

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

HURRICANE MIDDLE SCHOOL

PUTNAM COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

MARCH 2006

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Hurricane Middle School in Putnam County was conducted on February 15, 2006. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was to investigate the reasons for performance and progress that are persistently below standard and to make recommendations to the school and school system, as appropriate, and to the West Virginia Board of Education on such measures as it considers necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the standard.

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Five-Year Strategic Plan, interviewed school personnel and school system administrators, observed classrooms, and examined school records. The review was limited in scope and concentrated on the subgroups that failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Team Chair – Allen Brock, Coordinator

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Sterling Beane, Coordinator, Office of Instructional Technology

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Bane McCracken, Coordinator, Office of Healthy Schools

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Fred Amick	Junior High School Principal	Summersville Junior High School Nicholas County
Stephen Comer	Elementary School Principal	Spanishburg School Mercer County
Anthony Fratto	Middle School Principal	Lumberport Middle School Harrison County
Lois Greene	Middle School Teacher	John Adams Middle School Kanawha County
Damon Hanshaw	Assistant Superintendent	Nicholas County
Kathy Hypes	Director of Attendance	Nicholas County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

72 PUTNAM COUNTY

Harold L. "Chuck" Hatfield, Superintendent

310 HURRICANE MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Greg LeMaster, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 835

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	786	837	825	98.56	82.17	Yes	Yes	✓
White	764	810	798	98.51	82.58	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	15	18	18	100.00	53.33	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	297	332	322	96.98	71.67	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	161	178	174	97.75	43.39	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	786	837	825	98.56	81.72	Yes	Yes	✓
White	764	810	799	98.64	82.01	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	15	18	17	94.44	57.14	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	297	332	323	97.28	71.47	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	161	178	171	96.06	49.35	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Attendance Rate = 96.9%

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class

Mathematics											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	269	253	265	251	98.51	3.19	13.15	43.82	28.29	11.55	83.67
07	295	274	293	273	99.32	6.23	11.72	44.69	25.27	12.09	82.05
08	273	259	267	256	97.80	3.91	15.23	33.59	33.98	13.28	80.86

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
06	269	253	266	251	98.88	1.99	12.35	41.83	32.67	11.16	85.66
07	295	274	290	270	98.31	3.70	18.15	37.78	30.00	10.37	78.15
08	273	259	269	256	98.53	2.34	16.02	40.63	28.91	12.11	81.64

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

Other Relevant Performance Data

2004-2005 Writing Assessment Distribution of Performance Across All Performance Levels Grade 7

	Total # Tested	% Novice	% Partial Mastery	% Mastery	% Above Mastery	% Distinguished	% Below # Mastery	% At or # Above Mastery
STATE – WV	21040	2%	24%	57%	14%	3%	27%	73%
PUTNAM COUNTY	707	1%	18%	58%	19%	3%	20%	80%
HURRICANE MIDDLE	289	3%	22%	55%	15%	4%	25%	74%

Physical Assessment – Presidential Physical Fitness Test Passage Rate

Percentage of Students	School Year
61.98%	2003-04
57.96%	2002-03
48.699%	2001-02

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Hurricane Middle School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement for the special education (SE) subgroup. In accordance with Section 9.4 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education continued the school's Conditional Accreditation status at the September 2005 State Board meeting.

Hurricane Middle School achieved AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. It is further noted that the racial/ethnicity black (B) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored below the State's percent proficient level in mathematics and reading/language arts. 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.

Note: It was noted that the SE subgroup percent proficient in both mathematics (43.39 percent) and reading/language arts (49.35 percent) is promising.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided by the West Virginia Department of Education, RESA III, county and/or school.

1. Technology training.
2. WVEIS training.
3. No Child Left Behind.
4. Content Standards and Objectives training.
5. Informal Reading assessment.
6. Individualized Education Program (IEP) Software.
7. Accomplished Teacher Project.
8. Positive Behavior.
9. Alternate Assessment.
10. Standards Based Math.
11. Differentiated Instruction.
12. Physical Best.
13. Curriculum Mapping.
14. Positive Behavior Support.
15. Innovative Instructional Strategies.
16. Motivating the Reluctant Learner.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

6.1.2. High expectations. The health teacher had developed an outstanding curriculum that exceeded the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs). The curriculum addressed the CSOs, the lesson plans were immaculate, and the teacher was dynamic and exhibited high expectations for all students. Two math teachers exhibited excellent teaching strategies and a high level of professionalism in their classes. They applied a wide variety of teaching strategies and utilized math manipulatives in their instruction.

