

OFFICE OF EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDITS



DRAFT EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL

RALEIGH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

APRIL 2007

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Independence High School in Raleigh County was conducted on February 1, 2007. 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 D. Brock, Coordinator

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

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Cheryl Belcher, Coordinator, Office of Title II – School and School System Improvement

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Donna Burge-Tetrick, Coordinator, Office of Planning, Evaluation, Special Programs & Support Services

West Virginia Department of Education Team Leader – Gus Nelson, Coordinator, Office of Healthy Schools

TEAM MEMBERS

Name	Title	School/County
Todd Browning	Middle School Principal	Bluefield Middle Mercer County
Thomas Sanders	High School Principal	Pocahontas County High Pocahontas County

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

74 RALEIGH COUNTY
Dr. Charlotte Hutchens, Superintendent
502 INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL – Passed
Bob Meadows, Principal
Grades 09 - 12
Enrollment 754 (2nd month 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	162	167	163	97.60	60.12	Yes	Yes	✓
White	158	163	159	97.54	59.09	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	89	93	89	95.69	48.23	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	16	17	15	88.23	7.14	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Reading/Language Arts								
All	162	167	165	98.80	71.25	Yes	Yes	✓
White	158	163	161	98.77	71.15	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Low SES	89	93	91	97.84	58.62	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	16	17	16	94.11	6.66	NA	NA	NA
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA

FAY -- Full Academic Year
* -- 0 students in subgroup
** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

Passed
Graduation Rate = 86.2%

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
10	167	162	163	158	97.60	10.13	29.75	47.47	12.03	0.63	60.13

Reading											
Class	Tested Enr.	FAY Enr.	Tested	FAY Tested	Part. Rate	Novice	Below Mastery	Mastery	Above Mastery	Distinguished	Proficient
10	167	162	165	160	98.80	5.00	23.75	37.50	26.25	7.50	71.25

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

Other Relevant Performance Data

2005-2006 Writing Assessment Distribution of Performance Across All Performance Levels Grade 10

	Total # Tested	% At Distinguished	% At Above Mastery	% At Mastery	% At Partial Mastery	% At Novice	% With No Score	% of Students at or Above Mastery	% of Students Below Mastery
STATE – WV	19235	6	21	52	17	3	1	79	21
RALEIGH COUNTY	760	5	23	53	15	4	1	81	19
INDEPENDENCE HIGH	160	5	21	51	17	5	1	77	23

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Met Standard

5.1.1. Achievement.

Independence High School achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval. It is further noted that the special education (SE) subgroup with the number (N) less than 50, scored far 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 close the achievement gap for the SE and SES students.

Adequate yearly progress (AYP) information by class data showed that 39.88 percent of Grade 10 students were below mastery in mathematics and 28.75 percent were below mastery in reading. This provides an implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement programs.

The following professional development and/or training opportunities were provided.

1. Smart Board/Data Projector.
2. Grade Quick.
3. Writing Roadmap I and II.
4. SAS in Schools.
5. 21st Century Training and Technology.
6. WESTEST Analysis.
7. Writing Assessment and WESTEST: Improving our Scores.
8. Pacing and Mapping.
9. Data Analysis – HSTW Training.
10. Differentiated Instruction.
11. Safe and Healthy Schools Training.
12. Technology Academy.
13. The Self-Directed Learner.
14. ACT PLAN Workshop.
15. Respect and Protect.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

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

- 6.1.3. Learning environment.** The staff was extremely helpful and dedicated to student achievement. An example to the dedication to student achievement was that they elect to give up 15 minutes of their planning time to monitor hallways to provide a safe environment.
- 6.1.5. Instructional strategies.** Special needs students were taught skills needed to seek employment. These students were transported to job sites with a teacher for actual job experiences. They participated in the Schools to Work community-based work site.
- 6.1.7. Library/educational technology access and technology application.** The Team found evidence of a broad range of staff development opportunities related to technology. Professional development included the following: SAS, SchoolKit, Writing Roadmap, 21st Century Learning Period, etc. Observations revealed that SAS was implemented in Anatomy and Physiology and Writing Roadmap was being used in English. It was evident that the administration and staff were dedicated to implementing 21st Century technology.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress.

6.1. Curriculum

- 6.1.2. 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)**

All of the Algebra II classes were kept on the same pace with the same lesson plans. This practice did not allow for individual class differences and flexibility in curriculum delivery.

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

The Team interviewed teachers and students and found all teachers were not providing instruction in writing assignments to all students on a weekly basis. Also, the Team found student writing was not always collected and corrected for spelling, punctuation, content, and grammar.

