



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

PROGRESS REVIEW EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

PRESTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

JULY 2014

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced on-site review (five days in advance) was conducted at the Preston County School District April 16–18, 2008. The Team also visited Kingwood Elementary School, Central Preston Middle School, and South Preston Middle School. The Education Performance Audit Report was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education June 2008 and the Board gave the county 90 days to develop a corrective action plan to correct the deficiencies in the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) report. The Preston County Corrective Action Plan was presented to the State Board at its October 2008 meeting.

At its December 2008 meeting, the State Board unanimously voted for the OEPA to conduct an Education Performance Audit of the Preston County School District and examine facilities, finance, leadership, and curriculum.

A second audit of the Preston County School District (January 26–28, 2009, and February 17–19, 2009) found that conditions in the county regarding facilities, finance, leadership, and curriculum continued to worsen. The report was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education March 2009. The State Board declared that a state of emergency existed in the Preston County School District and placed the school district on Nonapproval status. The State Board immediately intervened in the operation of the school system.

The West Virginia Board of Education directed the Office of Education Performance Audits to conduct a full audit of the Preston County School System to “ascertain the degree of compliance and progress in addressing the noncompliances from the Office of Education Performance Audits audit which ascribed nonapproval . . .” status. An Education Performance Audit Team conducted a full county audit of the Preston County School District August 21–23, 2012. A report of the Education Performance Audit was reviewed by the West Virginia Board of Education November 2012. The State Board returned partial control to the Preston County Board of Education in 1. Policies and 2. the establishment and operation of a school calendar. All other areas of intervention remained in place and the State Board continued the county’s Nonapproval status.

A Progress Review was conducted on May 21-23, 2014, to ascertain progress of the county in improving student achievement, reducing the financial deficit, stabilizing personnel practices, and facility improvement. This report describes the Education Performance Audit Team’s assessment of progress made by the Preston County School System in meeting the requirements for the county school system to assume local control.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Dr. Donna Davis

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Deborah Ashwell	Coordinator	OEPA	Student Performance/ Five-Year Strategic Plan/High Quality Standards/Technology
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EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT CURRICULUM ANALYSIS

Special Education

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan, the Special Education Monitoring Report, the Self-Assessment Report, and the county adequate yearly progress (AYP) data and interviewed the Preston County coordinator responsible for special education.

1. The coordinator of special education had only been in the position for one year and the special education department completed the corrective actions recommended in the Special Education Monitoring report. The West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs, issued a letter informing the Preston County Superintendent and the Director of Special Education that all corrective actions had been completed.
2. The Team commended the special education department for the following activities.
 - Working to include special educators in all staff training provided by the Teacher Leadership Institute (TLI) team.
 - Addressing literacy deficiencies at Preston High School by extending the Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) program to include students with disabilities.
 - Working with RESA 7 to provide professional development opportunities for special educators, general educators, and administrators that focus specifically on co-teaching methods.
 - Working with the Central Office Curriculum Leadership Team to provide support for personalized learning (SPL) training and develop a plan to target students for instructional activities.
 - Identifying and addressing areas of concern including AYP, lack of teacher certification, and Policy 2419 compliance issues. According to the self-assessment and desk audit, these issues had been addressed in a clear and formal plan, and submitted to the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Special Programs.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

NO FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED. The coordinator of special education has been in the position for three years and the special education department completed the corrective actions recommended in the Special Education Monitoring report from January 2013. The West Virginia Department of

Education, Office of Special Programs, issued a letter informing the Preston County Superintendent and the Director of Special Education that all corrective actions had been completed.

Title I

1. The Title I Coordinator had only held the position for three days at the time of the Education Performance Audit and could not readily answer some questions about Title I. The Team felt that he was knowledgeable of the Preston County Title I program in general, was enthusiastic about the Title 1 position, and was realistic about the work to be completed. The Team believed that the coordinator has an accurate grasp of the current situation and ideas concerning corrective action of the Title I Monitoring compliance issues.
2. Preston County was working to resolve the areas of concern identified by the Title I monitoring team by the following actions.
 - Updating inventory of items purchased with Title I funds.
 - Replacing Title I funds used to purchase materials for non-Title I schools.
 - Developing programs to engage parents and means to communicate with them (e.g., hire parent coordinators and tutors).
 - Implementing programs to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers (e.g., Benedum Collaborative with West Virginia University and a similar program with Fairmont State, Principals for Tomorrow).
 - Hiring three academic coaches, each coach was assigned to two schools.
3. Preston County employed a Parent Volunteer Coordinator for each Title I school and a person at the county level to oversee the parent programs at all Title I schools. The monitoring team reported that the program was successful and recommended that it be extended to the non-Title I schools.
4. Preston County hired tutors for each Title I school to work with students during the school day. The job posting for the position listed qualifications that included, but were not limited to, having a Bachelor's Degree and experience working with students.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

NO FURTHER ACTION REQUIRED. The consolidated federal programs review conducted May 19-20, 2014, found the Title I Plan compliant in all areas.

Elementary Curriculum

The Title I Coordinator was responsible for the elementary curriculum with 20 percent of the coordinator's time designated to elementary education. This was not sufficient to

lead curriculum improvement and a concentrated focus on curriculum and instruction at the elementary level. Declining WESTEST2 percent of students achieving at the proficient level and the number of new principals and substitute principals were prominent indicators that the elementary curriculum needed more direct attention. The coordinator of elementary curriculum was not aware that new social studies standards were in effect. Professional development had not been provided to social studies teachers on the new standards.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The county administration realized 20 percent of the Title I Elementary staff position was not sufficient time to address elementary curriculum. Through interviews, the Team discovered the Title I/Elementary Curriculum position and job responsibilities will be realigned. A Federal Programs Director position was posted. The Curriculum Director will be responsible for elementary and secondary curriculum, Student Assistant Team (SAT), and Support for Personalized Learning (SPL). In addition, all schools had an assigned, permanent principal with the understanding the two schools consolidating (Tunnelton-Denver and South Preston Middle) had one principal for both schools this year (2013-2014).

Through document reviews, the Team determined all teachers were provided professional development for the current State approved social studies standards. In addition, the county adopted a new social studies textbook series.

Secondary Curriculum

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan, the Title II Monitoring Report, and adequate yearly progress (AYP) data and met with the Preston County Director whose responsibilities included, but were not limited to, secondary curriculum, school improvement, career technical education, STEP 7, professional development, and Title II.

1. The director has held the position for three years; however, responsibility for Title II was just added to her duties last year.
2. When asked to discuss secondary curriculum, the director said that the county has just started to hold weekly curriculum meetings that she attends along with the coordinators responsible for Title I and elementary curriculum, special education, and the assistant superintendent. They plan to start looking at test data to determine the professional development needs for the county.
3. When asked about the current professional development in place to address curriculum at the secondary level, the director said that Preston County sent a team of two math teachers, two English/language arts teachers, and a principal to each of the Teacher Leadership Institute (TLI) sessions this past summer. The county provided follow-up by having the TLI team provide staff development on the

Next Generation Standards to the other county English/language arts and math teachers.

4. A county plan for building capacity using Teacher Leadership Institute (TLI) participants from previous years was not apparent. It appeared that once teachers attended TLI and provided staff training, they were no longer involved in any staff training. The Education Performance Audit Team recommended that the county begin to build capacity by developing a TLI Participant Cohort that builds on knowledge learned at each Teacher Leadership Institute (TLI) session and supports new team members before they attend the institutes.
5. When asked about the Science, Art, and Social Studies (SASS) Institute, the Director said she thinks a team attended but did not know who was on that team or what content areas they represented. Follow up professional development was not offered to county science, art, and social studies teachers.
6. The director of secondary curriculum, like the coordinator of elementary curriculum, was not aware that new social studies standards were in effect. Professional development had not been provided to social studies teachers on these new standards.
7. When asked how the county supported social studies teachers since it has been so long since the last social studies adoption, the director reported that the county purchased mobile labs for social studies teachers as part of the Textbooks to Technology program. She was not able to provide information as to the number of labs purchased or the schools in which they were placed.
8. The director said that she forwards e-mails she receives from the West Virginia Department of Education, Coordinator of Social Studies, containing websites and other information useful in developing lesson plans to principals and asks that principals share the information with teachers. No mention was made as to whether teachers were using those resources.
9. The director said that the county purchased 30 netbooks for students taking Math I. The teachers who attended TLI made this request based on learning that an entire Math I course is available on Teach 21. They also learned that they can use existing algebra and geometry texts for this instruction.
10. A teacher was sent to the English 12 CR Course training and will be teaching that course this year. This is a new English/language arts course for students who scored mastery on the WESTEST2, but did not plan to take advanced placement (AP) English in Grade 12.
11. The county was starting to implement the Books on the Bus program.
12. When asked how the summer professional development sessions were determined and how teachers decided what they would attend, the director explained that the academic coaches and technology integration specialists (TIS) made the decision as to what professional development would be offered. In a follow-up question the Team learned that a very short survey was given to teachers to see what type of professional development they would like to have. Once the schedule was developed, teachers chose which professional development sessions they wanted to attend. As has been typical of the Team's observations, there was no apparent connection of the professional development offered and attended to the county's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

13. The director expressed pride in the career and technical education (CTE) program because a Wind and Power Pathway had been added, one of only two schools in the nation selected to offer the pathway. The other school is located in South Carolina.
14. The director also reported that students improved their scores on the Work Keys reading assessment.
15. Preston County was unable to offer the Alternate Pathway option because of the financial deficit.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The director overseeing Federal Programs and elementary curriculum was also assisting with secondary curriculum. This was his second year in the current position, and next year he will be responsible solely for curriculum, K-12. The county currently had posted the Federal Programs director's position.

As reported by the Director of Federal Programs/Elementary Curriculum, the development of a countywide professional development plan was an "evolving" process. The director conducted needs assessments with teachers at each school, as well as worked with school administrators to determine the county professional development needs. At the forefront for teachers was developing knowledge and implementation of the Next Generation Content Standards. The director reported the county had focused most of its attention on helping teachers understand the foundational shifts connected to the new standards. Teachers who attended training at the Common Core Institute in April 2013 provided training for other teachers in the county in June 2013. Instructional Support and Enhancement (ISE) days, as well as two-hour long evening sessions were held approximately three times during the year, and used to support the training provided during the summer. The county also received support from the State math coordinator via telephone during a follow-up training session. Additionally, the central office formed countywide content-specific cohorts for core area teachers (math, English, social studies, and science) and held professional development sessions to introduce and discuss instructional strategies.

Following the diagnostic reviews conducted by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and Regional Education Service Agency 7 (RESA 7) staff at the Priority and Focus schools in the county, the central office requested diagnostic visits be conducted in all other schools. In response, the director planned summer academies for the various school accountability designations (Transition, Support, Focus, and Priority), targeting the needs identified for the specific schools.

The director reported the high school was changing from block scheduling to an 8-period day for the upcoming school year. He indicated this decision was made

based upon student achievement results. During the summer academy planned for the high school staff, master teachers from the surrounding area who currently work within an 8-period day will present and answer questions about the transition.

As reflected in the county's strategic plan, much of the professional development was focused upon building the capacity of school administrators. The superintendent stated that there was a concentrated effort to develop the instructional leadership skills of the county's principals. As reported by the Federal Programs/Elementary Curriculum director, administrators were participating in modules monthly based upon the seven Standards for High Quality Schools. The central office was working to build principals' knowledge of data beyond standardized testing results and how to use this data in making instructional decisions. Principals were provided training on the High Quality Standards Data Collection Site and the self-assessment rubric, and then asked to work with their staffs to complete the self-assessment. This allowed for personalized professional development for the schools.

The Federal Programs/Elementary Curriculum director worked with teachers to develop instructional pacing guides based upon the Next Generation Content Standards. The model was shared with the Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) 7 and will be utilized in a training planned with representatives from each of the 12 counties comprising the RESA during the summer of 2014.

The director reported all schools had leadership teams and were at different stages in developing collaborative teams. The director was providing support for schools in these areas by attending leadership team meetings and modeling processes and procedures, as well as meeting individually with principals to review agenda items for faculty meetings and encouraging incorporation of more curriculum related issues. While teacher leadership seemed to be increasing through participation in leadership and collaborative teams, not all principals were empowering teachers to lead professional development within the schools.

The Options Pathway was not available for students during the current school year; however, according to the superintendent, plans were in process to provide the Options Pathway next year.

While the number of students completing career and technical education programs decreased slightly from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013 (315 to 313), scores on all three areas of the ACT WorkKeys remained well above required levels. During the two-year period, scores in Reading increased one percent (93 percent to 94 percent), while scores in Math (82 percent) and Locating Information (82 percent) remained the same. Student scores on the performance assessment (94 percent) remained the same from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013. Similarly, percentages for positive placement (99 percent), jobs in field (96 percent), and continuing education in field (88 percent) remained the same.

Strategic Planning

Interviews with curriculum staff indicated that positive curriculum related initiatives were taking place in Preston County. However, a comprehensive plan for professional development was not in place and the professional development listed on the Five-Year Strategic Plan was not tied to any goals. No one interviewed was familiar enough with the plan to know what was currently included in the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan or what needed to be added so the plan served as the basis for all professional development.

When interviewed, the assistant superintendent responded that he was assigned the responsibility for the Five-Year Strategic Plan last year just before the deadline for submission. Because of the limited time, he submitted the plan himself. This year he had the Curriculum Leadership Team at the county level enter the professional development delivered over the summer and the professional development that they knew will be taking place this year. He was surprised when told that none of the professional development entered was attached to a goal. When asked, the assistant superintendent indicated that, to his knowledge, no one from the central office was reviewing, approving, and/or monitoring individual school strategic plans.

Because no apparent vision was applied for the professional development needed to ensure students increase proficiency in all content areas, the Team recommended that the Preston County Curriculum Leadership Team work together to identify needs, prioritize those needs, and develop a county Five-Year Strategic Plan that will guide all professional development. The Team further recommended that the leadership team work with each school to guide the development of individual school strategic plans and monitor the action that takes place to ensure that each school's identified goals are met.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. Ten of the 12 schools in Preston County have received diagnostic visits from RESA 7. These reports were to be used in the development of school level strategic plans. A review of school level strategic plans revealed administrators did not consider the recommendations in these reports when developing the strategic plans. According to the Title I/Elementary Curriculum Director, modules have been developed and are currently being delivered to principals addressing this disconnect between diagnostic results and strategic planning process. The Team noted improved planning needed to occur to connect data, goals, action steps, and professional development with recommendations from diagnostic visits to effectively impact school and student achievement.

**Growth Model District Level Summary
All Students
Preston County
School Year 2013**

**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

Location	Mathematics 2013					Reading/Language Arts 2013				
	Low	Typical	High	Median Percentile	Percent Proficient	Low	Typical	High	Median Percentile	Percent Proficient
State	51165 (34.9%)	45256 (30.9%)	50057 (34.2%)	50	45.1%	50484 (34.6%)	45076 (30.9%)	50227 (34.5%)	50	48.7%
-- District	882 (36.6%)	729 (30.3%)	796 (33.1%)	48	39.0%	940 (39.3%)	737 (30.8%)	716 (29.9%)	45	41.3%
-- Aurora Elementary	16 (35.6%)	14 (31.1%)	15 (33.3%)	48	36.4%	23 (51.1%)	12 (26.7%)	10 (22.2%)	32	32.7%
-- Bruceton School	55 (19.6%)	78 (27.8%)	148 (52.7%)	67	51.6%	68 (24.2%)	85 (30.2%)	128 (45.6%)	61	48.9%
-- Central Preston Middle School	107 (44.0%)	80 (32.9%)	56 (23.0%)	38	40.3%	91 (37.8%)	81 (33.6%)	69 (28.6%)	45	49.0%
-- Fellowsville Elementary	18 (50.0%)	9 (25.0%)	9 (25.0%)	32	39.3%	23 (63.9%)	10 (27.8%)	3 (8.3%)	25	33.9%
-- Kingwood Elementary	62 (45.3%)	38 (27.7%)	37 (27.0%)	43	40.4%	72 (53.3%)	34 (25.2%)	29 (21.5%)	32	44.7%
-- Preston High School	347 (39.3%)	291 (33.0%)	245 (27.7%)	45	37.1%	389 (44.5%)	270 (30.9%)	216 (24.7%)	40	39.7%
-- Rowlesburg School	26 (33.3%)	18 (23.1%)	34 (43.6%)	58	38.8%	28 (35.9%)	17 (21.8%)	33 (42.3%)	57	40.8%
-- South Preston Middle School	60 (48.8%)	34 (27.6%)	29 (23.6%)	35	29.6%	52 (42.3%)	39 (31.7%)	32 (26.0%)	44	36.8%
-- Terra Alta/East Preston	63 (33.2%)	54 (28.4%)	73 (38.4%)	50	33.7%	80 (42.6%)	49 (26.1%)	59 (31.4%)	45	37.4%
-- Tunnelton-Denver Elementary	31 (49.2%)	15 (23.8%)	17 (27.0%)	39	27.5%	18 (28.6%)	22 (34.9%)	23 (36.5%)	52	26.4%
-- Valley Elementary	25 (18.4%)	42 (30.9%)	69 (50.7%)	66	35.5%	27 (19.9%)	55 (40.4%)	54 (39.7%)	58	32.7%
-- West Preston Middle School	72 (37.5%)	56 (29.2%)	64 (33.3%)	49	43.7%	69 (35.9%)	63 (32.8%)	60 (31.3%)	48	48.7%

The Growth Model District Level Summary Results chart identifies the percent proficient in each school compared to the county and the State averages for both mathematics and reading/language arts. In addition, growth is examined and determined to be low (red cells), typical (yellow cells), or high growth (green cells) based on previous performance.