6.1.3. Learning environment. The building was extremely clean and well decorated with educationally stimulating materials. The facility was constructed in different stages over a span of several years. The older sections of the building were maintained as well as the newer parts of the building.

The student body exhibited excellent behavior and manners throughout the Team's visit. Students were extremely helpful to Team members and presented themselves in a mature and positive manner.

6.1.4. Instruction. The school had established a Saturday class to address academic enrichment. Several volunteers have been active in tutoring students to help increase achievement. Students were targeted for the class if they had not mastered the concepts on the WESTEST. An average of approximately 50 students attended each Saturday.

6.8.1. Leadership. The principal was well organized and dedicated to the achievement of all students. This was his first year at the school and teachers indicated that he had made numerous improvements. The principal was a positive role model for students and staff and was knowledgeable of the deficiencies of the students and the steps to be taken to address these deficiencies.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standard (5.1.1. - SES)

6.1. Curriculum

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

The physical education curriculum did not address the Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs) as approved by the West Virginia Board of Education and indicated by lesson plans and the activity taking place. Neither a physical education curriculum

nor a course syllabus was available. Sequencing was not incorporated for one grade to the next in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Identical activities were repeated in each of the classes and grade levels. The activities listed in the lesson plans were all team sports or competitive activities. The physical education CSOs require that the curriculum include individual non-competitive activities, rhythmic activities, and outdoor adventure activities, such as, hiking, archery, etc.

Instructional strategies in physical education were inappropriate, ineffective, and did not involve all students. Teaching and instruction were nonexistent on the day of the Education Performance Audit. Students were playing games while the teacher was observing and some students were not involved in any activity. The games should have been organized in smaller groups with more equipment so that all students practice skills. Only two balls were available for over 40 students. Playing the games without introduction and teaching of skills for the activity and all student participation and practicing the skills was an ineffective instructional technique.

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

The Team interviewed staff and conducted observations and reported that very little true collaboration occurred between the special education teachers and the general education teachers. In most cases, the general education teacher developed and implemented the lesson plans without full participation of the special education teacher.

Instruction in many of the classes relied upon one or two instructional strategies. Several classes were composed of teacher directed instruction with little student interaction. Some classes relied upon small group instruction in which one or two of the students did a majority of the work and other students socialized during this time.

6.1.7. 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)

Several students interviewed stated that they rarely utilized computers. Computer logs in the new part of the building were not up-to-date to verify student use of the computer laboratory. The Team also noted that very few classroom computers were being utilized by students. Teachers stated that computer laboratories were not capable of whole class instruction.

6.1.12. Multicultural activities. Multicultural activities are included at all programmatic levels, K-4, 5-8, and 9-12 with an emphasis on prevention and zero tolerance for racial, sexual, religious/ethnic harassment or violence. (Policy 2421)

A countywide or schoolwide multicultural plan was not in place. There were very few multicultural activities throughout the building. Students could not articulate any knowledge of multicultural activities and the Team reported that there were few multicultural activities included at all programmatic levels as required by Policy 2421.

6.2. Student and School Performance

- 6.2.2. Counseling services. Counselors shall spend at least 75 percent of the work day in a direct counseling relationship with students, and shall devote no more than 25 percent of the work day to counseling-related administrative activities as stated in W.Va. Code §18-5-18b. (W.Va. Code §18-5-18b; Policy 2315)**

Evidence did not exist to show that the guidance counselors were involved in a direct counseling relationship with students 75 percent of the work day. According to the counselors, the percentage of time spent with students was probably less than 75 percent of the time. A counseling log failed to verify the required 75 percent of student contact time. Students stated that they had little contact with counselors during the year. Several students stated that the only time that they could visit the counselors was during lunch time; however, the counselors had lunch duties which impeded counseling opportunities.

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

Some lesson plans were difficult to follow and would be difficult for a substitute teacher to implement. Several plans listed activities for the entire period, such as, “check for understanding”, “students will research medieval times via online information and instruction”, and “map review”.

