

**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

GILMER COUNTY

CENTRAL OFFICE FOLLOW UP AUDIT

APRIL 2016

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

An announced follow up audit of the Gilmer County Central Office was conducted by the Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) on February 16-17, 2016, at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE). The purpose of the review was to determine the effectiveness of the state-appointed Superintendent and the degree to which Gilmer County may be ready for the full control of their educational system.

The OEPA Team interviewed the Gilmer County Board of Education President and members, school district personnel including the County Superintendent, the Administrative Support Services Director, Treasurer, Federal Programs/Special Education/Preschool Testing Director, Attendance/Technology/Personnel Director, and other county office and school personnel. The Team also interviewed appropriate Gilmer County principals. The Team examined documents including the Gilmer County Strategic Improvement Plan; Gilmer County Board of Education meeting minutes; personnel documents; the school system policy manual; regulatory agency reviews, including but not limited to the independent financial audit and the Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP); public documents, newspaper articles and other appropriate documents as presented by the county staff and county board of education members.

This follow up report presents the OEPA Team's findings and recommendations regarding the Gilmer County Central Office.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

Office of Education Performance Audits Coordinator – Allen Brock

NAME	TITLE	COUNTY	CATEGORY
Rick Deuell Team Leader	Retired, Assistant Superintendent	Berkeley County	Superintendent Board Members
DeEdra Lundeen Bolton, Ed.D.	Superintendent	Grant County	Superintendent Board Members
Justin Schooley, Ed.D.	Associate Superintendent, Personnel	Berkeley County	Administrative Practices Evaluations Personnel
Steve Peer	Assistant Superintendent, Treasurer, Chief Business Officer	Mineral County	Administrative Practices Finances Federal Programs CEFP
Don Bucher	Assistant Superintendent, Personnel, Special Education	Pendleton County	Administrative Practices Principals
Brad Simmons	Retired, High School Principal	Hardy County	Administrative Practices Principals

GILMER COUNTY CENTRAL OFFICE EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Gilmer County Central Office is currently under West Virginia Board of Education control for facilities, personnel, and finance. Gilmer County has a state appointed Superintendent, Gabriel Devono. The current county board of education continues to lack cohesion and unity which impacts county and central office leadership and progress. Workshops and trainings have been conducted for the county board in areas of need including boardsmanship, ethics, personnel, county board of education roles and responsibilities, and communication. Support for and participation in trainings and workshops varies among the board members. Lack of effective and consistent communication among county board members and the county superintendent results in failure to collaborate and interact with collegiality and professionalism.

A difference of professional opinion exists among county board members and the county superintendent on the readiness of the central office to regain full control of finance, personnel, and facilities. The central office is functioning efficiently, the schools are doing well, and the students are achieving near or at state averages. Financial irregularities are no longer occurring and personnel decisions comply with State code. Additionally, the facilities issues are being settled and should be resolved by the fall 2016 with the opening of a consolidated elementary school, a proposed new middle school, and the sale of surplus properties. The main contention in the community and with the county board continues to be property and facilities, in particular, the consolidation of the elementary schools. The anticipated date for resolution of the aforementioned issues is January 1, 2017.

Central Office Interviews:

Gabriel J. Devono, Superintendent
Rebecca Minigh, Administrative Support Services Coordinator
Kendra Brown, Treasurer
Sherry Ratliff, Accounts Payable/Payroll
Patty Lowther, Federal Programs/Special Education/Preschool Testing Director
Joe Frashure, Food Service/Transportation Director
Judith A. Stalnaker, Attendance/Technology/Personnel Director
Kyre-Anna Minney, Academic Coach/Instructional Facilitator

Principal Interviews:

Kimberly Freeland, Leading Creek Elementary School
Shelly Mason, Sand Fork Elementary School
Nasia Butcher, Gilmer County High School
Toni Bishop, Glenville Elementary School

Gilmer County Board Of Education Member Interviews:

Dr. William Simmons, President
Misty Pritt, Vice President
Dr. Carl Armour, Member
Norma Hurley, Member
Tom Ratliff, Member

Other Interviews:

Cindy Daniel, Deputy State Superintendent, West Virginia Department of Education

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUPERINTENDENT:

Findings: Communication; knowledge of and compliance with WVBE Policy 5310; and superintendent leadership.

The OEPA Team recommends:

- effective and thorough communication between directors at the central office and the Superintendent; senior staff meetings held at least twice monthly in addition to regularly scheduled principal and director meetings;
- effective and thorough communication between the Superintendent and the county board of education;
- training, for the Superintendent, in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310, the West Virginia Educator Evaluation system; and
- an effective mentor, for the Superintendent, for specific trainings in the area of communications, conflict resolution and team building to improve county superintendent and county board relations; effective and efficient operation of the central office and schools; and information to the public.

COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION:

Findings: Communication with the Superintendent; knowledge of finance, personnel and county board relations; and knowledge and adherence of ethical standards pertaining, but not limited to, outside communications and confidentiality.

The OEPA Team Recommends:

- ongoing training in effective and thorough communication techniques for county board members, central office administrators, and the Superintendent; and
- training on finance, personnel, board relations, and ethics for county board members, facilitated through the West Virginia School Board Association and/or the Training Standards Review Committee.

PERSONNEL:

Findings: Outdated employment application; outdated professional bid sheet; knowledge of federal laws related to human capital management; and collaboration with chief financial officer.