Mathematics. Bruceton School (51.6 percent proficient) and Valley Elementary (35.5 percent proficient) demonstrated high growth. Fellowsville Elementary demonstrated low growth with 39.3 percent proficiency. All other schools demonstrated typical growth. As the chart indicates, the Preston County School District scored 39.0 percent proficient in mathematics. Bruceton School was the only school in the county to achieve above 50 percent proficient in mathematics. Two schools, Tunnelton-Denver Elementary and South Preston Middle School, demonstrated less than 30 percent proficient. These two schools will be consolidated fall 2014 and will remain a Priority school due to the priority status of Tunnelton-Denver.

Reading/Language Arts. Aurora, Fellowsville, and Kingwood Elementary schools demonstrated low growth in reading/language arts. All other schools demonstrated typical growth. As the chart indicates, the Preston County School District scored 41.3 percent proficient in reading/language arts. All schools scored below 50 percent proficient.

Considering the target of 75 percent proficiency for all students by 2020, it is imperative that schools demonstrate high growth in order to close achievement gaps. At the current rate of growth, the Team is concerned that Preston County will not reach the target of 75 percent of all students proficient.

Based on the 2013 WESTEST2 scores, Preston County School System had one Priority School, six Focus Schools, two Support Schools, three Transition Schools and no Success Schools. The chart lists all Preston County Schools and the West Virginia Accountability Index (WVAI) designation.

Priority Schools	Focus Schools	Support Schools	Transition Schools	Success Schools
Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School	Bruceston School	Aurora Elementary School	Rowlesburg School	
	Kingwood Elementary School	Terra Alta/East Preston School	Fellowsville Elementary School	
	Valley Elementary School		Preston High School	
	Central Preston Middle School			
	South Preston Middle School			
	West Preston Middle School			

Ten of 12 schools received diagnostic visits from RESA 7. However, from a review of school strategic plans, the Team found no evidence of the report recommendations incorporated in the strategic plans.

ACT EXPLORE Assessment Results

ACT Explore composite trend data (Chart 9) showed some improvement from 2007-2008 (14.6) to 2011-2012 (15.2). Preston County's ACT Explore assessment results based on the five year trend data displayed in Chart 9 showed an up and down performance in all subjects from 2007-2008 to 2011-2012.

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Preston County students scored above the State average on the ACT EXPLORE in all areas in 2013-2014. Improvements were demonstrated in all areas except reading which remained the same from the previous year. Preston County achieved the national benchmark in English, but scored below the national benchmark in mathematics, reading, and science.

Chart 9

ACT EXPLORE RESULTS				
Grade 8				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
English WV	14.1	14.1	14.3	14.1
English Preston	14.2	14.1	14.3	14.7
Mathematics WV	14.8	15.5	14.8	14.9
Mathematics Preston	15.1	14.8	14.6	15.5
Reading WV	14.1	14.0	14.0	14.0
Reading Preston	14.4	14.7	14.7	14.6
Science WV	15.9	16.6	16.0	15.9
Science Preston	16.4	16.4	16.6	16.6
Composite WV	14.8	15.5	14.9	14.9
Composite Preston	15.1	15.2	15.1	15.4

Benchmarks: English: 13 Mathematics: 17 Reading: 15 Science: 20

ACT PLAN Assessment Results

Preston County Grade 10 ACT PLAN composite results (Chart 10) showed a moderate increase from 2010-2011 (16.1) to 2011-2012 (16.3). Five years of trend data showed an up and down performance in English, mathematics, and reading results from 2007-2008 to 2011-2012; however, science scores did not show any significant gains or losses, but were near the State averages. ACT Plan trend data showed that Preston County must consider all areas assessed for school district improvement.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Preston County's ACT PLAN results improved in all areas except mathematics from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014. Compared to the national benchmark, Preston County achieved the benchmark in English, but scored below the national benchmarks in mathematics, reading, and science.

Chart 10

ACT PLAN RESULTS Grade 10				
	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
English WV	16.3	16.0	16.2	16.2
English Preston	15.5	15.2	15.6	15.6
Mathematics WV	16.2	16.4	16.4	16.3
Mathematics Preston	15.4	16.1	16.0	15.9
Reading WV	16.1	16.1	16.4	16.2
Reading Preston	15.4	15.8	15.9	16.2
Science WV	17.3	17.3	17.4	17.5
Science Preston	17.1	17.5	17.2	17.6
Composite WV	16.6	16.6	16.7	16.7
Composite Preston	16.1	16.3	16.3	16.5

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

5.1.2. Participation rate. A minimum of 95 percent in the current or a two or three year average of all students enrolled in a public school/county school district/state at the time of testing, including students in each subgroup as required by *NCLB* must participate in the statewide assessment WESTEST or the West Virginia Alternate Performance Task Assessment (APTA) in reading/language arts or mathematics. Students with a significant medical emergency may be exempt by appeal from the calculation of participation rate for AYP provided that the county superintendent has proper documentation. (Policy 2340; Policy 2419; Policy 2510)

A review of the adequate yearly progress (AYP) data showed that the Preston County School District met the 95 percent participation rate for test taking.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Through a review of county data and interview with the County Test Coordinator, the Team found evidence the county met the required 95 percent participation rate in statewide assessments.

5.1.3. Attendance rate (Elementary/Middle). The student attendance rate for elementary and middle schools is at or above 90 percent or the percentage of students meeting the attendance rate show improvement from the preceding year. The student attendance rate will be adjusted for students excluded as a result of the Productive and Safe Schools Act (W.Va. Code §18A-5-1a) and school bus transportation interruptions (W.Va. 126CSR81), West Virginia Board of Education Policy 4110, *Attendance Policy*, (hereinafter Policy 4110). Additional exclusions include excused student absences, students not in attendance due to disciplinary measures, and absent students for whom the attendance director has pursued judicial remedies to compel attendance to the extent of his or her authority. For the AYP determination, the attendance rate calculation will be used for accountability at the public school/LEA/SEA levels, but will not be calculated for each subgroup. However, for schools/LEAs that use the safe harbor provision to meet AYP for the achievement indicators, the attendance rate standard must be met by the subgroup/s not meeting AYP.

Chart 11 indicated the Preston County School District attendance rate has remained significantly above the State 90 percent requirement for the last five reporting years.

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In the quarterly report to the West Virginia Board of Education October 2013, the county attendance rate had decreased 3.09 percent from the previous year. As of the end of March, the average monthly attendance for the 2013-2014 school year was 93.8 percent, a 4.29 percent decrease in student attendance rates countywide.

Chart 11

ATTENDANCE RATE	
Year	Attendance Rate
2008-2009	97.39%
2009-2010	97.95%
2010-2011	98.17%
2011-2012	98.27%
2012-2013	98.09%
2013-2014	93.8%

5.1.4. Graduation rate. The student graduation rate is 80 percent or the percentage of students meeting the student graduation rate shows improvement. The graduation rate is calculated according to the high school completer formula recommended by the NCES with the additional condition that graduates include only those students who receive a regular diploma in the standard number of years and does not include students receiving the GED. For the AYP determination, the graduation rate calculation will be used for accountability at

the public school/LEA/SEA levels, but will not be calculated for each subgroup. However, for schools/LEAs that use the safe harbor provision to meet AYP for the achievement indicators, the graduation rate standard must be met by the subgroup/s not meeting AYP.

The data in Chart 12 showed that the Preston County School District graduation rate met the State requirement of 80 percent in the 2007-2008 through 2009-2010 reporting years; however, beginning in the 2010-2011 school year and continuing through the 2011-2012 school year, the graduation data indicated that the Preston County School District did not meet the required 80 percent. The Team noted a slight increase in the graduation rate in 2011-2012; however, the increase was not sufficient to meet the graduation rate requirement. Therefore, the Team recommended that Preston County develop action steps to address graduation rate and include them in the county and high school Five-Year Strategic Plans.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Preston County demonstrated an increase in graduation rate by 2.7 percent from 2012 to 2013. The graduation rates from one school year are considered in the reporting for the following year for accountability purposes.

Chart 12

GRADUATION RATE	
Year	Graduation Rate
2008-2009	82.28%
2009-2010	85.15%
2010-2011	78.55%
2011-2012	79.06%
2012-2013	77.69%
2013-2014	80.39%

Chart 13 demonstrated the number of advanced placement (AP®), honors courses, and college credit courses offered in Preston County's high school during 2011-2012. Preston County High School offered six (6) AP® courses, eleven (11) honors courses, and six (6) college credit courses.

Chart 13

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP®), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2011-2012			
High School/County	Number of AP Courses Taken	Number of Honors Courses	Number of College Credit Courses
Preston County High	6	11	6

Chart 13A demonstrated the number of advanced placement, honors, and college courses offered during 2012-2013.

Chart 13A

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP®), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2012-2013			
High School/County	Number of AP Courses Taken	Number of Honors Courses	Number of College Credit Courses
Preston County High	5	12	6

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Preston County High School offered one less AP course in 2013-2014 (AP Physics class was not offered). One additional honors class was offered (Math III STEM). Six college credit courses continued to be offered.

Chart 14 provides college entrance testing information for the American College Test (ACT) and the advanced placement test (APT) for 2010-2011.

Data are listed for Preston County High School, the county, and the State. Preston County's ACT percentage of test takers (56.2 percent) was lower than the State (61.1 percent). The ACT composite score for Preston County (20.3) was also slightly below the State composite (20.6). The chart indicated the percent of AP® test takers in Preston County and Preston County High School at all grade levels was substantially lower than the State averages, particularly in Grade 11.

Chart 14

COLLEGE-ENTRANCE TESTING INFORMATION – ACT & APT 2010-2011					
ACT(American College Test)			APT (Advanced Placement Test) Test Takers		
Schools	Test Takers	Composite Score	Tenth Grade	Eleventh Grade	Twelfth Grade
Preston High	56.2%	20.3	0.0%	3.4%	13.4%
Preston County Schools	56.2%	20.3	0.0%	3.7%	8.6%
STATE	61.1%	20.6	1.8%	22.3%	22.4%

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The percent of Preston County students taking the ACT decreased by 5.7 percent from 2010-2011 to 2012-2013, while the average composite score increased by 0.3 percent. The State demonstrated a slight decrease in the average number of test takers (1.5 percent) and no change in the average composite score.

During the same timeframe, the percent of students in Preston County taking the APT decreased, especially, in Grade 12, while the State demonstrated a slight increase.

Chart 14A

COLLEGE-ENTRANCE TESTING INFORMATION – ACT & APT 2012-2013					
ACT(American College Test)			APT (Advanced Placement Test) Test Takers		
Schools	Test Takers	Composite Score	Tenth Grade	Eleventh Grade	Twelfth Grade
Preston High	50.5%	20.6	0.0%	2.8%	6.8%
Preston County Schools	50.5%	20.6	0.0%	2.8%	6.8%
STATE	59.6%	20.6	3.7%	24.8%	24.7%

SAT/ACT Assessment Results

Chart 15 shows the Preston School District's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT) results; however, 2011-2012 results were not available at the time of the Education Performance Audit. The percent of test takers decreased in 2007-2008 but increased slightly in 2008-2009; however, in 2010-2011 the percent of SAT test takers increased significantly. The SAT math mean score showed a significant drop from 499 in 2009-2010 to 464 in 2010-2011. The SAT reading mean score decreased from 511 in 2009-2010 to 473 in 2010-2011. The writing score decreased from 494 in 2009-2010 to 459 in 2010-2011.

ACT composite trend data showed an increase from 2006-2007 through 2008-2009, but decreased in 2009-2010 and remained the same in 2010-2011. The percentage of students taking the ACT showed a decreasing trend during the past four years from 65.5 percent in 2006-2007 to 56.2 percent in 2010-2011.

From 2010-2011 to 2011-2012, the percent of students taking the SAT dropped 3.2 percent. Likewise, the scores in math, reading, and writing also declined. Improvement was noted during the 2012-2013 year as the percent of students taking the SAT increased by 1 percent. All scores improved with the greatest improvement noted in reading.

While the number of ACT test takers dropped from 2010-2011 to 2012-2013, the ACT composite score increased by 0.3 percent over the three year period.

Chart 15

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) - Preston County Schools					
County	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
SAT Takers (%)	9.7%	4.1%	5.4%	5.3%	8.4%
SAT Math Mean Score	494	514	524	499	464
SAT Reading Score	548	510	537	511	473
SAT Writing Score	482	495	511	494	459
AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT) - Preston County Schools					
ACT Takers (%)	65.5%	60.0%	52.9%	56.2%	56.2%
ACT Composite	20.5	20.8	21.0	20.3	20.3

NA – Less than 10 (Not Applicable)

Source: State, County and School Data, 2011-2012 West Virginia Report Cards, West Virginia Department of Education.

Chart 15A

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) - Preston County Schools		
County	2011-2012	2012-2013
SAT Takers (%)	5.2%	6.2%
SAT Math Mean Score	412	433
SAT Reading Score	421	482
SAT Writing Score	432	446
AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT) - Preston County Schools		
ACT Takers (%)	56.1%	50.5%
ACT Composite	20.4	20.6

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The high school graduate overall college going rate (fall 2011) for Preston County was 51.4 percent compared to the State's overall college going rate of 57.9 percent as presented in Chart 16. This was 6.5 percent below the State average.

The percent of students from Preston County going to college decreased 5.1 percent from fall 2011 (51.4 percent) to fall 2012 (46.3 percent).

Thirteen (13) of Preston County's 102 first-time freshmen or 12.70 percent were enrolled in Developmental English during fall 2011 compared to the State total (16.70 percent). Twenty-one (21) graduates or 20.60 percent were enrolled in developmental mathematics courses compared to the State total (28.20 percent).

Chart 16

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2011		
	Number of High School Graduates 2010-2011	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
State	18,001	57.9%
Preston County	276	51.4%
Preston High	276	51.4%

Source: West Virginia College Going Rates By County and High School Fall 2011,
West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

Chart 16A

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2012		
	Number of High School Graduates 2011-2012	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
State	18,335	56.4%
Preston County	296	46.3%
Preston High	296	46.3%

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

Preston County's percent of students enrolled in developmental courses was lower than the State's percentage of students taking both English and mathematics developmental courses (Chart 17).

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Nine (9) of Preston County's first-time freshmen or 8.9 percent were enrolled in Developmental English during fall 2013 compared to the State total (15.0 percent). Twenty-two (22) graduates or 21.8 percent were enrolled in developmental mathematics compared to the State (26.5 percent).

