



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

INITIAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

ROANE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

MAY 2010

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

An announced (five days in advance) Education Performance Audit of the Roane County School District was conducted on March 23 and 24 and March 29-31, 2009. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was to investigate reasons the county had not achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) during the past five years and other existing circumstances that warrant an on-site review. The Team also reviewed district level high-quality standards in accordance with appropriate procedures to make recommendations to the West Virginia Board of Education on such measures as it considers necessary to improve performance and progress to meet the high-quality standards as required by W.Va. Code and West Virginia Board of Education policies.

The Education Performance Audit Team interviewed the Roane County Board of Education President and Vice President and all board members and school district personnel including the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, Director of Personnel, Finance official, Director of Federal Programs, and other county office personnel. The Team examined documents including the Roane County Five-Year Strategic Improvement Plan; minutes of meetings of the Roane County Board of Education; personnel documents; personnel evaluations; the school system policy manual; regulatory agency reviews, i.e., financial audit, the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP), etc.; and letters, faxes, and materials of interest to the Education Performance Audit.

This report presents the Education Performance Audit Team's findings regarding the Roane County School District.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

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

NAME	TITLE	COUNTY	CATEGORY
Monica Beane	Assistant Director Office of Instruction	WV Department of Education	AYP/Five-Year Strategic Plan/High Quality Standards
Shawn Hawkins	Teacher Quality Coordinator, Office of Professional Preparation,	WV Department of Education	Certification
Delores Ranson	Retired Assistant Superintendent (Personnel)	Jackson County Schools	Personnel - Hiring/Licensure/ Internship
Jody Lucas	Treasurer/Chief School Business Official	Cabell County Schools	Finance
Christopher P. Derico	Director of Services	Lewis County Schools	Policies and Implementation
David Bailey	HVAC Tech Office of School Facilities	WV Department of Education	Facilities
Carroll Staats	Member, Board of Education	Jackson County Schools	Evaluation/ Administration
Robin J. Lewis	Superintendent	Hampshire County Schools	Leadership

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

INITIATIVES FOR ACHIEVING ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Education Performance Audit Team reported that Roane County had undertaken an initiative for achieving Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The prominent initiative and activity included the following.

5.1.1 Achievement. The Roane County School System was utilizing Acuity benchmarks to track student achievement progression throughout the school year and to provide targeted instructional interventions to maximize student performance. Data were being accumulated from DIBELS and the Informal Reading Assessment (IRA) and were being used to identify student problem areas and to focus instructional interventions.

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 2008-09 school year identified that Roane County did not make adequate yearly progress (AYP). Roane County failed to achieve AYP for the last five consecutive years. Chart 1 shows the grade span/assessment and subgroup(s) that did not make AYP. It also shows the percent proficient for each grade span/assessment and subgroup.

The Team noted that the performance of all subgroups failing to meet AYP (Chart 1) compared with the 2007-08 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) data, decreased in academic performance. The decline was noted; however, the 2008-09 results were compared to a new test (WESTEST 2) which was more rigorous than the 2007-08 WESTEST.

Chart 1

WESTEST			
GRADE SPAN/ASSESSMENT	SUBGROUP	2008-09 PERCENT PROFICIENT	2007-08 PERCENT PROFICIENT
Elementary – Mathematics	Special Education	27.5%	NA(S)
Middle – Mathematics	Special Education	14.8%	27.1%
Middle – Mathematics	Economically Disadvantaged	38.7%	57.4%
Elementary – Reading	Special Education	17.6%	NA(S)
Middle – Reading	Special Education	19.8%	28.8%
Elementary – Reading	Economically Disadvantaged	45.4%	69.5%
Middle – Reading	Economically Disadvantaged	43.9%	66.2%

Chart 2 shows that the number of Roane County's schools identified for not achieving AYP increased in the last five years. In 2009, three of the county's six schools or 50 percent failed to achieve AYP.

Chart 2

NUMBER OF SCHOOLS NOT ACHIEVING AYP	
Year	Number of Schools
2005	2
2006	1
2007	2
2008	2
2009	3

An examination of the WESTEST 2 assessment data for the 2008-09 assessment school year revealed that student achievement was significantly below the State average in all subgroups and at all levels (elementary, middle, and high school). (Charts 3-8).

Charts three through five indicated that the 2008-09 Roane County School District student percent proficient in mathematics was below the State percent proficient. Student performance in reading/language arts (Charts 6, 7, and 8) was also below the 2008-09 State percent proficient.

Chart 3

ELEMENTARY MATHEMATICS 2008-2009		
Subgroup	District Percent Proficient	State Percent Proficient
All Students (AS)	56.4%	65.2%
White (W)	56.7%	65.7%
Black (B)	NA(S)	54.6%
Special Education (SE)	27.5%	40.9%
Economically Disadvantaged (SES)	49.2%	56.0%

Chart 4

MIDDLE MATHEMATICS 2008-2009		
Subgroup	District Percent Proficient	State Percent Proficient
All Students (AS)	46.5%	56.9%
White (W)	46.6%	57.6%
Black (B)	NA(S)	42.3%
Special Education (SE)	14.8%	23.1%
Economically Disadvantaged (SES)	38.7%	46.4%

Chart 5

HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS 2008-2009		
Subgroup	District Percent Proficient	State Percent Proficient
All Students (AS)	48.4%	56.9%
White (W)	47.7%	57.5%
Black (B)	NA(S)	44.3%
Special Education (SE)	NA(S)	21.6%
Economically Disadvantaged (SES)	39.0%	46.0%

Chart 6

ELEMENTARY READING/LANGUAGE ARTS 2008-2009		
Subgroup	District Percent Proficient	State Percent Proficient
All Students (AS)	52.1%	65.5%
White (W)	52.7%	65.9%
Black (B)	NA(S)	57.8%
Special Education (SE)	17.6%	32.8%
Economically Disadvantaged (SES)	45.4%	56.1%

Chart 7

MIDDLE READING/LANGUAGE ARTS 2008-2009		
Subgroup	District Percent Proficient	State Percent Proficient
All Students (AS)	52.8%	63.2%
White (W)	52.6%	63.5%
Black (B)	NA(S)	54.9%
Special Education (SE)	19.8%	22.6%
Economically Disadvantaged (SES)	43.9%	52.8%

Chart 8

HIGH SCHOOL READING/LANGUAGE ARTS 2008-2009		
Subgroup	District Percent Proficient	State Percent Proficient
All Students (AS)	42.0%	52.7%
White (W)	41.8%	53.2%
Black (B)	NA(S)	41.4%
Special Education (SE)	NA(S)	14.3%
Economically Disadvantaged (SES)	35.1%	41.8%

SAT/ACT Assessment Results

Chart 9 shows the Roane School District's Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Testing (ACT) results from 2004-05 to 2008-09. The SAT math mean score increased substantially from 422 in 2007-2008 to 499 in 2008-2009. The SAT reading score increased slightly from 458 to 564 during the same time period. The SAT writing score declined from 458 to 442. The percent of SAT test takers also increased from the 2007-2008 school year from 4.1 percent to 5.5 percent in 2008-09. A comparison of three year trend data shows that Roane County's students declined in percent of test takers, declined moderately in the math score, increased measurably in the reading score, and declined measurably in the writing score.

