



FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

BLENNERHASSETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

(FORMERLY BLENNERHASSETT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL)

WOOD COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

AUGUST 2009

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The West Virginia Office of Education Performance Audits conducted an Education Performance Audit of Blennerhassett Junior High School in Wood County on April 23, 2008.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of Blennerhassett Middle School (formerly Blennerhassett Junior High School) in Wood County was conducted May 19, 2009. The purpose of the follow-up was to verify correction of the findings identified during the original Education Performance Audit. The review was in accordance with West Virginia Code §18-2E-5 and West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320 which specify that a school that meets or exceeds the performance and progress standards but has other deficiencies shall remain on full accreditation status and a county school district shall remain on full approval status for the remainder of the accreditation period and shall have an opportunity to correct those deficiencies. The Code and policy include the provision that a school “. . . does not have any deficiencies which would endanger student health or safety or other extraordinary circumstances as defined by the West Virginia Board of Education.”

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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

96 WOOD COUNTY

William A. Niday, Superintendent

401 BLENNERHASSETT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement

Steve Angel, Principal

Grades 07 - 09

Enrollment 642 (2nd month 2005-2006 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2005-2006

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
Mathematics								
All	404	434	424	97.69	79.09	Yes	Yes	✓
White	401	429	419	97.66	79.18	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	132	154	150	97.40	61.53	Yes	Averaging	✓
Spec. Ed.	50	62	58	93.54	20.40	By Average	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Reading/Language Arts								
All	404	434	425	97.92	78.89	Yes	Yes	✓
White	401	429	420	97.90	78.98	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	132	154	150	97.40	56.15	Yes	Confidence Interval - Averaging	✓
Spec. Ed.	50	62	58	93.54	28.57	By Average	No	✗
LEP	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**

FAY -- Full Academic Year

* -- 0 students in subgroup

** -- Less than 10 students in subgroup

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.5%**

96 WOOD COUNTY
William A. Niday, Superintendent
401 BLENNERHASSETT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
Steve Angel, Principal
Grades 07 - 09
Enrollment 611 (2nd month 2006-2007 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2006-2007

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
Mathematics								
All	385	398	394	98.99	71.72	Yes	Yes	✓
White	380	393	390	99.23	71.95	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	136	144	140	97.22	54.13	Yes	Confidence Interval - Averaging	✓
Spec. Ed.	54	57	56	98.24	13.20	Yes	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	385	398	393	98.74	76.17	Yes	Averaging	✓
White	380	393	389	98.98	76.19	Yes	Averaging	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	NA	NA	NA
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Indian	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	136	144	139	96.52	63.15	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
Spec. Ed.	54	57	56	98.24	35.84	Yes	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 97.2%**

96 WOOD COUNTY
William A. Niday, Superintendent
401 BLENNERHASSETT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL – Needs Improvement
James Hostottle, Principal
Grades 07 - 09
Enrollment 577 (2nd month 2007-2008 enrollment report)

WESTEST 2007-2008

Group	Number Enrolled for FAY	Number Enrolled on Test Week	Number Tested	Participation Rate	Percent Proficient	Met Part. Rate Standard	Met Assessment Standard	Met Subgroup Standard
Mathematics								
All	347	365	358	98.08	73.09	Yes	Yes	✓
White	341	357	351	98.31	72.91	Yes	Yes	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	124	137	131	95.62	53.78	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	53	54	51	94.44	30.00	By Average	Safe Harbors	✓
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Reading/Language Arts								
All	347	365	356	97.53	75.51	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
White	341	357	349	97.75	75.37	Yes	Confidence Interval	✓
Black	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Hispanic	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Indian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Asian	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Low SES	124	137	131	95.62	57.98	Yes	No	✗
Spec. Ed.	53	54	51	94.44	30.00	By Average	No	✗
LEP	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

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

**Passed
Attendance Rate = 96.1%**

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURES FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

Below Standard.

5.1.1. Achievement.

Blennerhassett Junior High School failed to achieve adequately yearly progress (AYP) in 5.1.1. Achievement for the special education (SE) subgroup. In accordance with Section 9.5 of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2320, *A Process for Improving Education: Performance Based Accreditation System*, the West Virginia Board of Education issued the school Temporary Accreditation status at the November 2007 State Board meeting.

