent) in the most recent year; however, students' scores were lower all three years in mathematics, reading, and science. This is reflective of the emphasis Nicholas County High School has placed on English language arts, as the English test is comprised of a Usage/Mechanics section and Rhetorical Skills.

Benchmarks: English: 15 Math: 19 Reading: 17 Science: 21

ACT PLAN RESULTS
Grade 10

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
English WV	16.3	16.0	16.2
English Nicholas County	15.6	16.0	16.2
English Nicholas County High	16.1	16.3	15.9
Mathematics WV	16.2	16.4	16.4
Mathematics Nicholas County	15.3	16.2	16.2
Mathematics Nicholas County High	15.8	16.6	16.0
Reading WV	16.1	16.1	16.4
Reading Nicholas County	15.3	16.0	16.1
Reading Nicholas County High	15.8	16.4	16.0
Science WV	17.3	17.3	17.4
Science Nicholas County	16.9	17.4	17.6
Science Nicholas County High	16.9	17.7	17.3
Composite WV	16.6	16.6	16.7
Composite Nicholas County	16.1	16.6	16.6
Composite Nicholas County High	16.4	16.9	16.4

Source: http://wvde.state.wv.us/oaa/actplan.html

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY - ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data indicated that Nicholas County High School has placed significant emphasis on the reading language arts curriculum. Students demonstrated higher proficiency rates in reading language arts compared to math in all subgroups except for the male subgroup. The data also indicated greater support is needed for the special education subgroup and low socioeconomic status subgroup in both reading/language arts and mathematics. Large achievement gaps existed between these subgroups and their counterparts, signifying the need for targeted professional development for teachers in meeting these particular students' needs.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were scheduled to be provided for the 2013-2014 school year as reported by the principal.

1. Common Core Training for Math, English, Administrators.
2. School Opening Professional Development – Nicholas County High School Professional Learning Community (PLC) Groups Assigned.
3. Review of Six Shifts in Teaching.
4. Academic Vocabulary.
5. Setting Objectives (in PLC Subject Groups).
6. Writing Across the Curriculum.
7. Close Reading.
8. Review of Next Generation Accomplishments. What's Next?

Prior to the Education Performance Audit, the OEPA staff provided an in-service to Nicholas County High School staff on January 14, 2014, to review the indicators in Policy 2320 and prepare staff for the audit.

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT® (AP®), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2013-2014

High School	Number of AP® Courses	Number of Honors Courses	Number of College Credit Courses
Nicholas County High	2	7	1

The school currently offers two Advanced Placement courses: AP® English Language and AP® US History. Policy 2510 states, "A minimum of four College Board AP®

Courses (at least one from each core content areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) or the IB Program must be offered annually." The school did not offer an advanced course in either mathematics or science. Honors courses being offered included: Grade 9 Honors English, Grade 10 Honors English, Grade 9 Honors History, Grade 10 Honors History, Grade 10 Honors Biology, Grade 9 Honors Math 1, and Grade 10 Honors Math 2. Oral Communications was the only college credit course being offered.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT® TEST (APT) (COLLEGE BOARD)				
Nicholas County High	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13
10th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.9%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11th Grade Test Takers (%)	7.3%	7.0%	11.1%	6.0%
12th Grade Test Takers (%)	12.8%	13.1%	11.8%	7.0%
10th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	NA	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	NA	73.3%	60.0%	20.0%
12th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	NA	57.6%	50.0%	86.0%

*NA – Not Available.
Source: Reported by school.

During the 2012-2013 school year, 24 students at Nicholas County High School completed examinations for Advanced Placement® classes. These students were comprised of 10 juniors and 14 seniors. As indicated in the chart above, the percentage of Grade 11 students (6 percent) completing the tests decreased significantly compared to the previous year, and the percentage of these students scoring a 3 or higher on the examinations (20 percent) decreased from the previous two years. Similarly, a decrease was seen in the percentage of Grade 12 students (7 percent) completing examinations; however, there was an increase in the percentage of Grade 12 students scoring a 3 or higher compared to the previous two years (86 percent). The principal and staff must investigate methods to increase the number of students taking the Advanced Placement® test (APT®) and also increase the number of students scoring 3 or higher.