ACT trend data showed an increase in percentage of students taking the ACT (56.4 percent) in 2008-2009 over (47.3 percent) in 2007-2008. The ACT composite score also increased to 20.2 in 2008-2009 from 19.3 in 2007-2008. Three year trend data also revealed an increase in test takers and in the composite score.

Chart 9

SCHOLASTIC APTITUDE TEST (SAT) - Roane County Schools					
Roane County	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
SAT Takers (%)	6.7%	10.7%	10.4%	4.1%	5.5%
SAT Math Mean Score	481	461	501	422	499
SAT Reading Score	511 (Verbal)	483 (Verbal)	500	458	564
SAT Writing Score			475	458	442
AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING (ACT) - Roane County Schools					
ACT Takers (%)	40.0%	51.1%	55.5%	47.3%	56.4%
ACT Composite	20.8	20.2	20.1	19.3	20.2

Source: State, County and School Data, 2008-09 West Virginia Report Cards, West Virginia Department of Education.

ACT EXPLORE Assessment Results

Based on the 2008-2009 Grade 8 ACT EXPLORE results in Chart 10, Roane County test takers showed a decrease (14.4 to 14.1) in the composite score from the 2007-2008 school year. Three years of trend data showed a decrease in English (13.7 to 13.4); an increase in Mathematics (13.7 to 13.9); a decrease in Science (15.5 to 15.3); and Reading results remained constant (13.3 to 13.3).

Chart 10

ACT EXPLORE RESULTS					
Grade 8					
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
English WV	14.2	14.3	14.2	14.3	13.9
English Roane	13.3	13.4	13.7	14.0	13.4
Mathematics WV	14.2	14.5	14.5	14.7	14.3
Mathematics Roane	13.4	13.4	13.7	14.3	13.9
Reading WV	13.8	13.9	13.9	13.9	13.6
Reading Roane	13.5	13.2	13.3	13.2	13.3
Science WV	15.8	15.9	15.9	16.0	15.6
Science Roane	15.4	15.5	15.5	15.7	15.3
Composite WV	14.6	14.8	14.8	14.9	14.5
Composite Roane	14.1	14.0	14.2	14.4	14.1

Chart 10A depicts the relative rank of Roane County on the 2009 ACT Explore compared with the 55 county school districts in West Virginia by subject for Grade 8 students. Roane County School District ranked 54th out of the 55 West Virginia county school districts in English, 48th in Math, 44th in Reading, and 50th in Science.

The chart also gives the benchmark for each content and the percentage of Roane County's Grade 8 students performing above the benchmark. The following details the percentage of Grade 8 students above benchmark: English – 40.74 percent; Math – 16.67 percent; Reading – 26.54 percent; and Science – 3.70 percent.

Chart 10A

ACT Explore 2009								
Above Benchmark %								
County	Relative Rank	English Benchmark: 13	Relative Rank	Math Benchmark: 17	Relative Rank	Reading Benchmark: 15	Relative Rank	Science Benchmark: 20
Roane County	54	40.74	48	16.67	44	26.54	50	3.70

ACT PLAN Assessment Results

Based on the 2008-2009 Grade 10 ACT PLAN results in Chart 11, Roane County test takers showed a decrease (15.8 to 15.6) in the composite score from the 2007-2008 school year. Three years of trend data showed a decrease in English (15.4 to 15.2); an increase in Mathematics (15.1 to 15.7); a decrease in Reading (15.8 to 14.5); and results remained constant in Science (16.5 to 16.5).

Chart 11

ACT PLAN RESULTS					
Grade 10					
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
English WV	16.7	16.8	16.7	16.3	16.3
English Roane	16.4	14.9	15.4	15.1	15.2
Mathematics WV	16.4	16.5	16.6	16.3	16.3
Mathematics Roane	16.0	14.9	15.1	15.3	15.7
Reading WV	16.5	16.6	16.5	16.5	15.7
Reading Roane	16.2	14.7	15.8	15.8	14.5
Science WV	17.7	17.8	17.7	17.5	17.1
Science Roane	17.3	16.4	16.5	16.7	16.5
Composite WV	17.0	17.1	17.0	16.8	16.5
Composite Roane	16.6	15.3	15.8	15.8	15.6

Chart 11A depicts the relative rank of Roane County on the 2009 Act Plan compared with the 55 county school districts in West Virginia by subject for Grade 10 students. Roane County School District ranked 53rd in English; 33rd in Math; 52nd in Reading; and 43rd in Science. The chart also gives the benchmark for each content and the percentage of Roane County's Grade 10 students performing above the benchmark. The following details the percentage of Grade 10 students above the benchmark: English - 62.35 percent; Math - 35.29 percent; Reading – 41.18 percent; and Science – 15.29 percent.

Chart 11A

ACT Plan 2009								
Above Benchmark %								
County	Relative Rank	English Benchmark: 15	Relative Rank	Math Benchmark: 19	Relative Rank	Reading Benchmark: 17	Relative Rank	Science Benchmark: 21
Roane County	53	62.35	33	35.29	52	41.18	43	15.29

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)

Roane County School District and the county's school met the State participation rate standard as shown in Chart 12.

Chart 12

NCLB - All Subgroup - Partipation Rate										
WVEIS Code	School Name	School Type	2008-09	2007-08	AYP For PR 08-09			Trend		
			Part. Rate Math	Part. Rate Reading	Part. Rate Math	Part. Rate Reading	Part. Rate Math	Part. Rate Reading		
ROANE COUNTY										
549.	079 - 503	ROANE COUNTY HIGH	High	98.8	98.8	96.1	94.9	Yes	Up	Up
550.	079 - 301	SPENCER MIDDLE SCHOOL	Middle	99.8	100.0	99.8	100.0	Yes	Up	100%
551.	079 - 206	WALTON ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE SCHOOL	Middle	100.0	99.6	100.0	100.0	Yes	100%	Down
552.	079 - 205	SPENCER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Elementary	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	Yes	100%	100%
553.	079 - 203	REEDY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Elementary	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	Yes	100%	100%
554.	079 - 202	GEARY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL	Middle	100.0	100.0	99.5	99.5	Yes	Up	Up

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 13 indicated the Roane County School District attendance rate has remained above the State requirement of 90 percent for the last five reporting years. The Team noted that the attendance rate had declined in the last five reporting years.

Roane County contracted with RESA 5 for attendance director services. W.Va. Code §18-8-3(a) requires the county to employ an attendance director, “. . . at least a half-time director of school attendance if such county has a net enrollment equal to or less than four thousand students All persons to be employed as attendance directors shall have the written recommendation of the county superintendent.” This lack of focus on student attendance by a county employed, permanent personnel director is recognized as a factor in the declining trend in the percentage of attendance.

Chart 13

ATTENDANCE RATE	
Year	Attendance Rate
2004-05	97.11%
2005-06	97.11%
2006-07	96.84%
2007-08	96.59%
2008-09	96.15%

Chart 13A lists the 2008-2009 attendance rate for each school in Roane County.