Blennerhassett Junior High School achieved AYP in the all students (AS) subgroup and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroup in reading/language arts and in the economically disadvantaged (SES) subgroup in mathematics only by application of the confidence interval and/or averaging, and in the SES and special education (SE) subgroups in reading/language arts only by safe harbors. Six of the eight reporting cells declined in the percent proficient from the 2005-2006 school year to the 2006-2007 school year, with the exceptions being in the SES and SE subgroups in reading/language arts. The county curriculum staff and school staff are urged to address these subgroups in the county and school Five-Year Strategic Plans and apply interventions to improve achievement of all students.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Information by Class indicated scores below mastery in both mathematics and reading: Grade 7 – 27.53 percent in mathematics and 27.53 percent in reading; Grade 8 – 28.92 percent in mathematics. These scores have implication for the Five-Year Strategic Plan and school improvement.

Results from the 2006-2007 West Virginia Statewide Writing Assessment revealed a deficiency at Grade 7. West Virginia had 76 percent of the students at or above mastery compared to 75 percent for Wood County and 69 percent for Blennerhassett Junior High School. The school must continue to address this issue by developing a systematic writing approach and assure that all teachers provide instruction in writing and appropriate feedback to all students on a minimum of a weekly basis.

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

1. Digital Learner.
2. Write to Learn.
3. Three Tier Intervention.
4. Co-teaching.
5. EdLine.
6. GradeQuick.
7. Middle School Transition.

8. Formative Assessment.
9. Review of State Evaluation Process.
10. Racial, Sexual, Religious and Ethnic Harassment Policy.
11. Previewing, Scaffolding, and Differentiated Instruction.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

MET STANDARD. The achievement standard was met through the index application.

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 Blennerhassett Middle School performed within the point range (768-671) for full accreditation status.

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

Blennerhassett Middle School achieved AYP in the all students (AS) and the racial/ethnicity white (W) subgroups in reading/language arts by application of the confidence interval and the SE subgroup in mathematics by safe harbors. The WESTEST scores in mathematics for both the AS and W subgroups were slightly lower in 2008 (75.51 and 75.37) than in 2007 (76.17 and 76.19), and the score for the SE subgroup in reading/language arts was significantly higher in 2008 (30.00) than 2007 (13.20).

The school Five-Year Strategic Plan had been reviewed and revised and contained action steps to address achievement of the student groups and subgroups that did not achieve AYP. Teachers helped write the plan and were implementing the action steps in their classroom instruction.

The school implemented an exploratory class period during which students who scored below mastery on the WESTEST were provided additional instruction in mathematics and reading/language arts.

The West Virginia Statewide Writing Assessment was field tested during the spring of 2008 and results were not distributed to schools. To improve student writing skills teachers required students to write in all classes. This was monitored by the principal with lesson plan reviews and classroom walkthroughs. The language teachers were using Writing Roadmap 2 in the computer laboratories to teach student writing.

The principal reported the following professional developments and/or training opportunities were provided:

1. New West Virginia 21st Century content standards and objectives (CSOs) for 21st Century Learning.
2. Strategic Planning.
3. Teaching and Learning in Differentiated Classrooms.
4. Teaming for 21st Century Learners.
5. The Prioritized Curriculum.
6. RTI – Response to Intervention.
7. Writing for Learning.
8. Inquiry Based Mathematics.
9. 21st Century Technology.
10. Assessment for Learning.
11. Teaming for Professional Learning.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

Necessary to Improve Performance and Progress to Meet the Standard (5.1.1 – SE).

7.1. Curriculum

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

For a period of at least 25 minutes, four to six students in a mathematics class were disengaged from the lesson. No papers were on their desks and their books were closed.

One geography teacher did not exhibit high expectations for all students. Instruction was not provided throughout the entire class period. When students asked questions regarding the chapter review, the teacher provided the answers when asked rather than guiding students through higher order thinking skills.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal worked with teachers on topics, such as, holding high expectations for all students, not allowing students to remain disengaged from the lesson, and providing “bell to bell instruction”. The staff had staff development on effective teaching and differentiated strategies. Team visits to classrooms found all students actively involved in learning and teachers providing good effective instructional strategies.