The OEPA Team recommends:

- revision of county employment application based on the updates from Bowles Rice McDavid Graff & Love LLP;
- revision of the professional bid sheet based upon WVBE Policy 5000;

- revisions of job descriptions to include information from the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to allow for ADA accommodations; worker's compensation return to work; and Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).
- communication and collaborative work between the personnel director and finance officer to understand and develop the Certified List;
- ongoing professional development for the personnel director, such as that offered by the American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA) and/or the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM);
- closing dates be added to all job postings to allow the county to review the list of applicants and hire from that list; and
- reviewing length of time for reposting and determine sufficient time for applicants to apply.

FINANCE:

Findings: Communication; knowledge of generating specific budget reports from the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS); and team building.

The OEPA Team recommends:

- additional WVEIS training for the finance officer and appropriate central office staff to better manage budgets and to generate specific budget reports.;
- frequent and regular budget meetings scheduled by the finance officer with the Superintendent and personnel director to improve communication and knowledge of the budget and understanding of the financial system; and
- regular communication among the finance officer, personnel director, and the Superintendent to maximize staffing ratios.

COMMENTS:

- Based upon interviews and evidence presented, the audit team verified the central office and the schools are operating, for the most part, in an efficient and effective manner. The central office staff is competent to carry out the duties assigned to them.
- Evidence indicates central office personnel and school staff have been properly trained and are able to handle the guidelines necessary to comply with West Virginia Code and WVBE personnel policy.
- Leading Creek Elementary School, an intercounty Gilmer/Lewis initiative, should continue to receive support from the Gilmer County Superintendent through communication and collaboration with the Lewis County Central Office, and ongoing efforts to increase enrollment of Gilmer County students at the school.

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION ACTION AND DIRECTIVE, MAY 11, 2016:

The WVBE approved the Gilmer County Central Office Follow Up Audit (February 2016) and issued this directive:

All matters of personnel shall be returned to the control of the Gilmer County Board of Education effective July 1, 2016. Further, the WVBE directs all personnel attachments from Gilmer County Board of Education agendas be sent to the Deputy Superintendent of Schools within five (5) calendar days after the applicable county board of education meeting, also beginning July 1, 2016.

School Monitoring Report Summary Baseline Audit Fall 2014

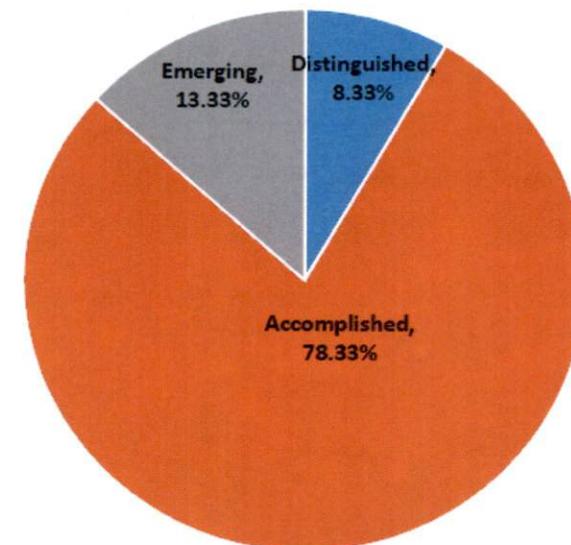
RESA 7 - Gilmer County

	2014/2015	2014/2015	2014/2015	2014/2015	2014/2015 Attendance Rate	2015/2016	2014/2015 CTE
Gilmer	Graduation Rate	Proficiency Math	Proficiency Reading	Dropout Rate	92.90	Enrollment	completers
	88.57	29.5	48.7	0.5		856	70

5 schools were audited

	Distinguished	Accomplished	Emerging	Unsatisfactory
Standard 1: Positive Climate and Cohesive Culture				
1A - Shared Beliefs and Values	2	3	0	0
1B - High Expectations for All	1	3	1	0
1C - Safe, Orderly, Engaging Environment	0	5	0	0
Standard 2: School Leadership				
2A - Principal Leadership	2	3	0	0
2B - School Teams and Councils	0	4	1	0
2C - Teacher Leadership	1	3	1	0
2D - Student Leadership	1	3	1	0
Standard 3: Standards-Focused Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments				
3A - Classroom Learning Environment	0	3	2	0
3B - Standards-Focused Curriculum	0	5	0	0
3C - Instructional Planning	0	5	0	0
3D - Instructional Delivery	0	3	2	0
Standard 4: Student Support Services and Family/Community Connections				
4A - Positive Relationships	0	5	0	0
4B - Student Personal Development	0	5	0	0
4C - Parent/Community Partnership	1	4	0	0
Standard 5: Educator Growth and Development				
5A - Professional Development	0	3	2	0
5B - Teacher Collaboration	0	3	2	0
5C - Evaluation, Feedback and Support	0	5	0	0
Standard 6: Efficient and Effective Management				
6A - Facilities	1	3	1	0
6B - Fiscal Resources	1	4	0	0
6C - Personnel	0	5	0	0
6D - Data, Information System, Tech Tools, Infrastructure	0	4	1	0
Standard 7: Continuous Improvement				
7A - Focused and Cohesive Plan	0	5	0	0
7B - Processes and Structures	0	4	1	0
7C - Monitoring for Results	0	4	1	0
Totals:	10	94	16	0
Percentage of Standard Functions	8.33%	78.33%	13.33%	0.00%

RESA 2

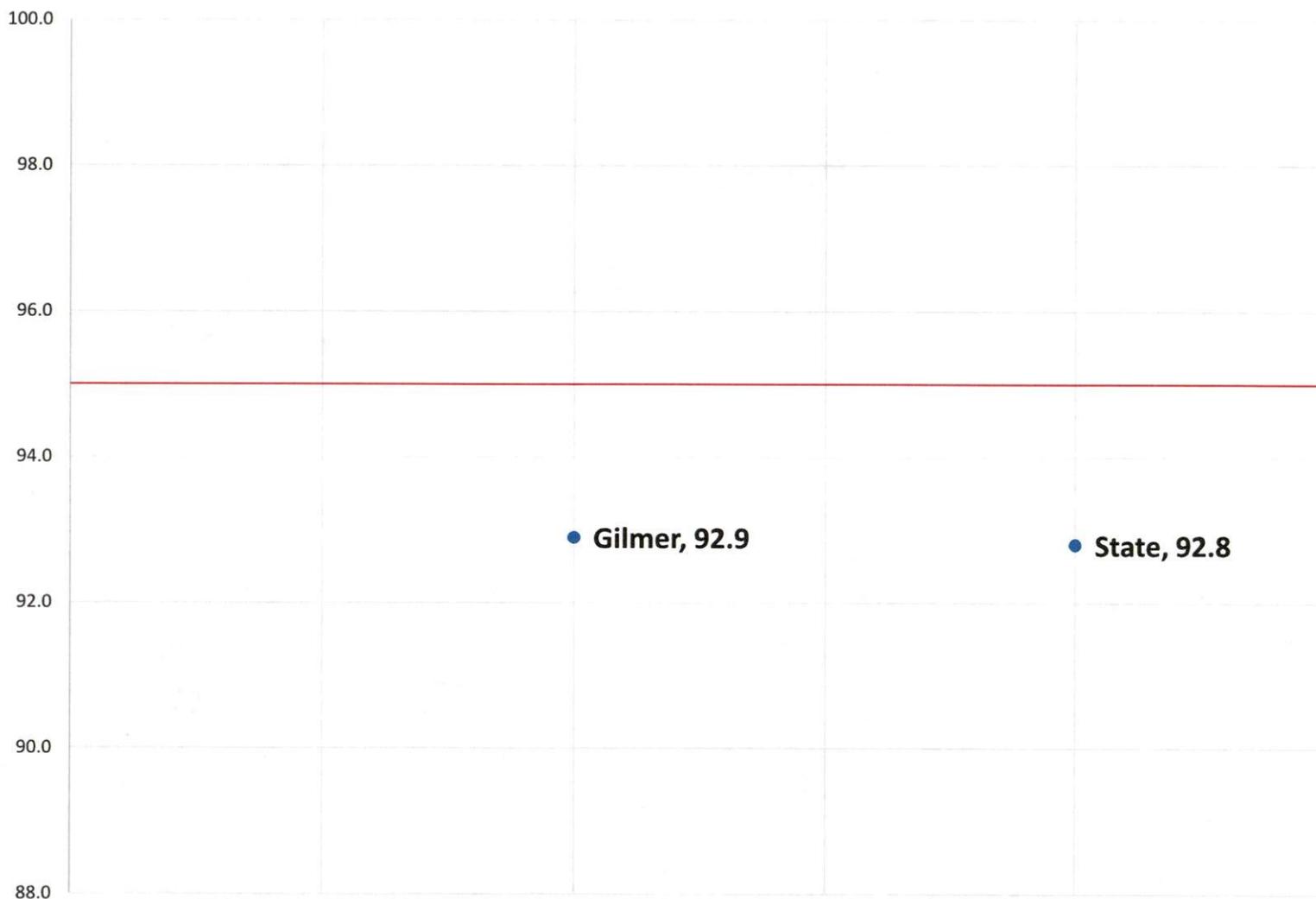


POLICY and CODE	Full Compliance	Partial Compliance	Non Compliance	Verification of Other Monitoring Reports	Addressed	Not Addressed	Not Applicable
Policy 2320 (A Process for Improving Education)	5	0	0	Policy 1224.1 (Accounting Procedures)	5	0	0
Policy 2340 (West Virginia Measures of Academic Progress)	5	0	0	Policy 2419 (Education of Students with Exceptionalities)	5	0	0
Policy 2510 (Assuring the Quality of Education)	4	1	0	Fire Marshal	5	0	0
Policy 4373 (Expected Behavior in Safe and Supportive Schools)	5	0	0	Health Department	5	0	0
W.Va. Code 18-2-7a (Physical Education)	5	0	0	School Building Authority	4	0	1
W.Va. Code 18-5-18b (School counselors in public schools)	5	0	0	Other Federal Reports	4	0	1
Totals:	29	1	0		28	0	2

Student Attendance Rates – 2014/2015

RESA	County Name	Attendance Rates
7	Gilmer	92.9
	State	92.8

Gilmer County



*Attendance rate data for 2014-2015 was updated on 12/07/2015. The updates were made as a result of WVDE staff identifying a miscalculation.

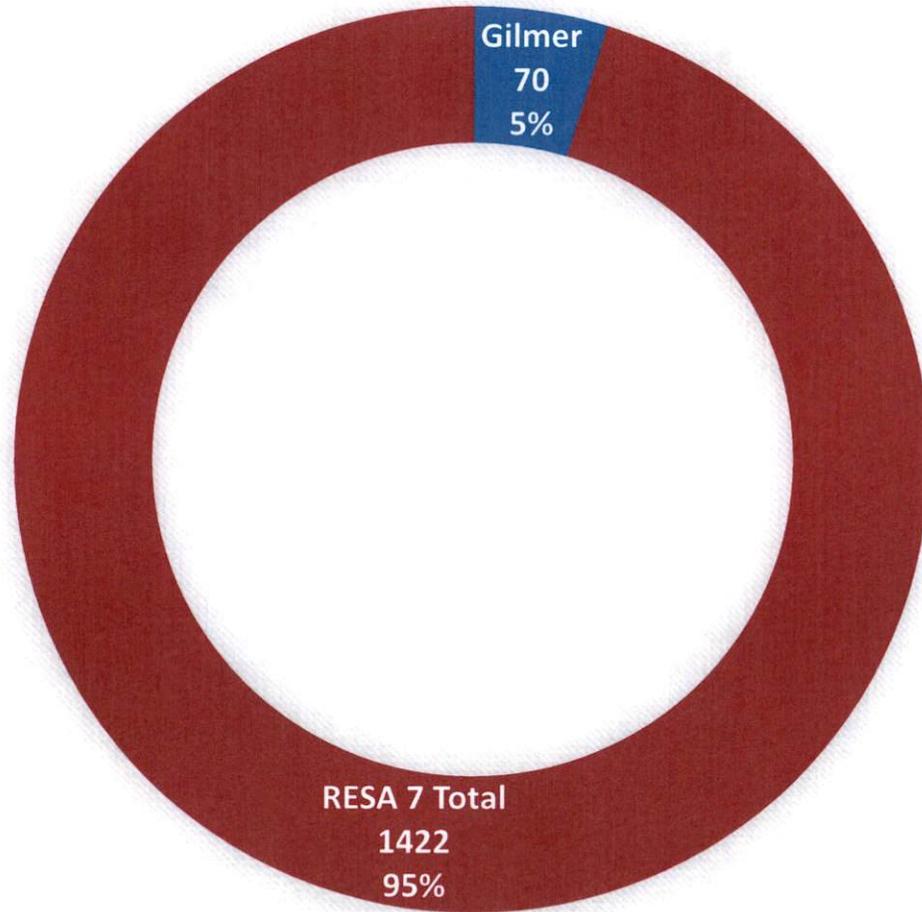
*2014/2015 is the baseline year that includes all absences

*95% is the accountability performance indicator

Career Technical Education Completers – 2014/2015

RESA 7

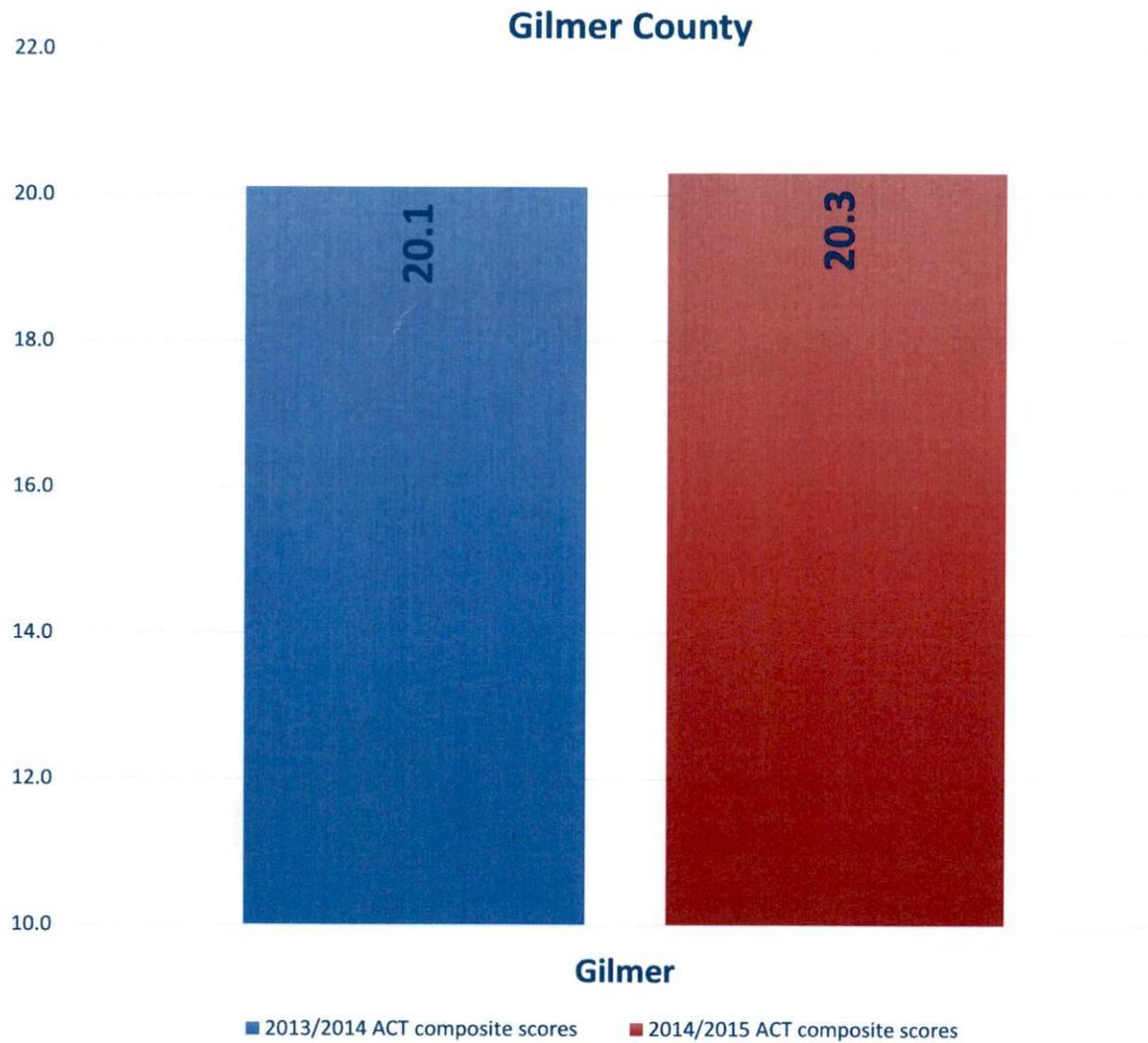
RESA	County Name	Completers
7	Gilmer	70
7	RESA 7 Total	1422



***2014/2015 school year is the baseline year for CTE completers**

ACT Composite Scores – 2014/2015

RESA	County Name	2013/2014 ACT composite scores	2014/2015 ACT composite scores
7	Gilmer	20.1	20.3



*2015 ACT National Score is 21.0

<http://www.act.org/newsroom/data/2015/states.html>

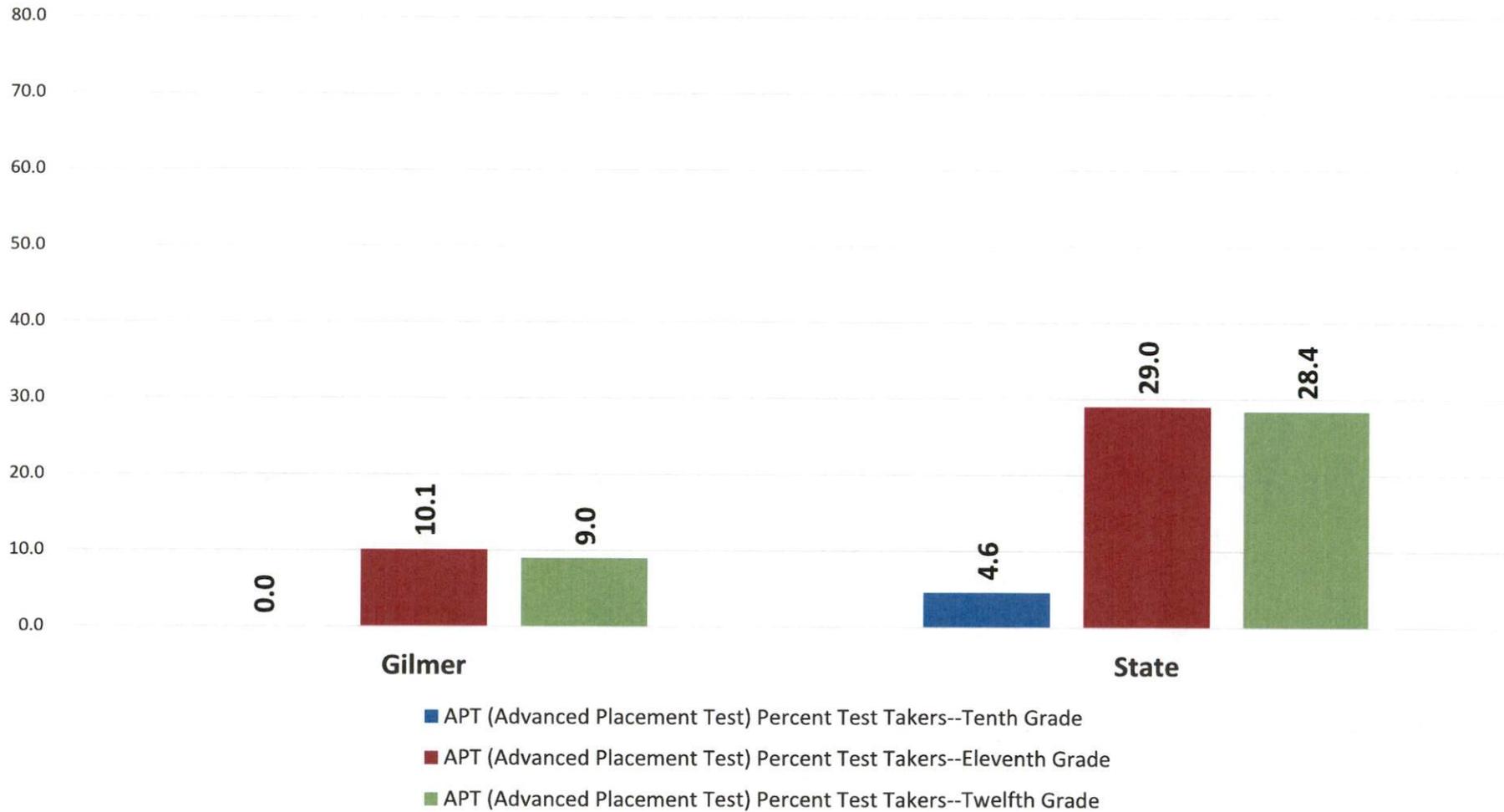
SAT Overall Mean Scores – 2014/2015

RESA	County Name	Critical Reading Mean	Mathematics Mean	Writing Mean
7	Gilmer	0	0	0

Advanced Placement Percent Test Takers – 2014/2015

RESA	County Name	APT (Advanced Placement Test) Percent Test Takers--Tenth Grade	APT (Advanced Placement Test) Percent Test Takers--Eleventh Grade	APT (Advanced Placement Test) Percent Test Takers--Twelfth Grade
7	Gilmer	0.0	10.1	9.0
	State	4.6	29.0	28.4

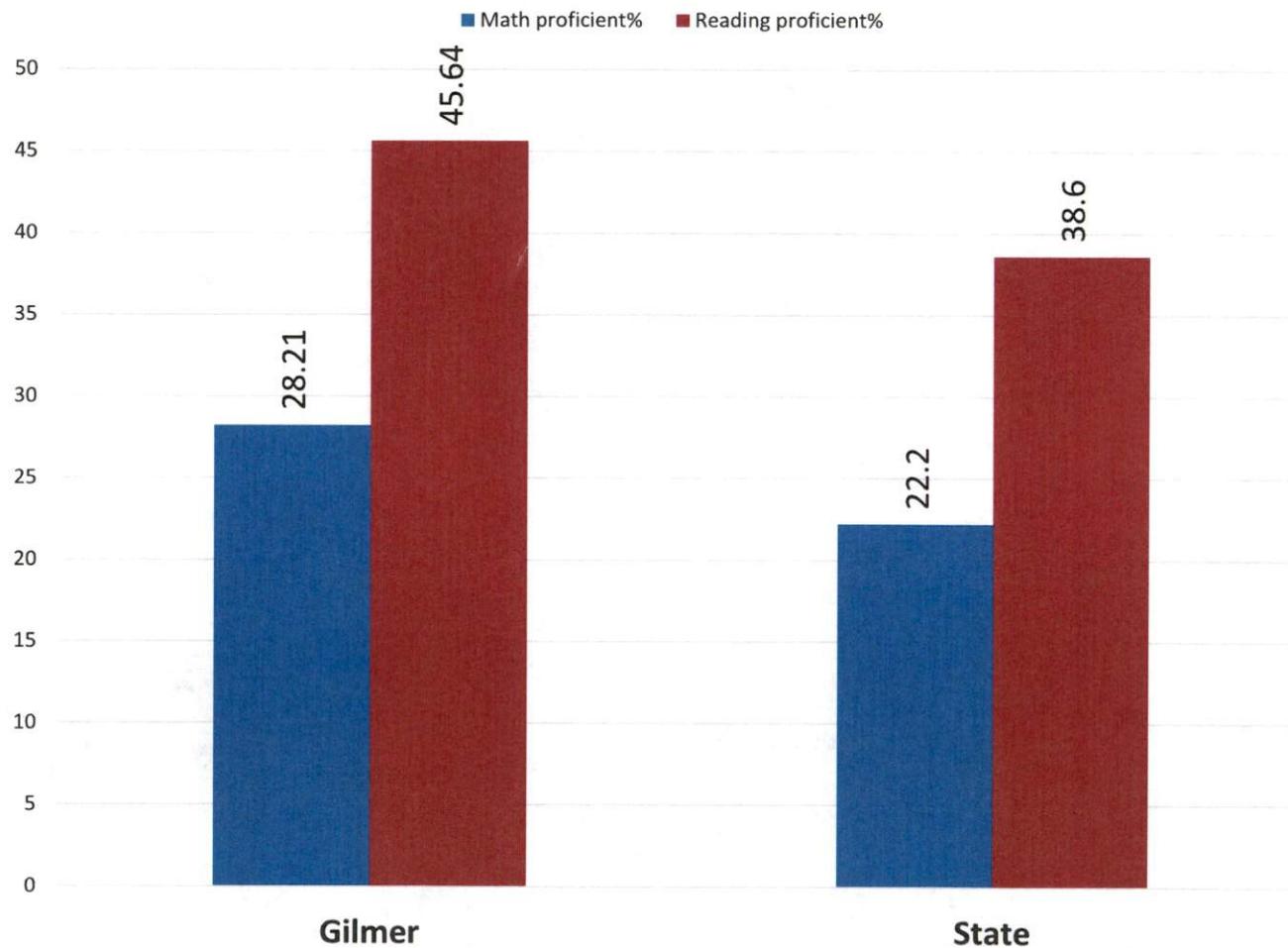
Gilmer County



**WV General Summative Assessment-2014/2015:
Closing achievement gaps within subgroups**

Gilmer County

RESA	County	Math proficient%	Reading proficient%
7	Gilmer	28.21	45.64
	State	22.2	38.6

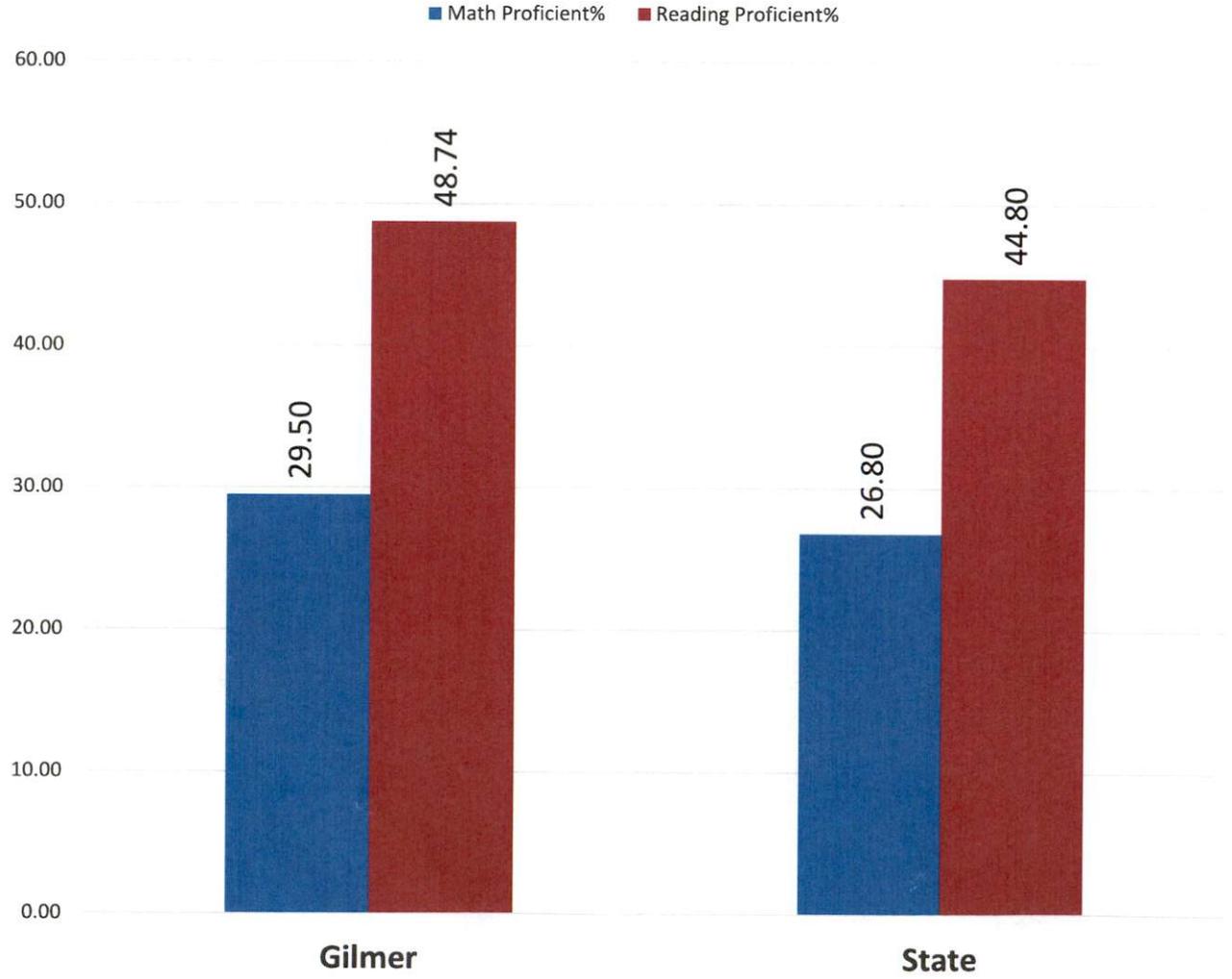


*Low SES public certified data on ZOOMW

WV General Summative Assessment – 2014/2015

RESA	County	Math Proficient%	Reading Proficient%
7	Gilmer	29.50	48.74
	State	26.80	44.80