6.6. Personnel

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

A physical education teacher did not have the appropriate endorsement.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan.** Most teachers were knowledgeable of the Five-Year Strategic Plan; however, teachers at one grade level could not articulate the components of the plan. The Team recommended that staff development on the development and implementation of the Five-Year Plan be conducted for all staff on an on-going basis.

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

7.1.1. Curriculum. The school district and school conduct an annual curriculum audit regarding student curricular requests and overall school curriculum needs, including distance learning in combination with accessible and available resources.

Special education students at Hurricane Middle School would be better served if the school's curriculum delivery was designed to meet the needs of this subgroup. An effective and efficient curriculum involves using available resources. The effectiveness of collaboration between general education teachers and special education teachers needed to be improved. Assistance may be requested from the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of Instructional Services and Office of Special Education.

The computer laboratories were not being utilized effectively or efficiently. In view of the achievement of the special education (SE) subgroup and the achievement gap of the racial/ethnicity black (B) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups, the Team determined that this technology should be consistently used for a more efficient and effective application to enhance student learning.

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

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.1. Curriculum based on content standards and objectives.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.1.5. Instructional strategies.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Technology (304) 558-7880
6.1.12. Multicultural activities.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Student Services and Health Promotions (304) 558-8830
6.2.2. Counseling services.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Student Services and Health Promotion (304) 558-8836
6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Services (304) 558-7805
6.6.2. Licensure.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Professional Preparation (304) 558-7842

16.1. Capacity building is a process for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. School and county Unified Improvement Plan development is intended, in part, to provide mechanisms to target resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance.

The Team determined that Hurricane Middle School and Putnam County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. However, the capacity must be further developed in the special education department to provide quality services to these

students. The Team recommended that the Putnam County School System, Director of Special Education, and the school administrator engage the Special Education Director and the Professional Development Director at RESA III in developing the school's capacity to improve the school's achievement of the special education students.

Identification of Resource Needs

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

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

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

- 17.1.1. School location.** The school site was not 11 acres +1 acre for each 100 students over 600. The school's location was not removed from undesirable noise and traffic. The site was not suitable for special instructional needs, e.g., outdoor learning. Well equipped and age level appropriate playgrounds/recreational areas were not provided.
- 17.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** The administrative office area did not include an adequate reception/waiting area.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility was not adequate in size, did not have access to natural and artificial light, storage was inadequate, and did not have the following: Counter space, outlets, mechanical ventilation, a ceramic kiln, and black-out areas. The music facility did not have an adequate storage area. The physical education facility did not have a display case.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The Grades 6, 7, and 8 science facility did not have the following: Air vacuum, ventilation fume hood, demo table, and darkening provisions.

- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The middle school stage did not have fire resistant curtains.
- 17.1.15 Health service units.** A health services unit of adequate size was not available. The following items were not available: Curtained or small rooms with cots, bulletin board, toilet, lavatory, scales, refrigerator with locked storage, work counter, and desk and chair.

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.

Hurricane Middle School and Putnam County must implement high-yield instructional practices and instruction that will improve achievement. Putnam County must actively pursue assistance from RESA III, the West Virginia Department of Education, and the West Virginia Center for Professional Development to assist with school improvement efforts. Curriculum must be data-driven and instruction must be relevant to the curriculum and provide all students the opportunity to learn. While the overall WESTEST results were very good, an achievement gap existed between the racial/ethnicity black (B) and economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroups and that of the all students (AS) and racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups.

The special education (SE) subgroup achievement did not meet percent proficient; however, at 43.30 percent in mathematics and 49.35 percent in reading/language arts, AYP is achievable. Putnam County and Hurricane Middle School must work on collaborative services and bring about further improvement of the SE group.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
72-310 Hurricane Middle	Conditional Accreditation	6.1.1; 6.1.5; 6.1.7; 6.1.12; 6.2.2; 6.2.3; 6.6.2		
			5.1.1 (SE)	May 31, 2007

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified seven high quality standards – necessary to improve performance and progress to meet 5.1.1 Achievement – for the special education (SE) subgroup. The Team presented one recommendation, noted one indicator of efficiency, suggested capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Hurricane Middle School’s Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance standards and progress related to student and school performance in the area of deficiency (5.1.1 SE). The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Hurricane Middle School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report and a May 31, 2007 Date Certain to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP).