



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT PROGRESS REPORT

FOR

ELKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL

RANDOLPH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

NOVEMBER 2008

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced Education Performance Audit of Elkins Middle School in Randolph County was conducted on February 26, 2008.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Elkins Middle School in Randolph County was conducted October 6, 2008. The purpose of the follow-up was to check progress of the school and county in correcting the findings identified during the original Education Performance Audit.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

75 RANDOLPH COUNTY

Susan Hinzman, Superintendent

401 ELKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

David Roth, Principal

Grades 06 - 08

Enrollment 734 (2006-2007 2nd month 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	685	727	716	98.48	77.40	Yes	Yes	✓
White	671	713	702	98.45	77.22	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	359	393	383	97.45	69.88	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	91	106	103	97.16	35.95	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	685	727	721	99.17	83.87	Yes	Yes	✓
White	671	713	707	99.15	83.68	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	359	393	388	98.72	76.96	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	91	106	104	98.11	41.11	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 92.4%**

75 RANDOLPH COUNTY
Susan Hinzman, Superintendent
401 ELKINS MIDDLE SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
David Roth, Principal
Grades 06 - 08
Enrollment 704 (2007-2008 2nd month 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	660	684	678	99.12	79.42	Yes	Yes	✓
White	650	674	668	99.10	79.72	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	324	339	334	98.52	74.76	Yes	Yes	✓
Spec. Ed.	94	103	102	99.02	37.63	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	660	684	678	99.12	83.25	Yes	Yes	✓
White	650	674	668	99.10	83.15	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	324	339	336	99.11	76.47	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Spec. Ed.	94	103	101	98.05	40.86	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

Passed
Attendance Rate = 96.0%

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1.1. Achievement.

Elkins Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup in mathematics and reading/language arts. Elkins Middle School achieved AYP in the economically challenged (SES) subgroup in 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.

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 Elkins Middle School performed within the point range (841-724) for full accreditation status.

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

1. Summer Teaching Academy.
2. Response to Intervention (RTI).
3. Computer Laboratory.
4. Teacher Web Page Design.
5. New Teacher Orientation.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

STANDARD NOT MET. The 2007-2008 WESTEST results indicated that Elkins Middle School failed to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) in the special education (SE) subgroup for mathematics and reading/language arts. The school continued to achieve AYP in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup for reading/language arts only by application of the confidence interval.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress for the Standard 5.1.1 Achievement (SE).

7.1. Curriculum

7.1.3. Learning environment. School staff provides a safe and nurturing environment that is conducive to learning. (Policy 2510)

Teachers were concerned about the safety of the students and staff due to the inability to call the office in the event of an emergency. There was no telephone or two-way intercom system in the individual classrooms.

Students voiced a concern about the cleanliness of the rest rooms. The Team observed that the rest rooms were unclean and that the general appearance of the facility needed maintenance and to be cleaned. Paint was peeling in rest rooms and hallways. The facility was generally depressing and the physical environment was not pleasant or stimulating. The four classrooms in the modular units were not conducive to learning and a lock down situation would be difficult because of the lack of communication devices to the administrative offices.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NOT APPLICABLE. This finding is now not applicable since the middle school building is not being used at this time. Elkins Middle School is located in modular buildings in Elkins High School's parking lot. The Team expressed concern that the facility improvement plans for the middle school did not include aesthetic improvements. According to the principal, the only changes the plans include are: The electrical system, asbestos abatement, and intercom system. The learning environment will remain the same unless plans are made to clean, paint, and improve the school's visual aesthetics.

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)

Science teachers did not provide the 50 percent investigation, inquiry, experimentation requirement by Policy 2510. Instructional materials in the science department were not sufficient to deliver the science West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives (CSOs).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. Interviews and lesson plan review could not verify 50 percent hands-on instruction in science. Teachers reported that this is due, in part, to the inability to store sufficient science materials.

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)

Instructional strategies were not varied on a buildingwide basis. A majority of teachers relied heavily on direct teacher instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Teachers were varying instruction and were teaching to various learning modalities. This was verified through classroom observations, teacher interviews, and lesson plans.

7.1.6. 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)

All teachers were not conducting instruction in writing on a weekly basis. The 2006-2007 West Virginia Statewide Writing Assessment percent at or above mastery was 74 percent while the State was 76 percent did not indicate a strong deficiency in writing scores, student achievement will increase when writing is incorporated in all classrooms.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Ample evidence was provided to show that teachers were providing writing assignments on at least a weekly basis. The Team observed numerous samples of student work throughout the school.

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)

Although technology was available, there was no evidence of extensive technology integration by student logs, student interviews, and Team observation. The Team noted minimal classroom computer usage throughout the day of the Education Performance Audit.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school had three computer laboratories, one was being housed in Elkins High School. The computer laboratory in the high school was highly utilized by students and usage was well-documented by computer laboratory logs. The other two computer laboratories in the modular buildings had just come online the day before the progress

monitoring due to electrical issues; however, the same documentation process was in place for the laboratory in the high school. The Team observed the new computer laboratories in use throughout the day of the progress monitoring.

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 6, 7, and 8 did not have science textbooks for every student. While teachers indicated that classroom sets of the textbooks were provided, the lack of a textbook for each student presented a problem for teachers as well as students. For example, teachers said that they had to modify instruction and homework assignments to accommodate this. Furthermore, they also had to rearrange their schedule for homework and expressed concern about the quality of assignments. This impeded instruction and delivery of the science curriculum.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Sufficient numbers of student textbooks were in place and a clear process was in place for acquiring additional books as needed.