AP® TEST TAKERS	
Nicholas County High	2012-13
Total # of test takers.	24

During the 2012-2013 school year, 37 students at Nicholas County High School were enrolled in Advanced Placement® classes; this was approximately 5 percent of the students enrolled as identified through the 2nd month enrollment report for 2012. Of these students, 24 completed exams for AP® courses. It is imperative administration and staff develop methods for recruiting more students for rigorous coursework, including clearly communicating the purpose and benefits of Advanced Placement® classes to parents and students.

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2012		
	Number of High School Graduates 2011-2012	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
State	18,335	56.4%
Nicholas County	305	42.6%
Nicholas County High	201	45.8%

Source: West Virginia College Going Rates By County and High School Fall 2012, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

As the chart above shows, the college going rate for Nicholas County High School was slightly above the county rate, while it was 10.6 percent below that of the State. Ninety-two of the graduates from Nicholas County High School attended college in Fall 2012. The staff of Nicholas County High School and the Nicholas County central office must investigate and implement programs and practices that will increase the number of students attending college.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2012					
	1st Time WV Freshmen Total #	English Total #	% in Developmental English	Mathematics Total #	% in Developmental Mathematics
State	7,708	1,341	17.40%	2,222	28.83%
Nicholas County	131	16	12.21%	46	35.11%
Nicholas County High	94	10	10.60%	31	33.00%

High School Graduates Enrolled in Developmental Courses Fall of 2012 showed 94 graduates of Nicholas County High School entered college as first time freshmen. Of these 94 students, 10 or 10.60 percent enrolled in a developmental English course. The percentage of students enrolled in a development English course was significantly lower than the State (17.40 percent). However, students enrolled in a developmental mathematics course tripled, with 33 percent. This percentage was slightly lower than the county (35.11 percent), but it was 4.17 percent higher than the State's enrollment (28.83 percent).

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 education opportunities including reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration. (Policy 2510)

Special Education Classes. The Team determined low expectations existed in the classrooms serving students with intellectual disabilities. During these observations students were completing coloring sheets and differentiated instruction was not provided to meet students' needs. During the math class three students sat in the back of the classroom with an aide. The aide did not interact with the students and two of three students were disengaged from learning activities. Observations in the reading classroom found interaction among the three adults present, who were passing a ball around and talking about what they did the previous weekend, but they were not interacting with the six students present. Two students were completing very basic activities, such as identifying what the weather was like outside and completing the phrase, "My name is …." Coloring sheets were posted around the room. When the Team member left the classroom, an aide followed and asked the Team member to return to see one of the students make a clay donkey later in the day. The teaching of functional needs or community readiness skills was not apparent in these two classrooms.

Collaborative Teaching. Collaborative teaching appeared to be successful in one English 12 class, where the Team member reported being unable to differentiate between the general education teacher and the special education teacher, as well as between general education students and those being served by an individual education program (IEP). All students were highly engaged and were interacting with both teachers. The special education teacher spent the entire block in this particular class and reported that she plays an active role in providing instruction.

Team observations in other collaborative classes raised concerns regarding the effective implementation of co-teaching. During one observation the co-teacher was sitting, but stood upon the Team member's entry and remained against the left side classroom wall during the entire period. The general education teacher's lesson plans had only "Snow Day" listed for Monday with no apparent instructional plans prepared for that day. Students were reading aloud and were asked to "popcorn someone" by choosing the next reader. Engagement levels were low in the classroom and one student appeared to be asleep in the back of the classroom. Redirection was not given for this student until the co-teacher standing along the wall noticed the Team member looking repeatedly at the disengaged student. The special education teacher working in this classroom was a

passive observer and did not interact with students. The special education teacher was also absent from the classroom for 25 minutes.

In other instances, special education teachers working in collaborative classrooms, as well as the interventionist, were observed providing supervisory support rather than instruction, e.g., Algebra II; Math Lab. During the math lab one student was asked if the teacher ever reviewed completed work with the student; the student responded in the negative and indicated that students "just work until all the green units are complete".

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)

The Team determined high levels of student engagement existed in classrooms where students were being challenged with questions that required deeper critical thinking skills (Pre-Calculus and Math 2), or where activities were hands-on and relative to real life (Chemistry II and Physics).

During many of the classroom observations conducted, Team members reported seeing instructional strategies being implemented that failed to engage the majority of students. Instances of low student engagement were observed when the following activities were taking place.

- Group work without assigned roles and clear expectations (Civics; Trigonometry .
- Utilization of strictly lecture by the teacher (World History).
- Round robin reading by students (English 10 and ELA).
- Lack of rigor in instruction, such as teaching below grade level concepts (Trigonometry and Algebra II) or asking students to complete low skill level activities, i.e., coloring sheets, defining vocabulary words using textbook glossary (Math MI and Health).
- Lack of instruction to fill the class period (Earth Science).
- Class discussion that did not attempt to include all students (Biology II: 7/18 students participating; Anatomy & Physiology: 5/21 students participating, with one student answering seven questions and another answering four questions; Health: 5/19 students participating).

In both science and math classrooms, Team members observed teachers utilizing various informal formative assessments, e.g., parking lot, exit slips, I know it/I know some/I need help; however, it was unclear how teachers were following up with this information.

Overwhelmingly, students reported the school cares most about WESTEST2 and athletics. When asked what one thing teachers could do to help them learn, students stated better meeting their needs through such means as providing more individual attention and more thorough explanation of concepts, reteaching, and including more hands on activities and less lecture. One student stated, “Go back and help me.”

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 school had four computer labs in addition to mobile labs for each of the core content areas (two – math; one each – science, social studies, and English). Additionally a lab with 25 iPads was available and the school had two Whiteboards, which teachers and students stated were old and rarely used. Students reported never having used a Whiteboard at the school. Observations and interviews with students and teachers revealed that the available technology was primarily used for word processing and research purposes. Acuity, WV Writes, Carnegie Learning software, and the Internet were the most frequently used technology applications. Teachers and students were unaware of student social networking tools such as Edmodo, Schoology, and Thinkfinity. No advanced computer classes that taught skills more involved than those needed for PowerPoint were being offered.

Although Virtual School was listed on the master schedule as a class during Block 4, interviews revealed that only two students had access to the West Virginia Virtual School (WVVS). One of these students was utilizing the OnTarget program for math remediation and the other was studying a foreign language at the career and technical center. A student interviewed reported having no knowledge of the WVVS.

A technology system support person was assigned from the county office; however, teachers indicated at one time a technology person was housed within the school, but that person retired and the position was not filled. Levy monies were then utilized to provide a support person during after school hours. Teachers reported that technology maintenance was an issue and that sometimes one or two weeks may pass before an issue is resolved. One teacher (Spanish) indicated she did not have the opportunity to use the technology but felt it would be helpful for instruction if it were available.

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)

According to the West Virginia Department of Education Course Information for Policy 2510, “A minimum of four College Board AP® Courses (at least one from each core content areas of English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) or the IB Program must be offered annually.”

The master schedule reflected the school currently offered two Advanced Placement courses: AP® English Language and AP US History. The school did not offer an advanced course in either mathematics or science. Students and teachers reported that an AP® Psychology and English course were both scheduled to be taught; however, low student interest caused the classes to be removed from the master schedule. Honors classes were being offered in each of the four core areas (math, science, social studies, and English). One college credit course, Oral Communications, was being offered through Glenville State College. During interviews, students expressed interest in taking more diverse and challenging coursework, such as that provided through Advanced Placement and virtual school. One senior commented, "I don't feel that this school has prepared me very well for college."

7.1.11. Guidance and advisement. Students are provided specific guidance and advisement opportunities to allow them to choose a career major prior to completion of grade 10. (Policy 2510)

Career Guidance. Overall, students reported little to no career guidance from counselors. Grades 9 and 10 students expressed that counselors did not interact with students until their junior year in school. One group reported the only times available to meet with counselors to discuss career and college planning were during lunch and advisory. A student being served on a modified diploma was asked if she was receiving any career planning support, and she replied, "No one talks about that." Another student indicated that he thought the counselors only worked with scheduling.

Advisory. The school had the following advisory schedule: Monday – Attendance; Tuesday – Multicultural activities; Wednesday – Work It Out Wednesday – Math and reading language arts remediation; Thursday – Character education; and Friday – Clubs. Students reported the advisory program was not beneficial in supporting improvement on the WESTEST2 and expressed frustration that teachers providing remediation in math and English/language arts were not always teachers from those disciplines and could not answer content-specific questions. At least one teacher during interviews expressed a similar frustration in being unfamiliar with the content he/she was being asked to teach during advisory. When asked what they normally did during advisory, a group of students stated, "Absolutely nothing," and reported that sometimes they did math or English worksheets on Wednesdays.

There was no evidence of a structured curriculum for the advisory program. The Team observed very little meaningful instruction during the advisory period. The principal indicated that seniors worked on scholarships, received career guidance, and completed LINKS lessons during advisory. One Team member observed five students arrived late to a senior advisory, and the teacher said nothing. The Team member who observed this class was told there was no lesson plan, that the students, "just do Channel One, homework, senior diploma stuff, or something to do for college." Observations confirmed students watched Channel One, but afterward, they sat and talked to one another. In one freshman advisory students learned how to address an envelope, the teacher had detailed lesson plans for the advisory period, and the majority of students were engaged. Another freshman advisory observed also revealed a lesson with a beginning, middle, and end, as students watched Channel One and then discussed anti-smoking

commercials and the issue of tobacco use at school. In a third freshman advisory class , students completed math problems from the Friday before. Students sat in groups and the teacher sat at her station most of the period, looking at student work as they finished. Nine students were observed off task. As students finished the worksheet, they were told to sit quietly while the others finished. The students sat and talked to one another. During one junior advisory, two teachers were in the classroom. One of them used the microwave to heat lunch. The class began at 11:42 A.M., but instruction did not begin until 11:50 A.M. This advisory period functioned as a study hall with students completing individual tasks, such as a Spanish vocabulary puzzle, reading a book, or doing math assignments, while others just sat and talked to one another. During another junior advisory, students were observed sitting and talking with the teacher while a program was playing on the television. Students were not engaged with the program, and during the latter half of the period, the teacher told students about a local activity occurring in the county to show support for service and sacrifice.

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.

The Team found that the majority of teachers could not articulate the goals of the strategic plan. When asked what the goals of the strategic plan were, answers varied from ensuring there was enough technology within the school to transitioning to the Next Generation Standards. Only three teachers could state that the goals dealt with improving math and reading/language arts proficiency rates for special education students. Some teachers could recite the mission statement (PAWS = Powerful Academics Welcomes Success); however, it was stated that this was a recent change. The core beliefs and mission statement printed in the student handbook did not match those published in the strategic plan. Teachers indicated the plan was updated annually and could not state how progress with the plan was monitored. One teacher stated, “I think we look at it every year.” Teachers also did not clearly articulate how the plan was used for school improvement.

The Team determined teachers had limited involvement in developing the strategic plan. One group of teachers reported that one person from the leadership team worked on the strategic plan, while another group reported the entire leadership team worked on the plan. A third group stated the leadership team was developed from the strategic plan. When asked when teachers had received a copy of the strategic plan, one teacher replied, “A few weeks ago.”

The principal reported that she and the superintendent developed the goals and then shared a hard copy of the plan with the staff. The goals, as stated in the plan, were developed “after analyzing student data for Mathematics/ELA” and target a one percent

increase in each of these areas by students with disabilities across all tested grade levels. The Team's analysis of the proficiency data led to the conclusion that while these goals were attainable, they lacked in expectations for students and would not place this student subgroup on track to meet the proficiency rate of 75 percent by 2020 as outlined in the West Virginia Accountability Index (WVAI) nor effectively close the achievement gap between the special education subgroup and the non-special education subgroup. Growth Model data for the 2012-2013 school year revealed a 41.8 percent proficiency gap existed between special education students and non-special education students in mathematics and a 40.5 percent gap existed between these two subgroups in reading/language arts.

During the exit conference, the superintendent and principal reported the "1 percent" was a typographical error in the school's published strategic plan and the goals should have stated a 10 percent increase in math and reading/language arts scores for students with disabilities, rather than a one percent increase.

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)

All teachers interviewed referenced the review of various data, i.e., WESTEST2, student attendance, and discipline at the beginning of the school year. Teachers reported reviewing WESTEST2 data to determine which content standards and objectives were missed most often by students. Several teachers mentioned that content area data were reviewed frequently during professional learning community (PLC) meetings early in the school year. Individual teachers from physical education, math, science, and English mentioned utilizing student data, such as Fitnessgram, Carnegie Learning, classroom summative assessments, and WV Writes to make instructional adjustments. However, the Team could not determine from classroom observations, interviews, and PLCs minutes that a unified approach had been developed by departments to collect and analyze student data to make instructional changes based on individual students' needs.

Teachers also reported students were provided a form to chart their performance on the WESTEST2 and to document skills that needed strengthening. During interviews, students indicated they had been provided their WESTEST2 scores during advisory; however, they reported they were not utilizing the information in any way to increase their achievement.

The principal reported that Support for Personalized Learning (SPL) was in place to strengthen student learning and students were identified for services through teacher referral. However, teachers were unfamiliar with the term SPL and could not speak to its implementation at the school. While the principal communicated STAR reading scores

were used to identify students for SPL, it was not evident to the Team members that students were being placed in support services based on individual needs as determined by student-specific data. Math and English/language arts remediation during advisory (Work It Out Wednesdays) consisted of reteaching weak skills identified on the WESTEST2 in which all students regardless of their performance on the WESTEST2, must participate.

7.4. REGULATORY AGENCY REVIEWS.

7.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews. Determine during on-site reviews and include in reports whether required reviews and inspections have been conducted by the appropriate agencies, including, but not limited to, the State Fire Marshal, the Health Department, the School Building Authority of West Virginia, and the responsible divisions within the West Virginia Department of Education, and whether noted deficiencies have been or are in the process of being corrected. The Office of Education Performance Audits may not conduct a duplicate review or inspection nor mandate more stringent compliance measures. (**W.Va. Code §§18-9B-9, 10, 11, 18-4-10, and 18-5A-5; Policy 1224.1; Policy 8100; W.Va. Code §18-5-9; Policy 6200; Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §104.22 and §104.23; Policy 4334; Policy 4336)**

A review of regulatory agency reports revealed one West Virginia School Building Authority (SBA) citation in its review conducted March 13, 2013, had not been corrected. The SBA reported that the interior courtyard created with the building addition was overgrown and recommended that the grass in this area be replaced with low maintenance ground cover, such as river rock. On the date of the Education Performance Audit, this area was still overgrown and had not been re-landscaped as recommended by the SBA. The principal reported that plans were underway for this area to be utilized for a vegetable garden the next school year. The garden will be incorporated in instruction for a variety of courses.

All other regulatory agency recommendations (Sanitation, Finance, State Fire Marshal) had been addressed.

7.6. PERSONNEL.

7.6.2. Licensure. Professional educators and other professional employees required to be licensed under West Virginia Board of Education policy are licensed for their assignments including employees engaged in extracurricular activities. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2; Policy 5202)

A review of professional educator licensure completed by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Professional Preparation identified the following issues.

1. Three teachers did not hold appropriate endorsements for the courses they were teaching.

2. Two teachers needed course codes verified or corrected/removed in the master schedule for the courses they were listed as teaching.

3. Two teachers needed to provide a copy of their DMV driving record and a copy of their valid West Virginia driver's license per West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2422.2.

4. Four teachers needed to verify they had completed AP training and their courses were on the AP audit.

5. One teacher needed to apply for a restricted special education endorsement for General Science or remove this course assignment from the master schedule.

6. One teacher needed to apply for a restricted special education endorsement for math or remove this course assignment from the master schedule.

7. One teacher teaching under Form 20A (Original Teacher Out-of-State) needed to contact the Office of Professional Preparation for an update.

8. Two incomplete entries in WVEIS (7DEW D and 7JAC T) needed to be completed or removed from the master schedule.

9. Five teachers needed verification of content exams for the courses which they were teaching in order to be considered highly qualified (Music, Math – 2 teachers, Art, and Social Studies).

10. One coach's temporary authorization had expired June 30, 2008, and had not been updated.

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)

Although supported by the superintendent, the principal reported having no formally assigned mentor. The district's Support for Improving Professional Practice (SIPP) plan indicated beginning teachers (Years 1-2) would have access to a mentor hired through the central office. This mentor would be a retired teacher who would observe and provide feedback to all beginning teachers in the county. According to the plan, these teachers would also attend the Beginning Teachers' Academy sponsored by the West Virginia Center for Professional Development (WVCPD). The principal and teachers reported these services were to begin in March. The county had utilized its own monies to provide mentoring services, but was supposed to receive mentoring funding from the West Virginia Department of Education. The superintendent reported this funding had not yet been received. Beginning teachers at the elementary level had attended the WVCPD training in the fall, while secondary teachers were scheduled to attend in the spring. The principal reported the school had six beginning teachers for the 2013-2014 school year. Teachers expressed concern regarding the process being implemented by the county, with one teacher commenting, "We had real meetings last year."