Chart 13A

ATTENDANCE RATE	
Year (2008-09)	Attendance Rate
Geary Elementary	97.07%
Reedy Elementary	96.88%
Spencer Elementary	96.59%
Walton Elementary/Middle	96.96%
Spencer Middle	96.98%
Roane County High	94.43%

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 14 showed that the Roane County School District graduation rate met the State requirement of 80 percent for the last five reporting years. However, the Team noted that the graduation rate had declined in the past three years. The central office instituted an extra step that required students considering dropping out of school to complete an interview with a central office staff member (typically the assistant superintendent or contracted attendance director) prior to being able to withdraw from school. During the interview, the student must provide reasons for dropping out of school. In turn, the central office staff member discusses possible alternatives to dropping out of school.

Chart 14

GRADUATION RATE	
Year	Graduation Rate
2004-05	80.00%
2005-06	80.00%
2006-07	85.05%
2007-08	84.77%
2008-09	82.74%

SECTION II
DATA ANALYSIS

Chart 15

NUMBER OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT (AP), HONORS, AND COLLEGE COURSES OFFERED 2009-2010			
High School	Number of AP Courses Offered	Number of Honors Courses Offered	Number of College Credit Courses Offered
Roane County High School	4 (3 taught)	2	0

Chart 15 demonstrated the number of advanced placement (AP), honors courses, and college credit courses taught in Roane County's high school.

<u>AP Courses Taught</u>	<u>Honors Classes Taught</u>
Biology	English (9-12)
Calculus AB	Math (9-12)
Chemistry	

The Team interviewed the county curriculum administrator as well as the Roane County High School principal.

1. Only AP Biology, AP Calculus, and AP Chemistry were currently being taught at Roane County High School. Staff indicated that AP English was offered; however, not enough students were interested to warrant teaching the course. While three AP courses were being taught at Roane County High School during the 2009-2010 school year, they did not meet the four course requirement of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510. Additionally, AP courses taught prior to 2009-2010 were not authorized by the College Board.
2. The principal at Roane County High School indicated the following AP courses will be offered during the 2010-2011 school year: AP Biology, AP Calculus, AP English, AP Studio Art, AP US Government and Politics, AP US History, and AP Comparative Government and Politics. The county and school will need to determine that the classes can be authorized by the College Board and that the teachers have participated in the required training.
3. Algebra III was not being taught as a dual credit course; it was being taught as a college credit only course after school through West Virginia University.
4. Economics was offered, but due to lack of student interest, was not being taught.

Chart 16 showed that the percent of advanced placement (AP) test takers decreased schoolwide with 0.0 percent students taking the AP exam in 2008-09. No students scored a 3 or higher on the AP exam during the 2008-09 school year. Roane County High School appeared to lack a focus on advanced courses and data suggested that students were not adequately prepared to earn a passing score on the AP exam. Currently, no incentives were in place that encouraged students to take an AP course or to attempt the AP exam.

Chart 16

AP TEST TAKERS				
Roane County	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
10 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
11 th Grade Test Takers (%)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
12 th Grade Test Takers (%)	9.5%	8.8%	1.8%	0.0%
10 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0			0.0%
11 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0			0.0%
12 th Grade Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	0.0			0.0%
TOTAL Test Takers (%) with a score of 3 or higher	*	*	*	0.0%

Chart 16A shows the advanced placement (AP) courses taught at Roane County High School in 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 and the number of students enrolled. The AP courses taught in 2008-2009 were not College Board authorized classes. Five-year trend data showed that 0.0 percent of Roane County's students scored a 3 or higher on the AP examinations.

Chart 16A
Number of students Enrolled in AP courses

2008-09	2009-10
AP Chemistry – 8 students	AP Calculus – 2 students
AP Biology – 7 students	AP Biology – 10 students
	AP Chemistry – 17 students

The high school graduate overall college going rate for Roane County in 2008-09 was 46.1 percent compared to the State's overall college going rate of 58.8 percent as presented in Chart 18. The county's college going rate declined 2.3 percent from fall 2007 while the State's college going rate increased 1.3 percent.

Chart 17

ESTIMATED COLLEGE GOING RATE FALL 2007		
	Number of High School Graduates 2006-07	Overall College Going Rate Percentage
State	17,914	57.5%
Roane	182	48.4%
	Number of High School Graduates in 2007-08	Overall College Going Rate Percentage in 2007-08
State	NA	58.8
Roane	NA	46.1

NA denotes Not Available

Source: West Virginia College Going Rates By County and High School Fall 2007, West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission.

Roane County School District's percentage of students enrolled in developmental courses was measurably higher than the State's percentage of students taking English and mathematics developmental courses (Chart 18).

Sixteen of Roane County's 59 first-time freshmen or 27.12 percent were enrolled in Developmental English during fall 2008 compared to the State total (15.79 percent). Twenty-six graduates or 44.07 percent were enrolled in Developmental Mathematics compared to the State total (27.55 percent).

Chart 18

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES ENROLLED IN DEVELOPMENTAL COURSES FALL 2008					
	1 st Time WV Freshmen Total #	English Total #	% in Developmental English	Mathematics Total #	% in Developmental Mathematics
State	8,073	1,275	15.79%	2,224	27.55%
Roane County High	59	16	27.12%	26	44.07%
Roane County	59	16	27.12%	26	44.07%

Source: First-Time Freshmen, Previous Year WV High School Graduates in Developmental Courses by Type of Course Fall 2008 (census).

SECTION III

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

7.1. CURRICULUM.

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

The Team interviewed central office curriculum staff, reviewed documents, conferred with individual school audit teams, and talked to some principals and found the following situations in which curriculum was not based on 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs).

1. **Spencer Elementary School.** The individual school Education Performance Audit Team reported that the 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) were not being used to guide the curriculum in several classes.
2. **Spencer Middle School.** The individual school Education Performance Audit Team reported that the 21st Century content standards (CSOs) were not guiding the curriculum.
3. **Geary Elementary/Middle School.** The individual school Education Performance Audit Team reported that in at least one-third of the classes the curriculum was based on textbooks, workbooks, and worksheets rather than the West Virginia CSOs.
4. **Roane County High School.** Only AP Biology, AP Calculus, and AP Chemistry were being taught at Roane County High School. The principal stated that AP English was offered; however, enough students were not interested to warrant teaching the course. The minimum requirements of Policy 2510 were being met, as the courses were offered, but not taken by students. A schoolwide plan needed to address the lack of interest in AP courses.
5. **Walton Elementary/Middle School.** The individual school Education Performance Audit Team reported that 11 teachers were not using the CSOs as a basis for the school's curriculum and instruction.
6. **Countywide.** Through findings documented in school team audits, it was evidenced that teachers were not basing their instructional practice on standards-based instruction. Textbooks and accompanying worksheets were driving the instruction. Teachers indicated during Team interviews that they used the textbooks to plan the instruction, and then they find the CSOs to see which ones fit the lesson.