Chart 17

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2011					
	1 st Time WV Freshmen Total #	English Total #	% in Developmental English	Mathematics Total #	% in Developmental Mathematics
State	7,457	1,247	16.70%	2,104	28.20%
Preston High	102	13	12.70%	21	20.60%
Preston County	102	13	12.70%	21	20.60%

Chart 17A

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2012					
	1 st 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%
Preston High	107	15	14.00%	24	22.40%
Preston County	107	15	14.02%	24	22.43%

Chart 17B

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2013					
	1 st Time WV Freshmen Total #	English Total #	% in Developmental English	Mathematics Total #	% in Developmental Mathematics
State	7,704	1,153	15.0%	2,041	26.5%
Preston High	101	9	8.9%	22	21.8%
Preston County	101	9	8.9%	22	21.8%

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

7.1. CURRICULUM.

7.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives. The curriculum is based on the content standards and objectives approved by the West Virginia Board of Education. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)

Findings Specific to Program Areas

1. The Team observed evidence that the county did not seem to be building capacity by developing a Teacher Leadership Institute (TLI) participant cohort. It appeared that once teachers attend and provided staff training, they were no longer involved. It would build capacity if the county would develop a TLI cohort that supported new team members before they attended the institute and allowed them to learn new information after the next group returns. The Team recommended that previous TLI and Special Education Teachers Leadership Academy (SETLA) participants be invited to participate in the cohort. The cohort members should provide information among each other and share this information throughout the county.
2. Within the interviews, the Team learned that the County Curriculum Leadership Team was attempting to develop a plan for implementing support for personalized learning (SPL); however, the Team was concerned that the plan did not align to the West Virginia Department of Education, Support for Personalized Learning (SPL) User Guide, developed to ensure quality implementation. Preston County School District's current plan involves a designated period of time within the school day in which all students are placed in a skills development class. Within this plan, students are grouped using WESTEST2 scores and benchmark scores; however, it was noted that students have the opportunity to test out of their group. The current plan is designed so that Tier 2 instruction is delivered within a skills development group rather than in the regular education classroom where Tier 2 should occur. Additionally, only the students achieving at the highest level ever have the opportunity to participate in instructional opportunities that require higher order, critical thinking skills. Therefore, the county plan did not afford students with disabilities the opportunity to participate in higher level thinking activities. The Team urged that Preston County School District study the West Virginia Department of Education SPL guidance document and revise their plan so that only students receiving TIER 3 instruction are pulled out of the regular classroom, which is the intent for SPL and how it is explained in the document.
3. When asked about the Science, Art, and Social Studies (SASS) Institute, the Director of Secondary Curriculum thought that a team attended but did not know who attended or what content areas they represented. Follow up professional development was not offered to county science, art, and social studies teachers.

4. The director of secondary curriculum, like the coordinator of elementary curriculum, was not aware that new social studies standards were in effect. Social studies teachers had not been provided professional development on new social studies standards.
5. The Team made the following additional observations regarding curriculum based on West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) and the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan.
 - Although Goal 1 was to increase student proficiency in all content areas, the Title I Coordinator indicated that the primary focus had been on mathematics.
 - A series of professional development sessions on Number Talks was scheduled for all teachers. The sessions will be organized by grade levels.
 - The coordinator indicated that reading had not been addressed at the county level. He said that each school had been isolated and was responsible for designing its own plans to improve reading scores.
 - When asked about WESTEST2 scores, the coordinator said that there were pockets of successes, but much work needed to be done. He was especially concerned about Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School and described the current environment. He said that two schools had been combined while construction was taking place and students were literally being bussed between the two campuses within the day. He said that this would not be the sole cause of the low test scores, but wondered if this was a contributing factor.
 - In reference to special education scores, he explained that fewer students were being identified for special education; therefore, while there are fewer students, they are the ones who struggle the most and demonstrate the lowest test scores.
 - The Team believed that the Title I Coordinator has a realistic grasp of the situation, but limited ideas as to how to approach corrective actions.
 - During the past three years, the Title I position has not had consistent staff. A former Title I Director retired and the position was vacant for a time, a coordinator was hired (position reduced to coordinator to save money) who was in the position one year, and then another coordinator was employed. This lack of continuity affects curriculum leadership and improvement at the elementary level.
6. The Preston County coordinators and director needed to review the West Virginia Board of Education policies regarding the Next Generation Standards and their implementation.
7. At least one area of concern was identified and a recommendation made in the Title I monitoring report that did not appear to have been addressed. The Title I Monitoring Team expressed concern that professional development be developed

and included in the Five-Year Strategic Plan. While professional development had been developed, it was not included in the plan. Only two professional development sessions paid for with Title I funds were listed in the plan. The Team also recommended that all professional development activities be designed around and tied to the goals of the Five-Year Strategic Plan to ensure all professional development is aligned to the goals for increased student achievement.

8. The coordinator for Title I programs was also responsible for the elementary curriculum. Many of the observations and interviews were made by the Team during the interview about Title I. Because the Title I coordinator had only been in this position for three days at the time of the audit, he had not had time to study the Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Team recommended that he spend some time reviewing the current plan then revise it to include the Title I professional development planned for the county. This will also ensure that the professional development planned is aligned to the district and schools' needs for improving student achievement.
9. When asked how the summer professional development sessions were determined and how teachers decided what they would attend, the director explained that the academic coaches and technology integration specialists (TIS) made the decision as to what would be offered. Through a follow-up question the Team learned that a very short survey was given to teachers to see what type of professional development they would like to have. Once the professional development schedule was developed, teachers chose which sessions they wanted to attend. No connection to the goals and objectives stated in the Five-Year Strategic Plan was evident.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. Programs identified in the 2012 Education Performance Audit report (1 and 3 above) were no longer provided at the State level. Through reviews of diagnostic reports, the Team discovered all school had leadership teams but were at different stages of implementation. However, at the time of the progress review, all schools had leadership teams. Through interviews, the Team found the Title I/Elementary Curriculum Director mentored principals through attending leadership team meetings and providing feedback to principals in efforts to improve effectiveness.

Since the TLI and SETLA teacher academies were no longer provided by the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), Preston County School System had a plan in place to address professional development needs. During 2013-2014, the Special Education Director provided training in the following areas.

- Support for Specially Designed Instruction.
- Support for Personalized Instruction.

- **Autism Cohorts.**
- **Standards-based IEP Development.**
- **Crisis Prevention Institute.**
- **Crisis Prevention for Students with Autism.**
- **Co-teaching Sessions.**
 - **Marilyn Friend: Teacher Training.**
 - **Anne Beninghof: Train-the-Trainer Model.**
- **Deconstructing Next Generation Standards for Special Educators.**

This summer (2014) county office administrators have the following professional development planned.

- **Support for Personalized Instruction (teams of general educators and special educators).**
- **Support for Specially Designed Instruction.**
- **Summer Teachers' Academies by School Designation.**
 - **Support for Personalized Learning.**
 - **Next Generation Standards.**
- **Summer Principals' Academy.**

Recommendations

1. Preston County District first and foremost needs to review the procedures for the strategic planning process. This will provide a structured format for the development of a solid plan to ensure that monitoring procedures are in place for success.
2. The Team further recommended that the Preston County Curriculum Leadership Team review the professional development that took place this past summer (2012) as well as any additional professional development planned to occur during the school year. The leadership team must determine its relevance to the data and alignment to the goals and objectives in the strategic plan and make revisions and/or additions as necessary. They should identify ways to blend and braid information gleaned through the analysis of all curricular and achievement reports to establish the county needs as the basis for the development of a comprehensive professional development plan.
3. The Team recommended that an integrated and an all-inclusive Professional Development Plan be developed and the Five-Year Strategic Plan be revised to reflect the activities that support learning for all students.
4. The Team recommended that the assistant superintendent review the Five-Year Strategic Plan development process as it was conveyed that he is responsible for coordinating the development of the plan. The Team also recommended that someone at the county office be designated to provide guidance to individual

schools on how to develop their respective school strategic plan and review and monitor the schools' five year strategic plans.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. Strategic planning was reviewed through principals' modules during the 2013-2014 school year. At the county level, no person was assigned the task of reviewing school level strategic plans. The county plan was streamlined and addressed the two most critical needs: increasing student achievement and decreasing the county financial deficit. The county office scheduled and provided professional development; however, it was unclear if the county level sessions were specifically aligned to individual school needs. The Team recommended further support be provided to schools in the strategic planning process. This process should begin with thorough data analysis, setting SMART goals to address weaknesses or areas requiring improvement, action steps to achieve the goals, and professional development to ensure all staff are prepared to achieve the goals for each school.

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)

Findings

Preston County School District had not monitored their Five-Year Strategic Plan to assess effectiveness of programs and/or instructional strategies. The Preston County School District did not monitor schools' Five-Year Strategic Plans or the strategic plans' goals, action steps, and the identified improvement areas to continuously ensure student progress and positive student achievement.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

IN PROCESS. The Team found the same conditions existed during the Progress review; however, the curriculum director had a plan to provide information and guidance to school staff during the summer, including data disaggregation and strategic planning.

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)

Findings

The Team reviewed the Preston County Technology Plan and the Comprehensive Plan completed by the MEEKS Education Technologies and interviewed personnel responsible for elementary and secondary curriculum, the assistant superintendent, and the special education coordinator and made the following observations.

- Three technology integration specialists (TIS) served assigned schools.
- According to the technology plans, Preston County was striving to update existing infrastructure as well as plan for future school construction. The Team noted from information learned during two interviews that the current technology infrastructure in the schools being consolidated cannot support additional technology; therefore, these schools were not being given priority for technology support. The Team was concerned about equity of access for students in these schools compared to other schools in the county. The Team noted that the new schools are not scheduled to be open until the 2014-2015 school year.
- During the interviews with the Preston County Curriculum Leadership Team, it was stated that mass amounts of technology professional development were being offered; however, none of the professional development listed in the county Five-Year Strategic Plan was tied to the goals for student achievement.
- Through the interview processes, the Team noted that the TIS teachers provided technology professional development based on a short survey.
- The Team also noted that while a technology coordinator position existed, that person was mainly in charge of the infrastructure and did not take part in the curriculum and professional development meetings to address the needs of the educators and students.
- Through careful study and comparison of the MEEKS Comprehensive Plan and the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan, the Team made the following observations.
 - The MEEKS Comprehensive Plan provided an extremely well-written, step-by-step process for the installation of technology necessary for an education system; however, no mention of any of MEEKS suggestions was included in the Five-Year Strategic Plan.
 - It would be extremely beneficial to the Preston County School District if the MEEKS plan was implemented as a guide for the strategic acquisition of the necessary technologies. Furthermore, if the MEEKS Comprehensive Plan is not used after it was commissioned and paid for; it should be considered a waste of time and financial resources.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. Preston County Schools continued to update the existing infrastructure for the older schools; however, technology infrastructure was being addressed through the construction of the new buildings. Through the interview process, the Team learned the technology director was working with the

construction manager to oversee implementation of infrastructure necessary to support technology. Preston County School System implemented various recommendations from the MEEKS Comprehensive Plan conducted in 2011.

The technology director wrote an RFP that was approved allowing for low cost month-to-month billing from Frontier, Inc. for updating the existing infrastructure throughout the county schools. The director, with the support of a contracted individual, was in the early stages of writing a policy to address criteria for purchasing programs and hardware.

Instructionally, a review of the State report indicated that TechSteps was used; however, not to the extent to support achievement of the technology standards.

Preston County School System posted an additional technology integration specialist (TIS) position, increasing the existing technology personnel to four positions. However, during the interview, the technology director indicated that four TIS positions were not adequate to serve 10 schools throughout the county.

Through a review of the technology plan, the Team determined the lack of school technology teams was a concern. During the interview, the director indicated he was in the process of establishing those teams. Once established, the technology teams will develop a process for reviewing the purchase of educational programs to support the integration of technology within the curriculum and a process for purchasing hardware needed to support such programs for technology integration. The Team noted that the director was extremely concerned about technology integration within the curriculum; however, the technology plan focused more on the infrastructure implementation.

The Team recommended that through the strategic planning process goals be included to address technology integration within the curriculum.

7.1.13. Instructional day. Priority is given to teaching and learning, and classroom instructional time is protected from interruption. An instructional day is provided that includes a minimum of 315 minutes for kindergarten and grades 1 through 4; 330 minutes for grades 5 through 8; and 345 minutes for grades 9 through 12. The county board submits a school calendar with a minimum 180 instructional days. (W.Va. Code §18-5-45; Policy 2510)

Findings

One school lacked the required instructional time.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. A review of school bell schedules revealed the school cited for lack of instructional minutes had been corrected; however, the Team discovered

three schools currently did not meet the required number of instructional minutes. Some schedules reflected homeroom for approximately 45 minutes during which time teachers took attendance and lunch count, and then began instruction. The Elementary Curriculum Director indicated he had reviewed some lesson plans but could not verify all teachers developed plans for this instructional period.

The Team recommended removing the title of Homeroom and developing an instructional period including lesson plans to reflect the content being delivered.

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.

Findings

The Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan Committee had not adequately analyzed data and identified areas of need. The plan included many strategies that were basic compliant requirements of State Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies rather than strategies based on data analysis and identified county needs.

The Team, through the plan analysis and multiple staff interviews, observed that the county Five-Year Strategic Plan was not a guiding plan or foundational document for the Preston County School District. The professional development plan was a listing of some professional development activities that had already occurred and others that had been scheduled for this school year (2012-2013); however, none of the professional development activities was attached to a goal or objective in the plan. Activities to address the goals and objectives of the county's Five-Year Strategic Plan were almost nonexistent.

None of the Preston County curriculum staff the Team interviewed could provide information as to what was included in the plan or what they intended to add to the plan. The curriculum staff was surprised to hear from the Team that nothing had been entered in the column to connect professional development to specific goals and objectives.

When the committee meets to update Preston County's Five Year Strategic Plan, the Team recommended that the committee begin by identifying goals and objectives based on identified needs. Furthermore, activities aligned to identified goals and objectives that will ensure increased student achievement are essential plan components and then professional development should be based on the identified needs and aligned to the goals and objectives.

The professional development must include areas specific to county and school improvement needs. The county plan should provide the structure leading to the goal of increasing achievement of all students and provide the guidance for ensuring that improvement occurs.

Preston County School District had not monitored their Five-Year Strategic Plan to assess effectiveness of professional development programs effectiveness of instructional strategies. The assistant superintendent stated that it was not clear how the central office staff would review and monitor school strategic plans because it had not been done previously. It is essential that the central office develop a comprehensive county plan and then establish a monitoring procedure for reviewing the schools' Five-Year Strategic Plans. With an integrated effort from all program areas, Preston County School District will be able to monitor the county strategic plan's goals and progress in order to continuously ensure student progress and positive student achievement.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The county level strategic plan contained two broad goals: 1. All schools will meet the WVAI and 2. County will decrease the deficit. The strategic plan was monitored periodically and progress was made toward decreasing the county deficit. West Virginia Accountability Index (WVAI) data will not be available until late summer to determine success of goal 1.

School level plans were completed with little guidance or support. Plans did not contain SMART goals with related action steps and professional development to support the goals. Also, plans were not revised following the RESA 7 diagnostic visits. A plan is in place to address strategic planning for the 2014-2015 school year through summer academies and principals' modules.

The Team recommended a county office administrator be assigned the task of monitoring the development, submission and progress of school level strategic plans.

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)

Findings

The Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan did not adequately reflect that the Strategic Plan Committee analyzed the county data and identified areas of need. The county plan should have provided the structure leading to the goal of increasing achievement of all students and guidance for ensuring that it occurs.

- Data analysis of the 2011-2012 WESTEST2 test results had not been done at the time of the audit.

- The Preston County School District Leadership Team will need to focus on and engage in a system for analyzing, interpreting, and using data to identify and assist students not at grade level.
- The Preston County District Leadership Team should meet at the beginning of the school year and analyze data in planning for the 2012-2013 school year, including the development of a comprehensive professional development plan that addresses all program areas.
- The county should request assistance in strategic planning from the West Virginia Department of Education.
- District administrators should conduct additional individual school improvement conferences with principals and school leaders.
- A designated district administrator should monitor school strategic plans to ensure they are developed based on identified school and county needs to ensure increased student achievement.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. Basic WESTEST2 data disaggregation was completed at the beginning of the school year by county office personnel. Data were distributed to administrators to review with school staffs. Administrators were also provided a number of other data sources schools could draw upon as they developed school level strategic plans and student learning goals through the educator evaluation system. Through reviews of school level strategic plans and interviews, the Team determined schools will need to utilize this data as future plans are developed.

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)

1. Finance

In the annual audit of Preston County Schools, the auditors noted the following conditions

Financial Condition

At the end of fiscal year 2011, the Preston County Board of Education reported a deficit in the general fund of approximately \$2.7 million dollars. Insufficient work had been completed on the 2012 statements for the Education Performance Audit Team to determine if progress had been made to reduce or eliminate that deficit. Statements are not required to be completed until the end of September.

Subsequent to the Education Performance Audit, the West Virginia Department of Education, Division of Student Support Services, provided financial data showing that Preston County had made a little progress on resolving their deficit. After subtracting the liability for OPEB, the deficit was decreased by \$431,027, but the county still has a deficit of over \$2 million (\$2,295,735).

The county has decreased the number of personnel employed in excess of the number funded by state aid in two years from a high of 66.3 to 27.5, but since the county's excess levy rates are set at only 18.8 percent of the maximum allowed, the levy does not provide sufficient funds to carry even the 27.5 over formula. That is one of the reasons they have not made tremendous progress in reducing the financial deficit; the other being that they have not sufficiently reduced other expenditures.

The following chart illustrates this point:

	FYE 6/30/08	FYE 6/30/09	FYE 6/30/10	FYE 6/30/11	FYE 6/30/12
FINANCIAL DATA:					
Unreserved Fund Balance:					
General Current Expense Fund	\$ 912,807	\$ 1,512,183	\$ (7,483,024)	\$ (12,167,806)	\$ (3,921,265) ⁽¹⁾
Other Post Employment Benefit Liability (OPEB)	N/A	\$ 543,345	\$ 5,160,069	\$ 9,441,044	\$ 1,625,530
Unreserved Fund Balance without OPEB Liability	\$ 912,807	\$ 2,055,528	\$ (2,322,955)	\$ (2,726,762)	\$ (2,295,735)

Notes: (1) The financial data presented for FY 07 through 11 are from audited financial reports. Financial data for FY 12 is from unaudited financial reports.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. At the end of fiscal 2013, the Board reported a deficit in the general fund of approximately \$1.58 million. This amount shows an improvement of approximately \$1.16 million from the reported deficit at the end of FY 2011. The following table illustrates the change:

Preston County			
Unrestricted Fund Balance History			
adjusted to exclude OPEB Liability and Encumbrances			
			Change
FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	From 2011
(2,743,257)	(2,432,449)	(1,580,868)	1,162,389

As illustrated in the table below, Preston County has taken steps to reduce personnel. This action has contributed to the improvement in their financial position.

Funding Year	2012	2013	2014	Change
Professional Pers.	4.15	2.29	7.07	2.92
Service Pers.	19.96	13.529	3.426	-16.534

The treasurer and superintendent closely monitor the deficit reduction plan and believe the deficit will be reduced to approximately \$300,000 at June 30, 2014.

The audit report for 2013 shows a negative fund balance of \$100,423 in the Special Revenue Fund. It appears that this amount is due from the General Revenue Fund. If so, then the reported General Fund Balance is overstated by that amount.

The Team recommended the treasurer take immediate action to determine if the Special Revenue Fund balance is due the funds from the General Revenue Fund and make the appropriate adjustment in the current year. The Team further recommended the treasurer modify the spreadsheet used to determine the cash

balances in the various projects within the Special Revenue fund to include beginning cash balances and verify, periodically, the resulting cash condition with the cash amount in the financial system (WVEIS).

FINDINGS

Purchase Orders and Accounts Payable Process

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8200, *Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual for Local Educational Agencies*, requires local education agencies (LEAs) to maintain a requisition and purchase order system on the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS), whereas, an approved, pre-numbered purchase order is issued to the successful vendor prior to an order for a commodity or service being placed.

From a small sample of paid invoices, four invoices were found with dates prior to the dates on supporting purchase orders.

1. Bachtel Enterprise was paid for invoice dated April 10, 2012, from purchase order 1201624 dated April 16, 2012. Payment was made with check number 100300.
2. Ball Auctions was paid for 2011 and 2012 auction services approved by a central office administrator on April 27, 2012, from purchase order 1201696 dated April 30, 2012. Payment was made by check number 100301.
3. Preston Fencing was paid for invoice dated October 22, 2011, from purchase order issued October 31, 2011. Payment was made with check number 98740.
4. Jackson Home Services was paid for invoice dated March 23, 2012, from purchase order 1201551 dated March 27, 2012. Payment was made with check number 100081.

Immediate action must be undertaken to strengthen internal controls in purchasing. The problem with invoices pre-dated to purchase orders was noted in the Education Performance Audit Team's 2009 report and in the 2011 audit.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. West Virginia Department of Education Policy 8200, *Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual for Local Educational Agencies*, requires LEAs to maintain a requisition and purchase order system on the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) whereas an approved, pre-numbered purchase order is issued to the successful vendor prior to an order for a commodity or service being placed.

From a small sample of paid invoices, two invoices were found with dates prior to the dates on supporting purchase orders. Specifically:

- 1. Henry T. Limberg Co., Inc. was paid by check numbered 105987 for invoice 13034-1 dated October 17, 2013, and invoice 13034-2 dated November 15, 2013, from purchase order 1401119 issued December 9, 2013.**
- 2. Laurel Aggregates of Del., LLC was paid by check numbered 105988 for invoice 96410 dated November 10, 2013, invoice 96142 dated October 31, 2013 and invoice 96664 dated November 11, 2013, (from purchase order 1401170 dated December 20, 2013).**

This problem with invoices pre-dated to purchase orders was noted in the Education Performance Audit Team's 2009 and 2012 reports as well as the 2013 annual financial audit.

The administration has made improvement in this area, as the number of incidents has been reduced. Business office staff is well aware of the problem and focused on communicating to different spending units the correct procedures.

Personnel and Payroll

Federal special education grant funds were being used to pay 34.3 percent of the salary and related cost for the administrative assistant. No special education responsibilities were listed for the administrative assistant on the central office list of duties provided by the county and posted on the county website. The Team recommended immediate action to change the payroll cost distribution to 100 percent General Fund. Continued payment for this position from federal special education grant funds would be considered an inappropriate expenditure of those funds. Further, the county may be required to reimburse the special education grant for the salaries charged to the grant in error.

In addition, it was noted that in a letter dated August 30 2012 to the payroll office, the assistant superintendent of Preston County recommended that the Title I secretary/superintendent's secretary be granted an additional 12 years of work experience for pay purposes for work outside of West Virginia public education. Work experience was from National Medical Homecare and Transcribers Unlimited. The superintendent approved this additional experience by his signature and date on the letter. Although it is recognized that some county boards in the past have granted service personnel additional years of experience for work experience earned prior to being employed by the board, it is not clear whether county boards have such authority. WVC §18A-4-8(i),(2) defines years of employment as:

"Years of employment" means the number of years which an employee classified as a service person has been employed by a county board in

any position prior to or subsequent to the effective date of this section and includes service in the Armed Forces of the United States, if the employee was employed at the time of his or her induction. For the purpose of section eight-a of this article, years of employment is limited to the number of years shown and allowed under the state minimum pay scale as set forth in section eight-a of this article;

In addition, the granting of such additional work experience must be paid from local funds, since the additional years cannot be reported for funding under the Public School Support Program.

Furthermore, if a county has a practice of granting credit for work experience earned prior to being employed by the school system, such credit must be granted uniformly and the board must have a local policy to this effect. No such policy was provided to the Team, and failure to apply the practice uniformly has the potential of creating inequitable pay issues, which could be a cause for an employee to file a grievance. WVC §18A-4-5b states, in part, that:

“These county schedules shall be uniform throughout the county with regard to any training classification, experience, years of employment, responsibility, duties, pupil participation, pupil enrollment, size of buildings, operation of equipment or other requirements. Further, uniformity shall apply to all salaries, rates of pay, benefits, increments or compensation for all persons regularly employed and performing like assignments and duties within the county: ...”

Therefore, the WVDE position for years has been that county boards should not grant service personnel additional years of experience for outside work experience. If a board needs to increase the salary to attract competent personnel, it should do so by implementing a salary supplement for the position. A final issue is that approval was not obtained from the State Superintendent to grant the additional years of experience for this employee, which Preston County Schools is required to do.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The county corrected the previously listed findings.

NEW FINDING. In following up on the previous findings, a new finding was noted. The director of special education’s salary is paid 100 percent from IDEA, federal, funds. During an interview, the Team learned that the director is responsible for several programs other than special education. These include managing Title III, supervising school nurses, alternative education, home bound instruction, personalized learning and the SAT process.

Immediate action must be taken to proportion salary cost to responsibilities. IDEA funds must not be used for cost outside of special education.

Individual School Accounting

The treasurer could not produce board minute records that showed where a list of groups collecting funds in the name of any school was approved as required by Policy 1224.1, *Accounting Procedures Manual for Public Schools*, Section 5.1 (version effective August 14, 1996 through August 12, 2012).

Immediate action must be taken to collect and approve a list of all groups collecting money in the name of any school.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The Preston County Board approved a listing of all school support organizations that are conducting fund raisers in the name of a school during the 2013-14 year during a meeting on February 10, 2014.

NEW FINDING: In following up on this finding, a new finding was noted. Individual schools were audited timely for the 2013 year. Audit reports were clearly written and well organized; however, corrective action plans were not available for all schools.

Immediate action must be taken to ensure that all school principals submit corrective action plans for any findings noted and report when the findings have actually been corrected.

Question of Expenditures

For two years, the Preston County Board of Education has approved out-of-state travel for the Title I secretary to attend the National Title I Director's Conference and the secretary is scheduled to attend this current year (2012-2013). Expenditures totaling \$1,853.05 have been made to reimburse travel expense to the Title I secretary for attending that conference. The board approved these trips as shown in agendas of December 12, 2011, and December 15, 2010. The question is asked if the federal funds would be better used to allow instructional staff to attend this activity since that staff is more likely to be in a position to share information gained from the conference with other instructional staff at the school(s) and directly affect student achievement.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. Title I travel expenditures had been resolved.

Financial Reporting to the Board

The Handbook of School Finance requires the treasurer to give the board a signed monthly report which indicates by fund, the beginning cash balance, the current month's

receipts, the current month's disbursements and the current month's ending cash balance along with other requirements.

The treasurer did not provide monthly reports to the board as required by West Virginia Board of Education, Policy 8100. According to financial staff, plans are in place to begin such reporting but as of the Education Performance Audit (August 31, 2012), no reports had been given.

The Team recommended that the treasurer begin reporting to the Preston County Board of Education as required by West Virginia Board of Education policy.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The treasurer now reports to the board as required by West Virginia Board of Education policy with one exception, balances in the debt service account were not reported to the board monthly.

The Team recommended the treasurer begin including the fund balances of the Debt Service Fund in the monthly financial report provided to the Board.

NEW FINDING: The Team reviewed the annual audit report for the year ended June 30, 2013, and did not find property tax accruals in the asset section of the fund statements and corresponding entry in the liability section for taxes from that year expected to be received after September 1 of the 2014 year. Such accruals are required to be reported according to generally accepted accounting standards in the United States of America (GAAP). While this oversight or error would not impact the ending fund balance, it would cause the net assets to be understated. It is highly unlikely there would be a zero amount.

The Team recommend the treasurer communicate with the audit firm to determine cause and ensure accruals be correctly recorded at end of the current fiscal year.

Posting #S 1022 (6/11/2010)

The personnel posting indicated a 240 day contract at a "G" pay scale plus a \$3500 supplement. The Team was unable to find the \$3500 supplement on the approved service personnel supplemental salary scale. There appeared to be a difference in the calculation of the supplement as the actual amount paid during a year based upon the information contained in WVEIS payroll system was \$3501.60.

Additionally, the candidate selected had been provided years of service for years previously worked in private industry which appeared to be in direct violation of W.Va. Code §18A-4-8(i)(2). Employment term and class titles of service personnel; definitions states:

"Years of employment" means the number of years which an employee classified as a service person has been employed by a county board in any position prior to or subsequent to the effective date of this section and includes service in the Armed Forces of the United States, if the employee was employed at the time of his or her induction. For the purpose of section eight-a of this article, years of employment is limited to the number of years shown and allowed under the state minimum pay scale as set forth in section eight-a of this article;

On the certified list of 2/9/12, this employee was noted as having one (1) year of service and being paid from the State aid formula. No earlier report was provided to the Team to determine what was submitted to the State for funding purposes.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

IN PROCESS. The county is in the process of correcting this finding, but several grievances have been filed, which must be resolved.

Posting #S 1020 and 1021 (6/11/2010)

The Team did not find where the pay grade and supplements, if any, were identified on the job postings.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The Team recommended approval of supplemental pay schedules be confirmed and date of approval recorded in the schedules. Development and maintenance of salary schedules is currently the responsibility of an assistant superintendent of schools.

Commendation

The Team noted marked improvement regarding business office staff confidence in administrative policy. A strong spirit of team work was present along with improved communications and knowledge of finance policy and procedures. The superintendent and treasurer have a good dialogue and share the common goal of eliminating the deficit without jeopardizing student achievement.

Assistant Superintendent's Salary

It was noted during the review that when the current Assistant Superintendent was promoted from Title I Coordinator to Assistant Superintendent, the salary supplement for this position was increased from \$6,300 to \$12,645, and the increase was not submitted for approval by the State Superintendent of Schools.

Furthermore, the personnel file did not reflect the change in status from Title I Coordinator to the Assistant Superintendent, although the pay appeared to have been adjusted for the change in positions. This position change would typically warrant the issuance of a new contract.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The superintendent stated this action occurred prior to his appointment and all personnel actions since his appointment adhere to proper procedures. This will need resolution.

Vehicles Purchased

It was noted that several vehicles have been purchased since July 2009. During fiscal years ended June 30, 2010 and 2011, four new and one used vehicles were purchased where the purchases exceeded \$25,000, which meant that the purchases were subject to the competitive bid requirements of West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 8200, *Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual for Local Educational Agencies*. The following is a listing of the vehicles purchased during this time frame in which the purchase price exceeded \$25,000:

Amount of Check	Check #	Date	Vendor	Quantity	Description
\$38,006.00	89860	8/27/09	Scott Ford & Mercury	1	2009 GMC Envoy
				1	2007 Ford Escape
\$46,792.00	94078	9/9/10	Scott Ford & Mercury	2	2011 F250 Truck
** \$31,470.00	95011	11/19/10	Valiton's Kingwood Chrysler Jeep Dodge	1	2011 Ram2500

Upon inquiry, the finance staff of the Preston County School District was unable to timely produce the required bid documentation for the purchases of new vehicles in fiscal year 2010 and 2011. Furthermore, since these purchases exceed \$25,000 additional bidding requirements are stipulated by West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 8200, *Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual for Local Educational Agencies*, which lists the requirements in Section 7.11.4 for purchases costing \$25,000 or more but less than \$50,000.

In addition, the Team selected one purchase, identified by ** in the preceding list to see if any notation was made in the board meeting minutes. Since this purchase was dated 11/19/10 the Team reviewed minutes from September 13, 2010, through December 15, 2010. The Team found no mention of the vehicles to be purchased or the results of any competitive bid process. The only reference to this check being issued was its inclusion in the listing of checks written submitted as an attachment to the 12/15/10 board minutes.

It was also noted that other vehicles were purchased during this same time frame (FY 2010 and 2011) where the cost of each vehicle fell between \$10,000 and \$25,000. Under the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8200, *Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual for Local Educational Agencies* Section 7.11.3, competitive bids should have been obtained for these purchases as well.

The following is a listing of the vehicles purchased during this time frame where the purchase price was between \$10,000 and \$25,000:

Amount of Check	Check #	Date	Vendor	Quantity	Description
\$23,482.00	89874	8/27/2009	Valiton's Kingwood Chrysler Jeep Dodge	1	2009 Ram 2500
\$17,995.00	89813	8/27/2009	J & J Choice	1	2009 Chevy Malibu
\$23,893.02	89576	7/30/2009	Scott Ford & Mercury	1	2009 E250 Van

Upon inquiry, the finance staff of Preston County School District was unable to timely produce the required bid documentation for the purchases of new vehicles in fiscal year 2010 and 2011.

The Team noted other issues resulting in questionable costs related to the purchase of these vehicles which included the following.

- It was noted that West Virginia Consumer Sales tax had been charged and paid on the document fees assessed by the vendors. The Preston County School District is exempt from paying sales tax. The total tax paid on these transactions was \$15.00.
- It was noted that temporary tags were purchased at a total cost of \$23.00. The school district should not have paid this tag fee as permanent county tags can be obtained free of charge from the West Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (WV DMV) upon presentation of the certificate of origin.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. The treasurer/CSBO has established procedures to ensure that competitive bids are obtained whenever required and that invoices are reviewed to ensure that the county does not pay consumers' sales taxes or other inappropriate fees when paying invoices.

Travel

It was noted during the review that travel reimbursements totaling \$1,671.46 were paid to the Title I director for attending a conference during January 2012. This included reimbursement for a rental car in the amount of \$586.23, plus an additional \$55.22 for fuel and a parking fee. These costs were questionable, considering the need for a rental car at a convention and the upgrading of the vehicle. Once again, it would be difficult to justify the benefit of these expenditures to the students in Preston County. The link to National Title I Conference attended by the Title I Director during January 2012 is: http://issuu.com/APlusEvents/docs/t12_conference_program_with_tabs/155

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. The superintendent supervised travel expenditures to assure fiscal responsibility.

Required Bonds

The required bonds for the Treasurer, Superintendent and Board President had been obtained and appropriately recorded with the Preston County Clerk.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

No further review warranted.

FINANCE SUMMARY

The Team noted marked improvement regarding business office staff confidence in administrative policy. A strong spirit of team work was present, along with improved communications and knowledge of finance policy and procedures. The superintendent and treasurer have a good dialogue and share the common goal of eliminating the deficit without jeopardizing student achievement.

2. Facilities

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Preston County Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP), interviewed the “Supervisor of Maintenance/Facilities”, and conducted site observations. A narrative of the Team’s observations follows.