- 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)**

The administration stated that there was no county or school Multicultural Plan. When questioned, teachers could not articulate many buildingwide multicultural activities.

- 6.1.13. 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 following practices failed to demonstrate that priority was given to teaching and learning and the integrity of the instructional day.

1. Only Grade 9 students attended school the first day of the school year.
2. Students scheduled to eat during the second lunch did not receive the required 8100 minutes. Due to lunch scheduling, these students received 7650 minutes of instruction.
3. Several classes observed ended instruction 5-10 minutes early.

6.2. Student and School Performance

- 6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan. A Unified County Improvement Plan and a Unified School 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.

All teachers were not aware of the various components of the Five-Year Strategic Plan. They could not articulate how the plan would be used to address the needs of the school and students.

- 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)**

Lesson plans of two mathematics teachers and one science teacher were not thorough enough to be followed by a substitute teacher. It is important that instruction be continuous and sequential and a substitute teacher be able to continue the lessons and instruction of the classroom teacher.

6.7. Safe, Drug Free, Violence Free, and Disciplined Schools

- 6.7.2. 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)**

Smokeless tobacco was evident in the male rest room located nearest the library.

RECOMMENDATION

- 6.2.4. Data analysis.** While the teachers were utilizing the WESTEST data, they were not using the ACT Plan or ACT Explore data. The Team recommended that the school use all student data to make decisions on curriculum delivery.

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 Independence High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Raleigh 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 Raleigh 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.

A schoolwide program was needed to assist teachers in implementing the writing process. The Five-Year Strategic Plan needed to be effectively implemented and applied to result in improved student and school performance.

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 Independence High School in achieving capacity, the following resources are recommended.

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS	RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6.1.2. High expectations.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instruction (304) 558-5325 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Special Programs, Extended & Early Learning (304) 558-2696
6.1.6. Instruction in writing.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instructional Technology (304) 558-7880 West Virginia Department of Education Office of Technical and Secondary Program Improvement (304) 558-2389
6.1.12. Multicultural activities.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of ESL/International Schools (304) 558-2691
6.1.13. Instructional day.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Instruction (304) 558-5325
6.2.1. Unified County and School Improvement Plan (Five-Year Strategic Plan).	West Virginia Department of Education Office of School and School System Improvement (304) 558-3199
6.2.3. Lesson plans and principal feedback.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of School and School System Improvement (304) 558-3199
6.7.2. Policy implementation.	West Virginia Department of Education Office of Healthy Schools (304) 558-8830

- 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 Independence High School and Raleigh County have the capacity to correct deficiencies noted in the report and target resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process.

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.

- 17.1.4. Counselor's office.** The counselor's office did not have adequate space.
- 17.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** The Library/Resource/Media Center did not provide appropriate space.
- 17.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility was not of adequate size, did not have access to natural and artificial light, did not have adequate storage, and did not have the following equipment: Two deep sinks, mechanical ventilation, ceramic kiln, or black-out areas. The music facility did not have a chalkboard/whiteboard and bulletin board.
- 17.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** The science facilities did not have the following equipment: Sink, hot and cold water, gas, AC and DC current, air vacuum, chalkboard, bulletin boards, open and closed shelving, ventilation fume hood, demo table, sufficient laboratory workspace, fire extinguisher, blanket, and emergency showers.
- 17.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** The high school stage did not have a wood floor.

- 17.1.13. Grades 7-12 school site vocational.** The business education all purpose facility did not have an overhead projector and a screen. The business education instructional facility did not have tables or adjustable chairs. The co-op, marketing, and agriculture education classes did not have adequate space.
- 17.1.14. Food service.** The kitchen was not of adequate size. Food and non-food storage was not adequate. A locker/dressing room was not available.

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.

Given the achievement levels of students in the mathematics subgroup, Independence High School and Raleigh County must implement high yield instructional practices and programs that will improve students' achievement. Raleigh County must actively pursue assistance from RESA I, 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.

School Accreditation Status

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
74-502 Independence High	Full Accreditation	6.1.2; 6.1.6; 6.1.12; 6.1.13; 6.2.1; 6.2.3; 6.7.2		

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Team identified seven high quality standards necessary to improve performance and progress. The Team presented one recommendation, noted an indicator of efficiency, offered capacity building resources, and noted an early detection and intervention concern.

Independence High School’s Education Performance Audit was limited in scope to the performance and progress standards related to student and school performance in the area of mathematics. The Team also conducted a resource evaluation to assess the resource needs of the school. The Team submits this draft report to guide Independence High School in improvement efforts. The school and county have until the next accreditation cycle to correct deficiencies noted in the report.