The principal assigned accountability partners who, according to the SIPP plan, were meant to help new teachers navigate processes and procedures within the school. Sensing the need for support for beginning teachers, the principal expanded the role of these partners by including peer observation as part of the partners' duties. Teachers participating in this in-house mentoring program reported positive results, stating they received supportive feedback from their mentors and help with classroom management issues. One teacher stated the assigned mentor was "a constant resource."

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)

The principal has worked to expand teacher leadership within the building through the established leadership team that included representation from each of the core areas, including special education. The remainder of the staff participated on focus teams relating to student attendance, advisory, data analysis, technology, parent communication, and career tech.

There was a lack of common planning time for teachers, especially special education and general education teachers who work together. One such set of teachers indicated they shared planning, but that this was "an accident" and not purposely part of the

master schedule. Another set of teachers reported that a common planning would enable them to co-teach more.

In an effort to provide teachers time to collaborate, the principal initiated meetings for teachers of core subjects to meet in departmental professional learning communities (PLCs) monthly for one to two hours during the school day, while teachers of non-core subjects supervise students participating in various planned activities. Agendas and minutes from departmental PLCs revealed these meetings consisted of primarily managerial tasks and discussions of day-to-day activities. For example, discussion topics such as textbooks, Advisor/Advisee (AA) schedule, teacher technology requests, and teacher room assignments were common during PLCs. The math department noted the principal asked them to complete pacing guides. Minutes of the meetings indicated the teachers decided to work on this assignment individually and discuss it at a later date because they did not have enough time remaining to begin work on the pacing guides. Minutes reflected the bulk of the meeting time was utilized to discuss such issues as who would be in charge of math field day, Acuity benchmark opening and closing dates, and Carnegie lab issues. English and social studies PLCs also noted work on pacing guides. Minutes from the freshman English indicated these teachers were developing a common formative assessment and had chosen a diagnostic test from their textbook to use for this purpose.

The principal reported spending 70 percent of her time dealing with managerial issues compared to time spent dealing with curriculum and instruction. As a beginning administrator, it is not unexpected that the principal's focus has primarily been on managerial issues; however, it is important for the principal to develop skills as an instructional leader and utilize these skills in leading the school to produce higher levels of student achievement.

RECOMMENDATION

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)

The Team saw evidence that the principal was reviewing teacher lesson plans, and the principal reported she had developed a rubric to assist in the review. Lesson plans were scheduled to be submitted to the principal each Monday. Team members reported seeing no detailed comments relative to improving instruction to address student achievement. Lesson plans for 10 different teachers had comments such as "good", "great", or "thank you" recorded by the principal, along with specific strategies highlighted. Three Team members reported seeing evidence of the principal collecting samples of student work and commenting on those.

The Team concluded that the principal was reviewing plans on a regular basis and identifying effective teaching strategies; however, the Team recommended the principal expand plan reviews to include constructive feedback targeting ineffective or inappropriate strategies being implemented with supportive suggestions on how to strengthen instruction to better meet students' needs. Most importantly, it is key that the principal follow up on these suggestions to ensure their implementation.

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 Nicholas County High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Nicholas 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 Nicholas 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 the 2013-2014 school year, Advanced Placement® courses were provided in English/language arts and social studies. Students indicated they would be interested in additional Advanced Placement® courses, as well as other classes not currently offered in the daily schedule. One Advanced Placement® course was cancelled and removed from the schedule due to low registration. With a set time already designated in the master schedule, utilization of Virtual School was an option the school could have pursued in meeting the curricular needs of its students, as well as meeting the course requirements outlined in Policy 2510.

While the Team felt it was commendable that the school chose to implement a remedial writing course (WV Writes) to strengthen students' skills, a review of the Online WESTEST2 Writing Assessment data revealed that students performed higher in writing compared to reading, with 65 percent proficiency in Grade 9 and 61 percent proficient in both Grades 10 and 11. Additionally, after reviewing the master schedule, the Team was concerned about students being withdrawn from other classes to participate in this remedial course. During Block 4 there were four possible English language arts classes, four social studies courses, five science courses, six math courses, and eight other required or elective courses from which students could be pulled to participate in the remedial writing course. As reported by the instructor of record, students will be pulled for participation until they obtain a specific score on their writing. The Team recommended the county and school investigate alternative methods for delivering remedial writing instruction.

8.1.6. Regional Education Service Agency. The school district effectively utilizes Regional Education Service Agency programs and services or other regional services that may be initiated between and among county boards.

