

**Education Performance Audit Report
For
PRESTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

MARCH 2009

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| Preston County School District..... | 2 |
| Kingwood Elementary School | 99 |

INTRODUCTION

An announced (five days in advance) Education Performance Audit of the Preston County School District was conducted on April 16 – 18, 2008. Kingwood Elementary School's individual school review was conducted as part of the county review. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education.

The report was presented to the West Virginia Board of Education at its June 2008 meeting. The State Board directed the Preston County Board of Education to prepare a corrective plan of action for the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) findings and present them to the West Virginia Board of Education at its October 8, 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. The OEPA was specifically instructed to review facilities, finance, leadership, and curriculum.

A second audit of the Preston County School District was conducted January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-19, 2009.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

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

| NAME | TITLE | COUNTY | CATEGORY |
|----------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| Linda Bragg | Coordinator Office of Title II – School & School System Improvement | WV Department of Education | AYP/Five Year Strategic Plan/High Quality Standards |
| Lisa Youell | CAG Liaison Office of Title II – School & School System Improvement | WV Department of Education | AYP/Five Year Strategic Plan/High Quality Standards |
| Delores Ranson | Retired Assistant Superintendent | Jackson County Schools | Certification/Hiring Personnel |
| Whitni Kines | Treasurer/CSBO | Barbour County Schools | Finance |
| Jody Lucas | Treasurer/CSBO | Cabell County Schools | Finance |
| Carroll Staats | Board President | Jackson County Schools | Evaluation/Administration/Leadership |
| Bill Elswick & Staff | Executive Director Office of School Facilities | WV Department of Education | Facilities |

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

COUNTY PERFORMANCE

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

This section presents the Annual Performance Measures for Accountability and related student performance data. It also presents the Education Performance Audit Team's findings.

5.1. ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1.1 Achievement.

Adequate Yearly Progress

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data for the 2006-2007 school year identified that Preston County did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP). Furthermore, Preston County failed to achieve AYP for the last five consecutive years and the county is on corrective action.

Subject and grade span for the spring 2007 assessment and subgroups that did not make AYP are shown in Chart 1. It also shows the percent proficient for each grade span/assessment and subgroup as well as the 2006 percent proficient for the 2007 subgroups that did not make AYP for assessing progress.

Chart 1

| WESTEST | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| GRADE SPAN/ASSESSMENT | SUBGROUP | 2007-08 PERCENT PROFICIENT | 2006-07 PERCENT PROFICIENT | 2005-06 PERCENT PROFICIENT |
| Mathematics – Elementary | Special Education (SE) | 51.3% | 54.3% | 54.8% |
| Mathematics – Middle | Special Education (SE) | *44.9% | 33.9% | 34.5% |
| Reading – Elementary | Special Education (SE) | 40.4% | 41.1% | 45.5% |
| Reading – Middle | Special Education (SE) | 35.7% | 30.6% | 29.3% |
| Reading – Secondary | Special Education (SE) | 24.6% | 17.0% | 25.5% |
| Mathematics – Secondary | Special Education (SE) | 21.3% | 26.9% | |
| Reading – Elementary | Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 68.8% | 68.4% | |
| Reading – Middle | Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 70.5% | 69.7% | |
| Reading – Secondary | Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 60.3% | 59.5% | |

* Made AYP

The Team noted that when the performance of the subgroups listed in Chart 1 was compared with the 2005-2006 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data, all special education

(SE) subgroups identified above decreased in percent proficient, most notably in secondary reading/language arts (-8.5 percent). The middle school level SE subgroup percent proficient increased in reading/language arts by 1.3 percentage points.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Preston County continued to fail to achieve adequate yearly progress for the special education (SE) subgroups at the elementary and secondary levels in both mathematics and reading/language arts and at the middle level in reading/language arts.

The county also failed to achieve AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup at all levels in reading/language arts. Furthermore, the county did not make AYP for WESTEST participation rate for the special education (SE) subgroup at the secondary level in both mathematics and reading/language arts.

Chart 2 shows that in the last five years, the number of Preston County's schools identified for not achieving AYP decreased from eight schools in 2002-2003 to four schools in 2004-2005 and 2005-2006, but increased to five schools in 2006-2007.

Chart 2

| NUMBER OF SCHOOLS NOT ACHIEVING AYP | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Year | Number of Schools |
| 2002-2003 | 8 |
| 2003-2004 | 6 |
| 2004-2005 | 4 |
| 2005-2006 | 4 |
| 2006-2007 | 5 |
| 2007-2008 | 3 |

An examination of the achievement gap between subgroups for the 2006-2007 assessment school year revealed a measurable achievement gap between the special education (SE) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups when compared to the academic performance of the All Students (AS) and racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups (Charts 3-8). The elementary and middle level SE subgroups did not make AYP in mathematics or reading/language arts. The high school level SE subgroup did not make AYP in reading/language arts.

Charts 3 through 5 indicated that the 2006-2007 Preston County School District student percent proficient in mathematics was below the State percent proficient at the elementary level, above the State percent proficient at the middle level with the exception of the special education (SE) subgroup (-3.1 percent), and above the State percent proficient at the high school level. Student assessment performance in reading/language arts (Charts 6, 7, and 8) indicated that the 2006-2007 Preston County School District student percent proficient was below the State percent proficient at all

levels, most notably the special education (SE) subgroup (-7.3 percent at the elementary level, -9.3 percent at the middle level, -11.1 percent at the high school level).

Chart 3

| ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Subgroup | District Percent Proficient | | State Percent Proficient | |
| | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| All Students (AS) | 78.1% | 77.6% | 79.7% | 77.9% |
| Racial/Ethnicity White (W) | 78.3% | 78.1% | 80.2% | 78.3% |
| Special Education (SE) | 54.3% | 51.3% | 54.9% | 51.8% |
| Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 72.0% | 71.6% | 72.7% | 70.8% |

Chart 4

| MIDDLE MATHEMATICS | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Subgroup | District Percent Proficient | | State Percent Proficient | |
| | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| All Students (AS) | 76.0% | 79.6% | 75.4% | 76.2% |
| Racial/Ethnicity White (W) | 75.9% | 79.7% | 75.9% | 76.7% |
| Special Education (SE) | 33.9% | 44.9% | 37.0% | 37.6% |
| Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 69.4% | 72.8% | 66.7% | 67.7% |

Chart 5

| HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS | | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Subgroup | District Percent Proficient | | State Percent Proficient | |
| | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| All Students (AS) | 72.0% | 65.7% | 68.5% | 68.3% |
| Racial/Ethnicity White (W) | 72.4% | 65.8% | 69.2% | 69.1% |
| Special Education (SE) | 26.9% | 21.3% | 24.1% | 23.1% |
| Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 64.9% | 55.0% | 58.6% | 58.2% |

Chart 6

| ELEMENTARY READING/LANGUAGE ARTS | | | | |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Subgroup | District Percent Proficient | | State Percent Proficient | |
| | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| All Students (AS) | 76.7% | 77.8% | 81.3% | 80.9% |
| Racial/Ethnicity White (W) | 76.8% | 78.0% | 81.7% | 81.1% |
| Special Education (SE) | 41.1% | 40.4% | 48.4% | 47.2% |
| Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 68.4% | 68.8% | 74.4% | 74.1% |

Chart 7

| MIDDLE READING/LANGUAGE ARTS | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Subgroup | District Percent Proficient | | State Percent Proficient | |
| | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| All Students (AS) | 77.6% | 79.1% | 81.4% | 81.6% |
| Racial/Ethnicity White (W) | 77.6% | 79.1% | 81.7% | 81.9% |
| Special Education (SE) | 30.6% | 35.7% | 39.9% | 40.3% |
| Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 69.7% | 70.5% | 73.9% | 74.1% |

Chart 8

| HIGH SCHOOL READING/LANGUAGE ARTS | | | | |
|--|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Subgroup | District Percent Proficient | | State Percent Proficient | |
| | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| All Students (AS) | 70.8% | 71.4% | 75.1% | 74.4% |
| Racial/Ethnicity White (W) | 71.3% | 71.2% | 75.7% | 74.9% |
| Special Education (SE) | 17.0% | 24.6% | 28.1% | 26.7% |
| Economically Disadvantaged (SES) | 59.5% | 60.3% | 66.0% | 65.0% |

Writing Assessment

Preston County School District's 2007 Statewide Writing Assessment performance depicted in Chart 9 was below the State percentage of students scoring at or above mastery at all tested grade levels. Grade 4 writing assessment percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency revealed a notable decline. Grade 7 (2007) writing assessment percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency increased 4 percentage points from the 2006 assessment. Grade 10 (2007) writing assessment percentage of students scoring at or above proficiency increased 6 percentage points from the 2006 assessment. Three year Grade 10 trend data showed Preston County performed above West Virginia in 2005 and 2006, but while the county school district's writing assessment results increased, the State's percent of students at or above mastery outpaced the county. The trend data provided an indication that improving writing performance is needed at all grade levels.

Chart 9

| WRITING ASSESSMENT RESULTS | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Percent Of Students At Or Above Mastery | | | |
| | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
| WV Grade 4 | 74% | 75% | 70% |
| Preston Grade 4 | 76% | 63% | 57% |
| WV Grade 7 | 73% | 75% | 76% |
| Preston Grade 7 | 67% | 65% | 69% |
| WV Grade 10 | 86% | 79% | 87% |
| Preston Grade 10 | 87% | 80% | 86% |

SAT/ACT Assessment Results

Chart 10 shows the Preston School District's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT) results. The SAT math mean score from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 showed no significant difference. The SAT verbal mean score from 2004-2005 to 2005-2006 decreased from 550 to 506. The percent of test takers increased in 2004-2005 but declined the next year.

ACT composite trend data showed no significant difference from 2002-2003 through 2005-2006. However, the percentage of students taking the ACT showed an up and down trend during the past four years.

Chart 10

| SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| County | 2002- 2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 |
| SAT Takers (%) | 3.5 | 3.1 | 5.8 | 3.1 | 9.7 |
| SAT Math Mean Score | 525 | 613 | 559 | 554 | 494 |
| SAT Verbal Mean Score | 493 | 614 | 550 | 506 | |
| Critical Reading Score | | | | | 548 |
| Writing Score | | | | | 518 |
| AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT) | | | | | |
| ACT Takers (%) | 67.4 | 56.8 | 63.3 | 56.6 | 65.5 |
| ACT Composite | 20.2 | 20.4 | 20.9 | 20.5 | 20.5 |

Source: State, County and School Data, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 West Virginia Report Cards, West Virginia Department of Education.

Preston County ACT assessment results five year trend data in Chart 11 showed a moderate increase in all subjects from 2003 to 2007. The composite score for Preston County was comparable with West Virginia's composite score.

Chart 11

| ACT ASSESSMENT RESULTS (FIVE-YEAR TREND) | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 |
| English WV | 20.3 | 20.6 | 20.5 | 20.8 | 20.8 |
| English Preston * | 20.5 | 20.4 | 20.9 | 20.4 | 20.8 |
| Mathematics WV | 19.2 | 19.4 | 19.3 | 19.6 | 19.5 |
| Mathematics Preston* | 19.3 | 19.4 | 20.1 | 19.4 | 19.4 |
| Reading WV | 20.9 | 21.1 | 20.9 | 21.2 | 21.2 |
| Reading Preston* | 20.5 | 21.0 | 21.2 | 21.1 | 20.9 |
| Science WV | 20.3 | 20.3 | 20.4 | 20.5 | 20.5 |
| Science Preston* | 20.2 | 20.3 | 20.8 | 20.5 | 20.5 |
| Composite WV | 20.3 | 20.5 | 20.4 | 20.6 | 20.6 |
| Composite Preston* | 20.2 | 20.4 | 20.9 | 20.5 | 20.5 |

* Data provided by Preston County

ACT EXPLORE Assessment Results

According to the 2007-2008 Grade 8 ACT EXPLORE results in Chart 12, Preston County students showed a 0.5 point increase in the composite score as compared to the 2004-2005 results. Four years of trend data showed a modest increase in all four academic areas.

Chart 12

| | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| English WV | 14.2 | 14.3 | 14.2 | 14.3 |
| English Preston | 13.4 | 13.7 | 13.6 | 13.8 |
| Mathematics WV | 14.2 | 14.5 | 14.5 | 14.7 |
| Mathematics Preston | 13.9 | 14.1 | 14.4 | 14.5 |
| Reading WV | 13.8 | 13.9 | 13.9 | 13.9 |
| Reading Preston | 13.2 | 13.4 | 13.4 | 13.7 |
| Science WV | 15.8 | 15.9 | 15.9 | 16.0 |
| Science Preston | 15.5 | 15.7 | 15.9 | 16.1 |
| Composite WV | 14.6 | 14.8 | 14.8 | 14.9 |
| Composite Preston | 14.1 | 14.3 | 14.4 | 14.6 |

ACT PLAN Assessment Results

Based on the 2007-2008 Grade 10 ACT PLAN results in Chart 13, Preston County test takers showed a measurable decrease (17.0 to 16.3) in the composite score. Three years of trend data showed a gain in English, mathematics, and reading results from 2004 to 2006-2007, then a substantial decrease occurred in these subjects in 2007-2008. Science scores were above the State average in 2004-2005 through 2006-2007,

but decreased in 2007-2008 and were below the State average. The declining 2007-2008 ACT Plan results showed that Preston County must consider this as an area for school district improvement.

Chart 13

| ACT PLAN RESULTS Grade 10 | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 | 2007-2008 |
| English WV | 16.7 | 16.8 | 16.7 | 16.3 |
| English Preston | 16.4 | 16.7 | 17.1 | 15.8 |
| Mathematics WV | 16.4 | 16.5 | 16.6 | 16.3 |
| Mathematics Preston | 16.6 | 16.6 | 17.2 | 15.7 |
| Reading WV | 16.5 | 16.6 | 16.5 | 16.5 |
| Reading Preston | 16.4 | 16.5 | 16.7 | 16.0 |
| Science WV | 17.7 | 17.8 | 17.7 | 17.5 |
| Science Preston | 18.0 | 18.0 | 17.9 | 17.3 |
| Composite WV | 17.0 | 17.1 | 17.0 | 16.8 |
| Composite Preston | 17.0 | 17.1 | 17.4 | 16.3 |

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Upon review of the report and further analysis of the data, the Preston County Schools Leadership Team has identified the following priorities.

1. To improve the academic performance of all students in reading and language arts, mathematics, science and social studies.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

WESTEST DATA. The Preston County Five-Year Strategic Plan did not include mathematics, science or social studies trend data. The county test coordinator indicated that they are aware of the need to improve mathematics percent proficient, but are focusing on literacy this year (2008-2009).

Trend data in reading/language arts showed a steady increase in percent proficient in the all students subgroup for Grades 3, 4, 6 and 8. While Grade 10 improved from 2007 to 2008, the improvement was not consistent from year to year. Grades 5 and 7 decreased in percent proficient for all students from 2007-2008.

SAT and ACT. At the time of the Follow-up Education Performance Audit additional data were not available.

ACT EXPLORE. An increase ranging from .1 to .3 in the four academic areas was shown (2008).

ACT PLAN. A substantial decrease occurred in 2007-2008 in English, mathematics, and reading. A smaller decrease occurred in science.

2. **To lessen the achievement gap among all students and students who are identified with disabilities.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

WESTEST Data – Reading/Language Arts

The difference (gap) in percent proficient between the all students (AS) and special education (SE) subgroups from 2004-2008 is depicted below.

Grade 3 – Gap increased
Grade 4 – Gap decreased
Grade 5 – Gap decreased
Grade 6 – Gap decreased
Grade 7 – Gap decreased
Grade 8 – Gap decreased
Grade 10 – Gap decreased

An analysis of the percent proficient in reading/language arts revealed that the achievement gap between the all students (AS) and the special education (SE) subgroup decreased in Grades 4-8 and 10, while the achievement gap increased slightly in Grade 3. Even though the achievement gap decreased in all but one grade, the elementary and middle level special education (SE) subgroups did not make AYP in reading/language arts or mathematics. The high school level special education subgroup (SE) did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP) in reading/language arts.

Many of Preston County Schools achieved AYP, but this was masked by the low cell sizes which eliminated those schools from this accountability standard.

The county test coordinator reported that the county had placed special education students into collaboration/inclusion classes in all but three schools. Those three schools (Kingwood Elementary School, Central Preston Middle School, and Preston High School) had large special education populations with traditional self-contained special education classrooms and did not make AYP because of the special education subgroup. Interviewees reported the need to improve co-teaching, align Response to Intervention (RTI) and the IEP processes, and use data to provide interventions at these three schools.

The career/technical education program at Preston High School initiated a literacy lab for students experiencing problems with literacy. Students can report to the lab for tutoring and special assistance in reading content material and taking tests.

Preston County hired one half-time Special Education Coordinator, two Technology Integration Specialists, two academic coaches, and a Transition Coordinator. According to central office directors, the additional staff and the implementation of common planning time for co-teaching has been instrumental in the increased number of schools making AYP over the past two years.

County directors provided training on data disaggregation and principals are required to make a report to the county regarding their test analyses. Documentation on data related activities varied from school to school. Interviewees indicated that Rowlesburg Elementary/Middle, Terra Alta, and South Preston Middle schools have used data effectively. Preston County Schools continued to provide one elongated day each week for all schools to work on school improvement.

One action step planned by the county was to increase Response to Intervention (RTI) implementation through Grade 5. The most recent training on the RTI model was provided August 2008 by the West Virginia Department of Education for Grades K-5 teachers. The Special Education and Title I directors continue to work with the RTI State Coordinator and RESA based RTI Specialists.

3. **To lessen the achievement gap among all students and students who are found in the low socio-economic subgroup.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

WESTEST Data – Reading/Language Arts

The difference (gap) in percent proficient between the all students (AS) and the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup from 2004 through 2008 is depicted below.

Grade 3 – Gap decreased
Grade 4 – Gap decreased
Grade 5 – Gap increased
Grade 6 – Gap increased
Grade 7 – Gap increased
Grade 8 – Gap decreased
Grade 10 – Gap increased

An analysis of the percent proficient in reading/language arts revealed that the achievement gap between AS and SES subgroups decreased in Grades 3, 4, and 8 while the achievement gap increased in Grades 5, 6, 7, and 10.

Many of Preston County Schools had small SES cell sizes which eliminated those schools from this accountability standard.

The county held a summer academy on Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships (RRR - Daggett Model). Approximately 180 teachers and administrators attended the

academy. Those who attended were expected to take a leadership role and use the RRR toolkits with teacher teams at their home schools. They were given three days at the beginning of the school year to work with the toolkits which included data analysis. Each school submitted documentation on the activities undertaken.

The county hired two Technology Integration Specialists (TIS) two Academic Coaches, and a Special Education Coordinator who have been trained as trainers on the Acuity Benchmark System. The TISs attended the Technology Integration Specialist training provided by the West Virginia Department of Education. Two teams of teachers (total of 20) and a central office director attended the Teacher Leadership Institute over the past two summers. A number of principals from Preston County attended the West Virginia 21st Century Leadership Institute.

4. To improve writing skills of all students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

At this time, there was no consistency in the strategies or processes being used to improve writing scores for all students. Some schools were using the *Four Square* strategy while others (Terra Alta, Rowlesburg and Bruceton) instituted portions of the *Kansas Writing Strategy Model*. **Some schools did not have the Kansas Writing Strategy Model in place at all.** Preston County has written a Benedum Grant to fund the Kansas Writing Model and Literacy Training; however, they had not yet heard about the grant award.

The county provided Writing Roadmap 2 training to teachers in Grades 3-12, but it was not used last year (2007-2008). County administrators indicated that writing was a priority and they have had discussions with principals this year concerning the use of Writing Roadmap 2.

According to the action steps outlined in the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) report (June 2008), implementation of the Kansas Writing Strategy Model (Grades 3-12) is the responsibility of the assistant superintendent. The assistant superintendent failed to demonstrate that he was guiding the county's schools in implementing this model. Team interviews with county and school professional personnel indicated that instruction in writing was left up to the schools. The Team determined that direction and monitoring was lacking from the central office. Individual school reports indicated that instruction in writing was not being provided in some of the schools reviewed.

5. Increase the availability and usage of technology to increase academic performance throughout the district.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

The county invested in the technology infrastructure at Kingwood, Terra Alta, and Bruceton schools. Because of the technology improvements, Preston County will be

able to offer summer school for the first time. The county purchased Plato (K-12 skills development program and summer reading program) and Fast Forward (serves children with auditory learning deficits) computer programs. The county was considering purchasing MAP (Management of Academic Progress) for Grades K-2

Interviewees reported bandwidth problems with the Online Writing Assessment Pilot last spring.

To achieve the identified priorities, the Leadership Team will implement the following strategies to improve student performance.

- 1. Provide leadership and professional development on identifying essential curriculum, curriculum mapping and implementing pacing guides.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Three years ago the county worked with ETS-Pulliam to map the elementary curriculum and create assessments using the ETS-Pulliam Test Item Bank. The mapping/pacing guides and teacher-made assessments were aligned to earlier versions of the State standards and needed to be recreated using the revised West Virginia 21st Century Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). This work was begun in one Title I elementary school as the result of the school being identified for improvement.

All principals are expected to attend county sponsored professional development for teachers so they can provide instructional leadership. District administrator meetings were increased from one to two times a month. Book studies on school improvement were ongoing.

The county superintendent directed school personnel to use snow days for professional development.

- 2. Focus on 21st Century Content Standards and Objectives.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

RESA VII provided training on 21st Century Skills. According to the registration document approximately 25 people attended.

Two teams of teachers (total of 20) and a central office director attended the Teacher Leadership Institute over the past two summers. According to registration documents, seven principals from Preston County attended the West Virginia 21st Century Leadership Institute.

The Technology Integration Specialists and Academic Coaches were trained as trainers on the Acuity Benchmark System.

District administrators conducted individual school visits to monitor walkthroughs.

The county held a summer academy on Rigor, Relevance and Relationships (RRR - Daggett Model). The Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships Framework was being used to move students from knowledge acquisition to application in a 21st Century context. This program can be used to measure progress in adding rigor and relevance to instruction and selecting appropriate strategies to meet learner needs. This program was also chosen to address the need to develop relationships and foster the belief that all students can learn.

