

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

PLEASANTS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL

PLEASANTS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

MAY 2005

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Pleasants County Middle School in Pleasants County was conducted on April 12, 2005. 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 Unified School 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 Brock, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Pamela Hoppe, Coordinator, Office of Instructional Technology

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Pam Abston	Coordinator, Office of Professional Preparation	West Virginia Department of Education
James Eakle	Elementary School Principal	Adamston Elementary Harrison County
Ronnie Poole	Intermediate School Principal	Nutter Fort Intermediate Harrison County
Drexel Sammons	Academic/Curriculum Coach	Raleigh County
Joe Wright	Middle School Assistant Principal	Park Middle School Raleigh County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

67-301 PLEASANTS COUNTY MIDDLE SCHOOL - Needs Improvement

PLEASANTS COUNTY
George Michael Wells, Principal
Grades 05-08
Enrollment 414

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on April 20	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
Mathematics								
All	404	413	411	99.52	70.64	Yes	Yes	✓
White	395	404	402	99.50	70.22	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	177	182	181	99.45	61.36	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	65	67	67	100.00	26.15	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	404	413	411	99.52	75.62	Yes	Yes	✓
White	395	404	402	99.50	75.31	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	177	182	181	99.45	64.77	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	65	67	67	100.00	27.69	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed

Attendance Rate = 98.4%

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
05	96	96	95	95	98.96	8.42	15.79	50.53	20.00	5.26	75.79
06	102	99	102	99	100.00	13.13	29.29	44.44	10.10	3.03	57.58
07	107	105	107	105	100.00	4.76	20.95	45.71	21.90	6.67	74.29
08	108	104	107	103	99.07	1.94	23.30	46.60	23.30	4.85	74.76

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
05	96	96	95	95	98.96	7.37	17.89	50.53	20.00	4.21	74.74
06	102	99	102	99	100.00	4.04	19.19	47.47	21.21	8.08	76.77
07	107	105	107	105	100.00	2.86	17.14	50.48	20.00	9.52	80.00
08	108	104	107	103	99.07	1.94	27.18	35.92	22.33	12.62	70.87

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

Other Relevant Performance Data

Statewide Writing Assessment Student Frequency and Percentage by Score

Grade 7

4.0		3.5		3.0		2.5		2.0		1.5		1.0		N		Total Freq.
Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	
0	0%	1	1%	12	11%	12	11%	59	56%	11	10%	6	6%	4	4%	105

Note: Eighty percent (80%) of the students scored at or above 2.0 on the Statewide Writing Assessment.

Freq. - Frequency - Number of students

% - Percentage of students

Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
47.07%	2003-04
46.55%	2002-03
48.586%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Pleasants County Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in one or more subgroups designated in 5.1.1. Achievement. One subgroup designated in 5.1.1. Achievement, included: special education students (SE). In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education issued the school Temporary Accreditation status at the September 10, 2004 State Board meeting.

The school revised its Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) to improve performance and progress on the standard and the West Virginia Board of Education upgraded Pleasants County Middle School to Conditional Accreditation status with a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve AYP.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Pleasants County Middle School had undertaken initiatives for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The prominent initiatives and activities included the following.

- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The learning environment in the classroom for autistic students demonstrated extremely high expectations, which maximized students' potential and achievement. Examples included: Emphasis on Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs), alternate assessment requirements, and life skill tasks.
- 6.1.4. Instruction.** The school implemented and utilized the Accelerated Reader Mystery Trip Program. The Accelerated Reader Mystery Trip rewarded students who attained 100 points through an incentive program at the local mall. Their partner in education funds this trip.
- 6.1.11. Guidance and advisement.** The school obtained 92 percent parent involvement with the students' five-year career plan. This was an excellent way of involving parents in their children's education and providing an avenue for an opening and welcoming school atmosphere.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standard

6.1. Curriculum.

- 6.1.5. Instructional strategies. Staff demonstrates the use of the various instructional strategies and techniques contained in Policies 2510 and 2520. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

Through classroom observations, the Team reported that several teachers were not keeping students fully engaged throughout the entire period. Teachers were observed to be grading papers, and a lack of variety of instructional strategies was also observed in some classrooms.

- 6.1.6. Instruction in writing. Instruction in writing shall be a part of every child's weekly educational curriculum in grades K through 12 in every appropriate class. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)**

The Team determined that the writing process needed to be implemented more consistently. Approximately two-thirds of the teachers and students interviewed had difficulty articulating how often and when instruction in writing took place and most of the time the writing was not being corrected for spelling, punctuation, and content.

6.2. Student and School Performance.

- 6.2.3. 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)**

After reviewing teacher lesson plans, the Team found that several teachers' lesson plans were inadequate. For example, several were sketchy and did not include concepts to be taught, one teacher's plans had a complete week omitted, and several plans would be difficult for a substitute teacher to follow.