As reported by the principal, the school received assistance from Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) 4 for math field day and administrative training regarding the Next Generation Content Standards and Objectives in mathematics. Given the low achievement performance of special education students and teachers' lack of knowledge of the Support for Personalized Learning (SPL), the Team recommended the school contact the technical assistance specialist at RESA 4 to obtain information and professional development on not only SPL, but also universal design for learning, formative assessment, and differentiation. The School Improvement Technical Assistance Manual published by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs, can serve as a resource in developing teachers' understanding in all these areas, and copies may be provided through RESA 4.

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 Nicholas County 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.

Building Capacity - Support

As part of the expectations outlined in the West Virginia ESEA Flexibility Waiver, approved by the federal government in May 2013, the district and the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) are to partner to provide professional development, technical assistance, and interventions to Support schools. It is recommended that these schools implement the Turnaround Principles developed by the United States Department of Education (USDE), which also align to the West Virginia Standards for High Quality Schools, West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2322, and complete an extended strategic plan. The local school district and board of education are responsible for providing the school with annual progress reviews.

It was evident the school was well supported by the central office. The superintendent was acting as a liaison to the school, and the central office had provided personnel, such as a dropout interventionist and academic interventionist. The central office had also assisted with payment for Advanced Placement exams and had supported inclusion of a dual credit course within the master schedule. In an effort to support teachers, the school had begun working with external entities, such as the June Harless Center of Marshall University and the Mid-continent Research Education Laboratory (McREL), to improve instructional practice.

The Team determined the school has not maximized the potential of resources within the building. During the Education Performance Audit, the Team identified teachers who could provide professional development for their colleagues in technology, informal assessments, and higher order questioning skills. Additionally, the principal was conducting walkthroughs, but no formalized method of collecting data regarding these walkthroughs and sharing the information with teachers as a whole to affect classroom instruction had been developed. The Team concluded that implementing a system to gauge student engagement and collecting and studying this data as a faculty could strengthen classroom instruction.

According to teachers, the central office had provided one professional development session regarding co-teaching. After conducting classroom observations and interviewing staff participating in collaborative teaching environments, the Team determined ongoing, sustained professional development is needed in the area of co-teaching for all special education and general education classroom teachers. In order to support the goals of the school's strategic plan and to increase academic achievement of students with disabilities, it is imperative the county and school pursue further professional development in this area.

It was evident to the Team that the principal was attempting to build a more collaborative environment for teachers through incorporating professional learning communities (PLCs). However, agendas from these meetings, as well as interviews with staff, indicated that greater understanding of these entities and their role in student achievement is needed. To create fully functioning professional learning communities, the Team recommended implementing book studies relative to the topic of PLCs, along with creation and utilization of common formative assessments and data analysis to strengthen instruction and improve student achievement.

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.

19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas. The music facility did not include chairs with folding arms. (Did not adversely impact program and student performance.)

19.1.14. Food service. A teachers' dining area was not provided that was of adequate size (250-300 ft^2). (Did not adversely impact program and student performance.)

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 2013-2014 “5-17 Percent Needy Report” indicated 50.78 percent of the students at Nicholas County High School were economically disadvantaged. As data analysis showed, significant gaps in achievement existed between the low socioeconomic status subgroup and the non-low socioeconomic status subgroup in both mathematics (32.6 percent) and reading/language arts (26.4 percent). While the staff at Nicholas County High School had begun the process of data analysis by annually reviewing WESTEST2 results to identify content standards and objectives with poor student performance and the development of formative assessments, the school needed to delve more deeply into standardized testing data and formative assessment data (Acuity, classroom tests). This would assist in identifying individual students’ deficiencies and tailoring advisory support (Work It Out Wednesdays) and classroom instruction to better support these students.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT SUMMARY

Nicholas County High School's Education Performance Audit examined 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 Nicholas County High School in improvement efforts.

The Team identified 11 high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress.

7.1.2. High expectations.
7.1.5. Instructional strategies.
7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.
7.1.9. Programs of study.
7.1.11. Guidance and advisement.
7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans.
7.2.4. Data analysis.
7.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews.
7.6.2. Licensure.
7.6.4. Teacher and principal internship.
7.8.1. Leadership.

The Team presented one recommendation (7.2.3.), noted two indicators of efficiency (8.1.1. and 8.1.6.), offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

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 Nicholas County High School and Nicholas County to revise the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan within 30 days and correct the findings noted in the report by the next accreditation cycle.