There appeared to be confusion regarding the expectations of teachers to provide standards-based instruction. Teachers attended professional development sessions provided by the central office, but no plan was in place to follow-up with teachers at the school level to ensure that practice has changed.

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)

Students in Roane County were not provided ample opportunity to be prepared for success beyond graduation from high school. The lack of college preparatory and or advanced courses puts students at a disadvantage as evidenced by the high percentage of students enrolled in developmental English and mathematics courses in West Virginia's colleges.

Individual school Education Performance Audits reported instances in four of the six schools that indicated high expectations for students through curricular offerings, instructional practices, administrative practices, etc., needed to be strengthened throughout the county's schools.

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)

The performance data and findings from the individual school Education Performance Audits indicated that the central office staff needed to be involved in the instructional practices applied in the schools.

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)

While the county had provided writing instruction professional development for teachers at all schools, the writing scores continued to decline. Roane County needed to provide support at all schools to assure that all teachers include instruction in writing as part of each child's weekly education curriculum.

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)

A sufficient number of State approved textbooks were provided for all students; however, the Team concluded through interviews with central office staff (assistant superintendent and special education director), that the math textbook series (Saxon Math) did not align to the newly adopted West Virginia content standards and objectives (CSOs). The central office staff indicated that once the new textbook series is adopted and purchased, math instruction will improve, resulting in higher student achievement in mathematics. However, the West Virginia content standards and objectives were revised nearly three years ago. The textbook should not be the basis of a curriculum driven by standards-based instruction.

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)

1. According to the West Virginia Department of Education Course Information for Policy 2510 the following programs were not being taught at Roane County High School.
 - Only AP Biology, AP Calculus, and AP Chemistry were being taught. While AP English was offered, the principal said that enough students were not interested to warrant teaching the course.
 - Algebra III was not being taught as a dual credit course; however, it was being taught as a college credit only course after school through West Virginia University.
 - Economics was offered, but due to lack of student interest, was not being taught.
2. According to the West Virginia Department of Education Course Information for Policy 2510 the following programs were not being taught daily at Reedy Elementary School: Science and Social Studies. The schedules revealed that science and social studies were being taught in two week increments in grades 5 and 6.
3. **Spencer Elementary School.** The teachers' class instructional schedules provided the county level Team showed: A Grade 3 classroom had science two days per week, a Grade 3 classroom had social studies three days per week, a Grade 4 classroom had social studies and spelling during the same 30 minute block and science four days per week.

7.1.12. 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 county office had a Multicultural Plan that was adopted by the Roane County Board of Education December 9, 2009. The premise of the plan is to address zero tolerance in all programmatic levels. Each month had a suggested or recommended list of activities to address the multiple areas of zero tolerance. However, school audit findings indicated teachers in all schools were not able to discuss a school or county Multicultural Plan.

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)

Walton Elementary/Middle School did not meet the required number of minutes as required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2510 (per Walton school audit findings). The Team reviewed individual teachers' classroom schedules at one school and found that instructional time was not always being used effectively. The Team recommends that the central office staff review all classroom schedules and practices to assist the schools in effectively using instructional time.

7.1.14. Alignment with job market opportunities. The technical and adult programs in the school are aligned with first local, and then state, then national job market opportunities. (Policy 2510)

The Team found the technical and adult programs were aligned with local and state job market opportunities (health care, oil & gas, farming, and education); however, no evidence was found supporting national job market opportunities. Job shadowing was available for students upon request. A meat processing lab is located at Roane County High School. Agriculture and farming are prevalent in the area. The FFA chapter consistently competes successfully at the national level.

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 plan did an adequate job of analyzing data and identifying areas of need; however, no plan of action was used to determine implementation of the plan. In addition, school improvement plans were considered ineffective as they were not created by a team of individuals. Teachers interviews in each school during the school audits indicated that not all had been given the opportunity to contribute to the plan or comment on the plan and many were not familiar with the goals identified in the plan.

Related to student achievement, the reason the district was identified for improvement, the scores in all areas were on a declining trend. Math scores were near the lowest in the State and the willingness to build capacity was limited at the central office. Through staff interviews conducted on the day of the audit, the rationale for low math achievement was that “there are no qualified math instructors in this county,” that they had a person dedicated to improving math achievement, but he now works at the West Virginia Department of Education. However, the county employed an interventionist assigned to work with staff at the elementary level to improve reading instruction.

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)

While opportunity existed for data analysis, a deep understanding of what to do with the data analysis did not exist. RESA 5 staff had been utilized at Spencer Middle School, but more guidance is needed countywide.

7.4. REGULATORY AGENCY REVIEWS.

7.4.1. Regulatory agency reviews. Determine during on-site reviews and include in reports whether required reviews and inspections have been conducted by the appropriate agencies, including, but not limited to, the State Fire Marshal, the Health Department, the School Building Authority of West Virginia, and the responsible divisions within the West Virginia Department of Education, and whether noted deficiencies have been or are in the process of being corrected. The Office of Education Performance Audits may not conduct a duplicate review or inspection nor mandate more stringent compliance measures. (W.Va. Code §§18-9B-9, 10, 11, 18-4-10, and 18-5A-5; Policy 1224.1; Policy 8100; W.Va. Code §18-5-9; Policy 6200; Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 §104.22 and §104.23; Policy 4334; Policy 4336)

1. Finance

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

Central Office

Fiscal Year 2009 Audit report reviewed. No findings or deficiencies were reported in internal control.

The general fund balance decreased by \$188,633, from Fiscal Year 2008. The decrease can be directly attributed to the county having to record an expense for other post employment benefits (OPEB) for the first time. In spite of this unusual expense the board's general current expense fund balance was a positive \$406,564.

The Team reviewed the Treasurer's Report to the Board and reported the following finding.

The treasurer provides a listing of expenditures and revenue each month to the board. The report did not contain all information required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8100, Handbook for School Finance in West Virginia. Requirements are shown in detail on page 53 of the handbook.

Individual Schools

An audit of Roane County individual schools was conducted by the Board's internal auditor for the year ended June 30, 2008. Corrective action plans addressing findings were prepared by each school principal. The audit of the year ended June 30, 2009 had not been completed.

Finding all Schools

West Virginia Board of Education Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Sections 5-1 and 5-7, requires the board to approve all groups collecting funds in the name of the school. No record of such board action was available.

Spencer Middle School

Finding 1. Checks 8123 and 8128 were issued to pay invoices dated prior to purchase orders being approved.

West Virginia Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-18. Purchase Orders, requires a pre-numbered purchase order be approved in writing by the principal or designee before the purchase is made.

Reedy Elementary

Finding 1. Checks 3426, 3430, and 3434 were issued to pay invoices dated prior to purchase orders being approved.

West Virginia Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-18. Purchase Orders, requires a pre-numbered purchase order be approved in writing by the principal or designee before the purchase is made.

Roane County High School

Finding 1. The Team reviewed invoices paid with checks 1207, 1211, 1213, 1217, and 1227 and could not make sure the invoices were verified for clerical and mathematical accuracy. Approval by principal or designee was not shown on invoices.

The Team recommended that the school strictly follow procedures for Itemized Claim for Payment required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-21.