3. Increase integration of technology.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Preston County has hired two Technology Integration Specialists.

| ACTION STEPS | TIMELINE | RESPONSIBILITY | INDICATORS |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Provide a summer academy focused on rigor, relevance and relationships. | August 14, 15, 18, 19, and 20, 2008 | Title I Director | School teams submit action plans. Principals conduct Walk Throughs to ascertain implementation of action plans. |
| Provide follow-up to the academy throughout the school year. | Ongoing | District administrators | Professional development sessions Extended day activities |
| Administrators meet an additional day a month for professional development activities dedicated to meeting AYP. | August 2008 – May 2009 | Assistant Superintendent | Agendas Records of Walk-throughs and school level implementation. Improved school strategic plans. |
| District administrations conduct additional individual school improvement conferences with principals and school leaders. | October 15, 2008 February 19, 2009 | District administrators | Minutes Records of ongoing walk-throughs |
| Principals study and discuss <i>Annual Growth, Catch-up Growth</i> by Lynn Fielding | Monthly at Principals' meetings | Assistant Superintendent | Agendas Discussion notes |
| Increase Response to Intervention implementation through Grade 5. | Training August 22, 2008 with implementation to June 2009 | Special Education Director | Intervention and lesson plans. |
| Implement Positive Behavior supports | August 2008 – June 2009 | Special Education Behavior Specialist | Discipline records |
| Implement | August 2008 – June | PHS Assistant | Discipline records, |

| | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Advisor/Advisee at Preston High School | 2009 | Principal | suspension records, drop-out rate |
| Implement Kansas Writing strategies Grade 3 - 12 | September 2008 – June 2009 | Assistant Superintendent | Writing Assessments |
| Establish District Literacy Team | October 2008 | Title I Director | Agendas Minutes |
| Establish Parent Advisory Council | September 2008 – June 2009 | Title I Director | Agenda Minutes Revised Policy |
| Improved computer laboratories and place Technology Integration Specialists at schools on improvement. | August 2008 | Technology Coordinator | Computer and specialists in place. |
| Establish a progression of actions to decrease truancy rates. | August 2008 – June 2009 | Attendance Coordinator | Increase attendance rate |

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

SUMMARY

Preston County had instituted corrective action through the directors, academic coaches, and technology integration specialists. The county continues to fall short of total corrective action regarding curriculum and instruction in some of the schools. The individual school reviews determined that new requirements for 21st Century Content Standards and Objectives, the High Quality Standards, and program effectiveness were absent in many schools. These areas were not being monitored by the curriculum and instruction leader assigned to check program effectiveness.

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)

Preston County School District met the 95 percent minimum participation rate. One school (Central Preston Middle School) did not achieve the minimum participation rate in the special education subgroup.

| PARTICIPATION RATE 2008 | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-----|
| Mathematics – Secondary | Special Education (SE) | 94% |
| Reading – Secondary | Special Education (SE) | 94% |

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Special Education Director will provide increased guidance and monitoring in maintaining the required participation rate. A new principal has been assigned to Central Preston Middle School and will closely monitor policies and procedures. Administrators will institute a procedure to ensure that all the schools in the district maintain the required participation rate.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED.

Preston County School's did not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) for participation rate in the secondary subgroups in both mathematics and reading/language arts. The Assistant Superintendent is responsible for evaluating principals' performance. The county has put in place an additional day each month to meet with administrators for professional development activities dedicated to meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP). In one instance, the Special Education Director was given the responsibility of dealing with issues related to special education students and civil rights as well as WESTEST participation rate of special education students. The principal retired and a new principal was assigned to Central Preston Middle School.

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 14 indicated the Preston County School District attendance rate has remained above the State 90 percent requirement of for the last four reporting years.

Chart 14

| ATTENDANCE RATE | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Year | Attendance Rate |
| 2003-2004 | 98.4% * |
| 2004-2005 | 98.7% * |
| 2005-2006 | 98.5% |
| 2006-2007 | 98.1% |
| 2007-2008 | 97.7% |

* Data provided by Preston County

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.

Chart 15 showed that the Preston County School District graduation rate met the State requirement of 80 percent for the last four reporting years. The graduation rate data has declined and should be included in the 2008-2009 county and high school Five-Year Strategic Plans.

Chart 15

| GRADUATION RATE | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Year | Graduation Rate |
| 2003-2004 | 84.5% * |
| 2004-2005 | 82.3% * |
| 2005-2006 | 83.6% |
| 2006-2007 | 80.8% |
| 2007-2008 | 81.1% |

* Data reported by county

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Attendance Director worked with the school administrators to establish a progression of actions to decrease truancy rates, a leading indicator of potential dropouts, and revised the referral to make it user friendly. Additional actions taken by the Attendance Director include:

- Published 3 articles in the Preston County Journal about the attendance policy, the importance of good school attendance, responsibilities of parents, and what to do if you are having problems.
- Formed an attendance committee.
- Presented a principal training with DHHR and the Prosecuting Attorney's office to increase valid communication with Youth Services, Child Protection Services and the prosecutor's office.
- Scheduled monthly meetings at each school to meet with the Student Assistance Team, parents, and principals about truancy problems in the schools.
- Provided WVEIS training to staff that enter attendance information into the system to correct common errors.
- Attend Multi Disciplinary Team meetings for all students that are in the court system for truancy.

The Preston High School staff implemented an Advisor/Advisee program. By building stronger relationships with students, teachers hope to provide a more positive environment for students to learn and be successful.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED.

- The county Attendance Director wrote three articles for the *Preston County Journal*. Documentation included the original drafts; however, the newspaper articles were not available.
- A committee was formed that included all school principals, the county Attendance Director, and a contracted educator. The individual was commissioned to rewrite the county attendance policy. The committee met once this year (2008-2009) to review the current attendance policy and suggest revisions.
- Training was provided last year (2007-2008) at two separate meetings.
- The county Attendance Director provided a schedule of school-based meetings that began in October 2008. A decision was made to focus more attention on the high school where the needs are greatest.
- The RESA VII WVEIS Director provided principals training on October 19 and 29, 2008.
- The county Attendance Director attended 22 multi-disciplinary team meetings this year (2008-2009) regarding students in the court system for truancy. She has also appeared in court 64 times this year regarding juvenile issues.
- Central office administrators articulated the need to improve facilities, school culture, and teacher/student relationships because of the impact those have on academic progress. High expectations for all continued to be an issue. Acceptance of special education students in a collaborative setting was improving, but continued to be a concern. The county had an After-School Out Reach program that addressed school-community relationships and cultural issues and provided bus transportation. A new component of the program was Toddler Tuesdays and After-School Explorers. Preston High School implemented the LINKS program through High Schools that Work which addresses social issues and goal setting that provide mentors who follow at-risk students through high school.

SECTION II

DATA ANALYSIS

Chart 16 demonstrated the number of Advanced Placement (AP) courses, honors courses, and college credit courses offered in Preston County's high school for the 2007-2008 school year as reported by the county.

Chart 16

| NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2007-2008 | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| High School | Number of AP Courses Offered | Number of Honors Courses Offered | Number of College Credit Courses Offered |
| Preston High School | 5 * | 5 * | 8 * |

* Data reported by county

Chart 16-A

| NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2008-2009 | | | |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| High School | Number of AP Courses Offered | Number of Honors Courses Offered | Number of College Credit Courses Offered |
| Preston High School | 8 | 7 | 6 |

* Data reported by county

Preston County School District offered five Advanced Placement (AP) courses, five honors courses, and eight college credit courses for a total of 18 higher level courses offered in Preston County's high school for the 2007-2008 school year. The available courses are listed below.

2007-2008

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses *

Calculus
Statistics
Studio Art
Chemistry
Physics

2008-2009

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses *

AP Calculus
AP Calculus Lab
AP Calculus BC
AP Statistics
AP Statistics Lab
AP Chemistry
AP Chemistry Lab
AP Physics B

Honors Courses *

English 10
English 11
CATS 9
History 9
History 10

Honors Courses *

OBJ ORNTLGN
Algebra II
ENG LA 101
ENG LA 111
PHYSSCI 9

Dual Credit Courses *

WVED Algebra
WVED Trigonometry
Music Appreciation
English 104
Literature – Upper Level
Advanced Human Anatomy
History 108
Political Science 1103

Dual Credit Courses *

Political Science
History 108
WWEB Algebra
Human Anatomy and Physiology
WWEB Trigonometry
English 104
Music Appreciation/History

* Data reported by Preston County

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

The 2008-2009 advanced courses are listed above in red print.

Chart 17 showed the percentage of Advanced Placement (AP) test takers increased from 2002-2003 to 2004-2005 in both grades 11 and 12. Both grades decreased to a very low percentage in 2005-2006 and increased in Grade 12 in 2006-2007. The percentage of 11th grade test takers with a score of three or higher increased from 66.7 percent in 2002-2003 to 100 percent in 2004-2005. Grade 12 test takers with a score of three or higher increased from 89.7 percent in 2002-2003 to 100 percent in 2005-2006 and decreased to 74 percent in 2006-2007.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Current data not available.

Chart 17

| ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP) TEST TAKERS (COLLEGE BOARD) | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Preston County | 2002-2003 | 2003-2004 | 2004-2005 | 2005-2006 | 2006-2007 |
| 10 th Grade Test Takers (%) | 0.0 | 0.00 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 11 th Grade Test Takers (%) | 0.8 | 1.60 | 1.6 | 0.0 | 3% * |
| 12 th Grade Test Takers (%) | 8.6 | 9.20 | 12.5 | 1.3 | 9.1% * |
| 10 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher | 0.0 | 0.00 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 11 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher | 66.7 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 0.0 | 0.0 |
| 12 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher | 89.7 | 51.60 | 85.7 | 100.0 | 74% * |

* Data reported by Preston County

The high school graduate overall college going rate for Preston County was 49.0 percent compared to the State's overall college going rate of 58.3 percent as presented in Chart 18.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Current data not available.

Chart 18

| ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2006 | | |
|---|--|--|
| | Number of High School Graduates 2005-06 | Overall College Going Rate Percentage |
| State | 17,441 | 58.3% |
| Preston | 290 | 49.0% |

Source: West Virginia College Going Rates By County and High School Fall 2006, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

Preston County's percentage of students enrolled in any developmental course(s) at 14.2 percent was measurably less than the State's percentage (34.1 percent) of students taking developmental courses (Chart 19). The percentage of Preston County's high school graduates enrolled in Developmental Mathematics was 12.8 percent compared to 30.3 percent for West Virginia and 4.3 percent enrolled in Developmental English compared to 15.6 percent for West Virginia.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Current data not available.

Chart 19

| HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN WV PUBLIC COLLEGES FALL 2005 | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| | % in Developmental Mathematics | % in Developmental English | % in Any Developmental Course(s) |
| State | 30.3% | 15.6% | 34.1% |
| Preston County | 12.8% | 4.3% | 14.2% |

Source: Performance of High School Graduates Enrolled in Public Colleges and Universities, Fall 2005. (December 2006) West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Current data not available.

SECTION III

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

7.1. CURRICULUM

7.1.9. Programs of study. Programs of study are provided in grades K-12 as listed in Policy 2510 for elementary, middle, and high school levels, including career clusters and majors and an opportunity to examine a system of career clusters in grades 5-8 and to select a career cluster to explore in grades 9 and 10. (Policy 2510; Policy 2520)

Art, music and physical education were offered at all schools. Although music was offered to all schools, general music was not taught at Fellowsville Elementary School by a music specialist as per the principal's request. General music was provided by regular classroom teachers certified in elementary education at Fellowsville Elementary.

Programs of study were not consistent at the middle schools. For example, Home Economics was offered at South Preston Middle and West Preston Middle Schools, while Tech Ed. was offered at the East Preston Schools. These programs will phase out at the respective schools with the retirement of the teachers who provide the program. This is not due to a lack of need for the programs in the middle schools, but due to a lack of funds to continue to offer the programs.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Preston County Schools has hired an additional music teacher. All elementary and middle schools are served by an art, music, and physical education specialist.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED.

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)

Only Grade 9 students attended high school the first day of the school year. Grades 10, 11, and 12 did not report to school. This did not allow equal access to the minimum 180 instructional days required.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

All Preston High School students attended the first day of the 2008-2009 school year. An Advisor/Advisee program has been implemented to address the social emotional needs of all students including the incoming Grade 9 students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED.

7.2. STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

7.2.1. County and School electronic strategic improvement plans. An electronic county strategic improvement plan and an electronic school strategic improvement plan are established, implemented, and reviewed annually. Each respective plan shall be a five-year plan that includes the mission and goals of the school or school system to improve student or school system performance or progress. The plan shall be revised annually in each area in which the school or system is below the standard on the annual performance measures.

The county Five-Year Strategic Plan did an adequate job of analyzing data and identifying areas of need. County office staff reported that the county team meets four times a year to review the plan.

The plan identified three goals that focused on increasing achievement in English/language arts, mathematics, and the use of technology. Baseline data were identified for each goal and objective with targets for the next five years. The actual data compared to the targets (pages 9-10 of the plan) had not been updated in the plan.

The plan identified 20 high yield strategies. The high yield strategies multi-year implementation section (page 16 of the plan) needed to be completed. The plan needed to be reviewed and updated and more effectively align to the county staff development plan and various county initiatives with the Five-Year Strategic Plan.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The high yield section of the strategic plan is no longer required in strategic plans by WVDE. Preston County has identified the following strategies as priorities to strengthen improvement efforts.

- 1. Provide leadership and professional development on identifying essential curriculum, curriculum mapping and implementing pacing guides.**
- 2. Focus on 21st Century content standards and objectives.**
- 3. Increase integration of technology.**

Related to student achievement, the reason the district was identified for improvement, Preston County identified several areas of need.

- Special education subgroup at the elementary level in reading and mathematics.
- Special education subgroup at the middle level in reading and mathematics.
- Special education subgroup at the high school level in reading.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION IN PROCESS.

The plan contained substantial gaps in the data analysis section. The goals, objectives and actions of the plan also need revision to adequately address the areas for improvement as identified by OEPA, and the data analysis conclusions. The conciseness and clarity of the strategic plan would also be improved by correcting formatting errors and gaps in the online submission of the core plan.

Numerous contacts have been made with Preston County Central Office staff by WVDE Office of Leadership Development between November 2008-January 2009 to offer assistance with the use of the planning tool as well as the content of the strategic plan. At the time of this report, Preston County is in the process of revising the strategic plan in response to the WVDE evaluation. WVDE staff will be meeting face-to-face with a representative of the Preston County Central Office during the week of January 26, 2009 to assist with revisions and formatting issues.

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)

It was reported that the central office was not active in the data analysis process at the schools. The assistant superintendent explained that this was more of a school based process. Given the low test scores in the schools, it is imperative that the central office staff play an integral role in the data disaggregation, dissemination, and monitoring progress.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The district provided a School Leadership Academy on August 14 and 15, 2008. Specific details are listed in the chart beginning on page 13. School leadership teams were provided planning tool kits and three additional days at the beginning of the school year to analyze data and use the information to plan for the 2008-2009 school year. The County requested assistance in strategic planning from WVDE. Following their suggestion, a strategic planning workshop was provided on September 17, 2008. District administrations will conduct additional individual

school improvement conferences with principals and school leaders on October 15, 2008 and February 19, 2009. Benchmark assessments and action plans will be priority topics of discussion.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED.

Some schools used data effectively while others needed continued training/monitoring.

County administrators expressed a need for additional training and monitoring of the teachers' use of data to form instruction. They identified a lack of interventions/re-teaching based on student needs.

County directors (Special Education and Title I) provided training on data disaggregation. Principals are required to make a report to the county regarding their test analyses. Documentation on data related activities varied from school to school. Interviewees indicated that Rowlesburg Elementary/Middle, Terra Alta, and South Preston Middle Schools used data effectively. Preston County Schools provides one elongated day each week for all schools to work on school improvement issues.

The county held a summer academy on Rigor, Relevance, and Relationships (RRR - Daggett Model). Staff were given three days at the beginning of the school year to work with the RRR toolkits which included data analysis. Each school submitted documentation on the activities undertaken.

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)

Finance

In the audit of Preston County Schools, the Team noted the following conditions.

The 2007 Form 11-10-10 and related Audit Report had not yet been completed. Discussion with the treasurer indicated that the 11-10-10 form was nearly complete. The West Virginia Auditors Office has scheduled the audit to be performed in June 2008. The 11-10-10 was required to be completed by September 30, 2007 and the Audit Report was due by March 31, 2008. The Team reviewed the 2006 Audit Report in lieu of the

2007 report. The Step 7 plan had been approved and funds were being expended in accordance with the plan.

The Fund Balance had increased from Fiscal Year 2004 through Fiscal Year 2007 (FY 2004 (\$469,397) FY 2005 (\$34,308) FY 2006 \$294,212). The Fund Balance for FY 2007 was not yet available. The county has gone from a negative fund balance to a positive balance.

The Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2006 noted the following deficiencies:

- 06-01 Purchase order system not adequate
- 06-02 Budget and expenditures over budget
- 06-03 Inadequate Internal Controls at individual schools
- 06-04 Fixed Asset Inventory not maintained
- 06-05 Debt Service Fund not recorded
- 06-06 Inaccuracies in financial statements

The FY 2005 Audit Report listed eight deficiencies and four of them were shown as having been corrected in the FY 2006 Audit Report. Discussion with the treasurer indicated that the six FY 2006 deficiencies were in the process of being corrected and several had already been corrected.

Individual school audit reports for Fiscal Year 2007 indicated a thorough review and areas for improvement. Board of Education reports were being provided as required, and individual school reports were being submitted.

Recommendations

1. Final Computations for Public Support Programs reported that in Fiscal Year 2009, the Preston County Board of Education is projected to be over formula by six professional personnel and over formula by 19 service personnel. Funding for professional staffing will be increased due to recent changes in the state aid formula that are phased in over the next five years. Funding for much of the overage in service personnel is provided by the food service program. The county should closely monitor staffing to stay within state aid formula funding
2. Unreserved funds. Preston County has been increasing their unreserved fund balance in the past few years. The county should continue efforts to improve their unreserved fund balance to provide a safety cushion for unexpected future contingencies.
3. The 2005 and 2006 Audit Reports noted that cash on the financial statements did not reconcile to WVEIS and bank records by minor dollar amounts. While the Team noted that the Finance Office reconciles its bank statements monthly, procedures should be strengthened to maintain a daily cash ledger and to reconcile the bank balance to WVEIS each month. The treasurer agreed with this and will work with other nearby county treasurers to model their processes.
4. County boards of education are required to prepare and publish financial statements for each fiscal year ending June 30 by September 30 and to have those financial statements audited by an independent accounting agency by March 31 of

the year following the close of the fiscal year. Preston County should take steps to comply with these requirements.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Preston County Schools has contracted with a highly respected, retired school treasurer recommended by the WVDE School Finance office. He has provided assistance and will continue to serve as mentor to the district treasurer providing direction and assistance as needed to the district treasurer.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE.

Annual Financial Statements

It was noted that the financial statements of the Preston County Board of Education for the fiscal years ended June 30, 2007 and 2008 were not prepared and published within ninety days after the end of the fiscal year. The complete set of required financial statements for both years, which includes the government-wide statements, the fund basis statements, management's discussion and analysis, and the note disclosures, were not completed until February 2009.

W.Va. Code §18-9-3a states that: "The county board of every county, within ninety days after the beginning of each fiscal year shall prepare on a form to be prescribed by the State Tax Commissioner and the State Superintendent of Free Schools, and cause to be published a statement revealing: (a) The receipts and expenditures of the board during the previous fiscal year arranged under descriptive headings; (b) the name of each firm, corporation, and person who received more than two hundred fifty dollars in the aggregate from all funds during the previous fiscal year, together with the aggregate amount received from all funds and the purpose for which paid: . . . and (c) all debts of the board, the purpose for which each debt was contracted, its due date, and to what date the interest thereon has been paid. Such statement shall be published as a Class I-O legal advertisement in compliance with the provisions of article three, chapter fifty-nine of this code, and the publication area for such publication shall be the county. " . . .

The State Auditor's Office of Chief Inspector did conduct an audit of the fund basis statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007, and issued a report dated October 20, 2008. In that report, the auditor noted several serious shortcomings and as a result, expressed an "adverse" opinion stating that because of these matters, the Board's financial statements did not present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, each major fund, and the remaining fund information of the Board. These matters included:

- The financial statements did not include the government-wide financial statements.
- The Board did not present capital assets.

- The Board did not report operating leases for various vehicles and other equipment.
- The Board did not report taxes receivable and deferred taxes.
- The notes to the financial statements were incomplete and inaccurate.
- The Board did not include required schedules of budget to actual comparisons or the Statement of Fiduciary Net Assets.
- The beginning balance reported on the Schedule of Changes in school activities did not agree with the prior year ending balances and one school is reported to have a decrease during the year with not reported revenues and expenditures
- The Board's fund financial statements were not properly footed and in balance

Furthermore, during the audit, the State Auditor's Office noted the following instances of noncompliance regarding the annual financial statements:

- The Preston County Board of Education did not properly reconcile the financial statements with other reports and supporting documentation and did not present financial statements properly. Numbers presented on the financial statement were not reasonable and not supported with adequate documentation. Numerous instances were noted in which the financial statements provided were not prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).
- A summary of the specific instances of noncompliance noted in the report (which the auditor noted was not intended to be a complete list), were:
 - Government-Wide Financial Statements – Were not prepared and not available for audit as of August 19, 2008.
 - Fund Level Financial Statements – material adjustments made to beginning fund balances.
 - IRP Fees and Public Utility – Revenues reported did not agree with actual confirmed amounts by differences that were both material and unreasonable.
 - Negative Revenue – negative revenue from other local sources of \$1,959,966 reported.
 - State and Federal Revenue Confirmations – Auditors were unable to reconcile revenues reported by the Board with the amounts confirmed as remitted through the State's accounting system.
 - Salaries Payable and Related Liabilities – Large discrepancy between amount reported as salaries and related payables on the Board's financial statements and amounts reflected in the gross payroll records.
 - Cash – cash reconciliation prepared by the Board was insufficient.
 - State Income Taxes Payable – Unexplained differences in the amount of state income taxes reported as payable.

- Property Taxes – The Board did not report as taxes receivable the amounts collected by the sheriff in June, but not yet received, and the schedule provided by the Board indicated improper calculation and a lack of understanding of taxes receivable.
 - Workers' Compensation – The Board reported a receivable of \$222,826, which could not be confirmed.
 - Receivables – Special Revenue Fund – Overstatement of revenues receivable by \$397,610.
 - Capital Assets – No capital assets were reported for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007, whereas capital assets of \$84 million were reported in the previous fiscal year's financial statements.
 - Operating Leases – No operating leases were reported for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007, whereas operating leases payable of \$152,776 were reported at June 30, 2006.
 - Transfers – No amount was reported as a transfer in the financial statements as the Board's contribution to the Child Nutrition Fund, whereas the child nutrition reports submitted to the WVDE indicate a transfer of \$527,131.
 - Notes to the Financial Statements – The notes to the financial statements were both incomplete and incorrect.
 - Schedule of Changes in School Activity Funds – The beginning balances reported for the individual school activity funds did not agree with the ending balances of the previous year with no explanation for the differences.
 - Other Missing Schedules or Statements – The financial statements failed to include the schedules of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance – budget and actual for any of the Board's funds or the Statement of Fiduciary Net Assets – Fiduciary Funds.
- Preston County Board of Education employees or management did not possess the requisite amount of skills and/or knowledge necessary to prevent, detect and correct a material misstatement in the financial statements prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
 - The Board did not provide documentation related to pledged collateral at the bank.

Audit Corrective Action Plan

It was noted during the review that a corrective action plan addressing the findings noted by the State Auditor's Office in its audit report of the Preston County Board for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007 could not be located by the staff of Preston County Board of Education. The Single Audit Act of 1984 requires audited agencies to provide responses to any findings noted by an auditor so that they may be included in the audit report, or prepare and submit a separate report reflecting those responses and the corrective actions the agency intends to take to correct any findings noted.

Internal Control Weaknesses

The Board contracted with an independent certified public accounting (CPA) firm on December 1, 2008 to assist management with the preparation of the financial statements, note disclosures and management's discussion and analysis for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008. As noted in a preceding paragraph, those unaudited financial statements were completed in February 2009. The firm was not engaged to conduct an audit of the financial statements, and therefore, did not express any form of assurance on the accuracy of those statements. The State Auditor's Office of Chief Inspector intends to conduct the audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2008 as soon as workload permits.