Aurora Elementary

This facility was built in 1995. Rooftop units provided the heating, cooling, and ventilation. The equipment was original to the building and approaching the end of its expected life. A few stained ceiling tiles in the facility appeared to be from active roof leaks. Some staining building up on the exterior of the building needed to be removed. A classroom and stage addition were under construction with completion due in October 2012. Overall the interior of the facility appeared well maintained and clean. The building needed some minor routine maintenance to keep the facility in like new condition. Several administrator changes have occurred at this facility and a long-term substitute principal was currently in place.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The classroom and stage additions at this facility were completed and opened in October 2012. This facility is in need of a new roof. There are no other significant changes at this facility.

Rowlesburg Elementary/Middle School

This facility was built in 1987. The building received heating and cooling from a two pipe hydronic system utilizing gas boilers and a chiller. The mechanical system was original to the building and the building was mechanically ventilated. It was a mild day during the visit and several classrooms had exterior doors and windows open which made it impossible to establish a ventilation profile on the building. Additionally, the second floor had problems with temperature regulation. Some of the domestic water and hydronic piping in the mechanical room needed to be insulated. A few stained ceiling tiles were prevalent throughout the facility. The interior appeared clean and well maintained. The building needed some minor routine maintenance to keep the facility in like new condition.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. A planned project for the summer of 2014 will improve the temperature regulation at this facility. This project is contracted through Southern Air and is awaiting approval from the West Virginia Department of Education. No other changes have occurred to this facility.

Bruceton School

The Bruceton School consisted of three structures: The main classroom building, the Kindergarten building, and the gymnasium. The gymnasium was the oldest building on the site.

Building 1. The kitchen was housed in a renovated section of the facility that was originally a vocational classroom area. The size of the kitchen was inadequate for the number of meals served. The air intakes on the overhead heaters needed to be cleaned. The cafeteria was across the hall in two former classroom spaces. The school was using three classroom spaces, but needed the extra space for instruction. The main furnace room for this building needed housekeeping. Excess items were stacked in the room. All mechanical rooms must be kept free of unrelated items and all equipment must be accessible on all sides at all times. A sump pump in the furnace room was of questionable functionality. The exit door was standing open during the visit and created a security concern. Several classroom exit doors were standing open, both to the courtyard and the perimeter of the building. Some of the classrooms had a curtain wall separating the spaces. Several instances of stained ceiling tiles existed throughout the facility. An on-going problem with the water in the science room and adjacent classroom was prevalent. The water has a strong sulfur odor and is black if it has not been used for a week.

Building 2. This building was heated with steam units in each classroom and a main furnace room. There was no temperature control for this system; therefore, it was difficult to maintain comfort levels in the spring and fall. The building did not have central air conditioning; however, each classroom was equipped with window air conditioners. It is very difficult to maintain adequate ventilation in this building. The kindergarten classrooms were not equipped with room sinks or bathrooms. The main door to the building was unlocked during the visit. The lock core was removed from the main hallway storage room. This room should remain locked to prevent student access.

Building 3. The gymnasium was located approximately 25 feet from the main building via an uncovered walk. The gymnasium was heated with a coal furnace and did not have any mechanical ventilation or cooling. The locker rooms were located below the stage area and were accessible through stairwells on each side of the stage. These stairwells were partially obstructed and not well illuminated. The building and immediate grounds around the building needed to be better maintained. Leaves and other debris were present around the furnace room entrance doors.

This school will be receiving an addition as part of the November 2010 bond. This addition will include a new cafeteria, kitchen, gymnasium space, and the existing kitchen will be renovated into pre-kindergarten classrooms. The main classroom facility will also get a sprinkler system as part of the project.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. A new addition is in progress that includes a new gymnasium, kitchen, and cafeteria. The current kitchen and cafeteria will be remodeled into Pre-K classrooms, the existing Pre-K classrooms will become 1st grade rooms, and the two first grade rooms will be middle school Spanish and health rooms. The current gymnasium will be demolished upon completion of the new addition and additional parking will be gained in this space. The current Pre-K building will be connected to the rest of the school as part of the construction process. This project is expected to be completed for fall 2014 use.

Terra Alta/East Preston School

The original structure was constructed in 1927 with additions in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. The auditorium has been used for storage for a number of years and the flooring and seats have been removed in some areas of the main level and stored in the balcony. This room is sometimes used for pull-out instruction. This room should be kept locked at all times to prevent students from entering unsupervised. The overall maintenance, appearance, and cleanliness of the facility have improved greatly, especially in the custodian rooms, mechanical rooms, and storage areas. The principal and the day time custodian are new to the school and they were both unfamiliar with several areas of the building at the time of the visit.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The original 1927 Middle School was torn down and a replacement was completed and opened in fall 2013. This new construction addressed any of the deficiencies listed. A new office space was configured as part of this construction. Additionally, a new computer laboratory was remodeled out of former shop space. The paving in front of the school has not been completed due to weather delays, but is on track to be finished in June 2014. The construction process caused some cracks to appear throughout the facility with old cracks enlarging. These need addressed. An intercom system was not part of the project and is being completed by the county. A new roof is needed on the parts of the facility not affected during the construction.

Fellowsville Elementary

This facility was built in 1953. Additions/renovations were performed in 1983 and 1990. The classrooms had window air conditioning units located above the outside exit doors in each classroom. Condensation from these units dripped on the ground in front of the doors causing erosion and mud. The Team recommended that tubing be added to these units to direct the condensate water away from the doors. This building was not mechanically ventilated. The facility had a newer water filtration system and gas boiler installed. The piping, heating coils, and plumbing fixtures appeared to be original to the

building. The exterior of the building needed to be cleaned and painted. Gutters needed to be installed to channel water away from the building. Some renovations had been made to the inside of the building and a new classroom addition was under construction in the back of the building. The office has been relocated to the front and is adjacent to the parking lot. One of the classrooms will be an art room. Until the construction is completed, in mid-November 2012, art was being taught in the gymnasium which did not meet any of the requirements for an art room. Two portable units were on site. One unit was being periodically used and the other was only used for additional storage. The kitchen did not have adequate freezer or dry goods storage space. Multiple upright freezers were taking up considerable space in the kitchen. The county needed to explore all options to incorporate a walk-in freezer to the school.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. An addition to the school was completed in 2012. This included a new front entry with a man-trap and office renovations. Two classrooms were added to the end of the hall. The HVAC at this facility still needs updated to include a ventilation system and central air-conditioning. The condensate lines from the window units have been redirected from the doors. No portable units were in use at this facility. No work has been done on the kitchen at this facility.

Kingwood Elementary School

This is a 1977 era facility. The facility consisted of three units: A main classroom building, with a gymnasium and classroom addition; the Morgan Street classroom building, including the kitchen and cafeteria; and the as yet uncompleted classroom addition at the side of the facility that replaces the old modular units. The school is located in an urban setting with little to no room for expansion.

Building 1. The facility was designed with an open classroom concept with blocks of four classrooms grouped together. Doors were being added to the classrooms to meet Safe School requirements. A lack of storage throughout the building caused the classrooms to appear very crowded. A main air handling unit provided fresh air to this building and the make-up air dampers appeared to be disconnected. The railing on the upper loft was extremely loose and dangerous.

The gymnasium and classrooms were added to this facility in 1985 and did not have air conditioning or forced ventilation. This addition is serviced with hot water heat from a boiler located in a central mechanical room. The backflow preventer in this mechanical room was leaking and the missing rain cap on the furnace exhaust provided a source of water infiltration.

Building 2. This building is approximately 150 feet from the main building doors when taking the direct route via steps; if the handicap ramp is used, the route is much longer. The handicap ramp is scheduled to be covered in the coming months as part of the November 2010 bond. The cafeteria and kitchen were located in this building. The hot

water tank for the kitchen was located in the dry storage room. The sinks needed to be re-caulked to prevent water infiltration to areas that would be difficult to clean, i.e., behind the sinks. The main furnace room for this building was located under the classrooms and only accessible from the outside of the building. This space was being used for additional storage while the construction continued on the new classrooms. Significant mold growth appeared to be on the items stored in this space and a careful examination should be made to determine what, if anything, is salvageable from this space. This space should not be used for storage as it is not ventilated and mold will continue to be a problem on organic materials stored here.

New Classroom Addition. The November 2010 bond allowed the dated modular units to be removed and replaced with a permanent structure. Construction was underway on these classrooms. The classes that were in the modular units had been incorporated into the main classroom building, making space tight and cramped.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The five-classroom addition was completed and opened in fall 2013. The path between the main building and lower cafeteria building has been covered. The addition of classroom doors in the main building was completed. The main classroom building is in need of a new roof.

Tunnelton-Denver Elementary

This facility was built in 1952. Additions/renovations were performed in 1977 and 1992. The heat for the upper section of the building was provided by two fuel oil boilers. The lower section of the building was heated with electric. The building was not air conditioned. There was no mechanical ventilation. Two portable units were being utilized and both appeared to be near the end of their useful life. The addition of the South Preston Middle School students to this facility has strained the overall capacity of the building and its instructional spaces. A new consolidated elementary/middle school is currently under construction to replace this facility.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. This school as well as the remaining facilities at South Preston Middle will not be used after the 2013-14 school year. A new facility, South Preston School, constructed at the Tunnelton-Denver site is complete and ready to open for the 2014-15 school year. This new facility addresses all the remaining deficiencies at both locations.

Valley Elementary

Portions of this school dated to 1925. Additions/renovations were performed in 1977, 1983, and 1999. Gas fired boilers and a chiller provided heating and cooling to part of the building. The 5th grade wing currently only had electric heat. Several stained ceiling

tiles were due to roof leaks. Ventilation levels in the building could not be accurately measured during the visit because the day was mild and several windows and exterior doors were open. Past inspections reported acceptable ventilation rates. The air handling equipment had accumulated a layer of dust and several items were stored on and around the equipment. The equipment and equipment room should be cleaned and the manufacturer recommended clearances around mechanical equipment should be observed. The 1999 addition was serviced by unit ventilators in each classroom; the air intakes located on the bottom of these units were very dirty. The mechanical room in the 1983 addition was being used as a staff lounge as well. The door to this space must remain closed and locked at all times to prevent student access to the area. The gym was housed in a detached building that did not meet any ventilation requirements. Children must cross an access road to reach the gym and staff members currently park in front of the gym, partially obstructing the road to the buildings located beyond the gym. The exterior of the gym building needed to be painted.

An addition to this facility is due to break ground in mid-September or October 2012 and has a planned completion in spring 2014. This addition includes a new gymnasium and classrooms to incorporate the students from West Preston Middle School.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

NO CHANGE. The addition to this facility has been delayed due to weather and bidding issues, which is not the county's fault. Construction has yet to start. This addition will address the deficiencies at both locations (Valley Elementary and West Preston Middle) when complete.

South Preston Middle School

This facility was built in 1914. Additions/renovations were performed in 1952, 1960, and 1971. The original building was closed due to structural concerns and the students were moved to modular units at Tunnelton-Denver in 2009. The gymnasium, three classrooms, and band room were still being used with both students and staff spending half days at each location. The building was not air conditioned. Heat was provided by a gas boiler. A coal boiler was also in operation at this facility. The building was not mechanically ventilated. The plumbing and electrical infrastructure appeared to be original to the building. This building had several Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues. The band room was located in a detached building and the walkway to the building was not covered. The heat for the building was provided by a ceiling mounted gas fired heater. The heater was installed exposed in the learning space. A carbon monoxide detector needed to be installed in this space. The interior and exterior of the building appeared to be run down. The number of modular units had to be reduced with the start of construction of the new combined elementary/middle school. The reduced classroom space has led to inadequate instructional space for both the middle school and elementary school students.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. This school as well as the remaining facilities at Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School will not be used after the 2013-14 school year. A new facility, South Preston School, constructed at the Tunnelton-Denver site is complete and ready to open for the 2014-15 school year. This new facility addresses all the remaining deficiencies at both locations.

West Preston Middle School

This facility was constructed in 1918. Additions/renovations were performed in 1950 and 1973. There was no air conditioning or mechanical ventilation. Heat was provided by some newer gas boilers. The interior and exterior of the structure needed to be cleaned and painted. The access and parking were inadequate. This building had several Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues. The plumbing and building infrastructure were all original to the building. The classrooms on the lowest level of the building were not being used with the exception of the original gymnasium which is where band was being held. Evidence of water infiltration in the lower classrooms led to their discontinued use. The administrator will be purchasing dehumidifiers for the band room. The library did not have computer work stations, electronic card catalogs, or copying equipment. The science rooms were not equipped with sinks, AC and DC current, ventilation hoods, laboratory space, or fire extinguishers. The auditorium did not have acoustical treatment or controlled illumination; however, some work has been done with new curtains and some maintenance work on the stage itself. The building appeared run down on both the interior and exterior. There was little evidence of proper upkeep and maintenance on this facility. This facility will be consolidated with Valley Elementary after an addition is completed at that school in spring 2014.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

NO CHANGE. The addition to this facility has been delayed due to weather and bidding issues, which is not the county's fault. Construction has yet to start. This addition will address the deficiencies at both locations (Valley Elementary and West Preston Middle) when complete.

Preston High School

The original structure was constructed in 1972 and has been added on to several times over the years. The facility also housed the Central Preston Middle School students after the closure of that facility. A new facility will be constructed as part of the November 2010 bond to house Central Preston Middle School. This project is due to start in mid-September 2012. The many renovations and additions to this facility have changed the original design intent of many areas to where they are now not adequately heated, cooled, or ventilated. The vocational area of the school was not mechanically

ventilated and used a different key than the rest of the facility. The doors in this area should have cores replaced to standardize the keys. The county recently completed the equipment installation phase of a performance contract at this facility that included upgraded lighting and some new heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment. A project was also completed to fix the windows in the 400 block that were leaking due to compromised seals. New science labs were added in what was an unusable courtyard. The overall housekeeping at this facility has shown improvement and a new administrator was in place for the third year in a row. The facility still had some deferred maintenance items.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The construction of the new Central Preston Middle School started in spring 2013 with site work. However, construction was delayed and no work was completed over winter. Progress has been made this spring and the project completion is projected spring 2015. A new roof is needed over the cafeteria, 9th grade addition, and vocational wing. A new meat processing building is currently under construction.

County Summary-Facilities

Ten maintenance workers care for the 42 buildings that make up the 12 schools in Preston County. The only unoccupied building that requires upkeep by the county is the main classroom facility at South Preston Middle School. Of the 10 maintenance workers, four are licensed electricians, two are licensed plumbers, and four are classified as general carpenters, one is a HVAC technician, one is an assistant supervisor, and one is a supervisor. The plumbers and electricians are masters in their trades. All are also assigned to general maintenance. Maintenance staff performs grounds work (mowing and snow removal) during the school term which restricted the amount of time they were available to spend on general maintenance. Three of the maintenance positions, including the HVAC technician, are dependent on the maintenance levy passing in November 2012.

The county implemented a computerized work order system and was taking part in the State provided Preventive Maintenance Program. Several teachers interviewed did not know the proper procedure for reporting maintenance concerns. After they reported problems to the school custodian or principal, they did not know who to contact or a procedure for ensuring their concerns had been communicated to the maintenance department.

In May 2012, The West Virginia Department of Education distributed a list of recommendations for resolving the financial situation in Preston County. On that list, Number 3 stated, "Analyze all expenses to determine necessity. Curtail all unnecessary expenditures . . . maintenance supplies and parts, etc." Number 9 stated, "Postpone all facilities maintenance, except emergency repairs." This list of recommendations has

greatly limited the work the maintenance department is able to accomplish in each facility.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. The county maintenance crew make-up has changed slightly. Two grounds keepers have been added, replacing the \$90,000 grass contract and \$45,000 snow removal contract. They are still adjusting to the work schedules and responsibilities of the job.

The county is continuing to use the computerized work order system, but is printing and hand delivering work orders. Work with the State provided Preventative Maintenance Program is minimal. To date, no equipment has been entered or scheduled.

7.6. PERSONNEL.

7.6.1. Hiring. County boards follow hiring practices set forth in W.Va. Code. (W.Va. Code §§18A-4-7a, 18A-4-8, and 18-2E-3a)

Findings

Professional, Service, and Extracurricular Personnel - Review of Job Postings

The Team reviewed postings for professional, service, and extracurricular personnel.

A total of 221 positions had been posted for the summer 2012 and the 2012-2013 school term. Vacant positions were posted on the county website, on the West Virginia K-12 Jobs Bank, and in schools and at the county office. Several of the total numbers of postings were “repostings” of those vacancies not filled. The Team reviewed the following number of postings for professional personnel: Classroom teacher (12); professional support (2); principal (5); county office administrator (1); extracurricular, excluding coaches, (6); coach (8); long-term substitute (5); summer positions (5).

The postings listed the vacancy title, posting date, closing date, and location. For professional positions, a link was provided on the posting for the job description which also included the required certification, employment term, and supervisor. Salary was shown as “based upon degree experience.” The job description for classroom teachers and coaches included the Performance Criteria listed in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. Specialized skills or criteria were not listed on the postings. Neither was any specialized training listed on postings, which is one of the criteria listed in the qualifications of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a. This criterion was not considered when rating the qualifications of applicants. Individuals were hired without current certification and were hired pending approval of a permit or out-of-field authorization. This was shown on the board agenda. For Preston County, certification of recommended applicants is reviewed by the West Virginia Department of Education.

Professional Personnel

The following noncompliance was noted.

1. Positions not filled per W.Va. §18A-4-7a(o)(3). The statute states, “If one or more applicants meets the qualifications listed in the job posting, the successful applicant to fill the vacancy shall be selected by the board within thirty working days of the end of the posting period.”

If in the judgment of the Preston County Superintendent, applicants are not qualified for the position, the county will repost the position. Non-qualification is determined following what is deemed to be an unsuccessful interview. The job description for principals included under minimum qualifications stated, “Completion of a successful interview.” Applicants were certified for two principal positions; however, the applicants did not have successful completion of the interview and, therefore, did not meet this minimum qualification for principal

positions. Note: The superintendent stated that as per legal advice from the board's attorney, reposting was proper if the applicants did not meet the board's minimum qualification criteria as listed on the posting even if they were certified for the position.

- Posting #s 107 and 117: Principal, Terra Alta East Preston. The position was posted May 1, 2012, with five certified applicants. After all candidates were rejected, the position was reposted July 2, 2012, and filled.
- Posting # 043: Principal Aurora Elementary. The position was posted June 15, 2012, with four certified applicants. One certified applicant did not have experience as an administrator. The assistant principal, Bruceton School, had one year experience. Another applicant was to complete her certification August 2012. All applicants were rejected. The job was reposted July 20, 2012, and was vacant at the time of the Education Performance Audit. A teacher (special education consultant) who did not hold principal certification was assigned to the position two or three days a week. A retired principal was assigned the other days and will fill the position effective for the remainder of the 2012-2013 school term as a long-term substitute. This individual worked in a vacant principal position as a substitute retired principal last year at West Preston Middle. Once this individual is assigned for the year as a substitute employee, the job will not be continuously posted. The Aurora principal position was being posted effective for the 2013-2014 school term.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed postings (34) for professional, service, and extracurricular (including coaches) personnel. Before beginning the review of documents for posted professional positions, the team discussed with the assistant superintendent of personnel West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5000 and the process being used by Preston County to implement the policy. It was stated that once school was in session for the 2013-14 school year, faculty senates in all schools voted to participate in the hiring process. Faculty senates selected the hiring model the school would use and members of the hiring committee were trained according to policy requirements. The county implemented the following process:

1. Vacant positions are posted by the personnel office for a period of no less than five days. Vacant positions are posted on the county's website, the WVDE K-12 Jobs Bank, in schools, other school facilities, and the county office.
2. Job applications are received in the personnel office during the posting period.

3. **Once postings are closed, a separate folder is made for each numbered posting. The personnel director identifies the name of applicants, reviews all applications, and completes a matrix showing the qualifications of the applicants in the first eight factors of W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a(b) (writes in, for example, the total amount of teaching experience in the certified area, degree level, etc.).**
4. **The matrix and copies of the applicants' job applications with related materials (resumé, letters of reference, etc.) are forwarded to both the principal and faculty senate hiring committee chair.**
5. **If the principal and faculty senate ask to interview (and in all files reviewed, interviews were held), the principal notifies the personnel director who, in turn, schedules the interviews at the school. The assistant superintendent attends, conducts, and participates in the interview process with the faculty senate hiring committee and principal. Interview questions and interviewer notes are retained in the posting file in the personnel office.**
6. **Following the interviews, the principal and faculty senate hiring committee chair submit their respective recommendations, using forms Appendix A and B from WVBE Policy 5000, to the superintendent.**
7. **If both principal and faculty senate hiring committee chair recommend the same applicant (which they did in all postings reviewed) and the superintendent concurs, the individual is recommended to the board for hiring.**

New Recommendation

It appeared the county personnel director was attempting to efficiently implement the new 2013 legislation and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5000. The posting files were comprehensive, organized, and complete. Although the personnel director was doing much work by reviewing all applications and completing a matrix prior to sending information to the principal, which is no doubt helpful to the principal and faculty senate, it appeared that he was too involved in the initial hiring process. It is recommended that the procedures be revised.

1. **Once the posting has closed, the personnel director submits a list of names along with the job applications and relevant materials of those applicants who meet the standards of the posting (are certified and meet special criteria and skills, if required) to the principal.**

- 2. The principal will in turn be responsible for carrying out his/her responsibilities of WVBE Policy 5000, providing within the timelines said materials to the faculty senate chairperson.**
 - 3. If the faculty senate hiring committee members wish to interview, the principal will set up the interview and follow the procedures in policy with the principal and faculty senate having a joint interview. The director of personnel would not be a part of this interview committee. If there is no interview, qualifications of the applicants will be determined by a review of the applicants' job applications and relevant materials.**
 - 4. The principal and faculty senate hiring committee chair submit their respective recommendations of the applicant who is determined the highest qualified by considering all factors set forth in WVBE Policy 5000 (a-i). No amount of weight is required to be assigned to any factor in making a recommendation and a factor may be assigned no weight at all. No matrix or documentation shall be required. However, if weight is given for each criterion when assessing an applicant's qualifications, and if one or more permanently employed instructional personnel apply for a classroom teaching position and meet the standards set forth in the job posting, each criterion shall be given equal weight except criterion 10 and 11, (which each will be given double weight).**
 - 5. Once the recommendation is received in the county office, the superintendent may determine to immediately concur with the recommendation or he may wish, especially if the applicant is new to the county, to interview or have his designee(s) to interview the applicant, check references, etc., before making his recommendation to the board.**
2. Personnel staff indicated that other vacant positions with certified applicants were reposted when it was found that the applicant(s) had unsatisfactory performance/references in the school systems where they currently or previously worked (Reference posting # 047).

Reposting of several positions also occurred when no applicant was certified. Some positions were reposted up to five times. Although this is not a noncompliance, the Team recommended that once the first posting is not filled due to no certified applicants, that the position be reposted with a closing date, "until filled." The Team further recommended that the same posting number be used when a posting is reposted.

- Posting #013: Technical Education, Aurora (posted 5 times).
- Posting #01: Social Studies/Science, Aurora, (posted 4 times).

Professional: Summer School Postings

Posting P 11/12 141-142: "Extracurricular - Contract Assignment – Summer School."

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. According to the executive secretary of personnel, only postings where there have been no certified applicants have been reposted.

3. W. Va. Code §18-5-39(c) states, "Certified teachers employed by the county board to teach in the summer school program shall be paid an amount to be determined by the county board . . . Provided, That teachers who teach summer courses of instruction which are offered for credit and which are taught during the regular school year shall be paid at the same daily rate they would receive if paid in accordance with the then current minimum monthly salary in effect for the teachers in that county."
 - In agreement with the salary listed on the posting for summer teachers, teachers were paid at a rate of \$20/hour. As per central office personnel, classes taught in a Credit Recovery program resulted in students receiving high school credit. In compliance with school law, the county determined a rate of pay for Summer School Student Interventionists and Summer Teachers/Facilitators who were paid at the determined rate of \$20/hour. Although teachers who taught in the Extended Year Program were to be paid \$20/hour, as per the superintendent, their positions were posted in error as "daily rate of pay," for which they were paid.

Corrective Action

Unless the payment agreement for Preston County teachers who taught summer school classes for high school credit is determined by the West Virginia Department of Education legal counsel to be in compliance with W. Va. Code §18-5-39(c), the Team recommended that a correction of pay be granted to appropriate teachers. Summer postings for summer 2013 should be posted with daily rate of pay if it meets the criteria of law as stated above.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

As per the school business official/treasurer, recommended corrective action to pay the teacher who taught summer school for high school credit during the summer of 2012 at her regular daily rate of pay was not granted.

A review of postings for this year's summer programs found all professional summer positions were posted at a salary rate of \$20/hour. Those summer

positions reviewed included Summer School Extended Year (4), Elementary Tutors (2), and Summer School Student Interventionist (2). The Student Interventionist assignment is to teach/facilitate a credit recovery program (PLATO) for which high school credit is given for successful completion. Preston County School System has taken the position that since a teacher of this program is more of a facilitator of the class, he/she should not be paid his/her daily rate of pay.

RECOMMENDATION – PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

At the time of the May 2014 audit, two teachers had been recommended for employment of Summer School Student Interventionist to teach the credit recovery summer program for a pay rate of \$20/hour. This program (PLATO) is taught during the school year and is one for which students receive high school credit. For compliance with W. Va. Code §18-5-39, these teachers are to be paid at the same daily rate they would receive if paid in accordance with the minimum monthly salary in effect for the teachers in the county. For other summer professional positions, the county board can determine the amount to pay.

For future postings, the correct amount of pay should be listed on the posting.

Recruitment

According to the former assistant superintendent, the county personnel director attends teacher recruitment fairs (last year attended fairs at Fairmont and Glenville). The county has also worked with individuals from Garrett County, Maryland, where three schools had been closed, to obtain teachers. Additionally, the personnel office sent postings to specific certification departments at West Virginia University. As a result of recruitment efforts, the county often had many applicants for a posted position (Posting 0036, Kindergarten, Rowlesburg 27 applicants; Posting 001, Elementary position, 18 applicants; 0023, Health and Physical Education, Preston High School. 18 applicants).

In an effort to recruit administrators to the county, Preston County has formed a partnership with West Virginia University to create a cohort group for Aspiring Administrators. Sixty individuals have applied and coursework will begin this fall.

Service Personnel

The Team reviewed a number of postings for service personnel that included: Regular, substitute, extracurricular and summer employment vacancies for aide, bus operator, cook, custodian, mechanic, and maintenance. The postings listed the vacancy title, posting date, closing date, and location.

A link for service personnel position posted opened to the full posting which provided information such as posting number, time of the shift, employment term, pay grade and other qualifications required. The county used as the title of the posting, "Non-certificated Personnel." As per the service personnel secretary, the posting title will be changed to "Service Personnel."

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed postings for regular, substitute, extracurricular, and summer employment vacancies for bus operator, cook, custodian, secretary, and maintenance. All postings reviewed met all requirements of W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b. No kindergarten vacancy for Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher (previously held by an individual with aide classification) has been posted for the 2014-2015 school term. The personnel director and secretary are scheduled to attend a training session at RESA 7 regarding the required training and authorization for these positions. The training session is to provide information to participants as to how to post the early childhood classroom assistant teacher position. The new classification will require either Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher – Temporary Authorization, Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher – Permanent Authorization or Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher – Paraprofessional Certificate (Reference W. Va. Code §18-5-18).

Noncompliance

4. Some postings reviewed also listed the required competency test (Example: S12-13-20 and 21, Kindergarten aide), while others did not list the required competency test (See S12-13-01, Cook II/Cafeteria Manager.). Posting S12-13-01 listed on the posting: 2 years experience as Cook II, Food Handler’s Card, Recordkeeping skills, and knowledge of school meal pattern.

According to W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b(g)(2), “Job postings may not require criteria which are not necessary for the successful performance of the job” For cook, for example, only a food handler’s card is required prior to the cook beginning his/her duties as a cook.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. Postings for service personnel positions were revised and meet all requirements of W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b. The Job Description for the posted position is included with the posting. Successful completion of the competency test for specific classification is listed on the posting as a requirement for the position. Job postings do not require criteria which are not necessary for the successful performance of the job.

5. W.Va. Code §18A-4-8b states, “Notice of a job vacancy shall include . . . the amount of pay and any benefits” The salary listed in the job posting was the Pay Grade only. Every posting (professional and service) stated, “PRESTON COUNTY SCHOOLS OFFERS PUBLIC EMPLOYEMENT INSURANCE, RETIREMENT, AND BOARD OFFERED DENTAL/OPTICAL PLAN. This is not accurate for service personnel postings.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b(g)(2) requires that the amount of pay and any benefits helpful to the applicant be included in the job posting. Service personnel postings now list for the posted position, the pay grade along with a salary range (example Pay Grade D, Salary Range \$19,050 - \$31,970). Insurance and retirement are listed as a benefit for regularly employed personnel only.

6. The job vacancy on the web did not include the job description for service personnel. According to the assistant superintendent, the job descriptions are available in schools and in the county personnel office.

Recommendations

- For all service personnel in which the State competency test is required, the test should be listed on the posting as a qualification of the position.
- Criteria which are not necessary for the successful performance of the job should not be added to the posting.
- The amount of pay for the specific pay grade should be added to the posting listing a range of pay from the lowest (with no experience) to the highest, or the county could put a link on the posting to the county pay scale for service personnel.
- Extend the wording on benefits offered to include “to regularly employed personnel”.
- As with professional personnel, job descriptions should be added as a link to service personnel vacancies.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. Postings and job descriptions have been revised. Correct classification titles are used for service personnel positions. The postings meet all requirements of W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b.

Notices of job vacancies for service personnel positions shall include the job description. For positions posted in schools and other conspicuous places for all service personnel to observe, job descriptions are printed on the back of the posting. Job Descriptions for aides, bus operators, cooks and custodians are available on the county website. As per the secretary of service personnel, job descriptions for positions other than the above four classifications will be put on the website prior to posting the position.

Noncompliance (The following was observed as a possible noncompliance.)

7. “Posting S12-13-23: Supplemental Position County Office *Scheduler for Substitute Service Employee Services: Schedule: 5:00 a.m. – 7:30 a.m. 1 hour in evening (flexible as needed – not to exceed 3½ hours. Subject to modification. Pay Grade “D.” Follow 200-day calendar. Note: This position did not have associated benefits.” *Pending West Virginia Department of Education approval.

Service Personnel Classification Titles for service personnel are listed in W. Va. Code §18A-4-8. Scheduler is not listed as a classification title nor did it appear on the county's list of service personnel class titles under Pay Grade D. It appeared that this position is to be considered an extracurricular position; however, the description of the position on the posting was more like a regular part-time (up to 3½ hours) clerk or secretary position. It was also a "split shift."

Corrective Action

This position should be given the appropriate service classification title (such as clerk or secretary) and posted with the appropriate class title as a regular one-half time position or an extracurricular position. Another option is to include these duties in the job assignment of another employee.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. To correct the above cited problem, the county hired the "Scheduler for Substitute Service Employee Services" through RESA 7. As per the new superintendent, the position will be eliminated.

8. Preston County employed a Supervisor of Maintenance and Assistant Supervisor of Maintenance. Each is paid at pay grade "H" with supplements of \$20,000 and \$7,500, respectively. Code §18A-2-5 restricts county boards from employing personnel in such positions to no more than the number employed on March 1, 1988. According to the West Virginia Department of Education records, Preston County Schools only employed one employee in a Pay Grade H position as of the last day of the 2nd month during the 1989-1990 school year.

Corrective Action

According to West Virginia Code §18A-2-5, only one employee may be employed at Pay Grade H.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PROGRESSING. A review of the Assistant Supervisor of Maintenance's Employee Assignments/Contracts (WVEIS) indicated the employee was changed from a Pay Grade of "H" to "G." However, the county added the difference between Pay Grade G and H (\$730) as an additional salary supplement. The supplement of \$7,500, which he was paid during the last on-site review, has been reduced to \$4,347.83. As per personnel director, the supplement was not approved by the West Virginia Department of Education.

9. W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b(g)(4) states, "The county board shall notify any person who has applied for a job posted pursuant to this section of the status of his or her application as soon as possible after the county board makes a hiring decision regarding the posted position."

In lieu of compliance with this law, the county superintendent has added to the service personnel job application the following statement, "To request confirmation of the final selection pertaining to this position, please contact the Preston County Schools Personnel Office at 304-329-0580, ext. 214. This did not appear to meet the requirements of this law.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. Once a vacant service personnel position is filled, the personnel director sends a letter to each unsuccessful applicant giving the status of his/her application. Applicants are encouraged to watch and apply for future posted positions.

Extracurricular Personnel

10. Posting PEC12/13 010 Parent/Community Volunteer Coordinator, Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School, \$10 per hour as needed, not to exceed 450 hrs. Minimum qualifications include high school diploma or GED. Two types of school employment, Professional (which requires a license) and Service, are identified by Class Titles in W.Va. Code §18A-4-8.

Corrective Action

The Parent/Community Volunteer Coordinator position did not meet the definition of either category. A requirement of an adult special interest specialization license of Parent Education could meet the definition of professional and could be posted as an extracurricular position (Reference State Board Policy 5202, Section 6.8 [d]).