Spencer Elementary

Finding 1. The Team reviewed invoices paid with checks 5035, 5039, and 5041 and could not make sure invoices were verified for clerical and mathematical accuracy. Approval by principal or designee was not shown on invoices.

The Team recommended that the school strictly follow procedures for Itemized Claim for Payment required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-21.

Finding 2. The Team reviewed invoices paid with checks 5039 and 5041 and found the invoices were dated prior to purchase orders being issued and approved.

West Virginia Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-18. Purchase Orders, requires a pre-numbered purchase order be approved in writing by the principal or designee before the purchase is made.

Walton Elementary and Middle

Finding 1. The Team reviewed invoices paid with checks 2633, 2636, 2635, and 2643 and could not make sure invoices were verified for clerical and mathematical accuracy. Approval by principal or designee was not shown on invoices.

The Team recommended that the school strictly follow procedures for Itemized Claim for Payment required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-21.

Geary Elementary and Middle

Finding 1. The Team reviewed invoices paid with checks 4950, 4951, 4952, and 4953 and could not make sure invoices were verified for clerical and mathematical accuracy. Approval by principal or designee was not shown on invoices.

The Team recommended that the school strictly follow procedures for Itemized Claim for Payment required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 1224.1, *Accounting/Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*, Section 1-21.

2. Facilities

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

1. **Geary Elementary School.** This building was constructed in 1980 with additions in 1986 and 1985. The site is 9.6 acres. The building heat is provided by a hot water boiler. The boiler is original to the building and is 30 years old. There is no central air conditioning system for all the classrooms; the classrooms have window air conditioning units. The existing system does not meet current ventilation standards. There is a crawl space under a portion of this facility. A piece of vapor barrier is missing, otherwise the crawl space appears dry and in good condition. There is some wall cracking in the corner of the multipurpose room. Some mercury thermostats were in place that should be removed. This facility received School Building Authority (SBA) funding to add additional instructional space and build a new gymnasium. Construction is to begin the summer of 2010. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's office cited one issue at this facility during the 2010 inspection regarding the failure to have the kitchen hood fire extinguishing system inspected annually. That issue has been resolved. This building does not have a fire protection sprinkler system.
2. **Reedy Elementary School.** This building was constructed in 1980. The site is 1.9 acres. The building is heated with a hot water boiler. The boiler is original to the building and is 30 years old. The central office and gymnasium have central air conditioning that is approximately 10 years old. The classrooms have window air conditioning units. The existing mechanical system does not provide forced air ventilation to the classrooms. The access roads to the school could use some improvement. The designated parking area is not adequate. Some sidewalk cracks could pose a tripping hazard, especially the sidewalk from the exit ramp to the playground. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's office cited one issue at this facility during the 2010 inspection regarding the failure to have the kitchen hood fire extinguishing system inspected annually. That issue has been resolved. This building does not have a fire protection sprinkler system.
3. **Spencer Elementary School.** This building was constructed in 1982 with additions to the original building in 1988, 1989, 1991, and 1999. The site is 27.5 acres. This facility is totally air conditioned. Some of the ceiling mounted air diffusers have moving louvers which are noisy and disruptive. The Team recommended that they be replaced. The cooling tower located on the roof is aging. Some sidewalk/concrete issues have been noted by the local health department. These issues have been or are in the process of being addressed. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's office cited one issue at this facility during the 2010 inspection regarding the failure to have

- the kitchen hood fire extinguishing system inspected annually. That issue has been resolved. This building does not have a fire protection sprinkler system.
4. **Walton Elementary/Middle School.** This building was constructed in 1966 with additions to the original structure in 1980, 1986, 1995, and 1998. The site is 29 acres. This facility has a variety of heating systems. The newest rooftop equipment at this facility was manufactured in 1997. Some of the classrooms have residential type gas furnaces installed. These classrooms need to have carbon monoxide detectors installed per West Virginia State Board of Education Policy 6200. Several of the wall mounted units had dirty air filters. Several were obstructed with classroom storage items. Several mercury thermostats were currently in use at this facility. These need to be removed from the classrooms and properly disposed. There are several areas where roof leaks appeared to be active. The building layout is less than desirable. Several classrooms (Rooms 100, 101, 103, 104, 105, 106) enter/exit through other classrooms. This could be disruptive to the educational process. Black staining on the rear wall of the facility needed to be cleaned. The fenced area (appeared to be a pre-school playground) was cluttered and needed to be cleaned out. The rest room exhaust systems were inoperable during the visit. The hallway electrical panels were not locked. Panels that are accessible to students should remain locked at all times. Several areas would benefit aesthetically with a thorough cleaning and some new paint. Significant soil erosion existed at the rear of this facility. A Geotechnical Engineer has evaluated the site and reported that the erosion is within 30 feet of the school building foundation. This issue is critical and needs to be addressed as quickly as possible. After the repairs are complete a safety fence should be installed between the playground and the river. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's office cited two issues at this facility during the 2010 inspection regarding the failure to have the kitchen hood fire extinguishing system installed and inspected annually. These issues have been resolved.
 5. **Spencer Middle School.** This building was constructed in 1949 with additions constructed in 1949, 1980, and 1986. The site is 7 acres. Access to the facility is narrow and less than ideal. The facility does not have centralized air conditioning or mechanical ventilation for the classroom spaces. Several stained ceiling tiles were prevalent throughout the facility. The building would benefit from a thorough cleaning and some new paint. The Mechanical Room was cluttered and several electrical panels were obstructed. Numerous areas were listed on the OEPA facilities checklist as being inadequate. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal's office reported that all the outstanding issues at this facility had been resolved. The building is partially sprinkled.

The children play on a football field that is next door to a rubber factory. The odor from the factory permeated the school and playground. The staff

reported that was something you had to get “used” to. The close proximity of the factory to the school facility compromises the educational environment and potentially poses some health and safety issues for the students and staff.

6. **Roane County High School.** This building was constructed in 1993. The site is 72 acres. This is the newest facility in the county inventory. It has central heating, air conditioning, and ventilation. Some stained ceiling tiles were prevalent throughout the facility. A ceiling tile behind the kitchen (exit sign) had mold growth. This area and issue have been noted on the annual SBA Facility Reviews for the past three years. The issue has not been resolved. Several units in the upstairs Mechanical Room were in the process of receiving compressor replacements. Some of the units had loaded air filters. Replacement filters were on site but they had not been installed. The school staff reported the county HVAC technician had resigned his position and that the compressor and filter replacements were on “hold”. The facility is still in sound condition. However, there are numerous signs that the facility is not receiving the required maintenance to maintain the facility to standard. This facility needs to have an aggressive maintenance and housekeeping plan implemented to maintain the facility in like new condition. The West Virginia State Fire Marshal’s office reported that all outstanding issues at this facility have been resolved. This building has a fire protection sprinkler system.

Countywide Notes/Recommendations.