During its work in preparing the financial statements, the CPA firm noted several internal control weaknesses, which were described in a letter to management, dated February 9, 2009, and provided recommendations regarding correction of the weaknesses to enhance the Board's internal control structure and improve the financial reporting process. These weaknesses and the recommendations included:

- **Grant Ledgers** - Grant ledgers are used to track specific receipts, disbursements, and cash balances of individual grants and are a key component of an internal control system. The grant ledgers are a critical component in ensuring compliance with grant awards and for determining that grant funds are spent properly, timely, and accurately. The following issues regarding the grant ledgers were noted:
 - Grant ledgers are not being reconciled timely and accurately to the accounting system and underlying supporting documentation.
 - Based upon inquiry with various department directors, it appeared that the department directors were not receiving timely reports on the status of their respective grants.
 - Several incorrect postings were noted in the grant ledgers which were corrected by the Board's subcontractor.
 - Several projects were noted within the grant ledgers for which a budget had not been established in the grant ledger.
 - Several projects were noted which needed budget lines transferred to the appropriate expenditure lines in the grant ledgers.
 - Expenditures in the grant ledgers, if allowable and budgeted, were not being charged to the oldest grants first.
 - The grant ledgers contained many old grant projects and grant project identification numbers that appeared to have not been closed out properly in the accounting system.

The CPA firm recommended that management establish policies and procedures to ensure grant ledgers are reconciled monthly to the accounting system and underlying supporting documentation. The firm further recommended that department heads be provided monthly reports of their specific grant awards so that adequate monitoring can be conducted. Evidence of the monthly

reconciliation should be documented and reviewed by someone independent of the individual who performs the reconciliation.

- **Grants Receivable/Drawdowns** - The Board receives a significant amount of federal and state grant awards from various sources. These grants have varying grant conditions and most require the Board to expend the funds prior to the drawdown of the grant funds from the grantor agency. In most cases, the Board will expend an allowable cost of the grant which creates a grants receivable and then the Board will draw (or request) funds to cover the expenditures from the grantor agency. A proper internal control structure should be established to ensure the timely draw (request) of funds so that the Board ensures that funds are liquidated in accordance with the grant conditions. Furthermore, the timely draw (request) of funds assists the Board in maintaining a healthy cash balance and liquid asset.

As of June 30, 2008, the grants receivable balance exceeded \$1.7 million. This amount appeared to be excessive, indicating a lack of timely draw downs.

The CPA firm recommended that management establish policies and procedures to ensure that grant funds are drawn in a timely and accurate manner.

- **Approved Grant Agreements** - Currently the grant ledgers contain over \$550,000 of expenditures charged to the projects for the Title One, Title Two, and the Reading First federal grants for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009. Upon review of approved grant awards, it appears that the Board does not have an approved grant award for these projects as of December 31, 2008. While this may be only a technicality, it could pose a significant risk to the Board receiving timely and accurate reimbursement for federal expenditures.

The CPA firm recommended that management contact the West Virginia Department of Education and resolve the issues on the outstanding grant awards immediately.

- **Grant Cash Account** - When Child Nutrition Cluster grant awards are drawn, they are deposited via ACH into a financial institution bank account in the name of the Board which is not the general operating account. Upon first review, it was noted that the balance was growing in this account and not being transferred to the Board's operating checking account. Transfers were not being made from this account to the Board's operating account in a timely manner. Furthermore, this account had not been established in the Board's accounting system (WVEIS) and had not been reconciled.

The CPA firm recommended that the Board establish policies and procedures to ensure that all cash accounts are established in the accounting system in a timely manner and reconciled the proper underlying supporting documentation. Furthermore, monies should be transferred timely and invested in accordance with the Board's policies and procedures.

- **Published Financial Statement Report** - Section 3a of Article 9, Chapter 18 of the West Virginia State Code requires the county board of education, within sixty days after the beginning of the fiscal year, to prepare on a prescribed form a statement revealing receipts and expenditures of the Board during the previous fiscal year arranged under descriptive headings. The Board did not file this report in accordance with West Virginia State Code for the year ended June 30, 2008. The CPA firm recommended that management publish the required information in accordance with West Virginia State Code.
- **Surety Bonds** - Section 6 of Article 9, Chapter 18 of the West Virginia State Code requires the Treasurer to execute a bond of faithful performance of his/her duty. Upon discussion with management and review, it appeared that the Board did not have surety bonding in place as of June 30, 2008. Subsequent to the release of the State Auditor's Office audit report, surety bonding was put in place.

The CPA firm recommended that management ensure that surety bonding is completed annually.

- **Pledged Collateral at Depositories** - Section 6 of Article 9, Chapter 18 of the West Virginia State Code requires the Board's depositories to provide bond to cover the maximum amount to be deposited at any one time or other security as permitted under the code. As of June 30, 2008, the Board was not adequately collateralized and was in noncompliance with this requirement. Subsequent to the release of the State Auditor's Office audit report, pledged collateral from the Board's depositories was completed.

The CPA firm recommended that management continue to monitor the amount of pledged collateral to ensure compliance with West Virginia State Code.

- **Capital Assets** - Proper internal control procedures require the Board to establish safeguards including a tracking system to protect assets from theft, loss, or damage. Furthermore, accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America requires the Board to establish internal controls to account for the capital asset activity and related depreciation which is to be reported in the district wide financial statements.

It was noted that the Board had not maintained a perpetual capital asset inventory and did not appear to be tagging and accounting for capital assets acquired or disposed of during the year end. Furthermore, the capital assets software in WVEIS was not being updated timely and contained numerous duplicate assets that were required to be adjusted to rely on the balances. In addition, no disposals or additions were accounted for in the WVEIS capital asset software.

The CPA firm recommended that management establish policies and procedures to ensure that capital assets are accounted for, safeguarded, and tracked for financial reporting and internal control purposes. Furthermore, management

should ensure a perpetual inventory system is maintained and that all capital asset additions and disposals are timely and accurately reported. Furthermore, the Board should ensure that a capital asset inventory is performed at least on a bi-annual basis and all missing assets, if any, properly investigated and resolved.

- **Purchase Orders** - Purchase orders are used in an internal control structure to monitor the Board's commitment of funds and to ensure that the Board does not over obligate available resources and funds. In a proper internal control structure, an open purchase order report should be reviewed monthly by someone knowledgeable of the purchase orders and any changes made at that time. Upon review of the open purchase order by age, there were several purchase orders over 500 days old that were still showing as open.

The CPA firm recommended that management establish policies and procedures to ensure that open purchase orders are reviewed on a monthly basis and make the appropriate changes at that time.

- **General Organization** - While completing the engagement, the CPA firm noted a lack of general organization of the financial records of the Board. For example, certain file cabinets contained multiple years of various unrelated data with no apparent filing consistency. Furthermore, there were numerous boxes with financial records in various locations of the Board's office and no central storage, tracking or safeguarding of the data.

The CPA recommended that management establish a formalized filing system which ensures the safeguarding of all financial data in a systematic and accurate manner. Furthermore, a tracking system of older records and where records are stored should be maintained and management should consider only storing two years of previous year's records and the current year records in the day to day business offices. In addition, management should ensure that documents are retained in accordance with West Virginia State Code.

Excess Levy

It was noted during the review that the voters of Preston County authorized the Board, at a special election held on November 7, 2006, to impose an excess levy for the three year period of July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2010 to provide additional funds, in the amount of \$1,500,000 per year, for the maintenance and upkeep of facilities and grounds. The levy order specified the amounts that were to be expended on each school each year.

Based on a review of financial reports for fiscal year 2008, it was noted that only \$259,152 of the levy proceeds were expended at various schools during the year, leaving a balance of \$1,240,848 unexpended for the year. The amounts specified by the levy order and the amounts expended were:

**Preston County Excess Levy Information
from 2008 General Ledger Reports**

| School Name | Levy Order Amount per year | Expenditures | Difference |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Aurora | 150,000.00 | 6,371.52 | 143,628.48 |
| Rowlesburg | 65,000.00 | 308.70 | 64,691.30 |
| Bruceton | 235,000.00 | 52,624.22 | 182,375.78 |
| Terra Alta/East Preston | 300,000.00 | 1,812.55 | 298,187.45 |
| Fellowsville | 45,000.00 | 36,958.42 | 8,041.58 |
| Kingwood Elementary | 80,000.00 | 34,605.45 | 45,394.55 |
| Tunnelton Elementary | 50,000.00 | 63.45 | 49,936.55 |
| Valley | 100,000.00 | 7,995.07 | 92,004.93 |
| Central Preston | 75,000.00 | 175.42 | 74,824.58 |
| South Preston | 75,000.00 | 47,462.55 | 27,537.45 |
| West Preston | 70,000.00 | 3,166.15 | 66,833.85 |
| Preston High | 210,000.00 | 41,208.66 | 168,791.34 |
| County | 45,000.00 | 26,400.00 | 18,600.00 |
| Total | 1,500,000.00 | 259,152.16 | 1,240,847.84 |

Budget Approval Process

It was noted during the review that the notice of the public hearing regarding the proposed budget for the 2008-09 year was not published at least 10 days prior to the budget hearing. Notices of the hearing and copies of the proposed budget were published on April 30, 2008 and May 5, 2008, however the public hearing was held on May 1, 2008. County boards are required to publish a notice of the public hearing at least 10 days prior to the hearing.

Purchase Orders and Accounts Payable Process

It was noted during a review of the purchase order and subsequent payment process that purchase orders are issued without an authorized signature and adequate internal controls are lacking. Specifically, requisitions are turned into purchase orders, printed and distributed to the appropriate persons for ordering without signature and one person is in charge of creating the purchase order, matching invoices, and creating vendor payments.

WVDE Policy 8200, the Purchasing Policies and Procedures Manual for Local Educational Agencies states that: "LEAs are required to maintain a requisition and purchase order system on the West Virginia Educational Information System (WVEIS) whereas an approved, pre-numbered purchased order is issued to the successful vendor

prior to an order for a commodity or service being placed." The policy also states that "A copy of each approved purchase order must be retained for file. The file copy may be retained either on paper, or electronically if the original approval signatures are available for subsequent review." The policy further states that "The Chief School Business Official has the overall responsibility for ensuring that funds are available for the purchase and that they have been properly budgeted and encumbered."

The current process used by the Preston County Board of Education is that a requisition is entered into WVEIS by support staff located throughout the system. These requisitions are then printed and routed to the appropriate parties for approval. For example a Title I requisition is routed to the Title I Director for signature and then to the superintendent for signature. After the appropriate signatures are obtained, the requisition is returned to the accounts payable supervisor, who then turns the requisition into a purchase order. The purchase order is printed and distributed to the appropriate persons for ordering. Once items are received, the receiving report is forwarded to the accounts payable supervisor, who matches the purchase order to the invoice and processes payment to the vendor.

At no time during this process is a printed purchase order actually reviewed or approved by either the superintendent and/or the chief school business official before it is issued. Furthermore, there does not appear to be any procedures in place which would preclude or detect errors or alterations to a purchase order, which could result in such errors or unauthorized purchases to go undetected. Procedures should be revised to segregate duties within the accounts payable process so that one person is not solely responsible for the printing of purchase orders, matching invoices and receiving reports upon receipt, and processing payments.

Payment for Commodities or Services

It was noted during the review that the following payments had been made to vendors prior to the services being performed or the commodities being delivered:

- Check Number 85282, in the amount of \$3,600, was issued to Larmat Construction Company on June 30, 2008 as a deposit for construction work, with the supporting documentation for payment being a bid proposal rather than an invoice.
- Check Number 82853 was issued to Three Rivers Contracting on December 6, 2007, as payment prior to the contractor starting the job, with the supporting documentation being a job estimate/bid.
- Check Number 82982, in the amount of \$13,962.50, was issued to Jack D. Forman Trucking as a 50% down payment prior to the merchandise being delivered.

W.Va. Code §12-3-18 and State Board Policy 8200 precludes governmental entities for paying for services rendered or materials furnished before the services are rendered or the materials furnished. WV Code §12-3-18 states that:

“It shall be unlawful for any county court [county commission], board of education or the council or a municipal corporation, or any other body charged with the administration of the fiscal affairs of any county, school district, independent school district, or municipality, to pay any claim for services rendered or materials furnished unless an itemized account therefore is filed by the claimant covering the claim. Such account shall be itemized in detail, and shall show, among other things, the following: If the claim is for services, it shall show the kind of service, the dates when same was performed and the name of the person performing it; if the claim is for materials or supplies furnished, the claim shall show in detail the kind of material or supplies furnished, the quantity, dates of delivery, and to whom delivered; . . .”

Disbursement of Funds Prior to Authorization

It was noted during the review that accounts payable checks are written and distributed to vendors on a weekly basis. These checks are not presented to the Board for its approval until after the checks are actually distributed. Furthermore, the reports provided to the board for approval are not sufficiently detailed for readers to understand what goods/services are being purchased. WV Code §12-3-18 requires all claims against a local governing body for payment of services rendered or materials furnished be approved by the governing body before payments are made. The statute requires the president or presiding officer of the governing body allowing the claims to endorse on all accounts allowed for payment the words “allowed and payment authorized,” together with the date of the allowance and signature.

Payroll Process

During testing of direct deposits for payroll the following items were noted:

- On November 5, 2007, a payroll check was issued to a substitute teacher in the amount of \$1,318.15. On November 7th, the teacher notified the Finance Department that he believed a mistake had occurred and that he was overpaid for the number of days worked. Since this was a direct deposit into the teacher's personal checking account, the individual reimbursed the money back to the board on November 13, 2007. The teacher's actual net check should have been for \$193.54, which was paid by check after he notified the board.

Apparently, this particular teacher had retired at the end of the previous year, but the assignment for the position had not been deactivated. When payment for the substitute work was initiated, his previous assignment was utilized instead of his substitute status assignment. If it were not for the integrity of this particular individual, the Board would have overpaid the employee and the error could have gone unnoticed. Procedures should be implemented to ensure that assignments

are promptly updated upon retirement or termination to preclude this type of error from occurring in the future.

- The deferred pay checks scheduled for release on July 5, 2007 were inadvertently released on June 26, 2007. It is normal and customary for boards of education to actually process the payroll for those who elect to defer a portion of their annual salary until the “summer months” prior to June 30 so that the expense is recorded in the appropriate fiscal year, but the actual distribution of the payments are to be held until the scheduled release dates in July and August. Care should be exercised to preclude the inadvertent early release of salary payments from occurring in the future. The Board should consider making arrangements with its banking institution to implement procedures whereby the payment dates are somehow confirmed via fax or phone, or establish predetermined release dates.

Bank Reconciliations

Previous audit reports and OEPA reports have noted that although monthly bank reconciliations are being completed, the balances were not being reconciled to the account balances reflected in the financial accounting system maintained on the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). Without this crucial reconciliation step, bank reconciliations do not effectively monitor and safeguard cash assets of the board from misstatements and/or misappropriations.

- During this review, the reviewer found that on August 3, 2007 direct deposits were deducted from the Board’s bank account which agreed to the direct deposit check register. This register included a direct deposit to an employee in the amount of \$1,281.97, who apparently had not provided the appropriate routing numbers for his personal bank account. Accordingly, the funds were never transferred to the employee’s bank account, although the payment was deducted from the Board’s bank account. This issue was resolved in September 2007. An additional \$1,281.97 was deducted from the Board’s bank account and transferred to the employee’s bank account on September 6, 2007.

However, no evidence could be found where the bank had re-deposited the original amount of the payment into the Board’s bank account, thereby causing the payment to be deducted twice for the one check. If a complete bank reconciliation (cash reconciliation) process, including reconciling the bank statement with the accounting records in WVEIS, had been completed, this overpayment would have been detected and resolved in a timely manner. As it currently stands, the Board may be “out” the funds, since more than one year has passed since the incident occurred.

The reviewer noted that beginning in August 2008, complete cash reconciliations are being performed. There is a minor discrepancy of \$196.87 that has been carried forward since August and another minor discrepancy of \$240.35, which occurred in December that the staff is working to resolve.

- It was further noted that the Board maintain several different bank accounts, but has assigned only one general ledger account number in WVEIS to account for the transactions in all bank accounts. Every bank account should be assigned a separate general ledger account in WVEIS. This would simplify the reconciliation process and make it easier to determine in which account an error has occurred when discrepancies are noted.

Finance Policies

It was noted during the review that the Board's finance policies have not been updated for some time. The majority of the policies provided to the OEPA Team were dated 1984 or 2000. All finance policies should be reviewed periodically and updated as necessary to ensure that they are current and provide guidance for all current financial activities.

Credit Card Purchases

It was further noted during the review that although vendor credit cards are used for fuel purchases, the Board did not have a policy in place to allow their use, which is a violation of State Board Policy 8200. Section 27.1.2 of the policy states that: "A LEA may establish by board policy a credit card program as an alternative payment method when making purchases of commodities and services, or for the payment of authorized travel expenses." Section 27.2.3 further states that: "A vendor issued credit card can generally be used only for purchases from that particular vendor or related vendors. Normally, there are very few restrictions as to the type of merchandise that can be purchased using the card, therefore, **stringent controls must also be maintained over who has access to the card and the types of purchases that are made.**" (Emphasis added)

If the Board intends to continue using credit cards for the purchase of fuel or other commodities, it needs to establish a Board policy to establish adequate internal controls.

Signatures on Checks

It was noted during the review that payroll checks were issued on November 20, 2008 with the signature of the treasurer. This individual was suspended by the Board on November 14, 2008, and the assistant superintendent named as interim treasurer. This matter has subsequently been corrected with the assistant superintendent's signature appearing on all checks issued by the Board since November 20, 2008.

Bonding of Treasurer, Superintendent and Board President

It was noted during the review that the bond of the superintendent, expired on July 1, 2008 and was not renewed until November 18, 2008 at the time that the bond for the assistant superintendent was obtained. It was also noted that the board president has been board president since July 3, 2006, but he was not bonded until November 18, 2008. Furthermore, no evidence was found to show that the current bonds have been recorded at the county courthouse, as required by W.Va. Code §6-2-12.

W.Va. Code § 6-2-10 requires, among others, that the superintendent of schools provide a bond, and State Board Policy 8100 specifies that faithful performance and public officials bonds are required for the president of the county board, the superintendent of schools, and the treasurer.

Underpayment of Treasurer's Salary

It was noted during the review that the Board's adopted salary schedule for the 2008-09 year shows that the treasurer's salary for year to be \$73,820.00, whereas the schedule of salary payments shows that the treasurer will be actually paid only \$73,500.00 by the end of the year. Unless corrective action is taken, the treasurer will most likely be underpaid by \$320.00 for the year.

Long Term Substitutes and Retirement

The OEPA Team found that persons hired as "long-term substitutes" by the Preston County Board of Education were included in the West Virginia Teachers Retirement Systems. After discussions with the West Virginia Retirement Board, the Team confirmed that those persons are NOT eligible for retirement benefits. Therefore, Preston County was not in compliance with the eligibility standards as established by the West Virginia Retirement Board.

Preston County must cease withholding and paying any future retirement contributions from those persons hired as long-term substitutes. In addition, the county should contact the West Virginia Retirement Board to determine how to correct the past error and recoup contributions previously submitted on behalf of those employees.

Facilities

The Education Performance Audit Team visited the schools in Preston County. A narrative of the Team's observations follows.

Fellowsville Elementary (Grades K-5)

This facility was built in 1953 with additions/renovations performed in 1983 and 1990. The classrooms had window air conditioning units. The 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 rest rooms needed to be cleaned and painted. A sizeable wall crack in the janitor's closet appeared to be a result of the building settling. The exterior of the building needed to be cleaned and painted. Gutters needed to be installed to channel water away from the building. The main building had numerous areas where roof leaks were present.

Two portable units were on site; one was currently being utilized as an art room. Both modular units were very old and are near the end of their useful life. The side walk leading to the modular units was in disrepair. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

The roof was replaced through levy funds. Other facility issues remained as reported during the April 2008 audit. Fire Marshal Reports were not available at the school.

South Preston Middle School (Grades 6-8)

This facility was built in 1914 with additions/renovations in 1952, 1960, and 1971. The building was not air conditioned. Heat was provided by a gas boiler and 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.

Several Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues existed with this building. Several stained ceiling tiles existed throughout the facility. The windows in the building needed to be replaced. The exterior brick needed repair. The brick chimneys at the rear of the facility needed to be repaired before they develop into a safety hazard. The entrance steps to the facility were cracking and needed to be repaired. The steps entering into the cafeteria needed to be secured to the floor. One of the lower classrooms had a floor that was sinking at the rear of the classroom. The playground was not equipped for middle school students. The band room was located in a detached building. The walkway to the building was not covered. The heat for the building was provided by a ceiling mounted gas fired heater. The heater installed was exposed in the learning space. A carbon monoxide detector needed to be installed in this space. The heater installation violated State Board of Education Policy 6200. The building appeared run down on both the interior and exterior. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

No work had been performed on this facility. At the time of the follow-up OEPA visit, the main structure was cleared of all students while awaiting a structural evaluation. Grade 6 students were relocated to classrooms at Tunnelton-Denver Elementary School and Grade 7 and 8 students were relocated to the gymnasium with the actual gymnasium floor used for three class spaces and the stage used for a fourth space. The individual school report details how curriculum and instruction are adversely affected by this situation.

Tunnelton-Denver Elementary (Grades K-5)

This facility was built in 1952 with additions/renovations 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. One of the fuel oil boiler gauges was damaged and needed to be repaired. Several areas on the walls and doors around the exterior of the building needed to be cleaned and painted. Some exterior block damage needed to be repaired. Efflorescence was on the wall along the ramp inside the building. A drainage system was installed at the rear of the building to help alleviate the moisture infiltration causing the efflorescence. The area that was excavated for the drainage installation was beginning to erode and needed to be addressed. The efflorescence should be cleaned from the wall and new paint applied. Two portable units were being utilized at this facility and both appeared to be near the end of their useful life. Some fascia had been blown off the side of the building and needed to be repaired. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

A French drain was installed along the outside of the building. The inside wall was repainted, but the efflorescence was not scrapped off the wall prior to painting. New base cove was installed along the wall.

Aurora Elementary (Grades K-6)

This facility was built in 1995. Roof top units provided the heating, cooling, and ventilation air to the building. 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. One of the exterior lights had a busted cover and bulb. Some staining was building up on the exterior of the building that needed to be removed. 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.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Stained tiles remained throughout the facility. A tile was missing outside Room 314 and a fire alarm sensor located in that tile space was dangling. Fire Marshal Reports were not available at the school.

Valley Elementary (Grades K-5)

Portions of this school dated to 1925 with additions/renovations 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. Staff reported that new air conditioning equipment had been purchased for the 5th grade wing and will be installed over the summer. Several stained ceiling tiles were due to roof leaks. The roof was in the process of being replaced during the walkthrough. Ventilation levels in the building could not be accurately measured during the visit. It was a mild day and several windows and exterior doors were open. Past inspections have found acceptable ventilation rates.