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

NONCOMPLIANCE. As per the assistant superintendent, there has been no change in the above position.

Summer School

11. Postings for Summer School were posted as "Extra-Duty Summer School Contracts" (Postings S12-ED-12, Summer School Custodian and S12-ED-07, Summer School Cook).

According to the former assistant superintendent/personnel director, all summer school positions, including service personnel positions, were posted. He stated that all service personnel positions were filled based on seniority of the applicants. W.Va. Code §18-5-39(f) states, "An employee who was employed in any service personnel job or position during the previous summer shall have the option of retaining the job or position if the job or position exists during any succeeding summer." With the secretary of service personnel absent due to attending a West

Virginia Department of Education training, the Team was unable to determine if service personnel who held summer positions last year had the option to return to their positions.

The Team reviewed county policies by title and by “word search” and no policy was found addressing the hiring of personnel into summer positions.

The Team noted that the county uses the terms “extra-duty” and “supplemental” synonymously with extracurricular. Extra-duty assignments are not posted, but assigned as per W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b (Also reference Preston County Board Policy (8-30). W. Va. Code does not have a job title as supplemental. Extracurricular assignment vacancies are posted and assigned as per W. Va. Code §18A-4-16.

Corrective Action

- The new assistant superintendent will need to study and follow W. Va. Code §18-5-39 when filling summer school positions for summer 2013.
- Summer school employment and seniority data must be maintained and used when required by W. Va. Code §18-5-39.
- Change title of summer school postings to “Summer School/Programs.” Remove the title of extra-duty from all postings.
- Summer School hiring should be written and added to Preston County policies.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. It is evident that the assistant superintendent of personnel is more familiar with school law as it relates to summer school programs; however, he needs to continue to study school law and also strive to keep current with the law as it changes. Postings for summer school positions are now posted as Summer School/Programs. All service personnel summer positions were posted, and individuals who held the positions last year were contacted and given the option to hold them again this year. No policy was observed addressing summer school hiring.

7.6.3. Evaluation. The county board adopts and implements an evaluation policy for professional and service personnel that is in accordance with W.Va. Code, West Virginia Board of Education policy, and county policy. (W.Va. Code §18A-2-12; Policy 5310; Policy 5314)

A random review of professional evaluations disclosed the following.

1. Two first year teachers (Teacher – Terra Alta/East Preston School and Teacher– Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School) had one evaluation. First year teachers are required to have two evaluations.
2. All other teacher evaluations the Team reviewed met the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education, Policy 5310, and the Preston County Board of Education policy.
3. The Team was told observation forms to support the evaluations in the personnel files were not kept in the employee’s personnel file but were maintained at the schools. A sampling of the school principals produced mixed results as to where the observation forms were kept. The Teacher Observation Forms that support each Teacher Evaluation should be considered an integral part of the evaluation and kept in the personnel file. Central office staff responsible for evaluations should ensure that all evaluation and accompanying observation forms are submitted to the central office when administrators check out at the end of the school year. It was impossible to determine that timelines were followed.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

MINIMAL PROGRESS. Review of the status report produced from the Online Educator Evaluation System for each of the 12 schools revealed the following information:

- **Teachers’ self-reflections and student learning goals had been completed and all required observations had been completed for four schools.**
- **For the remaining eight schools, six self-reflections had not been completed; 12 sets of student learning goals were incomplete; and the required number of observations for 34 teachers had not been completed.**
- **Of the 34 teachers without the appropriate number of observations as required by Policy 5310, 16 were located at the high school level; three were at the middle school level; 14 were at the elementary level; and one was at a K-8 school.**

A random review of professional support personnel evaluations disclosed the following.

1. One speech pathologist (Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School) had evaluation goals established on 11-1-11 but did not have a follow up review at the end of the year.
2. Two speech pathologists (Kingwood Elementary and Itinerant) with more than five years of experience had not been evaluated in the past three years. Policy 5310 requires professional support personnel with more than five years of experience to be evaluated every three years.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Evaluations for 10 professional support personnel were reviewed with the following results:

MINIMAL PROGRESS.

- 1. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 and Preston County Board of Education Policy 7-5 require professional support personnel with more than five years of experience be evaluated every three years. Evaluations for five of the professional support personnel whose evaluation files were reviewed did not meet these requirements: speech language – Aurora School, speech language, Itinerate, physical therapist – Bruceton School, speech language – Kingwood Elementary and nurse – Central Preston Middle School. Two of these employees were cited for this same evaluation (issue) in the last audit.**
- 2. One speech language therapist – Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School - cited in the last audit for having an incomplete evaluation in school year 2011-2012 has not yet received a completed evaluation.**
- 3. One first year employee nurse (Terra Alta/East Preston Middle School) had only one evaluation during the 2012-2013 year. State and county personnel policies require professional support personnel during the first three years of employment be evaluated two times per year.**
- 4. An athletic trainer – Preston High School - was evaluated during the 2012-2013 year using the evaluation criteria and forms used to evaluate coaches rather than the criteria and forms used to evaluate professional support personnel as required by Preston County Board of Education and West Virginia Board of Education personnel policies. This same problem was cited in the last audit.**
- 5. Evaluations for the other two professional support personnel in the sample met all requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 and Preston County Board of Education Personnel Policy 7-5.**

A random review of coaches' evaluations disclosed the following.

- 1. Two coaches (Track – Preston High School and Track – East Preston Middle School) did not have evaluations for the 2011-2012 year.**
- 2. The athletic trainer was evaluated as a coach using the coaches' evaluation form and should have been evaluated using the procedures and forms for Professional Support Personnel.**

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

MINIMAL PROGRESS.

1. The two coaches cited in the original audit are no longer coaching in Preston County.
2. **The athletic trainer was again evaluated using the coaches' evaluation procedures and forms.** (See also the comments in the professional support personnel section.)
3. Evaluations for three coaches (cross country – Aurora; Cheer – Central Preston Middle; and Basketball – Terra Alta) did not have the observations attached. The observations are an official part of the evaluation and should be attached to the evaluation form and filed in the official personnel files for the county.
4. The completed observations and evaluations for five coaches at Preston High School (Cheer, Cross Country, wrestling, Soccer and volleyball) were not signed within four weeks of the end of the sports seasons as required by West Virginia Board of Education and Preston County Board of Education personnel policies.
5. The other nine coaches' evaluations in the sample reviewed met all the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 and Preston County Board of Education Policy 7-6.

A random review of extracurricular assignment evaluations disclosed the following.

The Team reviewed personnel files for persons serving in the following extracurricular positions: Spelling Bee Coordinator, Middle School Band Director, Elementary Math Field Day Director, Tutor, Drama Coach and Farm Manager and found no evaluations of personnel working in these extracurricular assignments.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed the procedures used to evaluate the persons serving in extracurricular positions and found these procedures working well. Employees in the extracurricular positions reviewed had been evaluated during the past year.

A random review of 12 school administrator evaluations disclosed the following.

1. Two school administrators (Administrative Assistant and Chief School Business Official/Treasurer) evaluations had goals established in the fall and a progress

review in midyear, but did not have the evaluation conference and narrative at the end of the year.

2. All other school administrator evaluations met the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education, Policy 5310, and the Preston County Board of Education evaluation policy.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. A random review of central office administrator evaluations was completed with the following finding: All evaluations for central office administrators, including evaluations for the two administrators cited, met the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 and Preston County Board of Education Policy 7-4.

A review of the status report produced by the Online Educator Evaluation System for school administrators revealed that all self-reflections and goals had been completed and approved by the superintendent, except for one administrator whose goals had not yet been submitted. The superintendent reported that he had repeatedly directed the administrator to enter goals into the Online Educator Evaluation system. The superintendent also reported that he had met with each school principal to establish goals for the evaluation system and had met mid-year with each one to monitor progress in meeting the goals.

Service Personnel

The Team reviewed a sampling of service personnel evaluations in the following classifications: Secretary, finance personnel, transportation, cooks, maintenance, custodians, and aides for personnel in the central office and schools.

1. One LPN Aide (Terra Alta/East Preston Middle School) did not have evaluations for the 2010-2011 or 2011-2012 school years.
2. All other service personnel evaluations reviewed met requirements of the Preston County Board of Education Evaluation Policy (File: R7-11).

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The Team reviewed evaluation files for a sampling of service personnel which included all service personnel classifications and all work sites.

1. The LPN Aide cited in the first audit is no longer an employee of Preston County Schools.
2. Two (2) employees (bus operator and county custodian) with 0-2 years of experience received only one evaluation in the 2012-13 year. Preston County

Board of Education Policy 7-11 requires service personnel with 0-2 years of experience receive two evaluations per year.

- 3. Thirteen (13) service personnel in the sample received no evaluation during the 2012-13 year. (aide – Bruceton; bus operator, bus operator, bus operator, aide – Preston High School; aide – Bruceton; aide – Itinerate, aide Itinerant and Aurora; secretary, mechanic, mechanic, cook – Bruceton and cook – Preston High School). This did not meet the requirement of the Preston County Board of Education Policy 7-11 that all service personnel be evaluated annually.**
- 4. The other thirty-five (35) service personnel evaluations reviewed met the requirements of Preston County Board of Education Policy 7-11.**

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)

The county had written policies for the implementation of the beginning teacher internship program (R7-1-2) and beginning principal internship program (R7-1-3); however, one job description addressed both positions. The job description did not include the specific requirements listed in W. Va. Code or in the county policies, such as, the mentor serving on the professional support team.

To date eleven (11) beginning teachers and four (4) beginning principals were listed for mentor assignments. The posting for mentors for the 2012-2013 school term was August 14, 2012, and was being posted until all mentor positions were filled. Individuals can apply for a mentor position and once hired he/she is then eligible to be assigned when there is a need and he/she is selected by the assistant superintendent. The assistant superintendent was in the process of assigning mentors to beginning teachers and principals. Mentors for two principals had been assigned. According to the superintendent, a county orientation for new teachers was scheduled the week of the Education Performance Audit, but was cancelled and rescheduled for the last week in August.

The Team interviewed the principal of Fellowsville Elementary School. Although he had no new teachers this year, he had one last year. The principal was very knowledgeable of the beginning teacher/principal internship programs and the required implementation.

A review of 2011-2012 documents sent to the county office quarterly showed that mentors kept a documentation log of classroom observations and meetings of the support team. Documentation showed, for the most part, that required observations and meetings were being held. Documents were signed by the beginning employee, the mentor, and the principal.

Recommendations

- Since the county is doing one mentor posting (continuously posted) for mentors, the Team recommended that the posting be in the spring before teachers leave for the summer. The posting would be for the subsequent school term. Teachers who train and become eligible for mentor certification during the summer can be hired at a later date.
- Once the beginning teacher or principal is employed, the mentor should be assigned effective for the new school year. If possible, the new teacher should have a mentor in place on the first day of his/her assignment.

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COMPLIANCE. The county is implementing its Support for Improving Professional Practice plan, which addresses support for beginning teachers. All beginning teachers (22) have mentors. Two mentors have three beginning teachers. Two mentors are assigned to two beginning teachers. Requirements and implementation of the mentor program are patterned after the repealed W. Va. Code §18A-3-2b. Beginning teachers participate in New Teacher Orientation, the Center for Professional Development Beginning Teacher Academy, and relevant county professional development for teachers. The assistant superintendent stated the county is currently working toward revising delivery of the mentor component of the program. The county has three beginning principals. The beginning principal internship is implemented according to W. Va. Code §18A-3-2d and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5899. One individual is a mentor to two principals.

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)

W.Va. Code §18A-2-12a (1) provides “The effective and efficient operation of the public schools depends upon the development of harmonious and cooperative relationships between county boards and school personnel.”

Findings

The Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) Team interviewed the President of the Preston County Board of Education and the four other board members, the superintendent, and county office staff. The Team reviewed agendas and minutes of the Preston County Board of Education meetings, relevant memoranda, and documents. The findings are the result of the interviews and document reviews.

Leadership Development Indicators.

1. At the district level the Preston County Board of Education Board member interviews evidenced a general lack of communication and understanding concerning overall student achievement, adequate yearly progress (AYP) results, the strategic planning process, the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan, and instructional leadership to improve student achievement.
2. Board members needed a better understanding of student achievement results, the AYP status of individual schools and the school system, and other standards of student performance, i.e., graduation rate, and other performance results.
3. Board members evidenced a general lack of communication and understanding concerning Preston County’s financial status and progress toward budget deficit reduction.

County Leadership

1. The overall financial status of the system should be communicated with the school board. Board members were not informed regarding quarterly updates as to the progress toward budget deficit reduction.
2. Board members were not aware of the Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan and no one had served on the planning committee. Minutes of board meetings did not show that the county’s strategic plan was presented to the board for information and discussion.

3. Board of Education Agendas and Minutes.
 - Preston County Board of Education Agendas are submitted to the West Virginia State Superintendent of Schools for approval.
 - The Team reviewed Preston County Board of Education meeting minutes from the time of State intervention in the operation of the county school system to the most current available minutes (June 11, 2012) contained in bound documents. Minutes of meetings contained minimal information to inform the public of board meeting business conducted. While the Preston County Board of Education is limited to approving student discipline and field trips, board minutes of meetings should include brief comments on reports, the budget, delegations, etc. Currently, many of these are included as attachments and according to board member interviews are given to the board as information in written reports. The Team believed that information should be shared verbally with the board. The board minutes were scarcely more than the board agenda that had been submitted to the West Virginia State Superintendent of Schools.
 - Board minutes showed meetings with the local school improvement councils (LSICs) scheduled with six schools presenting one evening at 20 minute intervals and the remaining six schools reporting at another meeting. Minutes did not indicate a quorum of LSIC members present.
 - Board minutes are official documents and as such should be accurate. The Team noted errors, duplicate minutes, an agenda only in one instance, a meeting out of chronological order, minutes not signed by the president and secretary, etc.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The OEPA Team interviewed the President of the Preston County Board of Education and two board members, the superintendent, and county office staff. The Team reviewed agendas and minutes of the Preston County Board of Education. The findings are the result of the interviews and document reviews.

- 1. Preston County Board of Education Board members communicated an understanding of countywide student achievement and strategic planning and were involved in developing the Five-Year Strategic Plan.**
- 2. Board members conveyed a thorough understanding of the county's financial status and the county's progress in deficit reduction.**
- 3. The Preston County School System Superintendent worked well with the Preston County Board of Education members and kept them informed on personnel actions, financial reports, and student achievement. Board members received training on the Strategic Plan, board leadership, personnel, and finance.**

4. **Board meeting minutes contained minimal information to inform the public of board meeting business. Again, minutes were scarcely more than a board agenda. The county superintendent will need to expand board minutes to provide a statement regarding items discussed.**

8.1. INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY.

Indicators of efficiency for student and school system performance and processes will be reviewed in the following areas: Curriculum delivery, including but not limited to, the use of distance learning; administrative practices; personnel; utilization of a Regional Education Service Agency, or other regional services that may be initiated between and among participating county boards. The indicators of efficiency are developed for use by the appropriate division within the West Virginia Department of Education to ensure efficient management and use of resources in the public 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.

Findings

- In addition to Title I, the Title I Coordinator was also responsible for the elementary curriculum. With 80 percent of his time Title I and 20 percent elementary education, the employee did not have sufficient time to meet the needs of the elementary students in Preston County. The low and declining student WESTEST2 achievement in the elementary mathematics and reading/language arts scores pointed to a need for curricular leadership from the central office at this level.
- There was only a central office secondary curriculum director. Other central office staff members were titled as coordinators, and in one case, administrative assistant. According to the superintendent, this retitling saved the county a huge amount of money. The curriculum and instruction duties were divided among central office staff. Although a county curriculum leadership team was in place, **no one person was responsible for leadership in curriculum development.**
- The Team noted that the superintendent did not appear to be involved with curriculum.

Recommended Action

- The Team recommended that one person be identified to oversee curriculum and instruction. This was identified in the March 2009 Education Performance Audit Report.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The Team found that the county followed the recommendation to identify a county level administrator to oversee curriculum. With the retirement of the secondary curriculum supervisor, a new position was posted for a federal programs director. The Title I/Elementary Curriculum position will be realigned to

include elementary and secondary curriculum with no federal program responsibilities.

Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, the current Federal Programs/Elementary Curriculum director will be the Director of Curriculum for K-12. An individual will be employed as the Director of Federal Programs.

8.1.2. Transportation. The school district evaluates the cost containment and effectiveness of the transportation system and provides students efficient transportation services consistent with State laws and policies.

Findings

Transportation has been a contentious issue for the Preston County School District. Preston County planned to implement a single bus run for all students as a cost saving measure to reduce the county's financial deficit. A significant concern regarding the length of time involved for Pre-Kindergarten and primary students resulted in the county returning to the previous transportation schedule. According to the superintendent and members of the board of education, this expenditure has been included in the 2012 levy call. The Team noted that the adjustment in transportation attempted was not an item in the Preston County Budget Reduction Plan submitted to and approved by the West Virginia Board of Education March 2012.

As recommended by the "West Virginia Department of Education Recommendations for Resolving Preston County Schools Financial Situation" May 15, 2012, the county did not purchase/replace school busses.

The "Preston County Schools Extended Employment/Supplement Extracurricular/Extra Duty 2012-13" document provides a Supplemental Salary in the amount of "\$50.00 per year for electric reimbursement for drivers who park bus at home." The Team viewed this as an inefficient use of fiscal resources given the financial deficit of Preston County.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Bus Runs – Kindergarten Students

The county began this academic year (2013-2014) with a single route system in place. Mixed reviews were received from schools; however, some money was saved regarding wear and tear on buses. The decision was made to return to double bus routes early October 2013. The superintendent did this in response to principals' concerns at the outlying schools. A single route system had always been in place in the mornings, but it was tried this year in the evenings as well. It extended the day for elementary schools, but made it difficult to have staff meetings at the end of the day and also made the day long for elementary students. The superintendent recommended the system return to a double route run in the evenings. Central Preston Middle School and Kingwood Elementary

are tied to high school times/while all outlying schools are picked up and taken home and then those closer to town are picked up and taken home. Transportation staff has been investigating inefficiencies with transportation. Transportation staff thinks things have settled down; however, a lot of turmoil occurred at the beginning of the year when the change was made.

Bus Purchases

This year the county was able to purchase 5 buses; three of those have been received. The remaining two buses are expected to arrive within the next week. The fleet is aging and beginning to have a lot of mechanical issues. The county has had to do four engine rebuilds this year alone due to mileage on motors. Some buses are 15-20 years old. Salt used for the roads during the winter has taken its toll on the undercarriage of the buses. A slight increase in enrollment enabled the county to make a request to receive funding from the State to purchase additional buses. Surplus buses are sold at auction. Buses are advertised and a local auctioneer handles the selling of the buses, but in the future the county will probably utilize the online auction system. The transportation director believed the going rate for an auctioned bus was anywhere from \$1500 to \$3000, depending on mileage and condition of buses. A lot of the auctioned buses go out of the country where they are used for public transportation.

Parking Buses

The county examined time and mileage figures for all drivers receiving a supplement and is looking at whether it is fiscally sound for them to park their bus at a central location or near their homes. Sufficient plug-in space was not available at the central office for the entire fleet. Batteries cost \$197 and starters cost \$350. Currently, the county needs to find a parking space for two drivers that would be more fiscally efficient. The director would like to see drivers be able to park at the schools to help with costs. Four buses are parked at Terra Alta. Decisions made at this point were based on total mileage buses are running for round trips.

8.1.3. 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-16 (d)).

Findings

During the 2011 fiscal year the citizens of Preston County supported the Board's initiative to issue a building Bond in the amount of \$39,000,000 to implement much needed building construction and renovations. In concert with that Bond, the county has received additional West Virginia School Building Authority (SBA) funding, issued

QZAB bonds and received other grants for a total of \$69,317,975.92 to construct and improve the school facilities.

The Team commended the board and superintendent for gathering community support for the Bond. Furthermore, the Team commended the treasurer for providing timely accounting of all expenditures, obligations, and remaining balances of these funds in a clear, concise, and easy to follow report. Such reporting to all concerned will ensure that projects will be completed within budget.

The following provides completion dates or anticipated dates for the countywide facility projects currently underway in Preston County. It is noted that some of the projects were over budget and had to be redesigned.

Aurora School – September 28, 2012 substantial completion

Bruceton School – May 2014

Central Preston Middle – May 2014

Fellowsville Elementary – December 2012

Kingwood Elementary – December 2012

New South/Tunnelton Denver – March 2014

New West/Valley Elementary – September 2014

Rowlesburg – 100 thousand from bond for site improvements/plumbing renovations - no timelines given.

Terra Alta/East Preston – March 2014

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Preston County School System was implementing the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan.

8.1.4. Administrative practices. The school district assesses the assignment of administrative personnel to determine the degree managerial/administrative services provided schools establish and support high quality curriculum and instructional services.

Findings

The Team noted the instability of administrative personnel as a deterrent to establishing and supporting high quality curriculum and instructional services. Four schools began the 2012-2013 school year with new principals and two schools began with substitute principals. In total, six of the 12 Preston County Schools were affected by administrative leadership. Preston County High School has had a new principal for each of the past three years.

Administrative leadership at the county office level has also been compromised by the turnover of staff.

- Assistant Superintendent. The assistant superintendent began the new role July 1, 2012. Prior to that he was Title I Director for one year. The previous assistant, former attendance director, returned to the attendance director position. This person left the position subsequent to the Education Performance Audit, resulting in another vacant position.
- Title I Coordinator. The Title I coordinator recently moved from principal of Bruceton Elementary to this position. The Title I position has been held by three different individuals in the past three years.
- Special Education Coordinator. The special education coordinator has been in the position one year. Prior to that, the position was vacant for six months.
- Treasurer/Chief School Finance Official. Three individuals have been in the treasurer's position in the past three years. Two other members of the finance office retired and new people were placed in these positions.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The current Title I/Elementary Curriculum Director was responsible for federal programs and elementary curriculum. The county posted a Federal Programs Director position and the current director will oversee elementary and secondary curriculum in the future. In addition, three coordinator positions were retitled director positions in April 2013 and approved by the West Virginia Board of Education.

8.1.5. Personnel. The school district assesses the assignment of personnel as based on West Virginia Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies to determine the degree to which instructional and support services provided to the schools establish and support high quality curriculum and instructional services.

Findings

As per the superintendent, the county has shown a slight increase in student enrollment over the past few years. However, it appears the enrollment could be down somewhat this year (2012-2013 with less than 50 students). The total enrollment for the county will not be determined until preschool students have been counted. (Preschool growth has shown positive growth in the county.) It is predicted that enrollment will increase in Bruceton as three hundred forty (340) new jobs will be available at the U. S. Penitentiary in Hazelton.

When the superintendent came to Preston County as superintendent, the county was over the state basic foundation allowance for fiscal year ended (FYE 06/30/09) **53.086** employees (professional and service). This increased to **66.326** (FYE 06/30/10), decreased to **29.422** (FYE 06/30/11), and decreased slightly to **27.546** (FYE 06/30/12). The superintendent stated that the county was currently within the basic foundation allowance for professional positions and over four or five positions in service

for the 2012-2013 school year. However, the Office of Education Performance Audits has not been able to verify this statement.

The superintendent stated that adjustments had been made in the county office with one less finance position (the county has established professional accountant positions as recommended by the West Virginia Department of Education, Assistant Superintendent of Division of Student Support Services, one less executive secretary, and a mechanic. Days of employment had been adjusted by cutting five to ten days of employment for some service personnel and school principals. Directors have also been reduced to coordinators with one coordinator position eliminated. The county has a school levy, but only three service positions are in the levy call.

According to the superintendent, all required programs of study are offered; however, there must be an enrollment of ten students in a class for a class to be taught. In addition to the required programs of study, the county offers ROTC with two instructors. One position is paid through the Armed Forces. The program has the highest enrollment in the state with approximately 300 students. The Rifle Team has received national recognition and is not only an excellent "at risk" program, but the pride of the county.

The county high school offers Chinese as one of its foreign languages and has a highly regarded fine arts program including an outstanding drama program, visual arts, and band which has 75 to 80 members. The band program is built at the middle schools. Each year the middle school bands, led by the band director, forms a county consolidated band which performs at the Buckwheat Festival. Band members wear their official school uniform.

Each school has a full-time principal and counseling service; however, county staff would like more. Each school has nursing services which are assigned. These services are offered with itinerant personnel in some schools. In the case of nurses, the pupil/nurse ratio might vary among schools, as often an Individualized Education Program (IEP) of one child in a school that would not ordinarily require a full time nurse will dictate a need for a full-time nurse to care for or be available for that specific child.

In addition to the ROTC teacher provided by the Armed Forces, funds for one teacher and parent/teacher coordinators (paid at \$20/hour) are provided through a 21st Century grant. A State grant pays for two technology integration specialists.

An Energy Specialist is paid through RESA (\$20,000). There are no benefits with this position.

To determine the professional personnel needs for a new school year, principals will meet with their respective staffs to determine a projected enrollment by grade or special needs. The number of cooks is determined by number of meals served. Custodians are determined by the size of the facility. Aides are assigned in kindergarten, preschool, and as per special education guidelines. Principals then meet with the appropriate

county coordinator, and their school's needs will be brought to the superintendent for consideration and approval. The county superintendent makes the final decision on staffing needs. Once staffing is established and approved at an elementary school, and a new student moves in putting the school beyond the maximum pupil/teacher ratio, the new student is assigned to a neighboring school in lieu of employing another teacher.

The superintendent expressed pride in some programs which although beneficial are not required. The county will need to examine course offerings to determine those that are essential. Since the county's excess levy rates are set at only 18.8 percent of the maximum allowed, the levy does not provide funds to carry personnel over the State Aid formula.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

The superintendent is in his first year as superintendent of Preston County Schools. In an interview with the superintendent, it was expressed that improvement of the total school system is his focus and goal.

Addressing the current status of the school system, the Team found that school enrollment over the last two years has not changed significantly. However, 200 students in the county were currently home-schooled. Additionally, the county has lost several students from the Bruceton attendance area to University High School, Monongalia County, and lost students to Tucker County High School. As Preston County School System works to improve, the superintendent would like for students and parents to want to return to Preston County Schools. With the expansion of the U.S. Penitentiary in Hazelton and the Mountaineer Challenge Academy, the superintendent anticipated new families will be moving into the Preston County area, which will increase the enrollment.

Preston County Schools has not only lost students, but teachers. Last year 22 teachers were lost to Monongalia County School System, and 8 to 10 teachers to other school systems. This loss included three math teachers whose positions have gone unfilled this year. The loss of the county's levy and the loss of dental and optical insurance appeared to be some of the reasons teachers left the county for a county with such benefits.

The loss of dental and optical benefits was due the county's financial standing. The superintendent is working toward balancing a school system budget and cuts in every department were evident. The superintendent met with school principals and county office administrative staff to project personnel needs for next school year. Personnel hired through RESA 7, such as the energy specialist (\$20,000), were eliminated. A service personnel position (HVAC) has been transferred from RESA 7 back into the county's school aid formula, although it still costs the county an additional \$5,000 a year. The county position was eliminated by the former superintendent, who then approved a \$10,000 supplement for the position when he contracted it through RESA 7, hiring his

HVAC employee. The employee had to give up \$5,000 and dental and optical insurance when his employment status changed from being paid with county state aid versus being contracted through RESA 7. As a result of these and other personnel cuts, the county is only .05 outside the school aid formula in professional instructional staffing and 1.97 in professional support personnel. The county is not outside the school aid formula in administrators and service personnel. Once the county financial deficits are eliminated, the superintendent will strive for the county to restore benefits such as dental and optical insurance to employees.

All required programs of study continue to be offered in schools. One elective offering at the high school, Chinese, has been eliminated. Services provided through itinerant professional support personnel such as counselors, nurses, occupational, and physical therapists remain the same as the previous audit. More counselors are needed in the school system; however, with professional support personnel over the formula, no new counselors will be added at this time. Offerings provided by itinerant personnel in art, music, and physical education have not changed.

The superintendent is positive regarding the future growth and success of Preston County School System. He will work to build the school system to a place where teachers will want to teach, students will want to learn, and parents and community members will want to be a significant part. The Team commended the superintendent for his stated commitment to the success of Preston County Schools.

CAPACITY BUILDING

18.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county electronic strategic improvement plan development is intended, in part, to provide mechanisms to target resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance.

The assistant superintendent was given the responsibility for developing the county electronic strategic improvement plan just before last year's submission deadline. The Team learned during the interview with the assistant superintendent that he updated last year's electronic strategic plan without committee collaboration. He also informed the Team that he plans to contact the committee members listed in the plan to find out if they are willing to serve in that same capacity. He also said that even though he accidentally submitted the 2012 plan on August 20, 2012, he will bring in the committee members before updating the plan. He stated that he realizes the plan is due September 15, 2012. The assistant superintendent said he had asked the county office directors/coordinators to enter their respective professional development conducted this past summer as well as those already planned for the upcoming year in the plan. The Team noted during interviews with county office staff and while reviewing the Five Year Strategic Plan, not all professional development activities were entered and the activities that were listed were not tied to the plan's goals. Every person interviewed about the plan expressed surprise when given examples of activities that were not currently included in the plan. When asked, the assistant superintendent confirmed that he did not review the schools' strategic plans and did not know of any person that has that responsibility.

Related to student achievement, Preston County must develop effective central office curricular leadership to approach curriculum systematically. This has been hampered, in part, by the instability of administrative personnel at the county and school levels. Additionally, no one single individual has the responsibility for curriculum leadership.

The effective utilization of fiscal resources is another area related to teaching and learning. This report details areas in which fiscal matters are connected to student performance. Preston County has failed to develop the capacity to manage fiscal resources strategically as evidenced by the county's budget deficit.

While the Preston County Board of Education and Superintendent of Preston County secured funds through a building bond, School Building Authority funding, QZAB bonds, and other grants to construct and improve the school facilities, this report describes present conditions and instances in which facilities are not conducive to learning. Some of these will be resolved when construction and renovations are completed. It is essential that Preston County utilize the maintenance staff in effectively maintaining schools. The county has not fully maximized the capacity of the maintenance staff.

Preston County must continue to target available resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Plans from 2012-2013 had been reviewed, including recommendations for revision, by the Title I/Elementary Curriculum Director. However, the Team did not see evidence that any central office staff was given the responsibility to review and approved school level strategic plans.

The Title I/Elementary Curriculum Director developed a summer Teachers' Academy for Summer 2014 based on school designation status to address each school's unique needs whether they be low performance (Priority or Support), subgroup achievement gaps (Focus), or progress with room to improve (Transition). Following the Teachers' Academy, a Principals' Academy will commence to incorporate the data and information from the Teachers' Academy, requiring principals to synthesize the information and apply in necessary areas at each school. Data should drive goals, action steps, and professional development in the strategic plan. In addition, data will assist administrators to determine gaps in professional development which influence professional learning community topics.

Even though data analysis and strategic planning needed further development, current county level administrators have a plan and the capacity to address these areas with school level administrators to impact student achievement and positive school growth.

While the county had taken steps to ensure a single individual will be responsible for curriculum, the Team determined the empowerment of teachers to support and provide professional development to their colleagues will be vital in ensuring pervasive and consistent delivery of instructional resources.

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.

As noted throughout this report, student achievement has declined in Preston County from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012. Furthermore, the financial deficit continues to exceed two million dollars. Personnel practices also continued to be inconsistent and deficient. These three areas continued to be a concern in Preston County.

PROGRESS REVIEW MAY 2014

Preston County School System demonstrated significant progress in promoting student achievement, improving personnel practices, and reducing the financial deficit.

SUMMARY

The November 2012 Approval Recommendations for Preston County School System were presented to and approved by the West Virginia Board of Education. The State Board returned partial control to the Preston County Board of Education in the areas of Policies and establishment of a school calendar and continued the Nonapproval status.

As evidenced in the May 2014 review, Preston County is moving forward and showing progress. Earlier problems with the increasing financial deficit had been addressed with a significant decrease in the deficit. The county is making progress in its facilities and implementing the Comprehensive Facilities Plan.

The Office of Education Performance Audits determined that the Preston County Board of Education demonstrated the resolve, training, knowledge, and empowerment to make decisions for the school system.

APPROVAL RECOMMENDATION

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education return local control of the county school system to the Preston County Board of Education effective August 1, 2014, subject to the following conditions: That,

1. The current superintendent remain in the position for two years, unless the superintendent and the Preston County Board of Education agree mutually to terminate the contract, and the county show continued progress in eliminating the financial deficit.
2. Transition to local control be provisional for two years.
3. Transfer of control of the following areas to the Preston County Board of Education be executed with a Memorandum of Understanding between the West Virginia Board of Education and the Preston County Board of Education.
 1. Finance.
 2. Personnel.
 3. Instructional Programs.
 4. Facilities.
 5. All other decision-making authorities of the local board of education according to statutory provisions and West Virginia Board of Education policies.

Note: According to the new Policy 2320 (effective July 1, 2014), school system approval status (Full, Temporary, or Conditional) is tied to grades of schools (A-F) within the school system. Since grades will not be issued until the fall of 2015, at which time all school systems will receive their first approval status under the new accreditation system, it is not necessary to issue an approval status in this report.