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)

Grade 6 students were the only students to attend school the first day of the school year. This did not allow equal access for all students to receive the minimum 180 instructional days required by W.Va. Code §18-5-45.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All grade levels reported to classes the first day of school.

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.

A majority of the staff was unaware of the educational components of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan. It was evident that the plan was not being used as a guiding component to the school's educational process.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All teachers interviewed were aware of the educational components of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan and could articulate how the components were to drive the classroom curriculum.

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)

The administration did not provide written feedback to teachers concerning lesson planning. All lesson plans must be checked at least once per quarter. Some teachers did not have lesson plans for Team review and some plans were not complete or up-to-date.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All lesson plans reviewed were of acceptable to high quality and administrative comments were observed on several of the lesson plans.

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 of noncompliances found at Elkins Middle School, the Team determined that the central office administration, the West Virginia Department of Education, and RESA VII provide the building administrator assistance in the school's operation and school improvement.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team believed that the administration had taken a proactive approach to addressing the items cited in the original Education Performance Audit.

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

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

Special education teachers were aware of the deficiencies of the special education students (SE) subgroup and were taking steps to increase student achievement. Students were on task and challenged with high quality instruction and special education teachers were provided individual student data to assist in planning lessons.

The deficiencies in instructional strategies, the Five-Year Strategic Plan, and lesson planning were major indications of the reason for low student achievement. The principal articulated the needs of the school and could provide information on strategies that he was using to educate teachers on proper curriculum delivery; however, there appeared to be a break-down in the implementation of these strategies. The principal must continue to monitor program delivery, lesson plans, and writing across the curriculum to improve achievement and teachers must make themselves aware of the components of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan and implement this plan, conduct weekly writing assignments, and maintain high-quality lesson plans that contain research-based instructional strategies that will improve achievement.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

A number of positive changes had been made since the original Education Performance Audit. The principal had spearheaded the initiative by providing high quality staff development and classroom observations to ensure high quality instruction.

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 Elkins Middle 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.**

Capacity building needs to be developed for educators at the school in strategically implementing the teaching and learning process as indicated in the Five-Year Strategic Plan to improve student and school achievement. The plan was well-developed and identified the areas of need for the school, but was not being effectively implemented to fulfill this intent.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Elkins Middle School demonstrated the capacity to address the issues and to correct them. The principal had teachers complete a five page workbook on the Five-Year Strategic Plan and its proper implementation in the classroom. All teachers were intimately aware of the plan and its role in addressing the school's deficiencies.

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 11 acres, plus one acre for each 100 students over 600, and was not large enough for future expansion. The location was not removed from undesirable noise and traffic, was not well-landscaped, and was not suitable for special instructional needs, e.g., outdoor learning.
- 19.1.2. Administrative and service facilities.** The administrative office area did not include an adequate reception/waiting area or sufficient work space and privacy.
- 19.1.3. Teachers' workroom.** A teachers' work area of adequate size was not provided and access to communications technology was not available.
- 19.1.4. Counselor's office.** The counselor's office did not have adequate space.

19.1.8. Grades 1-12 classrooms. Storage was not adequate. The following were insufficient: Numbers of desks and chairs, audiovisual equipment, controllable lights, and outlets.

19.1.9. Grades K-12 remedial. The size of the remedial areas was not adequate.

19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.

The art facility was not of adequate size and did not have sufficient storage. The following equipment and materials were not available: Two deep sinks, hot and cold water, counter space, display facilities, outlets, mechanical ventilation, ceramic kiln, and black-out areas.

The music facility was not of adequate size and sufficient storage was not provided. A chalkboard, bulletin board, and acoustical treatment were not provided.

The physical education facility was not of adequate size. The following equipment and materials were not adequate: Forced ventilation, provisions for two or more teaching stations, a display case, electrical outlets, and recording device.

19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities. The science facilities were not of adequate size and were not located with easy access to outdoor activities and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building. The following equipment and material were not provided: 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, emergency showers, balance cases, chairs/tables, darkening provisions, main gas shut-off, and adequate storage.

19.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage. The middle school stage was not of adequate size and was not located to have convenient access to language arts and music instructional area and close to seating. Fire resistant curtains, acoustical panels, film screens, controlled illumination, and outlets were not available.

19.1.14. Food service. Adequate seating for dining and study purposes, chalkboard and bulletin board, and a teachers' dining area of adequate size were not available.

19.1.15. Health service units. A health service unit of adequate size was not available. Curtained or small rooms with cots, toilet, and scales were not provided.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Elkins Middle School is temporarily located in modular buildings in the Elkins High School parking lot. Plans are to move the students back to the old middle school facility in August 2009.

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 deficiencies, Elkins Middle School will have great difficulty in achieving adequate yearly progress (AYP) unless all teachers challenge students through high-quality instruction. The administration must be the educational leader and provide staff development in the deficient areas to increase student achievement.

FOLLOW-UP TEAM SUMMARY

Elkins Middle School failed to maintain AYP for the 2007-2008 school year; however, the Team observed a number of improvements during the progress monitoring. Teachers were implementing the school's Five Year Strategic Plan and instruction was varied and educationally stimulating. The principal was well-aware of the needs of the school and had a plan for the observation and evaluation of teachers and the implementation of educational strategies to close the achievement gap.

Elkins Middle School had corrected all findings of noncompliance except 7.1.4. Instruction. The school also demonstrated progress in increasing student achievement.