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 in all classes. In one reading class the instructional strategy was not varied and the Team observed two students nodding off. Since this class crosses all grade levels and reading/language arts percent proficient declined in the all students (AS), racial/ethnicity white (W), and the special education (SE) subgroups, the school achieved adequate yearly progress (AYP) by averaging and safe harbors, and all reading/language arts subgroups were below West Virginia’s benchmark (79.19), the Team determined that all reading classes must incorporate interesting, stimulating, relevant instruction and actively engage students in the learning process.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Interviews with teachers confirmed they were using technology (computers, projectors, interactive smart boards, responders, etc.) to increase the student interest and actively engage them in the learning process. The Team observed teachers using technology and students engaged in learning throughout the building during classroom visitations. The Team reviewed lesson plans to verify varied instructional strategies were being used in the classrooms.

7.2. Student and School Performance

- 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)

In over one-half of the classrooms visited, lesson plans did not provide enough detail regarding procedures, steps of instruction, materials, etc. Lesson plans from the entire year for at least 13 teachers were not available for Team review.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The principal and faculty had worked on lesson plan formats and the collaboration was on-going. The Team reviewed a sampling of lesson plans in classrooms and interviewed teachers. The lesson plan formats were varied, but the essential components were in place. The lesson plans reviewed were complete enough for a substitute teacher to continue instruction in the absence of the regular teachers. The principal regularly reviewed and commented on lesson plans and monitored them during classroom walkthroughs.

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.

The Team reviewed student files and found that a special education teacher retained the parent copy of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Meeting Notification in three student files. The teacher indicated that he had forgotten to provide it to the parents.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The special education teachers had been provided training on the required procedures and appeared to be following the procedures of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2419 regarding IEPs.

7.6. Personnel

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)

One teacher's observation was not signed within the five day timeline.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed a sampling of personnel evaluations and principal observations and found the forms had been signed by the evaluator and employee as required.

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 Blennerhassett Junior High School in providing a thorough and efficient system of education. Wood 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 Wood 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.

The administration and teachers at Blennerhassett Junior High School had taken a proactive approach in dealing with the decline in the West Virginia Writing Assessment scores before the Education Performance Audit.

The computer laboratories were made more accessible before and after school; a writing laboratory had been established during eighth period for students who had deficiencies on the writing assessment or deficiencies in classroom assignments; Writing Roadmap was more widely utilized and every lesson plan was required to include a writing component.

Overall, the staff at the school had aggressively attacked the declining student assessment scores and had revised classroom teaching strategies. Most teachers varied instruction and had re-evaluated the direction that they needed to take to develop lesson plans based on the WV content standards and objectives (CSOs).

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

Blennerhassett Middle School underwent an organization change for the 2008-2009 school year with the Grade 9 students transferred to the high schools and the Grade 6 students transferred from the elementary schools to Blennerhassett Middle School forming a 6-8 middle school.

Blennerhassett Middle School had a new principal who was working to reestablish and/or continue the academic achievement of students for which the school has been historically known. The aggressive attack to

improve student achievement continued as illustrated by the formation of an exploratory class period in which additional targeted instruction was provided students who failed to score mastery level in mathematics and reading/language arts on the WESTEST. The school staff appeared intense in their efforts to improve achievement.

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

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

The Team determined that Blennerhassett Junior High School and Wood County have the capacity to correct the identified deficiencies. The school's administration and staff were enthusiastic about staff development that had been provided and the changes that they had made to improve student achievement.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

The Blennerhassett Middle School staff, with the support of the Wood County Schools Central Office staff, corrected the deficiencies identified in the Education Performance Audit report.

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.

- 19.1.5. Library/media and technology center.** Recordings were not available for student use.
- 19.1.10. Specialized instructional areas.** The art facility did not have two deep sinks, mechanical ventilation, a ceramic kiln, or black-out areas.
- 19.1.11. Grades 6-12 science facilities.** All science classrooms did not have AC and DC current, air vacuum, and sufficient laboratory workspace. One science classroom was not located with easy access to outdoor activities and isolated to keep odors from the remainder of the building.
- 19.1.12. Grades 7-12 auditorium/stage.** Acoustical panels were not provided.

FOLLOW-UP CONCLUSION

No change.

SCHOOL ACCREDITATION STATUS

School	Accreditation Status	Education Performance Audit High Quality Standards	Annual Performance Measures Needing Improvement	Date Certain
96-401 Blennerhassett Middle	Full Accreditation			

Education Performance Audit Summary

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the Full Accreditation status of Blennerhassett Middle School.