The gymnasium was housed in a detached building. Children must cross an access road to reach the gymnasium. The air handling equipment had accumulated a layer of dust and several items were stored on top and around the equipment. The equipment and equipment room should be cleaned and the manufacturers recommended clearances around mechanical equipment observed. The exterior of the building needed to be painted. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Valley Elementary received a new roof through levy funds. A metal building was added around the septic system outside. The concrete floor was being installed during the OEPA visit. The vinyl sheet floor at the exit door outside Room 9 had deteriorated and was in very bad condition. The top of the air-handler was being used to hold an accumulation of items from lost and found to maintenance products. A conduit in the gymnasium was detached from the wall and unsecured. Work had not been completed in cleaning and repairing this area in the lower stairwell near the classroom. Until this is finished, the area needs to be clearly marked for no admittance. The repairs on the lower stairwell on the opposite side had not been completed.

Rowlesburg Elementary/Middle School (Grades K-8)

This facility was built in 1987. The building received heating and cooling from a two pipe hydronic system that utilized gas boilers and a chiller. The mechanical system was original to the building. The building was mechanically ventilated. It was 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. The exterior brick around the building was stained and needed to be cleaned. A short section of hydronic piping in the mechanical room needed to be insulated. A few stained ceiling tiles existed throughout the facility. Paint was peeling off the interior walls in a few areas. There appeared to be small amounts of efflorescence, indicating some moisture migration may be occurring.

The walls will need to be sealed and repainted. The interior of this facility appeared clean and well maintained. The building needed minor routine maintenance to keep the facility in like new condition.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

No work had been done at this school. The principal reported that scrapping the efflorescence and painting the walls is on the top of the county's priority list.

West Preston Middle School (Grades 6-8)

This facility was constructed in 1918 with additions/renovations in 1950 and 1973. There was no air conditioning or mechanical ventilation. Heat was provided by some newer gas boilers. The structure needed to be cleaned and painted on both the interior and exterior. The access and parking were inadequate. There are several Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance issues with this building. The plumbing and building infrastructure are all original to the building. Several areas appeared to be active roof leaks occurring. Several of the stained ceiling tiles appeared to have been left in place for some time. The building appeared run down on both the interior and exterior. There was little evidence of proper upkeep and maintenance on this facility. The cleanliness of the interior was below standard. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan and program.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Asbestos was removed in the gym, auditorium, and library. A new roof was added to the main building. The edges have not been sealed and some leaks are occurring until this work is completed. For that reason, the walls have not been repainted, the ceiling tiles have not been replaced, and light covers have not been replaced. This is scheduled to occur during "Spring Break". New tile was installed at the main entrance of the classroom building and the gymnasium entry. The registers throughout the facility and the restrooms in the gymnasium were painted over the summer. The gymnasium floors were refinished and the dust was blown out of the heaters and off the lights.

Preston High School (Grades 9-12)

The original structure was constructed in 1972 and has been added on to several times over the years. The facility also houses the Central Preston Middle School students after the closure of that facility. The county plans to move the middle school students into modular units starting in the fall of 2008. 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. The roof top HVAC equipment and unit ventilators had not been maintained; the coils needed to be cleaned and regular maintenance needed to be performed on this equipment. Continuous roof leaks throughout the facility have marked the ceiling tiles which have not been replaced for as much as four years. Chipped floor tiles existed throughout the facility. Windows in

the 400 block of rooms leak and needed to be repaired to prevent further damage to the structure and the flooring. Science labs were not equipped with hot running water or fire blankets, the emergency gas shut off was missing the button in one room, and the hoods were either inaccessible and/or needed to be repaired. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan and program.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Multiple housekeeping and maintenance issues existed at this facility. The modular units were still not completed at the time of the OEPA visit. Most classroom doors did not have vision panels and presented a security issue. The middle school functions well within its limitations, but would be assisted with more space. The Team observed multiple vacant classrooms noted during the visit that could be used to more fully integrate the middle school into the high school. This would require logistical work on the part of both the middle school and high school principals. Currently, the middle school is holding two reading classrooms in the cafeteria and the WESTEST had to be administered in the cafeteria. The Fire Marshal and Pest Inspection Reports could not be produced at the time of the visit. There was no collaboration by the principal's of the middle and high school, making education compromised for all students.

Refer to the individual school audit report for detailed information regarding the facility adversely affecting students' educational opportunities.

Kingwood Elementary School (Grades K-5)

Kingwood Elementary School is a 1977 era facility. The facility consisted of three units: the main classroom building, including the gymnasium; the secondary classroom building, including the kitchen and cafeteria; and the modular units on the side of the facility. The school was located in an urban setting with little to no room for expansion.

Building 1. This facility was designed with an open classroom concept with blocks of four classrooms grouped together. A lack of storage throughout the building caused the classrooms to appear very crowded. Stained ceiling tiles existed throughout the facility due to repeated roof leaks. The tiles have remained in place for many years. A main air handling unit provided fresh air to this building. The room housing the air handler needed housekeeping, the make-up air dampers appeared to be disconnected, and the filter was very dirty and needed to be replaced. The railing on the upper loft was extremely loose and dangerous.

Building 2. This building is approximately 150 feet from the main building doors when taking the direct route via steps, if using the handicap ramp, the route is much longer. The walk is uncovered. The cafeteria and kitchen are located in this building. The hot water tank for the kitchen is 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.

Modular Units. Six modular units were in a state of disrepair. Not all of the toilets worked. The flooring in the units was cracked and peeling. Exit doors were blocked due to a lack of space. There was deterioration around the underpinning and around doors

and windows. The modular units were approximately 150 feet from the main building entrance doors and the walk was uncovered.

This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping program and plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

There were no changes at this school. The day of the visit, the principal was attending a county meeting at the board office and the secretary was absent. The substitute secretary was unable to locate the Fire Marshal Reports, Asbestos Reports and Pest Inspection Reports.

Terra Alta/East Preston School (Grades K-8)

The original structure was constructed in 1927 with additions in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. The furnace room had two active leaks. There were no buckets in place to catch the water which had spread across the floor and was encroaching into the side hall. Cables from the roof heating had fallen over the side of the building and were gathered and tied so they would not drape over the side again. The roof heating system had not been used and the power had been disconnected; therefore, the remaining cables should be removed. The gymnasium showed signs of continuous water infiltration at the exit doors. The doors no longer wanted to close. There was also water infiltration along the roof pitch. The auditorium had been used for storage for a number of years. The flooring and seats have been removed in some areas. This room should be kept locked at all times to prevent student or staff injuries. This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

There were no changes at this school.

Bruceton School (Grades K-8)

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. The school was located in an urban setting with no county owned property for expansion.

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 cafeteria was across the hall in three former classroom spaces.

There is a main furnace room for this building. Excess items were stacked in the room and the room needed housekeeping. Items were leaning against the furnace itself. 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 had questionable functionality. The gas powered lawn mower and snow-blower were stored in a former

assembly room. These items should be stored in a separate building in accordance to West Virginia Board of Education Policy 6200. This room was not locked. An enclosed vestibule with access to the parking lot and to the interior courtyard had not been cleaned on a regular basis. Cobwebs and dust had build up in this space. Students regularly crossed through this area for access to classes. Some of the classrooms had a curtain wall separating the spaces. Several instances of stained ceiling tiles existed throughout the facility.

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, making it 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 was very difficult to maintain adequate ventilation in this building. The kindergarten classrooms were not equipped with room sinks or rest rooms.

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 but 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 lit. The building and immediate grounds around the building need to be better maintained. Leaves and other debris were around the furnace room entrance doors.

This facility needed a more aggressive maintenance and housekeeping program and plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Carpet had been removed from the Pre-K classrooms. The levy funds provided a new roof on the Pre-K building and the doors and windows in this space will be replaced after the asbestos removal. The shop area will be converted into two classroom spaces. The gas powered equipment was still stored inside the main classroom building in this shop area.

FACILITIES COUNTY SUMMARY

The county has six maintenance workers to care for the 42 buildings that make up the 14 schools in the county. There are no unoccupied buildings that require upkeep on the part of the county. The maintenance director has been in the position for almost two years, with over 13 years in facility maintenance and is also the head of transportation. He is occasionally required to drive school buses when substitute drivers are not available. Of the six maintenance workers, two each are assigned as plumbers, electricians and general carpenters. The plumbers and electricians are masters in their trades. The two carpenters are former custodians with one and six years experience each. All six are also assigned to general maintenance. Several of the county janitors are maintained throughout the summer as grounds keepers to mow the school's lawns. Until the end of school each year, any grounds work that needs done is completed by members of the maintenance staff. This is the same at the beginning of each school year. With the number of schools in the county, the maintenance workers are required to provide grounds keeping for the last several weeks and first few weeks of each year. This impedes school maintenance activities.

Several components of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) work have been contracted out. The HVAC automation controls are mostly handled by Honeywell. A local company, Jackson Heating and Air Conditioning, also does work in the county. Filters throughout the county are changed by Filter Source; a local company. Filter Source will also report additional work and problems that are seen while changing the filters. Over the summer and fall of 2008, diffuser and duct cleaning was started by Spikes Chimney and Duct Cleaning and will continue during school breaks until finished. No preventive maintenance program was in place in Preston County.

The first day of the facility reviews was an ISE day and several principals were not in the schools and the second day of the reviews was a countywide principals meeting at the board office. Several of the administrators and secretaries in the schools did not know where the Fire Marshal, Asbestos Management, and Pest Inspection reports were located. It is important that more than one person in each facility know where these reports can be located.

When reviewing the asbestos management reports, the Team discovered that the inspector's signature was missing on the report at West Preston Middle School and that the asbestos inspection certification had expired one month before the inspection was performed. This affected all reports. Neither the inspector nor other county administration could verify if the certification had been renewed and the wrong one attached, or if it truly was expired.

A computerized maintenance management plan was not in place in the county. Several teachers the Team talked to did not know the proper procedure for reporting maintenance concerns. After reporting problems to the school custodian or principal, they did not know who to contact or if a procedure was in place for following up on concerns that were not addressed.

The Preston County School District Building Utilization is presented in Chart 21. Each school is listed with the student capacity, the current student enrollment, and the percentage of building utilization.

Chart 21

| Preston County Building Utilization 2007-2008 | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| School Name | Capacity | Enrollment | Utilization |
| Aurora Elementary | 170 | 131 | 77% |
| Bruceton | 650 | 486 | 75% |
| Fellowsville Elementary | 190 | 105 | 55% |
| Kingwood Elementary | 655 | 602 | 92% |
| Rowlesburg | 255 | 140 | 55% |
| Terra Alta | 655 | 449 | 69% |
| Tunnelton/Denver | 240 | 201 | 84% |
| Valley Elementary | 510 | 449 | 88% |
| Central Preston Middle | 497 | 286 | 58% |
| South Preston Middle | 315 | 177 | 56% |
| West Preston Middle | 390 | 230 | 59% |
| Preston High | 1925 | 1328 | 69% |

The Preston County Building Utilization chart shows that eight of 11 Preston County's schools are below the 80 percent recommended capacity for effective and efficient utilization. (Note: Preston County Middle School was relocated to Preston High School because the school was closed for safety concerns and is excluded from these numbers.) Preston County School District lacks the fiscal resources to update and renovate these schools to provide students a 21st Century education.

Students in Preston County are being denied the minimum, facilities and equipment for a basic education, schools that comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA), schools that provide a safe and healthy environment, and schools that have the appropriate space and equipment for science instruction, physical education, and general education. This is the result of multiple factors. Some of these include geographic and climate conditions of the county, limited fiscal resources, not utilizing facilities to their maximum capacity, and decisions regarding use of facilities.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Preston County Schools is utilizing levy funds to address maintenance and facility issues at each of the schools. Additional crews were added in the summer to address needs. We are currently in the second year of funding for this levy. The levy generates \$1,500,000 a year for each of three years. Each school's Local School Improvement Council submitted a prioritized list to be addressed. Maintenance staff reviewed the list and then it was presented to the Board. Local School Improvement Council members reviewed their lists and will be submitting

revised lists to the board during LSIC meetings in October 2008. See the schedule on page 45.

Currently, a bond will be placed before the voters in the November General Election in the amount of \$49,995,000 for the improvement of facilities. Contingent upon passage of the bond, the School Building Authority has granted Preston County \$19,800,000 additional funds. The plan calls for building two new Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools and additions and repairs for other schools in the county.

All recommendations are being reviewed and Preston County administrators will rectify as many of the issues as possible. Some of the recommendations are difficult to achieve with the facility, number of schools and personnel needed to operate them, and the financial constraints the county operates under.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED.

The schools in Preston County have continued to deteriorate. The bond failed by only 38 votes. Preston County is in severe need of major school improvements and lacks the resources to update the county's schools for 21st Century education.

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

Review of Job Postings: Professional, Service and extracurricular

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

The professional personnel postings listed the vacancy, posting date, closing date, location, employment term, salary (based upon degree experience), and supervisor. The job description was a part of the posting. The county job description included the Performance Criteria listed in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. The "required" certification for the posting was not listed on the posting or job description.

Service personnel postings listed the job vacancy, location, period of employment, and posting dates. It did not include the amount of pay and other benefits.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed postings for professional, service, and extracurricular personnel. Postings continued to have the components listed above. Preston County added to the majority of its postings a required certification for professional personnel (see comments below) and the amount of pay and other benefits for service personnel positions.

Professional Postings

Listed Certification

The Team reviewed 11 postings, three did not list the required certification. (See Postings Number 26 - Science, Preston High School; Number 48 - Spanish, South Preston Middle School/Rowlesburg; and AEP Instructor LD/BD/MI, Preston High School.) Additionally, only one certification was listed on the posting when an individual can be certified in one of several different certifications. For example, an individual will be certified for a Title I reading teacher position if he/she has any of the following four: 1. A master's degree in reading specialist, 2. completion of a graduate level reading specialist program, 3. a reading authorization, or 4. completion of a reading endorsement program. (Policy 5202, Section 126-136-8. 8.2.2 C.b.) Preston County lists only **Reading Specialist** as a required certification for the reading position, yet the job description, under qualifications, states, "Must have . . . reading specialist and/or reading authorization" and "must attain masters degree status."

A reading authorization does not require a master's degree, so it was evident that there was some confusion in listing the certifications for this specific posting under qualifications.

Recommendations

1. LIST All certification(s) approved by the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Professional Preparation, for the posted position (vacancy). This is extremely important when working to fill positions with certified individuals and meet the definition of Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT). Also, it is in compliance with W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (o) (1) (D) which states, "Postings for vacancies . . . shall be written so as to ensure that the largest possible pool of qualified applicants may apply."
2. To ensure all certifications are listed, the individual responsible for professional postings should be required to check the West Virginia Department of Education Course Codes for all eligible certifications for the position.
3. Require postings to be reviewed by a second personnel staff member to ensure that all components, such as the certification and endorsement levels, are listed on the posting.

Specialized Training

NONCOMPLIANCE. Specialized training is one of the six criteria listed in both the first and second set of factors of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (c) and (d). With the first set of factors, all relevant specialized training of the applicant is to be considered when determining the qualifications of candidates. With the second set of factors, only relevant specialized training listed in the job description is considered. W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (o) (1) (C), addresses "special criteria or skill," which may be required for the position. This should not be listed as specialized training.

Preston County does not request the applicant to list all or any of his/her relevant specialized training when applying for a posted position. (See Preston County Bid Sheet). The applicants mark "yes" or "no" if they have the training listed on the job posting. Therefore, no consideration is given to the criterion if using the first set of factors. Additionally, there is no verification that the applicant has had the training.

The county does consider specialized training when using the second set of criteria, if the training is listed in the job description. However, the majority of the postings do not list specialized training directly related to the job. Of those that do, the OEPA Team found that the specialized training listed was not specialized training, but more of a "special criteria or skill."

Example: Postings 023-1st Grade Terra Alta East Preston and 081, 3rd Grade, Terra Alta East Preston.

The following were listed in the job description as “Specialized Training”.

1. Verification of expertise in scientifically based reading research and the five essential components of reading in relation to instructional programs, strategies, materials, interventions and assessment.
2. Successful implementation of Reading First Strategies.
3. Prior experience working in Reading First classrooms preferred.

Recommendations

1. List or name the relevant specialized training on the job description that is desired for the position.
2. Provide space on the Bid Sheet for applicants to list the name of the training received as listed on the posting, date received, place received, and presenter or trainer’s name. Use with second set of factors in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a.
3. List additional space on the Bid Sheet for candidates to list other relevant training (with verifying information) to be considered when the county uses the first set of factors in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a.
4. If the training is required for the position, list it under “Special criteria and skills” not under relevant specialized training.

Long Term Postings: Professional and Service

NONCOMPLIANCE. It appeared that some confusion existed when posting “long-term” assignments, as some assignments were posted as a “leave of absence” vacancy, when there was no approved “leave of absence.”

Professional. Several postings which should have been posted as “long-term” assignments were posted as “due to leave of absence” when there was no approved leave of absence. As per the secretary of professional personnel, this is language that has often been used when an employee is to be absent for an extended period.

Posting 106, First Grade Long-term substitute, posted January 27 – February 2, 2009. This was posted as a long-term position; however, the hotline description on February 2, 2009 of the vacancy stated it was for approximately eight (8) weeks. This did not meet the definition of “long-term substitute” defined in W.Va. Code §18A-1-1.

“Long-term substitute” is defined in §18A-1-1 as a substitute employee who fills a vacant position (1) that the county superintendent expects to extend for at least ninety consecutive days, and is either: (A) Listed in the job posting as a long term substitute position of over ninety days; or (B) Listed in a job posting as a regular, full-time employee; and is filled by a substitute employee. An individual who meets this definition, is eligible for PEIA benefits (See W. Va. Code §5-16-2 (3)).

Unlike service personnel who are hired into a long-term posted position (as per §18A-4-15), the Code **does not give regular employment status to teachers in a long-term assignment.** As per the accounting technician, W. Va. Retirement Board, the substitute

teacher in a long-term assignment is still a substitute and is not eligible for retirement benefits. Preston County enrolls its substitute teachers, who have been hired into "long-term substitute" positions (possibly fewer than 90 consecutive days) in the W. Va. retirement program. This appeared to be true for all such substitutes, however, was verified for two substitute teachers. This appears to be a noncompliance.

The superintendent stated that he believed both professional and service personnel should be treated the same in receiving benefits. However, when a substitute service person is hired into a position posted as per §18A-4-15, after 20 working days, that person gets **regular employment status** (as long as he/she is in the position) which makes him/her eligible for benefits of a regular employee. The law **does not** give **regular employment status** to a substitute teacher in a long-term position.

Recommendation

1. The county must use the language outlined in W.Va. Code §18A-1-1 (l) for hiring "Long-term" substitutes.
2. The county must follow current laws in providing PEIA insurance benefits.
3. The county must not enroll **substitute teachers** for retirement benefits.

Service Personnel

Hiring of Service Personnel Substitutes as set forth in W. Va. 18A-4-15.

NONCOMPLIANCE. Posting S020. Bruceton School Aide (during leave of absence).

The autism mentor/aide was absent from work due to personal injury or illness. The employee was/is using sick leave and requested personal leave days from the county sick-leave bank. According to Preston County Policy R-8-2-3, this absence is to be "covered through rotation of substitute service personnel as prescribed by law." This law is found in §18A-4-15.

As per the service personnel secretary, no leave of absence had been requested or approved by the Preston County Board of Education. However, if the job **had been** due to a "leave of absence," to extend more than 30 days, regular employment status, excluding seniority, would not have been granted until the substitute who was hired in the job had been in the position for 20 or more working days. However, as per the finance office, regular employment status was granted immediately upon the Board hiring her in the posted position. (W.Va. Code §18A-4-15 (a) (2) (C) (i) (ii)).

It appeared that this substitute was receiving regular employment status benefits for which she is not entitled.

Posting: Bus Operator (Leave of Absence)

A bus operator broke her leg prior to the beginning of the school term. She did not ask for a leave of absence and such was not approved in writing by the Preston County Board of Education. The position should have been filled with a substitute from the rotating substitute bus operator list. However, the job was posted as a leave of absence (LOA) and a regular bus operator transferred into the position. That position was then posted as a LOA. A regular bus operator transferred into that position. The position was posted as a LOA. Again, a regular bus operator transferred into the position. By that time the injured bus operator returned and the above individuals moved back into the original assignment. If the position had been filled by a substitute, he/she would have been given regular employment status for which he/she would have not been entitled.

If the county, as per W.Va. Code §18A-4-15 and county policy, had filled the position from the rotating list of substitute bus operators, the bus operator who was in line to receive the assignment would have had continuous employment until the bus operator returned to work or the status of the job changed. This individual was denied work to which he/she was entitled.

W. Va. Code §18A-4-15 identifies when a job is to be posted. The above situation did not meet that criteria and should be corrected. This is a noncompliance of school law and the county's own policy.

As per the service personnel executive secretary, the postings were done as requested by the bus operators. However, the county should have used the "step-up" option found in §18A-4-15 whereby regular employees can move into the position of a regular employee.

Recommendation:

1. The county must follow W.Va. Code §18A-4-15 and Preston County Board of Education Policy R-8-2-3 when determining when to post long-term (or temporary) positions which may be filled with either regular employees (transfer) or with a substitute employees.
2. The county must follow §18A-4-15 to determine when regular employment status is granted to substitutes employed into long-term assignments.
3. The county must use the "Step-up" provision in §18A-4-15 to move regular employees into the position of a regular employee who is absent.

Noncompliances: Professional hiring as set forth in W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a

- **West Virginia Code §18A-4-7a (c) (6) and (d) (6).** Past evaluations are to be considered in the qualifications of an applicant if conducted pursuant to W. Va. Code §18A-2-12. It appeared in some postings that points were given for

evaluations which were not pursuant to the above Code: See applicants for special education positions at Preston High.

- Comparison of Candidate Qualifications. New applicants: A completed matrix (grid), rating, or other system to show consideration was given to all criteria listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (first set) to evaluate and compare qualifications of candidates was not available. With several postings, there was no evidence that all candidates were considered.

The superintendent of Preston County Schools indicated that principals can independently determine how they evaluate the qualification of new candidates, including the consideration given to each of the seven criterions listed in W.Va. Code. This varies from school to school. Principals have the opportunity to interview teachers; however, an interview is not required. That is, principals can interview or not interview (when using the first set of criteria in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a, although the interview is often included in (c) (7), the criterion which usually carries a heavier weight than the other six criteria listed in code.) The principal selects his/her teacher. Examples of this varied system are listed below.

- **Posting: Science 9-12 Preston High. August 10 – 16, 2007.** All applicants were new candidates for this position (no regular employee applied). The principal used the first set of criteria in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a to evaluate candidates. Evidence showed that a point method was used to evaluate candidates at Preston High School.

With the above posting/vacancy, there was no matrix, grid, or rating sheets to show comparison of the candidates for this position. Although a matrix is not required by Code, there must be documentation to show all seven criteria were considered for each candidate. There was no evidence that any candidate other than the one selected was considered. Two ratings sheets completed by two different evaluators were in the application file. The rating sheets were not signed by the evaluators. No other rating sheets were in the file, although more than one applicant applied for the vacant position. Criteria points that should have been the same for the candidate regardless of the evaluator were not the same. For example, one evaluator gave 3 points for 3.5 years of experience, while the other evaluator gave 4 points. One evaluator gave 4 points for past evaluations, while the other gave 5 points. The candidate had not been evaluated as per W.Va. Code §18A-2-12, therefore, should have received zero points for this criterion.