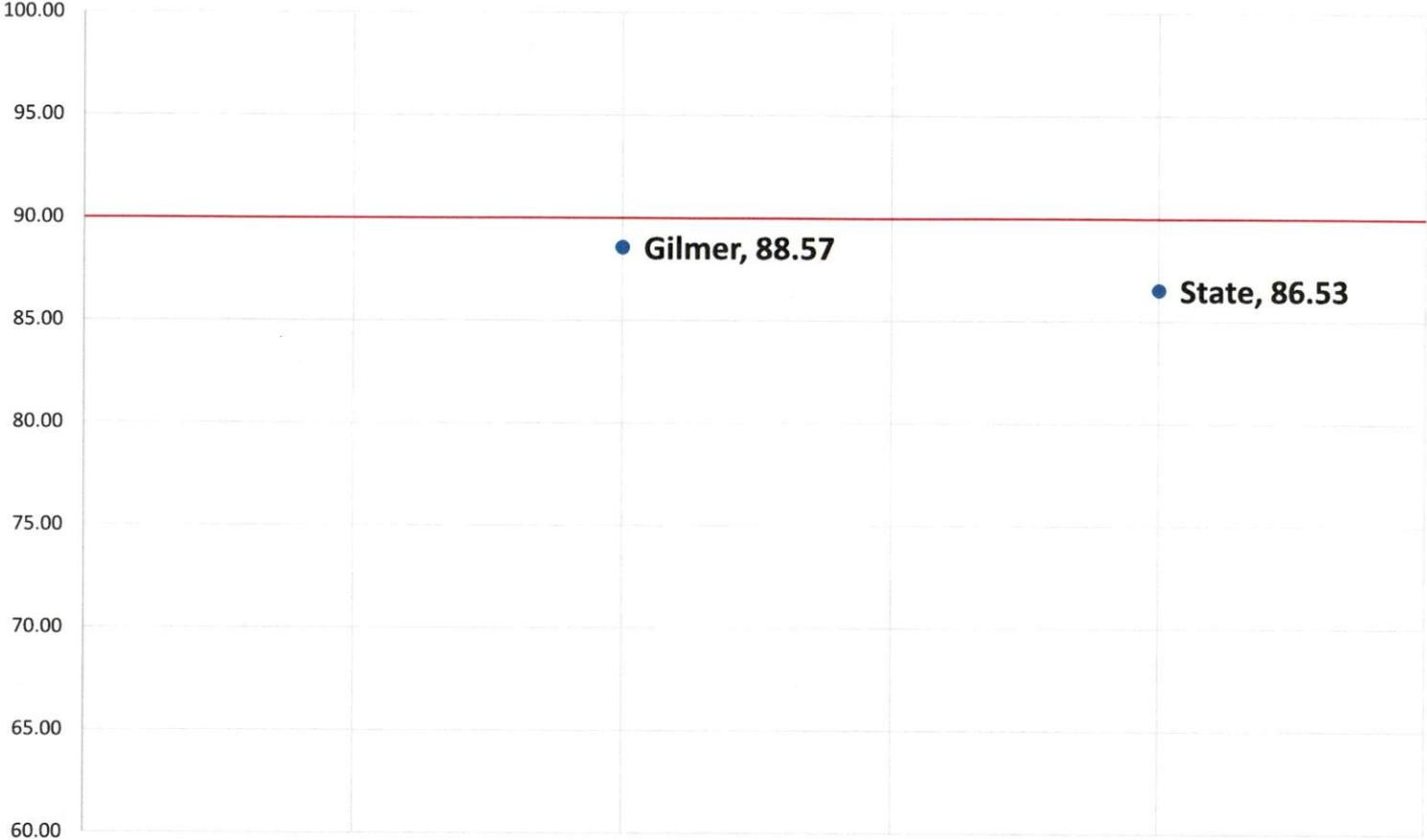
Gilmer County



Graduation Rates – 2014/2015

RESA	County Name	Graduation Rates
7	Gilmer	88.57
	State	86.53

Gilmer County

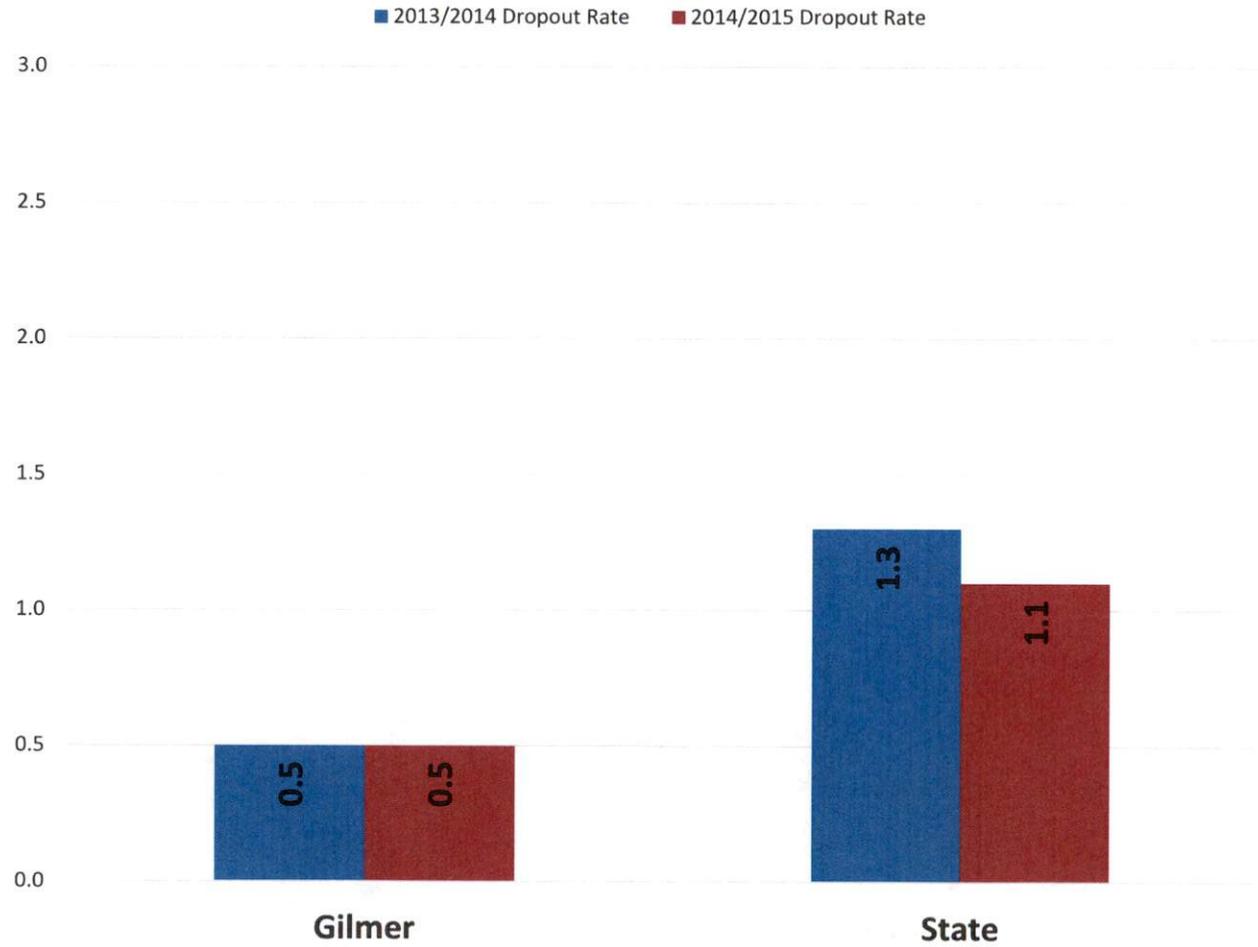


*90% is the state target

Dropout Rates – 2014/2015

RESA	County Name	2013/2014 Dropout Rate	2014/2015 Dropout Rate
7	Gilmer	0.5	0.5
	State	1.3	1.1

Gilmer County



*Dropout Rates for grades 7-12