

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

MARLINTON MIDDLE SCHOOL

POCAHONTAS COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

NOVEMBER 2004

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Marlinton Middle School in Pocahontas County on April 23, 2003.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Marlinton Middle School was conducted September 21, 2004. The purpose of the follow-up 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

NONCOMPLIANCES

5.1 Curriculum

5.1.4. Learning environment. School staff fosters an environment conducive to learning. (Policy 2510)

Health and physical education classes were taught at the same time in the gymnasium. The health class was located on the stage with no partition to separate the health class from the physical education class. The health classroom area did not have a chalkboard, instructional materials, or supplies available. The noise from the physical education class distracted the students and impeded teaching and learning in the health class.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The health class had been moved into a regular classroom.

5.1.9. Instructional materials. Sufficient numbers of approved up-to-date textbooks, instructional materials, and other resources are available to deliver curricular content for the full instructional term. (Policy 2510)

The special education classes did not have appropriate textbooks and supplemental materials. The materials that were copied and printed for student use were not aligned with the content standards. The health class did not have the basic instructional materials, i.e., chalkboard, supplies, etc.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. An interview with the special education teachers revealed that they had the materials, textbooks, etc., needed. The health class was in a regular classroom.

5.1.10. Programs of study. Programs of study are provided in grades K-12 as listed in Policy 2510 for early, middle, and adolescent levels, including career clusters and majors 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)

Choral music was not being taught.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Interviews with the principal and music teacher and a review of the class roster showed choral music was being taught to students in Grades 6 - 8 with 37 students enrolled.

5.1.14. Multicultural education. Multicultural education is taught at each programmatic level, K-4, 5-8, and 9-12 with an emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance for racial, sexual, religious/ethnic harassment or violence. (Policy 2421)

The Team determined through teacher interviews and classroom observations that some multicultural activities and lessons were conducted; however, a schoolwide multicultural education plan or curriculum had not been developed or implemented.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1a/b Achievement. Achievement data showed that 51.04 percent of the students performed at or above the third and fourth quartiles and a decreasing trend for students performing in the first quartile was evident. The Team recommended that the staff continue to monitor student mastery of the content standards and objectives and provide student support through reteaching and the tutoring program. **Note: Previous Policy 2320 effective May 31, 2003.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

Note: Current Policy 2320 effective August 19, 2004.

5.1.1. Achievement.

According to the West Virginia Achieves No Child Left Behind data, the school meets adequate yearly progress (AYP) for the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability.

This is the 1st year that Marlinton Middle School has not made AYP. One subgroup designated in 5.1.1. Achievement is economically disadvantaged (SES) students. In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the school was notified of any subgroup that initially had not made adequate yearly progress (AYP) in one year on any indicator and will be encouraged to revise the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) when a subgroup is identified in any one year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The school staff was working to revise the Unified School Improvement Plan (USIP) to address areas that will improve learning for all students, particularly the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup. For example, extra classes were being planned after school

and the staff was in the process of identifying those areas in which students were deficient on the WESTEST and targeting those areas in instruction.

- 5.1.1. Mission and goals.** The Team recommended that articulation and collaboration be established with the teachers and administrators of Pocahontas County High School. The Team recommended that the staffs address student transition from Grade 8 to Grade 9, curriculum alignment, and student achievement data.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Joint meetings between the staffs of Pocahontas County High School and Marlinton Middle School have been held to address these concerns.

- 5.1.2. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.** The Team observed that curriculum was based on the content standards and objectives; however, the Team recommended that special education teachers be participants in the CORE Knowledge Teams to assure consistency of instruction and delivery of the content standards and objectives.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Special education teachers were full participating members in the CORE Knowledge Teams.

- 5.1.3. High expectations.** The Team determined through teacher interviews and observations that the staff were not able to clearly articulate the expectations of students and how students were challenged to do their best. The Team recommended that the staff reach consensus on the definitions of high expectations for all students and that those expectations be communicated to students and parents.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. The faculty has met as a Committee of the Whole and discussed expectations and agreed upon a set of expectations for all students. These have been communicated to parents through meetings with parents and by newsletters.

- 5.1.8. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** The Team observed that the computer laboratory was utilized and the Compass program was used for SAT-9 preparation. The Team recommended that technology be used by students as a tool for learning and include word processing, presentations, data base applications, and Internet research. The Team also recommended that the Technology Plan be revised to include additional funding for materials and hardware for the library media center.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. A technology curriculum had been written for the middle school which included word processing presentations, data base applications, and Internet research. The library was currently being renovated and a new 30-station computer laboratory was being installed.

5.2.4. Lesson plans and principal feedback. The Team could not determine that written feedback was provided to all teachers on lesson plans. The Team recommended that written feedback be provided once each quarter to all teachers in the lesson plan book.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Teachers were using a lesson plan format that was easy for them and easy for the principal to check to determine if they are including the various parts of a good lesson. These lesson plans were submitted to the principal who reviewed them and commented to each teacher on the lesson plans every two weeks.

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.

15.1. 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*)

15.1.8. Grades 1 – 12 classrooms. Each classroom has sufficient space, equipment and materials. (Policy 6200 §§403; 502; 602)

Carpeting in some classrooms was worn and frayed.

15.1.12. Grades 7 – 12 auditorium/stage. Auditorium/stage facilities are adequate. (Policy 6200 §§519; 616)

The stage curtains were in disrepair and had been removed from the stage. A health class was held on the stage at the same time a physical education class was being conducted in the gymnasium.

15.1.15. Health service units. Health service units are adequate. A health service unit was not available.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The facility resource needs remained as noted in the May 2003 Draft Report with the exception of the following:

15.1.8. The worn and frayed classroom carpets had been replaced with new floor tile. The county will continue to replace the carpet floor

covering with tile as the carpet becomes worn and frayed and funds become available.

15.1.12. The stage curtains had been replaced with new curtains.

15.1.15. The health class had been moved to a regular classroom and no classes were being held on the stage.

BUILDING CAPACITY TO CORRECT DEFICIENCIES

- 14.3.11. Ensuring that the needed capacity is available from the state and local level to assist the school or school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies.**

The Team determined that Pocahontas County and Marlinton Middle School have the capacity to implement the strategies needed to correct the identified noncompliances.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The identified deficiencies had been corrected.

SCHOOL SYSTEM APPROVAL & SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the **Full Approval** status of the Pocahontas County School System and continue the **Full Accreditation** status of Marlinton Middle School.