- The largest need at every facility in the county, excluding Roane County High School, is an updated mechanical system that includes central heating, air conditioning, and ventilation.
- The county has a behavioral based energy program in place. The county should explore performance contracting options that include capital investment upgrades to the facilities.
- The county has an automated Internet based work order program in place. However, the county does not have a written preventive maintenance program in place. The current work order software that the county is utilizing can be expanded to include a preventive maintenance work order system. The Team recommended that the county establish a documented preventive maintenance program for every facility.
- The county maintenance staff is comprised of two full time people. The county is currently down to one full time person. An open HVAC technician position is being currently advertised. It is hoped that the position will be filled at the April 2010 board meeting. There is also a position at the high school that serves as a half time custodian/half time maintenance person. The county has six facilities. At the current staffing levels it is difficult to adequately maintain the facilities. Staff time is likely spent making repairs, leaving little time for preventive maintenance and improvements. The Team found several filters that were loaded during the visit.

There was little evidence that preventive maintenance was being performed. The county should consider increasing staff levels or outsourcing critical activities like preventive maintenance. It is recommended that all the boilers be inspected annually by a licensed inspector.

- The county is replacing the old carpet in the classrooms with tile as time and money permit. All mercury containing thermostats should be removed from the classrooms and replaced with digital thermostats.
- The county should remain diligent in identifying and repairing roof leaks. Ceiling tiles should be replaced within 24 hours of wetting to reduce the potential for mold growth.

7.5. ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES AND SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS.

7.5.1. Parents and the community are provided information. Staff members provide parents and the community with understandable information and techniques for helping students learn.

1. The school and county websites provide information to parents, students, and community on a wide variety of topics.
2. The student/parent handbooks contain abundant information on county and school policies and procedures.
3. The county has provided the "Edline" program for schools, and it is used to provide parents of individual student information on a weekly basis on how their child(ren) are progressing in each of their classes.
4. A variety of other communications were provided to parents from teachers on ways they can help their children learn.

7.5.2. Codes of conduct. The county and schools implement, investigate, and monitor the code of conduct for students and the code of conduct for employees. (W.Va. Code §18-2E-5; Policy 4373; Policy 5902)

The Team reviewed policies and incident reports to verify the Student Code of Conduct and the Employee Code of Conduct had been distributed and discussed with students and employees. Interviews were held with the superintendent, principals, and teachers to verify that the codes of conduct were being implemented. The Team also reviewed local school improvement council reports. The county and schools were found to comply with the requirements of law and policies. One school's Education Performance Audit report indicated that the Employee Code of Conduct should be reviewed with staff and clear expectations of professionalism stated.

7.5.3. Statewide assessment. Test security measures are in place for the WESTEST. All students in the school participate in the statewide assessment program that includes state content assessments on the WESTEST or West Virginia Alternate Performance Task Assessment (APTA) at grades 3-8 and 10 and the Writing Assessment at grades 4, 7, and 10. Students with disabilities who have an IEP or a Section 504 Plan may be assessed on the state content assessments under one of the following conditions: standard conditions, standard conditions with accommodations, or non-standard conditions with modifications. Students unable to participate in the standardized assessment under these conditions and who meet the alternate assessment criteria will participate in the West Virginia Alternate Performance Task Assessment (APTA). Education Performance Audit teams will verify the eligibility of any student tested under standard conditions, standard conditions with accommodations, alternate assessment, or medical emergency student exemptions. Students who are continuously enrolled in the public school from the fifth instructional day of

school to the spring assessment administration will be considered in the accountability system. (Policy 2340; Policy 2419; Policy 2510)

The Team interviewed the superintendent, county administrators and the high school principal and observed the procedures used to secure and protect the testing materials, the procedures used to distribute and collect the testing materials, the storing and using of test data, the records of students who took the West Virginia Alternate Performance Task Assessment and reviewed all other aspects of the state testing programs to verify the state testing programs were conducted in accordance with the requirements of State Board policies and found the statewide assessment programs were operating in accordance with all applicable policies.

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)

- Postings. The Team reviewed postings (professional, service, and extracurricular) in the Personnel Office. Vacancies were posted in the county board office, in all schools, and on Edline. The county moved its vacancy postings from the county webpage to Edline in January 2010, as they found Edline to be much easier for the county's programmer and more accessible for individuals looking for vacancies with Roane County Schools.

Positions were being posted as soon as they became vacant. Each posting included a nondiscrimination statement.

Professional vacancies, where certified applicants were at a minimum, were posted on the State website. During the summer months, when school is not in session, all vacancies are announced on a county personnel hotline. If a vacant position is not filled and reposted, it is reposted as a "new" vacancy/posting.

- Job Descriptions. Job descriptions for postings are available on Edline. Copies of job descriptions are also available in each school and the county office. Job descriptions for service personnel were updated and adopted by the Roane County Board of Education February 11, 2010.

Several job descriptions for professional personnel were outdated. Job descriptions for elementary and secondary teachers were approved September 1993 and December 1992, respectively. A speech pathologist job description was approved in 1989. Job descriptions reviewed did not include the "responsibilities" as required in State Board Policy 5310. (See §126-142-13, Classroom Teacher Responsibilities; §126-142-18, Administrators' Responsibilities; and §126-142-28, Coaches' Responsibilities.) Responsibilities for Professional Support Personnel **may be** included in job descriptions (§126-142-23). It was also noted that qualifications listed on postings were not noted in all job descriptions, such as, masters degree preferred, listed on all professional and extracurricular postings, and a current PPD test listed on all postings.

W.Va. Code §16-3D-3 (c) requires a tuberculosis skin test for the **initial** employment. Also, there was no evidence that a masters degree applicant gets preference over a bachelors degree applicant, as the county uses weight for the criteria listed in §18A-4-7a to determine the most qualified applicant. Even in a tie, seniority, not a masters degree breaks the tie.

Only two professional positions were posted after five days prior to the beginning of the instructional term and both positions were filled with applicants new to the county. (Kindergarten, Walton Elementary/Middle School and Social Studies, Roane County High School).

- There is an application for the initial employment (professional and service). There are no applications or forms to complete when requesting a specific posted position. Individuals who wish to apply for a specific position must submit a written request; however, this can be a one sentence request in a letter or written on a scrap piece of paper with no supporting data showing qualifications for the position.
- Several professional/extracurricular postings reviewed had only one or no certified applicants. According to the personnel director, this is the norm. When there is more than one applicant, the county follows W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a to determine the most qualified candidate for vacant positions. The Team reviewed matrices (grids) of those positions. Each matrix showed that the appropriate criteria listed in §18A-4-7a were used to evaluate each applicant. The county used a point system to determine the most qualified applicant when evaluated with the first set of factors in §18A-4-7a. The county also used the first set of factors listed in §18A-4-7a for extracurricular positions. When using the second set of factors in §18A-4-7a, there has never been a situation where the most senior regularly employed applicant was not selected as the most qualified.
- Interview questions are prepared in advance of the scheduled interviews and asked to all candidates. Some interviews require a written response to a prepared question. Interviews are held by the principal, the personnel director, or both. The interview questions, written responses, and interviewer notes are kept on file.
- The recommendation for employment is made by the principal and personnel director to the county superintendent.

The county works to fill vacant positions with certified applicants who also meet the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) definition of a highly qualified teacher. The county participates in the Transition to Teaching Program and has one teacher in the program. Two teachers were on an Alternate Route to Certification. The county has two speech assistants. To recruit new applicants, the personnel director uses the "Approved Educational Personnel Preparation Programs in West Virginia Colleges and Universities" provided by the West Virginia Department of Education to contact state colleges and universities for specific certified teachers. She also contacts colleges and universities from bordering states and the Big East Career Consortium to get leads on available candidates. The personnel director credits the county's use of Edline in getting out-of-the area applicants. The county recently hired (effective for next year) a science teacher and a science/math teacher from Kentucky - and a teacher with multi-categorical/autism certification

and a teacher certified in social studies who will be transferring from other counties in the State.

- No individuals have been employed on out-of-field authorizations this year (2009-2010).
- Coaches. There are no non-paid coaches. All coaches hold a teacher's license, substitute permit, or coaching authorization. Individuals holding a professional license are given priority in hiring. Once that is determined the county uses the first set of factors in §18A-4-7a, giving points to each criterion, to determine the most qualified.
- Service Personnel. W. Va. Code §18A-4-8b is followed in the selection of service personnel. Once applicants meet the criteria of qualifications and evaluation of past service, seniority becomes the deciding factor for transfer or employment of service personnel. The county has an employment application for initial employment as a service personnel employee. They do not have an application (form) to use when applying for a specific posted position. Therefore, individuals (regular employees wishing to transfer and substitutes) apply for the position by writing on a piece of paper, posted note, etc., that they want to apply for the posted position.
- All personnel employed by Roane County are reported on WVEIS. The county contracts three retired former Roane County employees through RESA 5 for ½ time administrative positions. Those positions included: Director of Federal Programs; Director of Student Services; and Director of Parent Involvement. As per the superintendent, with the declining student enrollment and the economy concern, the county was proactive when three full-time administrators retired. Those positions were eliminated and services for those positions were contracted on a half-time basis with the same employees at a set rate of pay. The superintendent states that this has been a substantial savings to the county during this lean time.

Recommendations

1. Number job postings. Once numbered, the county can keep track of the posting. For example, if the position is re-posted due to no applicants available, the same number is used. Example of a posting number: P11-501-01 (P = Professional, 11 = FY School Year; 501 = School Number (Roane County High School); 01 = actual posting number.) The Team recommended that Roane County use the same format for Service and Extracurricular using instead of P, S for Service and X for Extracurricular. This process will also provide accurate data to the personnel director in completing the annual Personnel Data Report required by the WVDE.

2. Job postings. Job postings should reflect the qualifications listed in the job descriptions. The Team recommended that the personnel director review qualifications and update them to ensure they are truly required. Example: Current PPD test could be listed as PPD test for initial employment.
3. Job Descriptions. Professional and Extracurricular – The Team recommended that job descriptions be updated and include the qualifications currently listed on job postings. The Team further recommended that the county add Responsibilities for Classroom Teachers, Administrators, and Coaches as required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. Responsibilities for Professional Support Personnel also may be added.
4. The Team recommended that the county create an application/form for applicants to use when requesting employment or transfer into a posted position. An application/form listing the criteria in §18A-4-7a would provide the personnel director information to use to screen applicants and determine their qualifications for the position.

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 reported that Roane County complied with licensure requirements.

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 a sampling of personnel evaluations for the 2008-2009 year covering all schools and the county office for the various groups of school personnel that included: 12 evaluations of teachers, 10 evaluations of coaches, 6 evaluations of professional support staff, 5 evaluations of school administrators, and 12 evaluations of service personnel from the various service personnel classifications. Overall the personnel evaluations were in excellent shape and completed in accordance with the requirements of State Code, West Virginia Board of Education policies and Roane County Board of Education policies. Three incidents were found that did not meet the requirements: 1. Two observations for one evaluation completed for a teacher at Spencer Elementary School were not signed by the evaluator; 2. one coach at Spencer Middle School did not have an evaluation for the 2008-2009 year; and 3. evaluations for all fall and winter coaches at Roane County High School were not available for review.

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)

All beginning teachers (12) and principals (2) had mentors and participated in the Beginning Internship programs. The programs were monitored by the county personnel director who planned and conducted a county orientation. Principals are responsible for the implementation of the program in their respective schools. No mentor has more than one beginning teacher. No teacher was in his/her second year of the program. Mentors attempt to implement the program according to West Virginia Code and State Board and county policies; however, observations of the beginning teacher by the mentor and required conferences/meetings are held informally at lunch, in the hallway, etc., rather than on a scheduled basis meeting the time requirements listed in policy and law. Principals and beginning teachers interviewed appeared pleased with the program. The personnel director surveys beginning teachers each year and findings provide data to the county in evaluating its program and making improvements. Two new staff development sessions will be scheduled next year for beginning teachers as a result of the 2009-2010 survey.

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

7.7.1. School rules, procedures, and expectations. School rules, procedures, and expectations are written; clearly communicated to students, parents, and staff; and enforced. (Policy 2510; Policy 4373)

All schools provide each student a student handbook which contains the school rules, procedures, schedules, expectations, etc., that will be in effect for that school for the school year. These handbooks are reviewed with students to ensure they understand the rules and procedures and the handbooks are shared with parents. Edline is provided for each school so the teachers and parents may directly communicate on student progress, class expectations, etc. A county website posts such things as rules, procedures, and expectations of students. The Team reviewed a sampling of school discipline records to verify the rules were being enforced.

Roane County Schools publishes a Roane County Schools Handbook for Parents and Students that is distributed to all elementary and middle school students. This handbook provides students and parents notice of required policies and procedures. This includes the grading policy, Student Code of Conduct, student discipline policy, student attendance policy, and drug free workplace. The handbook also includes Internet links to the official policies of Roane County Schools.

The one policy that was not located in the Parent and Student Handbook was notice of the Anti-Harassment and Violence policy. West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2421, Harassment requires notice of this policy either through the student-parent handbook or distribution of the policy to all students, faculty, and staff.

Roane County High School publishes a separate student handbook. Just like the elementary and middle school version, it provides notice to students and parents of policies related to grading, Student Code of Conduct, student discipline, and attendance policy. It also included notice of the Anti-Harassment and Violence policy.

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."

Roane County Schools has been working with a policy development company for several years. The Team reviewed the Roane County Schools policy manual on-line (<http://www.neola.com/roane-wv/>), and found that Roane County Schools has done an excellent job of developing policies that ensure student safety. Policies governing student discipline, student due process rights, nondiscrimination, Student Code of Conduct, and Racial, Sexual, Religious/Ethnic Harassment, and Violence policy have been clearly defined and written. Policy 5517.01, Aggressive Behavior Toward Students, clearly outlines procedures for both staff and students if they feel they have been a victim of aggressive behavior.

All policies are online and easily accessible to everyone, including students and parents. A search engine is available to assist in locating related policies.

The Roane County Schools Policy Manual outlines the procedures on amending, adopting, or repealing policies. This is located under Legislative in the Bylaws. The basic procedure indicates final action may be taken at the second meeting that the policy(ies) has been on the agenda consecutively.

Policy updates and changes are communicated to central office administrators and school principals at monthly staff meetings and through e-mail communication.

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.”

The Team reviewed the Roane County Board of Education agendas and minutes and interviewed all five members of the board of education and the county superintendent. Interviews and the board records indicated that a harmonious and cooperative relationship existed between the county superintendent and county board as a body. The board as a whole supported the county superintendent and this was reflected in board meetings and individually through all interviews.

During the course of the interviews, statements surfaced and minutes supported that indicated a desire by some board members for more communication from the superintendent to board members. Board meetings held once a month restricted the board in receiving communication and also confined them in acting on important items. The explanation of this was “budgetary constraints; however, the Team feels that two meetings monthly would be valuable in county business necessitating board of education action and provide timely communication to board members and the community.

1. Local school improvement council (LSIC) meetings with the board of education were not documented in the board minutes. The agenda states that the board of education will meet with the LSIC prior to the following board of education meeting to be held at the school. W.Va. Code §18-5A-2 (i) states, the local school improvement council shall meet at least annually with the county board, in accordance with the provisions in section fourteen. The board was meeting annually with each LSIC, but the meeting was not at a documented board of education meeting. The Team further noted that it was not possible to determine that the LSICs reported on their school’s Five-Year Strategic Plan.
2. Board minutes were not signed but were stamped by the superintendents’ signature stamp. The superintendent stated future minutes would be signed.
3. Minutes were hard to follow, vague, and did not list a start time or end time. Executive sessions did not indicate the time the board entered an executive session or returned from the session. It was difficult to understand the board’s business that was conducted.

4. Board of education members would benefit from professional development regarding their role in policy development and adoption practices. The current policy development process had minimal involvement of members of the board of education. The agendas and minutes frequently did list the title or specific policy that was being approved.
5. County office leadership was restricted by three administrative positions being contracted ½ time positions.
6. Board of Education members would benefit from more communication between the superintendent and the Board of Education members. Interviews with the superintendent and board members showed that no formal communication or updates existed between the superintendent and board members, such as, weekly or bimonthly newsletters, etc. The primary communication was by telephone to the board president.

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.

The county office staff has determined that the Saxon Mathematics program does not match the West Virginia content standards and objectives (CSOs) and is the reason for the low mathematics scores. While this may be a factor in the low mathematics assessment results, the school reports show a countywide curriculum need to concentrate on the 21st Century content standards and objectives and to use instructional time more effectively.

The Roane County central office staff responsible for curriculum was placed at Reedy Elementary School for three months to oversee daily school operations during the hiring of a new principal. This impeded the county in providing curricular leadership at schools that failed to make adequate yearly progress (AYP).

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 administrative personnel at the county office negatively affected student, school, and school system performance. Roane County does not have an excess levy that supports the education program and the county's response has been to eliminate county office positions and contract the positions as ½ day as staff retire. Three contracted ½ time positions were in place: Director of Federal Programs, Director of Student Services (attendance director), and Director of Parent Involvement. With a 61.7 percent county economically disadvantaged rate (West Virginia School Percent of Needy Students Report Based on 2nd Month Enrollment for 2009-2010) for all grade levels, the county expressed this was the best use of their resources.

While this method of employment may meet statutory hiring and conserve county fiscal resources, the Team questions the effectiveness and efficiency of one-half time, contracted persons in critical area positions of Director of Federal Programs and Director of Student Services (attendance director).

With the high percent of needy students, the declining graduation rate, and declining attendance rate; these management decisions may not be working to effect student performance. The Team recommended that the Roane County School District evaluate effectiveness of the county level administrative assignments to determine if this staffing practice is limiting services to the schools.

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.

- The Team reviewed student enrollment data for the last four years. The superintendent said that the enrollment has stabilized. The data showed a decrease in enrollment of 67 students from 2006 to 2009; however, enrollment increased by 17 students from 2008 to 2009.
- The county did not have an excess levy; therefore, must work to stay within the state aid formula. Each year, principals project their school needs for the upcoming year by projecting enrollments in their respective schools. The county then retains teachers to meet the basic needs, students' IEPs, and pupil/teacher ratio as required in W.Va. Code §18-5-18a. Split-grades are planned each spring in the elementary schools for the upcoming school year; however, this is not implemented if Title II (class size reduction) funds are available. Once these funds are no longer available the county may be required to have split grades if other funds are not available. Central office administrator positions have been cut and eliminated. Three administrators have been replaced with contracted services at a decreased cost to the county.
- As per the business manager, the county currently has three and one-half professional and two and one-half service positions funded outside the formula. There are also positions funded with federal funds, such as Title I, (9.5); Title II (2.5); Rural and Low Income (1); School Improvement Grant (1), etc. After school tutoring is funded from a Homeless Children and Youth Grant.
- As per the personnel director, the principal of Roane County High School, and the superintendent, all required courses are offered to students. When necessary, low incident courses are offered through virtual school. Art, music, and physical education are offered to all students by specialists, with the exception of art at Reedy Elementary School (PreK-4). Art is provided at that school by the regular classroom teachers. Physical education time requirements are met at all schools. Three RN school nurses and two LPN/aides serve the county. Counselors and librarians are assigned to the middle and high schools. School counselors are assigned on an itinerant basis to all elementary schools. The amount of time assigned to each school is determined by the number of students and needs of the respective schools. No itinerant person is assigned to more than two schools.
- Service personnel appear to be sufficient to serve the county. Aides are assigned to preschools and in special education classes where required or "needed." Custodians are assigned to the schools based upon the square footage of the facility. Cooks are assigned according to the number of meals served at the school and the guidelines listed in school law. The facility reviewer observed that the number of maintenance employees may not be adequate for preventive facility maintenance.

8.1.6. Regional Education Service Agency. The school district effectively utilizes Regional Education Service Agency programs and services or other regional services that may be initiated between and among county boards.

Roane County Board of Education is a member of Regional Education Service Agency 5 and receives its RESA services through this organization. The Roane County School District participates in all State mandated programs and services provided by RESA 5. A sampling of programs and services offered by RESA 5 in which Roane County participates included: Computer repair services, Adolescent Health Initiative, adult education, cooperative purchasing, continuing education, Medicaid reimbursement, professional development, tobacco use prevention, safe and drug-free schools, special education support, WVEIS support, and assistance for low performing schools.

CAPACITY BUILDING

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

The Team observed an overall lack of a plan for capacity building in Roane County Schools. With key staff positions being part time and contracted services, areas of need continued to worsen and student achievement continued to decline.

ROANE COUNTY SUMMARY

The Education Performance Audit of the Roane County School District identified that curriculum, instruction, and curricular leadership were the shortcomings of the school district. Declining student achievement in all areas and the individual school findings showed that the county must focus on learning. The structure at the central office impedes the county school district in providing the continuous and sustained leadership to individual schools.

It is the recommendation of the Office of Education Performance Audits that the Roane County School System seek the assistance of Mr. Charles Heinlien, Office of Organizational Effectiveness and Leadership to revise its Five-Year Strategic Plan and to assist with improving the students, schools, and school system performance.