- Rating Sheet for Candidates New to the System used at Terra Alta East Preston School were reviewed. As per the individual, this was a rating sheet created by the school principal and used to evaluate the 7-8 math candidates. For each criterion listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (first set), the candidates were rated: 1) very weak, 2) weak, 3) moderate, 4) strong, 5) very strong. As per the rating sheet for Math 7-8, Terra Alta East Preston School, an individual was considered the most qualified.

- At Central Preston Middle School, the following points were given for criteria listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a: Criterion 1) either 1 or 0; 2) 1 point for each year of experience up to 7 points; 3) 1 point for BA and 2 points for MA; 4) Up to 3 points; 5) None since not listed in the posting; 6) 1 or 2 points if as per W.Va. Code §18A-2-12; and 7 points up to 15 points for interview, knowledge of school system, etc. A summary sheet of qualification points was in the application file, but the form did not identify the position or vacancy. Based on notes in the file it appeared that the position was science.
- The rating scale for new candidates for Central Preston Middle School follows: Criterion 1) 0-1 points; Criteria 2 through 6) 0-5 points; and Criterion 7) 0 -10 points.
- The same point system appeared to be used at Preston High School. However, evaluators gave a different point value to qualifications which should have been the same, as they were not judgment calls. For example, an individual was given 2 points for 3 years of experience by one evaluator and 3 points by another evaluator. The candidate was given 3 points for academic achievement (GPA) by one evaluator and 2 points by another evaluator. One evaluator gave 4 points for evaluation, while another gave 3. Finally one evaluator gave 8.5 points for the 7th criterion and the other gave 5.4 points. (The 7th criterion could be one area where judgment would influence the score which could vary from evaluator to evaluator, as it is based on the applicant's interview.) Of all applicants who applied, there was a score sheet for only one candidate. Again, the score sheet in the application file did not identify a specific vacancy/posting. It was identified by the personnel secretary as the proper scoring sheet as it was in the only one in the application file.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Professional: Interviews and Ranking of Candidates

The superintendent stated that he interviews all new applicants and completed his own matrix to compare qualifications of applicants, and although the rating is different, the final results/decisions of the most qualified candidate were the same as that of the principals if they completed a matrix. He asks one standard question of all candidates. It is, "You have applied for the position of _____. Tell me why you would be the best candidate for this position? What knowledge and skills do you possess? Share with me your opinions and thoughts about the position." The superintendent uses various information from the interview to determine the weight given for criterion number seven in the first set of factors of §18A-4-7a. He also noted with the second set of factors in §18A-4-7a, that he usually uses seniority to declare the winner when there is a tie of the criteria categories. The Team found in one posting, (Posting #23, noted below), that specialized training was used to select the winning applicant.

The superintendent stated that all principals have the opportunity to interview applicants; however, only four of twelve principals chose to do so. He further stated that he talked

with principals at a principals' meeting this fall concerning being more consistent in how they evaluated qualifications and rated candidates for posted positions.

This was confirmed by the principal of Bruceton School, in a telephone conversation on January 30, 2009, who stated that he interviews candidates who are new to his school. He also stated that although principals can determine their own rating scale, when using the first set of factors, once established, it is consistent for each candidate. He also stated that when principals had group interviews, interview questions were developed in advance and asked of all candidates. In an interview with the principal of Preston High School on February 18, 2009, he stated that he interviews all candidates to set expectations. He uses an interview committee which includes a teacher from the subject area. The principal of Tunnelton-Denver Elementary does not interview when the second set of factors are to be used as he stated that seniority determines the winner. He said he would interview if all candidates were new. The principal of Rowlesburg Elementary/Middle, has had no new teachers to interview but stated that he would participate in the interview process.

Professional hiring as set forth in W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a

NONCOMPLIANCE. A review of several posting files indicated that, with the exception of one vacancy, the matrix was completed by the superintendent who handles personnel for the county. There appeared to be discrepancies in the evaluation of candidates and some data were often incomplete or missing. Some applicants selected appeared not to meet the requirements of W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a. Additionally, criterion number six in the second set of criteria was listed incorrectly in the matrix which could result in a different rating outcome for this criterion. As per the Code, the criterion addresses receiving an overall rating of satisfactory in the previous two evaluations conducted pursuant to W.Va. Code §18A-2-12. The county's matrix form states "Receiving an overall rating of satisfactory in evaluations over the previous two years." It does not require the evaluations to be as per W.Va. Code §18A-2-12. There was no consistent manner in determining the 7th criterion in the first set of factors. Examples of noncompliances are listed below.

- Posting 023 - First Grade Terra Alta/East Preston School May, 2008. Using the second set of factors of §18A-4-7a, a regular employee, won three of seven criteria.
 - Total years of teaching experience, received an overall rating of satisfactory in the previous two evaluations conducted per §18A-2-12 and seniority.
 - The candidates tied in the other four criteria. Both candidates stated they met the specialized training stated in the job description; however, the superintendent found the other candidate to have more training in the criterion and used this to select her as the "winner" of the position.

The most senior candidate met with the superintendent concerning his selection. The superintendent shared the matrix with the applicant and the reason for his selection. He did not provide a written reason. He did tell the candidate that she could file a grievance if she wished. The candidate did not. The superintendent stated that he knew that this individual was the most qualified as per §18A-4-7a.

- Posting 029 – Preschool. Certification: PreK-PreK Handicapped July 1, 2008.
 - All applicants were new; however, the second set of factors of §18A-4-7a was used to compare qualifications of applicants.
 - The superintendent said he talked with his lawyer who advised him to use the second set of factors. He did not know why he was so advised.
 - One applicant was certified, but according to the superintendent, withdrew her application. This was not noted in the file and no letter of withdrawal was in the file.
 - With the withdrawal of the regular employee, the first set of factors should have been used.
 - It appeared that all other applicants (five) were eligible for a permit.
 - One application was not complete or signed. The superintendent said it was called in.
- Posting 059 and 060 - Special Education (LD/BD/MI), Kingwood Elementary, August 11-15, 2008. First set of factors of §18A-4-7a was used to compare applicants' qualifications.
 - Five individuals applied. No information was listed on the matrix for an applicant. In the Total column, "no response" was written.
 - None of the other four applicants was certified in LD/BD/MI, yet under certification all were given a mark of "ok".
 - Amount of experience was not listed on the Bid Sheet, yet an amount was listed for three applicants. The fourth applicant received an "ok" for that criterion.
 - Academic achievement was not requested on the Bid Sheet. A degree level was listed on the matrix. It is assumed it is the degree level generally, since no candidate was certified.
 - Academic achievement was not requested on the Bid Sheet, yet was listed on the matrix for three of the candidates. "Not avail." was written for one candidate.
 - Specialized training was not considered. (Specialized training was not listed on the Bid Sheet. It is not required to be listed in the job description for consideration with the first set of factors.)
 - Under the seventh criterion, other measures or indicators upon which the relevant qualifications of the applicant may be fairly judged, three to six points were given to the candidates. One candidate received six points. Two received four points and one received three points. The candidate who received the six points and one of the two who received four points, were selected for the vacancies.
- Posting #66. 4th Grade, Tunnelton/Denver. August 12-18, 2008.
 - Seven of the eight candidates for this position were certified in elementary education.
 - For criterion number two (listed in §18A-4-7a first set of factors), amount of teaching experience in the subject area, all applicants received a "Yes." No amount of teaching experience was listed.

- For criterion number three, a degree level was listed, but not identified as the degree level in the relevant field or degree level generally.
- Criterion number four, academic achievement, was blank on the matrix. (none of the last three criterions was requested on the county's bid sheet.)
- Criterion number five, relevant specialized training was not considered. (Note: Specialized training does not have to be listed on the job description to be considered with the first set of factors.)
- All candidates received a "no." for criterion number six. Points (1-6) were given for criterion number seven.
- No total points were given, but it appeared that one candidate was recommended for the position. In that column where the name was listed, an asterisk was inserted in the Total Column with the comment, "has worked with Dibels and Reading First."

Note: Reading First and Dibels are used in Grades K-3, not Grade 4. Also, two other applicants held masters degrees. The candidate awarded the position held a bachelors degree.

- Posting 081 3rd Grade Teacher, Terra Alta/East Preston School. Certification Required: Elementary Education. Closing Date: September 2, 2008.
 - Both sets of factors were used for this posting.
 - The second set of factors was used first to compare qualifications of applicants for Posting #081.
 - Fifteen individuals applied for the position, including regular employees. It appeared that the superintendent listed the candidates on a matrix form using the second set of factors listed in W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a. As per the superintendent, one regular employee took another position and the other employee withdrew her application, although no verification/documentation of her withdrawal was in the file. (In a telephone call to this individual on January 28, 2009, she stated that she **did not withdraw her application** for this position.)
 - A review of this applicant's qualifications showed that, based upon the information on the application bid sheet, she was 1. Certified in elementary education, 2. had **seven years** teaching experience, 3. had existence of teaching experience in the certified area, 4. held a BS degree, 5. met the requirements of the specialized training, 6. received an overall rating of satisfactory in evaluation over the previous two years (county's form did not say "previous two evaluations as per §18A-2-12"). Her seniority was listed as "none"; however, it was listed on the original matrix as .55. This applicant appeared to be the most qualified candidate winning in the areas of greater amount of experience and evaluated with two satisfactory evaluations as §18A-2-12.

- This applicant marked “yes” on the application that she had the specialized training listed on the posting. The applicant stated in the telephone conversation that she had attended the K-3 Academy two summers, which included Response to Intervention (RTI,) provided by the West Virginia Department of Education. The Bid Sheet did not request verification or name of training relevant to the job or that listed on the posting, yet she was given no credit for this criterion on the first matrix using the second set of factors. The selected applicant was a substitute teacher, who had worked in a long-term assignment previously and won in the area of seniority, which she had accrued as a substitute teacher, per the superintendent.

First set of factors used first to compare qualifications of applicants for Posting 081.

The application file also included a matrix using the first set of factors which was completed by the school principal and listed three of the fifteen applicants. Only the first two had points given to them for the various criteria listed. One candidate scored one more point than another candidate in the overall score and was hired into the position.

It would have been appropriate to use the first set of factors to compare candidates if the candidate had indeed withdrawn her application leaving all “new” applicants. At that point, all remaining candidates should have been considered.

- Posting 093 - Special Education Leave of Absence (LOA), Bruceton School. First set of Factors of §18A-4-7a was used to compare qualifications of applicants.
 - Five individuals applied for the posted position. One applicant was selected for the position. This individual, a regular employee, resigned to take the LOA position as a substitute employee.
 - No candidate was certified in the required certification, yet one candidate received a yes for this criterion. (The individual held or was eligible for a permit.)
 - No application was in the file for this individual. The individual’s name and telephone number were written across the face of a sheet of paper.
 - Another candidate did not complete a bid sheet, but sent an e-mail or FAX stating, “I would like to bid on the Special Education job at Bruceton School.”
 - Amount of experience in the subject area was written on the matrix for each candidate; however, it was not requested from the applicant on the bid sheet. The county does not keep a record of amount of time worked in a specific subject area.
 - The degree level listed is Bachelor of Arts (BA) for all candidates except one. No degree level was listed for that candidate. It would appear that this degree is the degree level generally as no candidate was certified.
 - No information was listed for academic achievement or relevant specialized training, nor requested on the Bid Sheet.
 - This individual received an “ok” for past performance evaluation. Nothing was listed for the other candidates.

- Under the criteria of “other measures and indicators,” the following was noted. The candidate “Has worked in county sp. ed. programs: 4 pts. Other notes were Brief Sp. Ed. Assignment, 4 pts; Energy Express, 2 pts; Occasional Sub, 3 pts; Subbed in preschool 2 pts*.

Under this criterion (#7 in first set of factors) in other postings, such as Posting #61 - Math, South Preston (LOA), comments were written such as “good job as sub,” “outstanding references,” “great references,” “poor summer program”. No points were given in this posting and only an asterisk identified the winner of the position.

Recommendations

1. The proper set of factors are to be used to compare candidates’ qualifications.
2. The withdrawal of an application should be in writing. If not, it should be put in writing by the person who received the withdrawal request and placed in the file.
3. All criteria to be considered are to be requested on the bid sheet.
4. For factor number seven in the first set of factors, the county should identify in policy what other measurements and indicators upon which the relevant qualifications of the applicant may be fairly judged.

Professional Personnel: Bid Sheet Used to Apply for Posted Position: (See Appendix 2)

W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a outlines criteria to use to determine the qualifications of applicants. Preston County’s “Bid Sheet” for professional personnel collects data for the county to compare applicants if one or more permanently employed instructional personnel applies (exception: Criterion six does not say the applicant’s evaluations are for previous two evaluations and as per §18A-12-2). The bid sheet **does not** provide for information to compare the qualifications of candidates when the first set of factors is used. A review of the county’s rating sheets (matrix) of applicants will often show “information not available” for specific criteria. This was true on several matrices the Team reviewed.

The superintendent stated that individuals could call in their request for a position if they couldn’t get into the county office. He also stated that he will at times accept applications after the posting period and that he uses the postmarked date on the envelope as the date the bid sheet was received for a posted position. This procedure was not found written.

The bid sheet has a space for the applicant’s signature and date. Directions state the bid sheet is to be submitted to the personnel office prior to the end of the posting period.

There was a place on the bid sheet for a personnel office signature and date received. No bid sheets reviewed had either a signature or date received noted on the application.

The Bid Sheet for coaching positions asks for “Date of Birth.”

Recommendations

1. Revise the county's "Bid Sheet" to include ALL information needed to compare applicants using either the first set or second set of factors. The following were currently not included: a. Amount of teaching experience in the subject area, b. The degree level generally, c. Academic achievement, and d. Relevant specialized training (not just that listed on the job description).
2. Make "Bid Sheet" form available on the Preston County Webpage.
3. Record the date bid sheets are received in the personnel office.
4. If the practice of accepting bid sheets (applications) is continued after the posting closing date, note such information on the posting.
5. Require applicants to send a written application/request for the position (bid sheet, resume or letter with required information) which the applicant can deliver in person, FAX, e-mail or send by first-class mail. If applicants can call in their application, a bid sheet needs to be completed, signed, and dated by the county office staff member completing the application form.
6. "Date of Birth" should be removed from the Bid Sheet for coaching positions.

Posting Locations: Professional and Service

When a job becomes vacant, the county states that the position is posted in the county office, in schools, on the personnel hotline, and on the county's webpage. If directed by the superintendent, a professional vacancy is posted on the West Virginia Department of Education Job-Bank. However, there were no copies of such postings on file for verification.

Service personnel vacancies were not listed on the K-12 Job-Bank. This violated §18A-4-8b (f) (B) (g) which states, "Posting locations shall include any website maintained by or available for the use of the county board."

A review of the county's webpage did find postings listed. The postings of professional positions did not list the required certification(s) and there was no job description. Additionally, a bid sheet (application) for the position was not available on-line. The instructions for applying included: "To ask for a position, report to the Board Office at the Preston High campus."

On January 30, 2009, the following vacancy was posted on the county's webpage: Professional Personnel January 27, 2009 – February 2, 2009 Teacher First Grade Long-term Sub Tunnelton-Denver".

A call to the personnel hotline on the same date (January 30, 2009) listed only job vacancies which closed January 12, 2009 and January 14, 2009. There were no postings listed since that date. The above posting of the first grade teacher position was not on the hotline.

The Team reviewed previous jobs posted on the county's webpage on January 30, 2009; three postings (two professional and one service) were listed that had closing dates of

January 16, 20, and 27, 2009. It was evident that these postings had not been placed on the county's hotline.

A call to the personnel hotline February 2, 2009, listed the long-term substitute position (approximately eight (8) weeks) at Tunnelton-Denver. It also listed two bus operator vacancies posted January 30 – February 2, 2009.

Recommendations

1. To comply with the county policy, Preston County must place all new postings on the personnel hotline. At announced postings on the personnel hotline needed to be current during the entire posting period.
2. Preston should post vacancies on all web sites available to the county.

Comparison of Candidate Qualifications: Including regular employees. Completed matrix (grid), rating and/or other documentation to evaluate and compare candidates' qualifications were not available.

- **Posting: Kindergarten, Kingwood Elementary School.** (Applicants included regularly employed teachers.) A review of the application file did not produce a matrix or comparison of applicants. There were eight "Bid Sheets" for the position. The winner of the position was not listed; however, an individual's bid sheet was in front of the file (Dated 10-01-07).
- **Postings: Social Studies teacher and first grade teacher at Terra Alta/East Preston.** Applicants included regular employees and the second criteria in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a was used. The application included a matrix, but the winner of each area was not identified. There appeared to be a tie for the first grade position. The most senior person was not selected for the position. (Note: In this situation or another similar one where the most senior person was not determined the most qualified, the most senior candidate called to inquire as to why she didn't get the job. The superintendent did not respond in writing, but did explain that the other candidate had more years of experience and a higher degree level. The "winner" later withdrew her application and took another job giving the job to the most senior candidate.)
- **Posting: First grade teacher at Tunnelton-Denver Elementary.** There were several bid sheets for the position, but no matrix to show the comparison of applicants or who got the position.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. There appeared to be a matrix for each posting; however, inconsistencies continued in the consideration and rating of applicants, and it appeared that the correct set of factors, listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a were not always used. The Team reviewed postings where both sets of factors were used. (See comments/findings above)

It is important to note, as per the superintendent, the same individuals often apply for more than one vacant position. Therefore, the county uses one matrix to serve all posted positions, and that matrix gets filed in only one of the application folders. One matrix the Team reviewed had only two names on it, although there were several individuals to apply for the position. The superintendent also stated that when a matrix is used, not all names are listed on the matrix, as he knows the applicants and knows who will win in the categories without putting the information on a matrix. (The Superintendent is the Personnel Director.)

Recommendation

- Preston County is currently posting all special education positions with autism certification, regardless if autism is needed. This may not hold up in a grievance decision, as posting are to reflect the certification needed for the position at the time of posting. The Team recommended that the Personnel Director/Superintendent seek a legal opinion about this practice.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

COMPLIANCE. Preston County Schools eliminated the practice of including autism certification on all special education positions. Autism is only added to the posting, if needed, as per the professional personnel secretary. The special education director stated that she requested that the certification of autism be placed on all special education vacancies for elementary schools.

Recommendation. Filling of vacant positions with substitutes:

- As per the professional personnel secretary, approximately six positions were filled five days prior to the beginning of the instructional term. Four positions were elementary positions and were filled with substitutes certified in elementary education. One position was language arts at the middle school (grades 7 or 8). The position was filled by an individual who held elementary certification. She was not certified in language arts 7-8. No waiver or substitute permit had been requested as per West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5202. Subsequent to the Education Performance Audit, (May 14, 2008) the county superintendent submitted a waiver request to the West Virginia Board of Education. The State Board approved the waiver. The Team recommended that the personnel staff request waivers at the beginning of the school year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. At least nine professional positions were filled after five days prior to the beginning of the instructional time. Documents indicated that the county superintendent reported two such transfers to the State Superintendent of Schools.

Several transfers had been approved to take effect at the beginning of the next school term. The county showed several positions filled on a long-term basis. Some had been identified due to Leave of Absence (LOA); however, there was no LOA, but a need to fill the position until the regular teacher moves into the position at the beginning of the next school year.

- As per the superintendent only one professional position had not been filled (social studies, health, and physical education grades 6-8). The position requires health, physical education, and social studies certification and had been filled with a substitute who was certified in health and physical education. The current substitute was not certified in social studies and to date had not made application for a long term substitute permit in social studies (if he has completed 12 hours in social studies), neither has the county requested a waiver from Dr. Paine, State Superintendent, for the required social studies certification. It was stated that several different substitutes had been assigned to this position this year; therefore, with the current teacher, the county appeared to still be within its 30 days in which the non-certified teacher can teach. The position was posted and reposted (March 28, 2008). However, it was not posted at the time of the Education Performance Audit.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

COMPLIANCE. As per the professional personnel secretary, all positions were filled with certified teachers. One waiver approval for a teacher from the State Superintendent of Schools was on file.

Noncompliance. Service Personnel Job Descriptions:

- Job descriptions needed to be updated. No service personnel job description reviewed listed as a required qualification "Successful passage of the State Competency Test or presently or previously held the specific classification."

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

COMPLIANCE. This appeared to have been corrected. Job descriptions the Team reviewed included as a required qualification, "Successful passage of the State Competency Test or presently or previously held the specific classification."

Recommendation

Under qualifications of all service personnel the county should also include that the applicant must have obtained a high school diploma, general educational development certificate (GED), or is enrolled in an approved adult education course by the date of employment in preparation for obtaining a GED. Such employment is contingent upon continued enrollment or successful completion of the GED program. (W.Va. Code §18A-2-5.)

- W.Va. Code §18A-4-8b (g) (2) states that the amount of pay or other benefits are to be listed on the posting. This was not observed on the posting.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

COMPLIANCE. Amount of pay and other benefits were being listed on the postings.

- The job description for secretary listed under qualifications 1) requires extensive typing and office training and/or at least 5 years successful experience in similar work situation. 2) Typing speed at least 65 words per minute with a high degree of accuracy; shorthand or similar capabilities, etc. This appeared to be a violation of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7b (g) (2). Qualifications, as listed, do not require the state competency test for secretaries.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

This continued to be a possible violation of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7b (g) (2). The secretary job descriptions listed nine additional qualifications other than passing the competency test. Those included: Type 50 words a minute*, shorthand capabilities preferred, familiar with general office procedures, competency to do accounting, competent in operating a school computer, and competency in the operation of office machines in a school office.

The service personnel secretary stated that this is the number of minutes required on the State Competency Test for Secretaries. No attempt was made to confirm this, as it is to be a secured test and should not be reviewed by the evaluator.

The job description for cook had seven additional qualifications listed, which included successfully completing a 3-day Food Service Providers course at Fairmont State University, if new employee.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The certification requirement stated in the qualifications description on Preston County postings has been repositioned to the top portion of the description headings. Special Education postings now include the statement, “in the event there are no certified individuals applying we may employ someone eligible for a permit.”

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Correction Verified.

We always followed the seven factors in hiring professional personnel. The Superintendent has personally reviewed the factors with each principal and advised them on being consistent with their rankings during interviews. All rating

sheets/ matrices are reviewed by the Superintendent prior to recommending an individual to the Board to be employed. Matrix sheets are kept in the folders.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Not Corrected. As per the superintendent and one principal interviewed, the superintendent reviewed (at a principals' meeting) and asked principals to be consistent with their rankings. The superintendent stated that only four principals interviewed and completed matrices. Principals can still create their own ranking of candidates, but are to be consistent in doing so. Their method may be different than that of the superintendent, but as per the superintendent, the final results are usually the same.

Service Personnel Postings:

For service positions the salary is included on the page with the job description. It states what the employment term is (200 days) and that the salary is based on the county salary scale.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Correction verified.

Job descriptions have been updated to include the statement "Successful Completion of the State Competency Test is required". A copy of Preston County's Pay Scale and State Classification Areas for jobs is included with the postings.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

The statement "Successful Completion of the State Competency Test is required" was verified. A copy of the Preston County's Pay scale . . . was not observed.

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

The Team found the following inconsistencies with W.Va. Code §18A-3-2 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5202. Chart 22 explains the certification issues the Team observed through a detailed review of the certified list, WVEIS Master Course Schedule, and the West Virginia Department of Education Certification Database.

- Vacancy. Vacancy filled with (Certification: Elementary Education/ Science/ English). Not certified in special education. No certification pending for special education.
- As per the director of special education, six teachers were teaching students with autism; only one teacher was certified. No non-certified teacher had requested an

out-of-field authorization or permit. The director of special education said that all teachers were working toward autism certification.

- An individual who taught severe/profound students, was not certified for this assignment.
- As per the superintendent, out-of-field authorizations were not approved by the Preston County Board of Education.
- Coach (Non-paid) An individual was approved November 13, 2007, as an unpaid Coach for Girls' Basketball at Terra Alta Preston Middle School. He did not hold a valid coaching license. The individual applied to renew his coaching authorization on April 11, 2008 (after the basketball season had ended). His certification was approved April 14, 2008.
- A Coaches' data base was not on file in Preston County. Although the verification documents of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 ask who inputs data into the Coaches' database and how frequently is it updated, the personnel secretary and superintendent were not aware that there was such thing as a West Virginia Department of Education Coaches' Database.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. On January 27, 2009, a Coaches' Database was not on file and no one (superintendent or secretary) was knowledgeable of the database. During the OEPA visit, the executive secretary for professional personnel, contacted the West Virginia Department of Education to obtain information on how to complete the Coaches' Database. According to personnel at the Office of Professional Preparation, West Virginia Department of Education, the county had completed the Coaches' Database (2-12-09).

The principal of Preston High School, stated that he had four or five unpaid coaches. All hold teacher licenses. A list of unpaid coaches was not available. The substitute school principal at Central Preston stated that no unpaid coaches were at the school. The superintendent had stated that all coaches were certified, being recommended for employment, and only three unpaid coaches were in the county (all certified).

A review of employed coaches found that the cheerleader coach was hired on October 27, 2008; however, the coach did not receive verification of completion of the WVSSAC program and her paperwork was not sent to the West Virginia Department of Education until November 25, 2008. Due to problems with getting a good reading on her finger prints, the coach was not yet certified and the application continued to be considered "in process."

The superintendent was surprised to hear of this situation and said it just "slipped through the cracks."

Recommendations

1. Keep Coaches' Database up-to-date.
2. The superintendent needs to review the proposed agenda with the certification secretary prior to printing the final agenda and ensure that all employees required to hold a license are properly certified.
3. County personnel staff need to contact the West Virginia Department of Education Certification Office and receive written instructions on how to handle the certification of individuals for whom they are unable to get finger printing results due to technical problems.

Recruiting: The county superintendent states that the county has sufficient applicants for vacancies with the exception of autism. The county recruits teachers certified in autism by contacting colleges (local and out of state). No other formal recruiting was done.

Note: Staff members were not available in the county office to print the Highly Qualified Teachers Data from WVEIS. However, data were available to show that for the school year 2005-06, the county had 9.70 percent of its classes not taught by highly qualified teachers. For that year, only three schools Aurora Elementary, Fellowsville Elementary, and Valley Elementary had 100 percent of its classes taught by highly qualified teachers. Rowlesburg had 20.80 percent and Central Preston Middle had 16.70 percent of classes not taught by highly qualified teachers.

Chart 22

| School Location | Educator | WVEIS Assignment | Current Certification | Correction Needed |
|-----------------|----------|--|--|---|
| 070-103 | Educator | 4105-CMPSTN LOW 4106-CMPSTN LOW 4108-CMPSTN UP | Multi-Subjects HI | Needs one of the following endorsements (0800, 1000, or 1001) or correct with proper course code. |
| 070-204 | Educator | 2615-Preschool HNDCP | Social Studies 7-12 Rdg Spec Pk-AD Gifted 5-12 | Needs one of the following endorsements (4120, 4121, 4122 or 4123) or correct with proper course code. * Remains on schedule but no students assigned. |
| | Educator | No courses identified | Various | Identify courses or take out of Master Schedule |
| | Educator | Multiple | Multi-Subjects | Must have Autism |

| | | | | |
|---------|----------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| | | classes coded w/ U | Multi-Cat | endorsement or a BD or BD including autism endorsement * Remained on schedule and no students assigned. |
| 070-204 | Educator | Multiple classes coded w/ U | Multi-Subjects Permit for Multi-Cat | Must have Autism endorsement or a BD or BD including autism endorsement * Remained on schedule and no students assigned. |
| | Educator | All courses code with sixth digit I | Multi-Subjects | Must have endorsement, permit etc for I (Mental Impairment) |
| 070-206 | Educator | 2610-Preschool | RDG Spec PK-AD SLD BD | Needs Preschool Endorsement or correct to reflect accurate course code |
| 070-207 | Educator | No courses identified | Various | Identify courses or take out of Master Schedule |
| | Educator | Several courses coded with B, I and K in 6 th digit | Elem Early Ed | Needs endorsement for identified exceptionalities or Permit or correct course coding. |
| 070-401 | Educator | 6061-L | General Science Biology | Needs one of the following endorsements (4100, 4104, 4109) or correct with proper course code. |
| | Educator | 3008-C 7008/6008-0 | Multi-Subj Severe/Profound SLD BD MI | Need the following endorsement (4203) or correct with proper course code. For 7008 and 6008 add correct exceptionality to 6 th digit or needs Permit or endorsement for General Science |
| 070-401 | Educator | Coded as 215 "Special Education | Eng LA SLD BD | No courses coded for Spec Educ. |

| | | | | |
|---------|----------|---|---|--|
| | | Teacher" | | |
| | Educator | Various -R in 6 th digit | Elem | Needs College Sig on current Pending Permit request |
| 070-406 | Educator | 8007-0 ATT Director | Art | Needs Student Support Cert or Permit w/ Soc. Serv. Att. Director |
| 070-507 | Educator | 3032 AP Calc BC | Math | **BC not College Board Approved, only AB |
| | Educator | 6323 AP Physics B | Physics | **B not College Board Approved, only C |
| 070-507 | Educator | 1645 1647 1649 1651 1701-1702 | Math | Verify CISCO Training for 1645-1651 & Need the following endorsement (7030,7031,7033, 7035,7037, 7038, 7121,7131,7134 or 7212) or correct with proper course code for 1701-1702 |
| | Educator | 3511-0 | Art Industrial Arts | Course code requires Music and visual arts |
| 070-507 | Educator | 6201-0 | Multi-Cat | Correct 6 th digit to reflect T |
| | Educator | All courses coded w/ Z | First-Class/Full- Time Permit for Multi-Cat | If truly Alternative courses, needs Temp. Authorization for Alt. Ed, or correct sixth digit to reflect T |
| | Educator | No courses identified | Various | Identify courses or take out of Master Schedule |
| | Educator | All courses coded K | Multi-Cat | Needs one of the following endorsements (4100, 4104, 4109) or correct with proper course code. |
| | Educator | Course coded V in 6 th digit | Elem MR | Check position of V or correct course code |

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009**CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED.**

| School Location | Educator | Current Assignment | Current Endorsement(s) | Correction(s) |
|-----------------|----------|---|--|---|
| 070-103 | Educator | 4105 CMPSTN Low 4106 CMPSTN Low | Multi-Subjects Hearing Impaired | Course requires endorsement 1000 (English). Request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit OR Code 6 th digit for HI. As of 2/25/2009 course still reflected. |
| 070-104 | Educator | No courses identified | Permit Multi-categorical AND Math thru Alg. I Multi-Subjects MI | Assign courses or remove from Master Schedule. Verified as consultative, should be scheduled as 8017-T |
| 070-203 | Educator | 4801DR 4802 4800 | Multi-Subjects | Request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit for Multi-Categorical. No application pending as of 2/25/2009 |
| 070-204 | Educator | 2615-0 Preschool Handicapped | Social Studies Reading Specialist Gifted | Course requires endorsement 4122 (Preschool Special Needs). Request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit Still on schedule for Preschool, no reading verified as of 2/25/2009 |
| | Educator | 2755- | Music | Not a valid course code |
| | Educator | 4002-U English 2 | Multi-Subjects Multi-categorical | Course requires endorsement 4116 |

| | | | | |
|---------|----------|--|---|---|
| | | | | (Autism). Request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit. Still on master schedule as of 2/25/2009 (no students assigned, but causes a not highly qualified record.) |
| | Educator | 3004-R 3005-R 4001-R 4005-R 4401-R 4405-R 4804-R | Elementary K-6 | Course requires endorsement 4105 (SLD) or 4115 (Multi-categorical). Request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit. WVU states applied in Oct. to special education, but she has not completed their request in order to accept into program. |
| 070-206 | Educator | 2610-0 Preschool | SLD BD Reading Specialist | Request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit for Early Education. Still on schedule, but with no students assigned 2/25/2009. |
| 070-401 | Educator | 6008C0 Science 8 | Master Mentor Multi-Subjects SLD BD MI Severe Disabilities | Assign an appropriate 6 th digit exceptionality code (it is currently in the 5 th) AND request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit for visually impaired |
| | Educator | 6007C-0 Science 7 7007C-0 World Geo 7 | Family Consumer Sciences AND Out-of-Field for: Multi-categorical | Assign an appropriate 6 th digit exceptionality code (it is currently in the 5 th) AND request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit for visually impaired |

| | | | | |
|---------|----------|---|---|--|
| | | | | impaired **Note says collaborative, should be course code 8017-(6 th digit) |
| | Educator | 6006C0 Science 6 | Social Studies AND Out-of-Field for: Multi-categorical | Assign an appropriate 6 th digit exceptionality code (it is currently in the 5 th) AND request Out-of-Field or First- Class/Full-Time Permit for something other than multi- categorical **Note says collaborative, should be course code 8017-(6 th digit) |
| | Educator | 6006-0 Science 6 7006-0 World Regions 6 | Out-of-Field for: Multi-categorical | Assign an appropriate 6 th digit exceptionality code **Note says collaborative, should be course code 8017- (6 th digit) |
| 070-405 | Educator | 7825 Study Hall | N/A | Study Hall is not instructional time. Should not be a course. |
| | Educator | 7825 Study Hall | N/A | Study Hall is not instructional time. Should not be a course. Still reflected on master schedule, but with no students assigned as of 2/25/2009 |
| | Educator | 7825 Study Hall | N/A | Study Hall is not instructional time. Should not be a course. |
| | Educator | 3008-0 Pregeom/Alg | Cannot locate certification | Need social security number to assess. |
| 070-507 | Educator | 6321-0 AP Chem 6322-0 AP Chem Lab | Chemistry | Verify AP Approved |
| | Educator | 3031-0 AP Calc | Math | Verify AP Approved |

| | | | | |
|--|----------|--|---|--|
| | | 3032-0 AP Calc | | |
| | Educator | 6323-0 AP Physics | Physics | Verify AP Approved |
| | Educator | 1645-0 through 1701-0 | Math | CISCO courses require a career technical certificate or permit. Apply using the V9 and V10 . |
| | Educator | 0902-Z 3024-Z 3042-Z 3043-Z 4009-Z 4010-Z 4011-Z 4012-Z 6011-Z 6021-Z 6201-Z 6733-Z 6909-Z 7010-Z 7011-Z 7031-Z 7109-Z 7653-Z 7676-Z 7890-Z | First-Class/Full-Time Permit for: Multi-categorical | For Z code would need full certification and Form 38 Alternate Education Authorization. Perhaps code with a T, if a multi-categorical class. **Not eligible to be certified to teach Z course |
| | Educator | 4831-5 Asst Rdg. | English LA Multi-categorical | Courses codes with K require endorsement for severe disabilities, request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit No pending application as of 2/25/2009 |
| | Educator | 0900-K 3021-K 4831-K 6161-K 7009-K 7631-K 78900-K 8017-K | | Courses codes with K require endorsement for severe disabilities, request Out-of-Field or First-Class/Full-Time Permit **Permit submitted for Multi-Categorical will not cover K (6 th digit) |
| | Educator | 3113-V | Credential OK | V for Virtual school |

| | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------|--|--|
| | | 3113-3 Basic Math | | coding goes in 5 th position and/or correct with appropriate special education exceptionality code. |
|--|--|-------------------|--|--|

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Individual coding errors will be corrected. All certificates and licenses are reviewed regularly to determine accuracy. Citizen Coaches are not hired until they have completed their paper work. The same is true for other professional positions. Names are withheld from the agenda until candidates have completed their first set of paperwork for certifications.

A listing of teachers with “Out of field” authorizations is provided to the Board at the end of the second month.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009**CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED.**

There has been no change in recruitment efforts by Preston County Schools. The county continues to hire teachers on out-of-field authorization. On December 22, 2008 (more than one month after the end of the second month), a list of names of individuals teaching on an out-of-field authorization was presented to the board for approval.

The superintendent stated that hard-to-fill positions are posted on the West Virginia Department of Education Jobs Bank; however, no documentation was in the files (copy of the Jobs Bank posting) to verify this.

Recommendations

- Attend teacher recruitment fairs, especially West Virginia University and Fairmont State University.
- Provide training to the Certification Secretary on West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5202 and WVEIS concerning how to print data which will be helpful to the secretary and the superintendent.

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)

The Team reviewed new teacher hire logs for 2005-2006, 2006-2007, and 2007-2008 to determine the 0-3 years experience for required observations/evaluations; and compiled an alphabetical listing of personnel and matched the list with current personnel files.

The Team also reviewed personnel evaluations for professional personnel with 4-5 years experience, other professional personnel, support personnel, service personnel,

coaches, etc., to determine that the evaluation process was conducted according to W.Va. Code §18A-2-12, West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310, and county policy.

1. One teacher in the 3-5 years status had one evaluation for 2003-2004, no evaluations for 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007.
2. One teacher who was in his third year of teaching had only one evaluation and should have had two evaluations.
3. One administrator was not evaluated during the 2006 and 2007 years in accordance with the policy for evaluating administrators.
4. Professional support personnel were evaluated using a "performance evaluation form" rather than by writing mutually agreed upon goals for the year and being evaluated on the meeting of those goals.
5. One professional support staff member was evaluated as an administrator and the goals were not agreed on until November 19, 2007, missing the November 1st deadline.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Evaluation Policy, including observations, was addressed at our May 21, 2008 Principals Meeting and again at our August 11, 2008 Opening of the Year Principals meeting. All administrators were reminded to review Policy 5310 and establish a schedule for their observations and evaluations. We also asked schools to check their file to locate copies of missing evaluations. Principals will submit evaluation schedules to the Assistant Superintendent for review.

The Superintendent has completed the goal setting conference for the Assistant Superintendent. The Assistant Superintendent has scheduled the remaining administrators' goal setting conferences for September 29-October 3, 2008. Midyear and end of the year conferences have been scheduled. Both the Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent review data and set priorities for goal setting.

Service evaluation policy and processes have been reviewed with supervisors. A check list for submittal is being prepared. District Administrators will conduct periodic reviews of files to determine if they are in accordance with state policy.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED.

The Team reviewed a random sampling of professional personnel evaluations with the following results.

1. All teacher evaluations reviewed in the 0-2 years status met policy requirements and timelines.
2. One teacher in the 3-5 years status did not have an evaluation for the 2007-2008 year.

3. Evaluations for central office administrators and school principals met policy requirements.
4. The superintendent's evaluation met law and policy requirements.

A random review of service personnel evaluations produced the following findings:

1. The three bus operators reviewed had not been evaluated since 2001.
2. A secretary had no evaluation for the 2006-2007 year.
3. One custodian did not sign his 06-08-07 evaluation.
4. The three maintenance personnel reviewed had not been evaluated since 06-19-03.
5. One cook should have had two evaluations for each of the 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 years, but only had one evaluation for each year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. Preston County Board of Education Policy on evaluation of service personnel states "a. For service personnel with 0-2 years of experience, a minimum of two written evaluations per year are required. b. For service personnel with three or more years of experience, a minimum of one written evaluation per year is required."

The Team reviewed evaluations of personnel in the maintenance and transportation departments and a sampling of personnel in other classifications with the following results.

1. No evaluations for the 2007-2008 year were found in the personnel files of bus operators. (Note: Later in the review process the Team was presented a packet of evaluations of bus operators, mechanics, and the secretary of the Transportation Department for the 2007-2008 school year. The service personnel evaluation form provides for ratings of three performance standards – Work Habits, Work Performance, and Professional Development. Personnel are to be rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory with a place provided on the form for comments on each standard. ALL evaluations provided for personnel in the Transportation Department were marked identically (satisfactory) on all three performance standards and no comments were provided on any standard on any evaluation. Employee and evaluator signatures on most evaluations were not dated. Those evaluations that had dated signatures all had the same date – February 18, 2009 – the day of the Education Performance Audit.)
2. No evaluations for the 2007-2008 year for the six Maintenance Department employees were found in the personnel files.
3. In the sampling of the other personnel classifications, the Team noted the following deficiencies. The cafeteria manager at Bruceton School had no evaluations for the 2007-2008 year; two custodians at Bruceton School had no evaluations for the 2007-2008 year; one secretary at Bruceton School had no evaluation for the 2007-2008 year.

The Team was told that all principals and supervisors have check lists of personnel who are under their supervision that are required to be evaluated. All principals and supervisors are to submit the personnel evaluations to the central office at the end of each year as part of their end of the year school closing process. It appeared that whatever the principals and supervisors present as their personnel evaluations at the end of the year are accepted without anyone checking to ensure all required personnel evaluations are in the submissions made by the principals and supervisors.

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)

Preston County listed 19 beginning teachers who had mentors. Vacancies for mentors were not posted. The county had a list of teachers who successfully passed the mentor training. Once a mentor is needed the principal selects a person from this list to serve as a mentor for a beginning teacher. The Preston County Board of Education approved mentors for beginning teachers on November 26, 2007. All mentors were approved by the board.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

All mentor positions were posted for the 2008-2009 school year for each beginning teacher. Mentors must have completed the required training through the Center for Professional Development. Placements are based on subject area and/or grade taught, and school assignment.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. Preston County listed 23 beginning teachers who had mentors. Mentors complete the Mentor Training provided through RESA VII. A mentor trainer and teacher at Preston High School trained mentors during the summer. The posting for mentors was for a five-day period and closed on September 1, 2008. Since that time, the county has hired mentors who applied during the posting period as well as those who were recruited and who did not apply during the posting period.

As per school principals and teachers interviewed, the mentor(s) did not have released or available time to carry out the mandates of school law as it relates to mentor observations of the classroom teaching skills of the beginning teacher for at least one hour per week during the first half of the school year or, in most cases, one hour every two weeks during the second half of the school year. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b (a) (4) (5). Mentors (confirmed by beginning teachers and principals) said they attempt to see the beginning teacher before or after school, during lunch, or whenever they can find time to do so. As per the principal, a music teacher at Tunnelton-Denver Elementary assigned to the school for ten weeks was not seen by the mentor teacher during that time period. The mentor of the music teacher is not assigned to that school. Also, concerns existed with providing sufficient mentoring assistance, especially when the new teacher teaches special education and the mentor is not a special education teacher. This was a concern expressed by the mentor and the school principal.

The Team found that the mentors and principals knew little or were not aware of a Professional Support Team which was to be chaired by the principal. (W.Va. Code §18A-3-2b (a) (1) (6)). No case was found during the interviews with principals and mentors that the Support Team was meeting monthly and carrying out its responsibilities.

Principals signed a county verification form giving beginning teachers full professional status indicating that the beginning teacher had successfully completed the internship program and had demonstrated competence as a professional education per §18A-3-2c, when Preston County had not implemented the program according to the requirements of school law.

The assistant superintendent who supervises the Beginning Teacher/Principal Programs, presented an agenda of a Beginning Teacher Orientation which was held at 3:30 p.m. August 21, 2008. A copy of W. Va. Code §18A-3-2b was provided to the beginning teachers/principals which he stated is the county's program. There was no evidence that orientations have been held since that date for beginning teachers hired after August 21, 2008.

Recommendations

1. Released time be provided to the mentor as scheduled by the principal so that the mentor can carry out his/her duties as stated in W.Va. Code§18A-3-2b.
2. A record of dates of observations of classroom teaching skills be documented and reviewed by the principal prior to the monthly Professional Support Team Meeting.
3. Principals schedule and hold monthly Professional Support Team meetings and carry out the duties of the team.
4. Work to recruit mentor teachers who teach in the same or similar subject areas. When the mentor is not teaching the same or similar subject area as the beginning teacher, the mentor or professional support team should provide in-service for the beginning teacher in the areas in which the mentor is unable to provide.
5. Post for mentor teachers following the hiring of the beginning teacher or have an open-ended posting.
6. The assistant superintendent needs to monitor the implementation of the Beginning Teacher Program to ensure that it is being carried out according to school law. This may require some written documentation from the mentor and principal.

7.7. SAFE, DRUG FREE, VIOLENCE FREE, AND DISCIPLINED SCHOOLS

7.7.2. Policy implementation. The county and schools implement: a policy governing disciplinary procedures; a policy for grading consistent with student confidentiality; policies governing student due process rights and nondiscrimination; the Student Code of Conduct policy; the Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment, and Violence policy; an approved policy on tobacco use; an approved policy on substance abuse; and an approved policy on AIDS Education. (W.Va. Code §18A-5-1 and §18-8-8; Policy 2421; Policy 2422.4; Policy 2422.5; Policy 4373; Policy 2515)

W.Va. Code §18A-1-12a (17) states, “All official and enforceable personnel policies of a county board must be written and made available to its employees.”

Recommendation

Preston County’s operative personnel evaluation policy given to the Team was dated September 1999 and was not in compliance with the West Virginia Board of Education personnel evaluation policy which was revised September 11, 2006. Although Preston County had undergone a major policy revision process, this policy remained as active. The Team recommended that an updated personnel policy replace the September 1999 policy.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Personnel policies have been updated and are posted on the Preston County Board of Education website. Policies will be followed as monitored by county staff.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. No additional review warranted.

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.”

It appeared that an effective working relationship existed between the Preston County Board of Education and the superintendent. The following commentary illustrates ways in which board of education and superintendent leadership may be enhanced.

Findings

1. The required meetings with the board and each school’s Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) were not held as required by W.Va. Code §18-5-14 and §18-5A-2. Meetings were not conducted with each LSIC, a joint meeting was held with all the county schools’ LSICs and groups were formed based on categories, i.e., business/industry, teachers, parents, school personnel, etc., with each group meeting with one board member. After this meeting, the concerns of each group were summarized. The board did not receive and discuss the schools’ plans with the Local School Improvement Councils. There is no evidence that the Local School Improvement Councils had a quorum of their membership present for annual meetings with the board.
2. The Preston County Board of Education had a policy concerning delegations addressing the board that limits the time of presentations to five minutes. The board did not enforce the policy or take appropriate actions to grant waivers to

policy when needed. Board meetings would be less lengthy and more productive if the presiding officer followed the board's own policy.

3. The superintendent was evaluated by the board on March 14, 2005 (2004-2005) and on June 30, 2004 (2003-2004), but no evaluations of the superintendent were found for 2005-2006 or 2006-2007. The Team did not see a list of goals for the 2006-2007 year.

The superintendent's goals are to be annually established by September 15th, and the goals or objectives are to be written. The evaluation is to be completed by June 30th each year except when the superintendent's contract is expiring, and then the evaluation is to be completed by March 1. (In the interview with the board member, the Team asked about the superintendent's evaluation, and the board member did not remember them doing one.) If the superintendent's evaluation had been properly done, it would be in the file and goals or objectives would clearly be a part of it. Therefore, goals had not been established for 2007-2008.

4. March 24 Preston County Board of Education minutes showed personnel recommendations (transfers/reduction in force). Of four personnel on the list, three requested a hearing. The board called an executive session. When the meeting resumed, the superintendent revised his recommendation. In an interview with a member of the board of education, the Team inquired about this action and was told the board would not vote for the transfers. Not following the superintendent's personnel recommendation resulted in at least one grievance and potentially more by other personnel who were transferred. This action has the potential to involve administrative time in resolving the grievances as well as additional expenses for a county of limited resources.
5. Related to Number 4, the Preston County School System does not have an excess levy to support personnel salaries and the school maintenance program. Local board of education decisions as in the situation noted above, directly affect the effective and efficient use of scarce resource.
6. Preston County has requested to amend its Comprehensive Education Plan (CEFP) in which four modular units were purchased to house Central Middle School's students and be located at the Preston High School site. Middle school students are currently in classrooms at the high school. The current condition of the modular units has not undergone all agency inspections to ensure they meet all the safety and health requirements. The high school enrollment and percent utilization show that the facility could accommodate these students. Resistance from educators has presented obstacles to this course of action. A review of an architect's examination of the modular units and photographs showed the units to be substandard. It seems that the superintendent and board of education would consider cost effectiveness, the condition of the modular units, and the best educational environment for students. It is recommended that the Superintendent of Preston County and the Preston County Board of Education seek assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Facilities, and develop a cost effective solution to this issue.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Preston County Board of Education has revised its Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) meetings to occur at each school site. See the following schedule.

| | |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| October 9, 2008 | Fellowsville and Rowlesburg |
| October 13, 2008 | Preston High and Central Preston |
| October 14, 2008 | Aurora and Terra Alta/East Preston |
| October 16, 2008 | West Preston and Valley |
| October 28, 2008 | Tunnelton-Denver |
| October 30, 2008 | Bruceton and Kingwood |

The feedback received from the LSICs was positive toward the group meeting. Each school submitted reports related to their schools before the group meeting and were provided to the BOE with agendas. LSICs meet in different groups. Then the LSIC members could ask questions of the board. Principals and LSIC chairs have been informed that a quorum is a must.

The Superintendents' evaluations for each year were located and replaced in the file. Goals were identified and approved in the BOE minutes, August 11, 2008 for the current school year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION PARTIALLY FOLLOWED.

1. The OEPA Team reviewed the minutes of board of education meetings that recorded meetings with each school's Local School Improvement Council (LSIC) during the 2008-2009 school year. The minutes recorded the attendance of LSIC members to ensure a quorum of the membership attended the meetings with the board.
2. The Preston County Board of Education had made attempts to enforce the time limits of presentations to five minutes with some success, but the board is still not taking appropriate actions to grant waivers to the policy when needed. With the defeat of the bond levy and the controversy surrounding the financial audit for the 2007 fiscal year, the board meetings are somewhat chaotic which indicated a need for the board president and board to have better control of the meetings. The minutes of the board meeting on January 26, 2009, showed a person questioning the board following an executive session about what happened in the executive session. This was not during the part of the agenda when the board heard concerns from the public and is not permitted by the board's rules for conducting meeting. Minutes of this meeting showed the response from a board member to the speaker.
3. The Board of Education performed the required evaluation of the Superintendent on June 23, 2008. The evaluation had the goals for the Superintendent for the 2008-2009 year attached.

NEW ISSUES

The Team interviewed three board members and the county superintendent February 19, 2009. The Team's chair interviewed the Board President January 28, 2009. The Team reviewed agendas and minutes of the Preston County Board of Education; interviewed a principal, and county office staff; reviewed relevant memoranda, letters, and documents; conferred with Team members checking Facilities, Finance, Personnel, Accountability, and individual school reviews.

Multiple sources were used to draw the following conclusions about leadership conditions present in the Preston County School System.

1. Preston County Board of Education meeting minutes were not signed by the Board President on the following dates: April 7, 2008; April 28, 2008; May 10, 2008; July 7, 2008; September 4, 2008; and December 8, 2008.
2. Preston County Board of Education meeting minutes and attendance at the December 12, 2008 board meeting indicated that the current board of education chair does not always follow the "rules" for conducting a board of education meeting. At the December 12, 2008, meeting, the chair allowed comments from the public to speak who were not registered. The West Virginia Department of Education staff member observed shouting from two board members responding to the public. Some of the public members began yelling and two were ejected from the meeting. No one said "let's get in order" or took control of the meeting.
3. Critical facility issues are present throughout the county. The situation with the modulars for Central Preston Middle School students who were relocated at Preston High School has taken too long. Animosity is prevalent at the high school and the lack of cooperation by the administrator has affected the basic facilities for the middle school students and teachers. Current central office administration has not intervened to cause this situation to work. Custodial service for the middle school continues to be deficient. The January 12, 2009 board minutes direct the county superintendent to "assign two custodians at Central Preston Middle School." As of the review date, it was reported that custodians said they didn't have to do what the middle school principal asked.
4. Personnel issues that continue point up to a need for greater leadership. Finance issues are at a critical level and need immediate attention.
5. Curriculum leadership and direction is lacking from the county office level. The individual with this job description was unable to explain specifically what the county and schools needs were and how they were being addressed.

It is the position of the Team that leadership is deficient at the board and superintendent level. Too many laws and policies are being ignored or disregarded.

8.1. INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY

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.

There was no central office curriculum director. The curriculum and instruction duties were divided among central office staff. No one person was responsible for leadership in curriculum development.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Assistant Superintendent has been assigned the duties related to curriculum and instruction and will be monitored by the Superintendent.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED. A void continued to exist in curriculum leadership.

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

Eight of Preston County's 11 schools are below the recommended 80 percent utilization capacity: five schools at 55-59 percent utilization; two schools at 69 percent utilization; two schools at 75-77 percent utilization; two schools at 84-88 percent utilization; and one school at 92 percent utilization.

The grade levels in Preston County's schools vary with six different configurations. These include three K-5 schools; one K-6 school; four K-8 schools; two 6-8 schools; and one 9-12 school. This diverse structure may contribute to a loss of effectiveness and efficiency in operating and maintaining facilities and providing equal curriculum opportunities and support services.

All 11 school structures needed an aggressive maintenance plan, and nine of the 11 needed an aggressive housekeeping program. The facilities in Preston County have various deficiencies and all are old and the modular units at least two schools are unpleasant for teachers and students. Many of the schools have separate buildings with no covered walkway for students and staff. A kindergarten program at one school does not have sinks or restrooms in the classrooms. Science laboratories in the high school do not have hot and cold water, a fire blanket, and other essential equipment. Many of these issues make it difficult for the county to comply with the Safe Schools Act and a lock down situation.

The current condition of the facilities in Preston County impedes the delivery of the West Virginia Board of Education content standards and objectives at all grade levels.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Preston County Schools is utilizing levy funds to address maintenance and facility issues at each of the schools. We are currently in the second year of funding with this levy. The levy generates \$1,500,000 a year for each of three years to be directed at only maintenance. Each school's Local School Improvement Council submitted a prioritized list to be addressed. Maintenance staff reviewed the list and then it was presented to the Board. Local School Improvement Council members are revising lists and will submit their new list during October 2008.

Additionally, a sink has been installed in one laboratory and a classroom has been converted into another laboratory. Fire blankets have been requisitioned for science laboratories and delivery is imminent.

Currently, a bond will be placed before the voters in the General Election in the amount of \$49,995,000 for the improvement of facilities. Contingent upon passage of the bond, the School Building Authority has granted Preston County \$19,800,000 additional funds. The plan calls for building two new Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools and additions and repairs for other schools in the county.

All recommendations are being reviewed and we will attempt to address as many of the issues as we can. Some of the recommendations are difficult for us to achieve with the facility, number of schools and personnel needed to operate them, and the financial constraints of the county.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED. The condition of the facilities in Preston remains as previously stated. Only minor improvements have been made.

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.

The assignment of school principals affects Preston County Schools' ability to provide equitable and sufficient administrative services in schools to establish a high quality curriculum and provide the leadership for school improvement. For example, three of the twelve schools have enrollments of approximately less than 150 students and have full-time principals while the largest elementary schools with around 600+ students has only one full-time principal and a full time secretary. The central office staff reported that another school with a high enrollment has one principal. The larger school experienced achievement deficiencies on the statewide assessment program and would benefit from administrative support. The assignment of principals at the elementary schools needs to be reviewed to maximize effectiveness and efficiency.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Preston County has placed a half-time principal in the two larger elementary schools that needed administrative support to provide the leadership necessary for school improvement efforts. Following West Virginia code inhibits the ability for small schools to share principals.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

CORRECTIVE ACTION PARTIALLY FOLLOWED. A half-time principal has been added to the two larger elementary schools. According to the superintendent, the county is running over in personnel and it is going to be difficult to continue to operate in the black with personnel overages.

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

Over the last three years, Preston County has realized a slight, but not significant, increase in student enrollment.

The superintendent stated that the county lost 52 students last year. Enrollment was currently 4850. Adding pre-school programs/students has helped with the enrollment.

Itinerant personnel serve smaller elementary schools. According to the superintendent all schools meet the requirements of physical education.

Programs of study were not consistent at the middle schools. For example, Home Economics is offered at South Preston and West Preston Schools, while Technical Education is offered at East Preston Schools. These programs will phase out at the respective schools with the retirement of the teachers who provide the program. This is not due to a lack of need for the programs in the middle schools, but due to a lack of funds to continue to offer the programs.

According to the superintendent all required programs of study are offered at the high school. Dual credit is offered through Fairmont in English and Social Studies. AP classes are offered at Preston High School.

Edge credit has been added this year 2008-09.

The county uses Federal Funds (Title I, Title II, Special Education, Medicaid, etc.) to help fund personnel. The following programs/positions are funded/contracted through RESA and are not listed on WVEIS: School Improvement Specialist, five 21st Century Project Coordinators, Safe and Drug Free Schools Coordinator, Occupational Therapist, Part-time Secretary (food-services). Some of the above positions are paid at an hourly rate,

while others are paid at a flat rate. Other support personnel, such as the school psychologist, are provided through contracted services. As per the superintendent, currently, there are sufficient personnel to meet the county needs. The Team disagrees regarding the assignment of one principal in each of the two larger schools and the lack of a curriculum director.

Using Title II Funds, three academic coaches were added. (Bruceton, Valley and Kingwood). Two Digital Age Technician Specialists were hired countywide. An assistant principal was hired to serve on a part-time basis Terra Alta and Kingwood Schools.

However, to better serve the students, and to better equalize the caseload among teachers, the superintendent states that the county needs another counselor, nurse, high school science teacher, middle school language arts teacher, and alternative education teacher. One counselor, for example, now serves four schools.

To determine the county's staffing needs, in later winter the superintendent has each principal to provide him with a list of his/her needs for the upcoming year based upon projected enrollment, special student needs, etc. Once all those needs are collected the superintendent works with his administrative staff to determine personnel for the 2008-2009 school year.

Recommendations:

1. Update County Policy. As per county policy, Personnel Management, 8-18, dated May 23, 1983, and current practice, jobs are posted during the school months in schools, outside the board office, in the lower hall of the board office, school bus garage and in the supply room. Since vacancies are also announced on the county's personnel hotline and placed on the county and state web page, the county needs to update its policy to include the new posting areas.
2. Revise Letter to Unsuccessful Applicants. A letter is sent to all individuals who make application for service positions who are not accepted for the position. However, to meet the requirements of school law, the letter needs to be expanded to include "the status of his/her application." See §18A-4-8b(g) (4).
3. Certified Mail. Although the service personnel secretary stated that they met the requirement of sending all employees on the reduction in force (RIF) list certified copies of the postings, she had not filed her return notices in a matter to verify that this had been done. The Team recommended that the Certified Receipt be filed with a copy of the posting and placed in a special file or in the employee's personnel file.
4. The Team recommended strongly that all postings be numbered by fiscal year, location, and actual posting number. Each posting should be kept in a separate file with a copy of the posting, job description, verification of posting on-line, applications of all applicants and hiring documentation (matrix, grid, etc.) to determine the most qualified candidate, as well as name of candidate who was recommended for the position.
5. List the "required" certification on the posting or job description. Currently, the certification is not listed on the posting. However, the job description does note that the applicant must be certified for the appropriate subject area.

6. The County should be consistent in its selection of applicants by having a "county system" to evaluate candidates, instead of each principal using his/her own method of determining qualifications of a candidate.
7. The hiring forms need to be revised. More information should be obtained on the bidding sheet reflecting the applicant's qualifications as listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a. The name of the vacancy (posting) and location should be on all rating sheets. Any matrix used to compare qualifications of applicants should note that evaluations must be completed as per §18A-2-12, etc.
8. Teachers, including substitute going into a long-term position, who are not certified for the position they are being assigned, should not be placed on the board agenda for approval until they have, at a minimum, paperwork in process for a permit or out of field authorization. This will ensure that their certification does not fall through the crack.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

1. **The Preston County Board contracted a retired assistant superintendent to update policies and place on the BOE website.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

Updated policies were reviewed for the area of personnel. Policies were well-written and include both State Board policies and relevant school laws. The superintendent stated that he was not sure if the principals were familiar with the new policies . . . or had looked at them on-line. However, the principal of Bruceton School did say that he had reviewed the policies and had input into writing the policies. He also stated that some of the policies have been covered at principals' meetings.

R-8-2-1 states: "Master list of people who request a transfer of their intent form for the follow school year. These people who have requested transfer to specific schools or jobs will be considered when such opening occurs. This is also written on the back of the service personnel postings. ***Implementation of this policy would eliminate applicants from being required to apply for a position only during the posting period.*** The superintendent stated that he didn't know this process of applying for jobs was still in the policy and was to be removed. He plans to discontinue this practice.

Hiring forms have been reviewed and updated.

NONCOMPLIANCE. The superintendent stated that he had not updated the forms as he believed the county was going with RESA to implement a new program for accepting applications which would have required new application forms. That has not happened yet.

2. **The service personnel secretary has developed a process to file return notices. The Certified Receipt is filed with a copy of the posting.**

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

COMPLIANCE. The service personnel secretary keeps a copy of receipts of certified mail on file.

3. The service personnel secretary numbers postings by fiscal year, location, and actual posting number. Postings are kept in a separate file with a copy of the posting, job description, verification of posting on-line, applications of all applicants, hiring documentation, and the name of candidate who was recommended for the position.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

With the exception of verification of on-line posting; this has been met. However, previous postings are still on line and can be reviewed.

4. Required certification is listed on the posting or job description.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

The required certification is listed on the majority of postings which is now the procedure. However, when there is more than one certification that can meet the state certification requirements, all certification(s) should be listed. Also, the endorsement grade levels need to be listed with the certification.

5. The superintendent has personally reviewed the seven factors with each principal and advised them on being consistent with their rankings during interview. All rating sheets/ matrix are reviewed by the Superintendent.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. The superintendent stated that he reviewed the seven factors with principals and asked them to be more consistent with "their" ratings. However, they can still determine how a candidate is rated. The superintendent reviews all rating sheets/matrices and makes his own, using "his own" ratings. Required data are not collected on the bid sheet used and candidates cannot be given an equal opportunity to be judged with other applicants.

6. The hiring forms have been revised.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

(No.)

7. Teachers and substitute teachers going into a long-term position, who are not certified for the position they are being assigned, are not placed on the board agenda for approval until they have paperwork in process for a permit or out of field authorization.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW – January 26-28, 2009 and February 17-18, 2009

NONCOMPLIANCE. Most agenda items concerning hiring of employees state that the hiring is "contingent upon proper certification and clearance of any criminal convictions as listed in House Bill 146."

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.

Preston County is limited in its capacity to improve facilities and student, school performance of the special education subgroups.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Preston County lacks the capacity to improve facilities and student and school performance of the special education and economically disadvantaged subgroups.

PRESTON COUNTY SUMMARY (2008)

The Education Performance Audit of the county school district practices in Preston County revealed that four major issues that affect the provision of a thorough and efficient education system.

Issues included:

1. Limited fiscal resources.
2. Numerous schools in Preston County exhibited health and safety issues, i.e., not handicapped accessible, general maintenance and cleanliness, detached buildings, deteriorating conditions, portable units, HVAC systems were long past their useful life, and many schools failed to provide facilities for 21st Century Learning Skills.
3. No curriculum director and full-time principals in small schools.
4. Leadership. Role and functions of local board of education and superintendent.

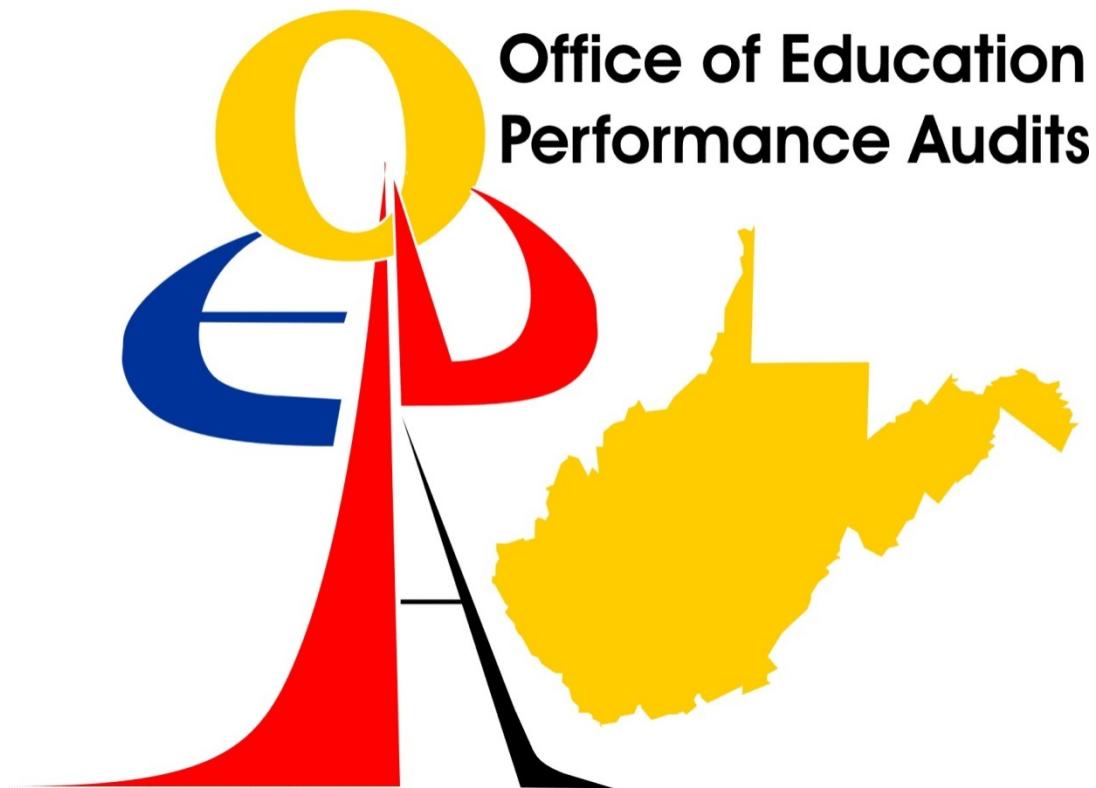
It is the recommendation of the Office of Education Performance Audits that the Full Approval status of the Preston County School System be continued and the West Virginia Department of Education offices already involved in the technical assistance continue their involvement with the county and the county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report. Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5. (p) School system approval (1).

Preston County Summary (2009)

Conditions within Preston County Schools continue to worsen. Academic progress has not changed substantially since the last review with Low SES and special education subgroups showing continuing problems. Facilities continue to impede the delivery of a thorough and efficient educational system. Finance irregularities are at a critical level that needs immediate attention. Personnel hiring, certification, and evaluation issues continue as noncompliances.

The recent failure of a school bond by a narrow margin has compounded the county's problems in addressing facilities and learning conditions at several schools. Yet another middle school has retreated into temporary facilities that are inadequate. The board and superintendent are struggling with constituent concerns and are having difficulties holding civil meetings amidst the chaotic and distracting conditions.

Students are not being provided a thorough and efficient system of schools as provided in law. It is recommended that the Preston County School System be placed on nonapproval status and that a state of emergency be declared. It is further recommended that delaying intervention for any period of time would not be in the best interest of the students. An immediate intervention into the Preston County School System is recommended in order to cause improvements in instructional programs, personnel, finances, and facilities within the county.



**Follow-up Education Performance Audit Report
FOR
KINGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PRESTON COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM**

MARCH 2009

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Kingwood Elementary School in Preston County on April 8, 2008.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Kingwood Elementary School in Preston County was conducted January 26, 2009. The purpose of the follow-up was to verify correction of the findings identified during the original Education Performance Audit. The review was in accordance with West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 which specify that a school that meets or exceeds the performance and progress standards but has other deficiencies shall remain on full accreditation status and a county school district shall remain on full approval status for the remainder of the accreditation period and shall have an opportunity to correct those deficiencies. The Code and policy include the provision that a school "... does not have any deficiencies which would endanger student health or safety or other extraordinary circumstances as defined by the West Virginia Board of Education."

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

70 PRESTON COUNTY

John Lofink, Superintendent

204 KINGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Jan Nichols, Principal

Grades K - 05

Enrollment 598 (2nd month 2005-2006 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2005-2006

| Group | Number Enrolled for FAY | Number Enrolled on Test Week | Number Tested | Participation Rate | Percent Proficient | Met Part. Rate Standard | Met Assessment Standard | Met Subgroup Standard |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mathematics | | | | | | | | |
| All | 256 | 271 | 267 | 98.52 | 76.98 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| White | 251 | 264 | 260 | 98.48 | 77.32 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Black | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Hispanic | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Indian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Asian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Low SES | 145 | 157 | 155 | 98.72 | 67.83 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Spec. Ed. | 59 | 64 | 61 | 95.31 | 51.78 | Yes | Confidence Interval | ✓ |
| LEP | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Reading/Language Arts | | | | | | | | |
| All | 256 | 271 | 268 | 98.89 | 81.42 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| White | 251 | 264 | 261 | 98.86 | 81.85 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Black | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Hispanic | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Indian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Asian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Low SES | 145 | 157 | 155 | 98.72 | 72.72 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Spec. Ed. | 59 | 64 | 62 | 96.87 | 49.12 | Yes | No | ✗ |
| LEP | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.8%**

70 PRESTON COUNTY
 John Lofink, Superintendent
204 KINGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
 Jan Nichols, Principal
 Grades K - 05
 Enrollment 585 (2nd month 2006-2007 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2006-2007

| Group | Number Enrolled for FAY | Number Enrolled on Test Week | Number Tested | Participation Rate | Percent Proficient | Met Part. Rate Standard | Met Assessment Standard | Met Subgroup Standard |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mathematics | | | | | | | | |
| All | 256 | 272 | 269 | 98.89 | 79.44 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| White | 253 | 269 | 266 | 98.88 | 79.60 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Black | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Hispanic | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Indian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Asian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Low SES | 136 | 145 | 142 | 97.93 | 71.42 | Yes | Confidence Interval | ✓ |
| Spec. Ed. | 61 | 71 | 68 | 95.77 | 53.44 | Yes | No | X |
| LEP | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Reading/Language Arts | | | | | | | | |
| All | 256 | 272 | 268 | 98.52 | 80.95 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| White | 253 | 269 | 265 | 98.51 | 81.12 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Black | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Hispanic | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Indian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Asian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Low SES | 136 | 145 | 142 | 97.93 | 70.67 | Yes | Confidence Interval | ✓ |
| Spec. Ed. | 61 | 71 | 68 | 95.77 | 48.27 | Yes | No | X |
| LEP | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.3%

70 PRESTON COUNTY
 John Lofink, Superintendent
204 KINGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
 Jan Nichols, Principal
 Grades K - 05
 Enrollment 602 (2nd month 2007-2008 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2007-2008

| Group | Number Enrolled for FAY | Number Enrolled on Test Week | Number Tested | Participation Rate | Percent Proficient | Met Part. Rate Standard | Met Assessment Standard | Met Subgroup Standard |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Mathematics | | | | | | | | |
| All | 265 | 272 | 270 | 99.26 | 77.94 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| White | 261 | 268 | 266 | 99.25 | 78.76 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Black | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Hispanic | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Indian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Asian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Low SES | 131 | 135 | 134 | 99.25 | 70.00 | Yes | Confidence Interval | ✓ |
| Spec. Ed. | 71 | 72 | 71 | 98.61 | 54.28 | Yes | No | ✗ |
| LEP | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Reading/Language Arts | | | | | | | | |
| All | 265 | 272 | 270 | 99.26 | 79.46 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| White | 261 | 268 | 266 | 99.25 | 79.92 | Yes | Yes | ✓ |
| Black | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Hispanic | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** | ** |
| Indian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Asian | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |
| Low SES | 131 | 135 | 134 | 99.25 | 67.69 | Yes | Confidence Interval | ✓ |
| Spec. Ed. | 71 | 72 | 71 | 98.61 | 42.85 | Yes | No | ✗ |
| LEP | * | * | * | * | * | * | * | * |

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.7%

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Met Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Kingwood Elementary School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup for mathematics and reading/language arts. Kingwood Elementary School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plans and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Student percent proficient increased in all reporting subgroups for mathematics and decreased in all subgroups for reading/language arts from the 2005-2006 school year to the 2006-2007 school year.

Results from the 2006-2007 West Virginia Statewide Writing Assessment revealed a deficiency at Grade 4. West Virginia had 70 percent of the students at or above mastery, compared to 57 percent for Preston County and 57 percent for Kingwood Elementary School. The school must continue to address this issue by developing a consistent approach to instruction in writing and assure that all teachers provide appropriate feedback to all students on a minimum of a weekly basis.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided as reported by the principal.

1. Positive Behavior Support.
2. Curriculum Assessment.
3. School Access Control.
4. Title I.
5. Inclusion.
6. Multicultural Activities.
7. Team Building and Working Together.
8. Technology Improvements.
9. Teach 21.
10. SuccessNet.
11. Safety and Wellness Committee.

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education-Performance Based Accreditation System* in Section §126-13-6 provides:

- 6.1. A system of points on an index will be used to assess and weigh annual performance measures for state accreditation of schools and approval of school systems that gives credit or points on an index to prevent any one measure alone from causing a school to achieve less than full accreditation status or

a school system from achieving less than full approval status: Provided, That a school or school system that achieves AYP is eligible for no less than full accreditation or full approval status, as applicable, and the system established pursuant to this subsection shall only apply to schools and school systems that do not achieve AYP.

The index showed that Kingwood Elementary School performed within the point range (86-61) for full accreditation status.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

MET STANDARD. Kingwood Elementary School continued to not achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts. Kingwood Elementary School again achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. WESTEST scores revealed a slight decline in all subgroups in mathematics and reading/language arts. The principal must actively pursue and implement high quality, research based programs and practices to increase student achievement.

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education-Performance Based Accreditation System* in Section §126-13-6 provides:

6.1. A system of points on an index will be used to assess and weigh annual performance measures for state accreditation of schools and approval of school systems that gives credit or points on an index to prevent any one measure alone from causing a school to achieve less than full accreditation status or a school system from achieving less than full approval status: Provided, That a school or school system that achieves AYP is eligible for no less than full accreditation or full approval status, as applicable, and the system established pursuant to this subsection shall only apply to schools and school systems that do not achieve AYP.

The index showed that Kingwood Elementary School performed within the point range (751-640) for full accreditation status.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

7.1. Curriculum

7.1.2. High expectations. Through curricular offerings, instructional practices, and administrative practices, staff demonstrates high expectations for the learning and achieving of all students and all students have equal education opportunities including reteaching, enrichment, and acceleration. (Policy 2510)

Three special education teachers told Team members that the special education students did not use the adopted texts because they could not do the work. This did not show high expectations for all students.

One Grade 5 teacher did not exhibit high expectations for all students. Eleven students out of 21 students were observed to be off task and not redirected by the teacher. Student interaction was minimal and transition from one subject to another was immediate with no closure from one class to another.

Another teacher did not exhibit high expectations for all students. Four of the 11 students in the class were off task for an extended period of time and not redirected by the teacher. Instructional strategies were not varied. One book was placed in front of one student and that student would read, then the book was moved to another student and so on.

Another teacher overly used sarcasm when addressing students. She told students that she was not here to put up with nonsense and then told students to not give "stupid answers." One student made a comment to her and her response was "Waa Waa Waa". This behavior was negative and would not positively affect students' attitudes toward instruction.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

All teachers have been directed to use appropriate county adopted grade level textbooks. This is verified by checking textbooks in the classrooms, through lesson plan review, and on-going walk-throughs conducted by the principal, assistant principal and academic coach.

All teachers will exhibit high expectations for all students by using research based teaching strategies as presented at the Preston County Leadership Academy August 14 and 15 , 2008. A follow-up training on "Sticks and Stones Exposed, The Power of Our Words" is scheduled for October 28th, 2008.

Other strategies being implemented include but are not limited to small group instruction, literacy centers, rigor and relevance strategies, hands-on activities, partner activities, etc. This will be verified by administrative and

teacher walk-throughs and lesson plan reviews. Checklists have been developed for walk-throughs that address identified deficiencies.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. The school successfully corrected all areas.

- 7.1.4. **Instruction.** Instruction is consistent with the programmatic definitions in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510, *Assuring the Quality of Education: Regulations for Education Programs* (hereinafter Policy 2510). (Policy 2510)

One classroom for Moderately Impaired (MI) students had 13 students, which was over the caseload of the class. Classes for MI students are allowed 8 students without an aide and 12 students with an aide.

At least four teachers stated that their science classes were not 50 percent investigation, active inquiry, experimentation required by Policy 2510.

Title I teachers did not have the opportunity to plan with general education teachers. Title I teachers' instruction was not connected in any way to that of the general education teachers.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

All Special Education class lists have been reviewed by school and district administrators and fall within the correct caseload guidelines. This can be verified by reviewing teacher's schedules and caseloads. County administrators will monitor classes regularly.

Science classes will provide 50 percent hands-on activities verified through walk-throughs and lesson plan reviews. Science instruction strategies trainings are scheduled for teachers 3-5 October 14-16.

Title I instruction is based on intervention strategies provided in the state approved reading series and professional development provided by WVDE Response to Intervention trainings. Title I teachers and general education teachers will meet monthly for collaborative planning. Collaboration will be verified through meeting minutes and sign-in sheets.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION PARTIALLY FOLLOWED. The Moderately Impaired classroom remained over the maximum permitted caseload. Through interviews with teachers and students it was found that students numbered as high as 16 students in the class.

The science classes were still not in compliance with 50 percent investigation, active inquiry, and experimentation required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510. The reason given by teachers was a lack of materials.

Title I teachers now have a collaborative planning period with general education teachers.

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)

Two special education teachers were observed serving more in the role of an aide. The general educator conducted the classes and the special educator monitored the classes and did not actively participate in curriculum delivery. Given the low percent proficient of special education students, special education teachers must actively instruct students to increase knowledge.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Additionally, three new special education teachers have been hired at Kingwood Elementary, necessitating further professional development in inclusion strategies and co-teaching. A variety of presentation modes including visiting model classrooms will be provided. Both special education and classroom teachers will participate in co-teaching trainings. Sign-in sheets will be maintained. Strategies learned will be incorporated into administrative walk-throughs to ensure implementation.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Staff development had been provided to teachers and the co-teaching method was being implemented in an appropriate and effective manner.

7.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application. The application of technology is included throughout all programs of study and students have regular access to library/educational technology centers or classroom libraries. (Policy 2470; Policy 2510)

The school's Five-Year Technology Plan had not been revised since the 2003-2004 school year. There were no technology action steps and the plan did not adequately address the needs of the school. Other than the mobile laboratory, which was being used for the writing assessment, only approximately 11 computers were observed in use throughout the day of the Education Performance Audit. Windows 98 was the predominated operating system at the school. Teachers stated that they were to be updated to VISTA in the near future.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Technology Plan has been updated. This can be verified by review. Additionally, a new Technology Integration Specialist has been provided by a grant from WVDE Title I Office.

The school library has been reconfigured to allow the addition of a computer laboratory with 30 computers for students.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. The Technology Plan had been updated and the computer laboratories showed high usage levels.

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

Grades 2 and 5 staff sent instructional supply lists home for students to provide for the class. Teachers verbally stated that the materials were only requested; however, the list did not contain that wording.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Teachers did not send out instructional supply lists to parents. The following statement was included in the principal's opening of school letter to parents:

If you are able and would like to help, teachers can always use: Pencils, Notebook Paper, Crayons, Hand Sanitizer, Tissues, Clorox Wipes, Paper Towels, Two Pocket Folders.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. No mandatory materials list was provided to students. A recommended list was provided; however, it was made clear that this was not a mandatory list.

- 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)

The classroom schedules indicate that three classes did not provide the required 315 instructional minutes. Each provided approximately 300 minutes of instructional time.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Administrators verified that classroom schedules meet instructional day requirements and are correctly reflected in posted schedules. Schedules posted outside classrooms reflect:

Kindergarten – 4th Grade – 315 Instructional Minutes
5th Grade – 330 Instructional Minutes

The principal and assistant principal will verify that posted schedules are accurate reflections of instructional minutes.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. All classes met the required number of instructional minutes per day.

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.

While the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan did address the needs of the school, over half the teachers interviewed could not discuss the educational components of the plan.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

School Administrators and leadership team members will work with teachers to explain and answer questions pertaining to the educational components of the plan. Each teacher will receive a copy of the updated completed plan. The plan will be discussed at team meetings quarterly. Team discussions about the plan will be reflected in agendas and minutes.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED. At least five teachers still could not articulate the needs of the school based on the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan.

- 7.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback. Lesson plans that are based on approved content standards and objectives are prepared in advance and the principal reviews, comments on them a minimum of once each quarter, and provides written feedback to the teacher as necessary to improve instruction. (Policy 2510; Policy 5310)

Eight teachers had lesson plans only for the current week. Twelve teachers had incomplete lesson plans. Teachers did not have verification that the principal had checked all lesson plans at least once per quarter. The principal had verification that she had notified individual teachers that they needed to improve their lesson plans so that a substitute teacher could better follow the plans and to focus the plans on student needs.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Teachers have been directed to maintain files of the current week, preceding week, and the upcoming weeks, lesson plans. Also, they will keep verification of review by administration. The assistant principal will assist the principal with the monitoring of lesson plans.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. All lesson plans reviewed were complete, thorough, and completed in advance. All lesson plans had been reviewed by administration at least once per quarter.

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)

Due to the number and the degree of deficiencies found at Kingwood Elementary School, the Team determined that technical assistance be provided by the central office administration, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA VII to assist the principal in the management and leadership of the school.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Preston County Board of Education has placed a half-time assistant principal at Kingwood Elementary School to provide additional administrative support.

The board has also increased custodial services. A team of two traveling custodians provides approximately two hours of service daily.

This year the school has the added support of a Title I funded Technology Integration Specialist. The central office has continued to provide an Academic Coach funded through Title II.

The county has also encouraged and sponsored attendance at several professional development and technical assistance sessions for the administration and the school staff. These offerings include:

- The Preston County Leadership Academy, focused on Rigor, Relevance and Relationships.
- A RESA sponsored training in Preston County on Strategic Planning.
- A WVDE Title I sponsored workshop on School Improvement.
- RESA VII provided training on Research Based Reading Strategies.
- Math Investigations training for Grade 3-5 teachers scheduled for October 3-7, 2008.
- Science instruction training scheduled for October 14-16.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION IN PROGRESS. While two high quality standards had not been completed in a satisfactory manner, the principal did have plans and procedures to correct these issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1.3. Learning environment. There was no way to secure the classrooms in an emergency or lock down situation. The Team recommended that the school and county investigate means to provide student security in emergency situations.

Walls were marked, numerous ceiling tiles were missing or stained and a great deal of dirt and dust were due to only two custodians serving the school. Paint was peeling throughout the building. The Team recommended that the school and/or county provide greater cleaning capacity at the school to improve the educational atmosphere.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Two additional part-time custodians have been provided by the county to help keep the building clean. Ceiling tiles were replaced and walls were painted throughout the building over the summer break.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. With the addition of the custodians and the paint, the school was brighter, cleaner, and more conducive to the learning process.

7.2.4. Data analysis. Grade 2 teachers stated that they would like to have access to Grade 3 WESTEST scores. They wanted to know what the areas of deficiency were so that they could help to fill in the weak areas. The Team recommended that these test scores be provided to all teachers to plan classes to increase student achievement.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

All teachers and specialists have met to analyze WESTEST and formative assessments to identify areas of deficiency. Grade 2 teachers were included in meetings. WVDE and RESA VII are providing technical assistance with vertical teaming. Beginning November 2008, monthly vertical planning meetings will be held to address student achievement. Agendas and minutes will be kept.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. WESTEST results were shared with all staff. This process was led by the school's technology specialist who disseminated the information.

7.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations. Disclosure forms were not available for Team members to sign to view Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The Team recommended that the principal develop a sign-off sheet to indicate the person reviewing the IEPs and the purpose.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Disclosure forms are included on all files, classroom and permanent. Procedures for maintaining confidentiality were discuss with the staff on August 21, 2008.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Disclosure forms were included on all files.

INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY

Indicators of efficiency for student and school system performance and processes were reviewed in the following areas: Curriculum delivery, including but not limited to, the use of distance learning; facilities; administrative practices; personnel; utilization of regional education service agency, or other regional services that may be established by their assigned regional education service agency. This section contains indicators of efficiency that the Education Performance Audit Team assessed as requiring more efficient and effective application.

The indicators of efficiency listed are intended to guide Kingwood Elementary School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Preston County is obligated to follow the Indicators of Efficiency noted by the Team. Indicators of Efficiency shall not be used to affect the approval status of Preston County or the accreditation status of the schools.

8.1.4. Administrative practices.

With an enrollment of 608 students and 43 teachers, it would be extremely difficult for one administrator to be the curricular leader and deal consistently with student and staff issues. The Team believed that the principal is overly burdened and is in the role of maintaining rather than building the educational program.

The deficiencies found at Kingwood Elementary School were indicative of a school in need of strong leadership and support from the central office. The administration and staff did not work well together to correct issues that have been in place for a period of time. It is imperative that the entire staff work together for the common good of the students to correct the deficiencies identified in this report. The Team questioned the ability of the staff in their current state to make the changes necessary to increase student achievement.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Preston County Board of Education added a half-time assistant principal and a part-time custodian team to provide support for the principal. An academic coach is in place for a second year.

The WVDE provided a grant to place a Technology Integration Specialist.

The County Office provided training, tool kits and three work days, August 18, 19 and 20, 2008 for a school leadership team to plan together.

Preston County Leadership Academy on August 14 and 15, 2008 addressed rigor relevance and relationships. A follow-up training on “Sticks and Stones Exposed, The Power of Our Words” is scheduled for October 28, 2008.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. With the addition of a half-time assistant principal, the principal was afforded additional time to concentrate on curricular issues. The Team believed this to be integral to improving student achievement. The administrator and staff appeared to work together for student needs and it was reported that the central office staff was supportive of the school.

BUILDING CAPACITY TO CORRECT DEFICIENCIES

West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 establishes that the needed resources are available to assist the school or school system in achieving the standards and alleviating the deficiencies identified in the assessment and accountability process. To assist Kingwood Elementary School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

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

The Team believed that the administration must actively seek assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education offices listed in the chart to correct the identified deficiencies. The Preston County Central Office, RESA VII, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development must also be contacted for assistance in addressing the issues.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Preston County Central Office, WVDE, and RESA VII have provided technical assistance, professional development as reported throughout this response.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Kingwood Elementary School had sought, and received, assistance from the West Virginia Department of Education, the Preston County Central Office, RESA VII, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development.

IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCE NEEDS

A thorough and efficient system of schools requires the provision of an adequate level of appropriately managed resources. The West Virginia Board of Education adopted resource evaluation as a part of the accreditation and evaluation process. This process is intended to meaningfully evaluate the needs for facilities, personnel, curriculum, equipment and materials in each of the county's schools and how those impact program and student performance.

19.1. Facilities, equipment, and materials. Facilities and equipment specified in Policy 6200, Chapters 1 through 14, are available in all schools, classrooms, and other required areas. A determination will be made by using the Process for Improving Education (W.Va. Code §18-2E-5) whether any identified deficiencies adversely impact and impair the delivery of a high quality educational program if it is below the West Virginia Board of Education standards due to inadequacies or inappropriate management in the areas of facilities, equipment, and materials. The Education Performance Audit Teams shall utilize an assessment instrument for the evaluation of school facilities which generally follows the requirements of Policy 6200. Note: Corrective measures to be taken in response to any identified resource deficiency will of necessity be subject to the feasibility of modifying existing facilities, consideration of alternative methods of instructional delivery, availability of funding, and prioritization of educational needs through Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plans and the West Virginia School Building Authority. This policy does not change the authority, judgment, or priorities of the School Building Authority of West Virginia who is statutorily responsible for prioritizing "Need" for the purpose of funding school improvements or school construction in the State of West Virginia or the prerogative of the Legislature in providing resources. (*Policy 6200 and Tomblin v. Gainer*)

According to the items checked in the School Facilities Evaluation Checklist, the school was below standard in the following areas. The principal checked and the Team confirmed the following school facility resource needs.

19.1.1. School location. The school site was not five acres, plus one acre for each 100 students over 240 and was not large enough for future expansion. There was not a sufficient amount of on-site, solid surface parking for staff, visitors, and individuals with limited mobility.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Currently, a bond will be placed before the voters in the General Election in November in the amount of \$49,995,000 for the improvement of facilities. Contingent upon passage of the bond, the School Building Authority has granted Preston County \$19,800,000 additional funds. The plan calls for building two new Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools and additions and repairs for other schools in the county. A new PK-8 for Kingwood Elementary is part of the plan.

At this time, a reception/waiting area has been set up for school visitors at the school entrance.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Although the corrective action was followed by the Preston County Central Office, the failure of the bond election terminated the plans set forth for the school. The Preston County Central Office must continue to seek remedies for the items listed above.

19.1.3. Teachers' workroom. Communication technology was not provided.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The Technology Integration Specialist has provided teachers with a computer work area in the computer laboratory.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Communication technology was provided.

19.1.4. Counselor's office. Adequate space was not provided and the counselor did not have easy access to student records.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Currently, a bond will be placed before the voters in the General Election in November in the amount of \$49,995,000 for the improvement of facilities. Contingent upon passage of the bond, the School Building Authority has granted Preston County \$19,800,000 additional funds. The plan calls for building two new Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools and additions and repairs for other schools in the county. A new PK-8 for Kingwood Elementary is part of the plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Although the corrective action was followed by the Preston County Central Office, the failure of the bond election terminated the plans set forth for the school. The Preston County Central Office must continue to seek remedies for the items listed above.

19.1.5. Library/media and technology center. Space for technology, including computer laboratories, was not available.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

The school library was reconfigured to allow a full computer laboratory to be installed. The WVDE Title I office has provided funding for a full-time Technology Integration Specialist to support instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. A new computer laboratory had been completed which was staffed with a full-time Technology Integration Specialist (TIS).

19.1.7. K classrooms. Areas for students' coats were not provided.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Classrooms have been reassigned so that the former kindergarten class is now a Special Needs Pre-Kindergarten class with three students. That lessened the need for space for twenty coats.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION NOT FOLLOWED. While the space for the number of coats decreased, space was not provided for any coats.

19.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms. The location of academic learning areas was not near related educational areas and away from disruptive noises. Storage was not adequate.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Currently, a bond will be placed before the voters in the General Election in November in the amount of \$49,995,000 for the improvement of facilities. Contingent upon passage of the bond, the School Building Authority has granted Preston County \$19,800,000 additional funds. The plan calls for building two new Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools and additions and repairs for other schools in the county. A new PK-8 for Kingwood Elementary is part of the plan.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Although the corrective action was followed by the Preston County Central Office, the failure of the bond election terminated the plans set forth for the school. The Preston County Central Office must continue to seek remedies for the items listed above.

19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas. The art facility did not have a ceramic kiln or black-out areas. The music facilities did not have acoustical treatment.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Currently, a bond will be placed before the voters in the General Election in November in the amount of \$49,995,000 for the improvement of facilities. Contingent upon passage of the bond, the School Building Authority has granted Preston County \$19,800,000 additional funds. The plan calls for building two new Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 8 schools and additions and repairs for other schools in the county. A new PK-8 for

Kingwood Elementary is part of the plan. The plans call for specialized classrooms.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. Although the corrective action was followed by the Preston County Central Office, the failure of the bond election terminated the plans set forth for the school. The Preston County Central Office must continue to seek remedies for the items listed above.

19.1.15. Health service units. A bulletin board was not available.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

A bulletin board has been purchased and put in place for Health Services.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CORRECTIVE ACTION FOLLOWED. A bulletin board had been provided.

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.

Kingwood Elementary School is likely to maintain the course of its performance levels if it does not receive continuous and sustained intervention from State education agencies. The principal is overextended and there appeared to be a lack of knowledge from the staff of what was required of them in several of the areas the Team identified.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Student achievement had not increased on WESTEST scores; however, the principal has a half-time assistant principal and now has more time for the curricular aspects of the school.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

| School | Accreditation Status | Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards | Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement | Date Certain |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|---------------------|
| 70-204 Kingwood Elementary | Temporary Accreditation | 7.1.4 (Partially corrected); 7.2.1; 7.8.1 | | May 31, 2009 |

Education Performance Audit Summary

Two high quality standards had not been corrected and one had been partially corrected from the original Education Performance Audit.

Pursuant to W.Va. Code §18-2E-5, the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education issue Kingwood Elementary School Temporary Accreditation status with a May 31, 2009 Date Certain to correct the remaining findings.

The OEPA will conduct another follow-up review after May 31, 2009 to determine that improvement efforts have been sustained and the partial compliant standard (7.1.4) and the noncompliant standards (7.2.1 and 7.8.1) have been corrected.