- 6.2.4. 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)**

Through teacher and administrator interviews the Team found that WESTEST data were not being used effectively. Only five teachers reportedly had access to individual test results on hand. Also, a majority of teachers reported to have only analyzed the data once, and that was at the retreat at the beginning of the school year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1.2. High expectations.** Special Education (Learning disabled, gifted and speech) students were required to go to the elementary building for services. The Team recommended that the special education students remain in the middle school facility for all services.
- 6.1.4. Instruction.** Students identified as learning disabled were not receiving the most effective education available through the existing pull out program in reading/language arts. Reading/language arts and mathematic classes should include team teaching with general education teachers and special education teachers in all grades. In consideration of the special education subgroup failing to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in reading/language arts and mathematics, the school staff must pursue a structure and instruction that will improve achievement.
- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** While the computer laboratories were being utilized, the Team found that very few of the classroom computers were being used, except for the Grade 5 classes. The Team recommended that individual classroom computers be better utilized.
- The Pleasants County Middle School Technology Plan only indicated “70 percent (70%) of students will use technology to improve basic skills.” The Team recommended that the Indicators of Achievement reflect that all students use technology to improve basic skills.
- 6.1.12. Multicultural activities.** While the school has an abundance of multicultural activities in place, there was a lack of the county multicultural plan. The Team recommended that a county multicultural plan be applied utilizing the components already in place.
- 6.5.2. Codes of conduct.** Through interviews with the principal, the Team found that 51 suspensions resulted from 38 individual students. Twenty-five percent (25%) of these resulted from physical assault/contact. The Team recommended that the school develop and implement an anger management program targeted to decrease the number of physical assault/contact incidences.
- 6.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations.** Given the design of the facility, the Team determined that safety might be an issue because individual classrooms cannot be secured if necessary. Also, outside access doors remained unlocked throughout the school day. The Team recommended that the school explore additional avenues to further secure the building during school hours. This would also assist in reducing the amount of noise and distractions from adjoining classrooms and hallways.

Exemplary Programs & Practices

Standard Number: 6.1.4. Instruction

Title: Art Extravaganza - Color My World

Description of Program

March is Youth Art Month in the state of West Virginia. Each year related arts teachers at Pleasants County Middle School orchestrate a schoolwide arts extravaganza to celebrate both art and music in our school. This is an annual integrated, cross-curriculum event. The exhibit includes art based on all six West Virginia Board of Education art standards. Student work reflects knowledge and understanding of basic art concepts and self expression. The exhibit reinforces the impact of an integrated unit on student achievement such as creative writing across the curriculum, titling of work, and symbolic usage in art. Students are also asked to compare, contrast, and evaluate their own work, as well as, the work of other students. Developing aesthetic judgment is one of the goals of this schoolwide event. This year's theme was "Color My World". Works of art, music, and the written word were centered around the theme. Musical selections reflected the various types of art highlighted in the show: Mexican, African, French, Caribbean, and Japanese. Evening activities included displays of Young Writers stories and classroom activities. Refreshments were provided by the Home Arts Department.

Summary of Results

Many of the art projects are integrated lessons displaying the collegial planning between the art department and the core curricular instructors. This art exhibit provides a source of self-pride and self-discipline for students and fosters community involvement in the school and appreciation for the arts.

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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 Pleasants County Middle School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Pleasants 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 Pleasants County or the accreditation status of the schools.

7.1.1. 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.

Programs are needed to assist teachers in the proper development of lesson plans and in implementing the writing process. These issues would better serve the school and have a direct impact on student achievement.

7.1.3. Facilities. Schools are operated efficiently, economically, and without waste or duplication, and the number and location of schools efficiently serves the student population. (W. Va. Code §18-9D-15 and §18-9D-16d)

The inability to secure each individual classroom during an emergency has the potential to be a serious problem. It is recommended that Pleasants County Middle School and Pleasants County explore methods in which this issue can be solved.

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 Pleasants County Middle School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.5. Instructional strategies.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.1.6. Instruction in writing.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.2.4. Data analysis.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Assessment (304) 558-2546

16.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county Unified 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 determined that Pleasants County Middle School and Pleasants County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies.

However, Pleasants County is urged to contact the RESA V Director of Special Education and the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Education, Executive Director, for assistance in designing and implementing programs for the special education (SE) subgroup.

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.

- 17.1. 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 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.

- 17.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** Pamphlets were not available for student use.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have a ceramic kiln or black-out areas. The physical education facilities did not have a display case or bulletin board.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The Grades 6, 7, and 8 science facilities were not of adequate size; did not have gas; an air vacuum; a ventilation hood; a demo table; an emergency blanket; or emergency showers; and no main gas shut-off.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The auditorium did not have acoustical panels.

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.

None identified.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
67-301 Pleasants County Middle	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.5; 6.1.6; 6.2.3; 6.2.4		
			5.1.1. (SE)	May 31, 2007

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified four (4) high quality standards – necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the 5.1.1. Achievement – for the special education (SE) subgroup and presented six (6) recommendations. Additionally, the Team identified one (1) exemplary program and noted two (2) indicators of efficiency issues.

Pleasants County Middle School’s Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and process standards and progress related to student and school performance in the area of deficiency (5.1.1 - SE). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Pleasants County Middle School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report.