



**Office of Education
Performance Audits**

FINAL EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT

FOR

MONROE COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

AUGUST 2013

WEST VIRGINIA BOARD OF EDUCATION

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction.....	2
Education Performance Audit Team.....	3
High Quality Standards.....	4
Capacity Building.....	49
Early Detection And Intervention.....	51
Monroe County Recommendations.....	52

INTRODUCTION

An announced (five days in advance) Education Performance Audit of the Monroe County School District was conducted February 13-16, 2012. The review was conducted at the specific direction of the West Virginia Board of Education. The purpose of the review was to investigate existing circumstances that warranted an on-site review. The Team review was targeted to finance, specifically the financial deficit; personnel, hiring practices; board policies; and board of education and superintendent leadership, and 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.

A Follow-up Education Performance Audit of the Monroe County School District was conducted April 23 through April 25, 2013. The purpose of the follow-up review 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.

This report presents comments from the previous Education Performance Audit report and follow-up review of the Monroe County School District.

EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AUDIT TEAM

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

NAME	TITLE	COUNTY	CATEGORY
Dr. Teddi Cox	Educational Consultant	OEPA	Leadership
Delores Ranson	Educational Consultant	OEPA	Personnel/Hiring
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Madelaine Shultz	Mechanical Engineer	Office of School Facilities WV Dept. of Education	Facilities

HIGH QUALITY STANDARDS

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)

Finance

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

Deficit Fund Balance.

According to Monroe County Schools' audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011, the district had a deficit general fund balance of (\$664,803) at year end, exclusive of the OPEB liability. This compares to a positive fund balance of \$253,372, also exclusive of OPEB, June 30, 2010. This decrease of \$918,175 was a dramatic shift in the year-end carry-over balance that the board has available in just one year

According to W.Va. Code §11-8-26, a local governmental entity is prohibited from expending funds or incurring obligations: ". . . in excess of funds available for current expense." In addition, the West Virginia Department of Education recommends that county boards maintain a 3-5 percent carry-over balance at year end to provide for any unforeseen expenses that may be incurred.

The board has developed a corrective action plan as to how it will resolve the deficit that has been incurred and to strive to build up its carry-over balance to the minimum recommended by the West Virginia Department of Education.

During the review, the Team noted that year to date general fund expenditures as of January 2012 was \$90,180 less than the same period in 2011. While this reduction is a move in the right direction, more aggressive action will need to be taken to cause a positive fund balance at the end of fiscal year 2012.

The Team commended the Monroe County School District's treasurer for communicating to the Monroe County Board of Education and other administrative staff the downward trend of the fund balance at the beginning of the 2011 year. During a board of education meeting in August 2010, the treasurer shared a power point presentation showing trend data. Data on the various slides were easy to understand and clearly showed the cause of the deficit and how the trend started during the 2007 year. One slide showed expenditures first exceeding revenue by only \$11,166 during 2007 and depicted the pattern growing each year thereafter to fiscal year 2010 when expenditures exceeded revenue by \$973,830. Another slide showed employment compared to enrollment beginning with fiscal year 2006 and continuing through 2010. This presentation clearly and concisely displayed that the number of employees continued to increase while student enrollment decreased.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. According to Monroe County School District's audited financial statements for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2012, the district had a deficit general fund balance of \$167,485 at year end, exclusive of the OPEB liability. This compares to a negative fund balance of \$664,803, also exclusive of OPEB, June 30, 2011. This increase in fund balance of \$497,318 showed that the district adhered to its deficit reduction plan.

The Team identified a negative fund balance in the special revenue fund of \$33,297 which may impact the general fund in future years since a revenue source within the special revenue fund could not be identified to cure the negative. The Team recommended that the treasurer research the cause of this negative balance and resolve the cause within this fiscal year.

The Team reviewed a comparison of general fund expenditures as of March 2013 with March 2012 and found expenditures were down \$299,509 from the same period of 2012. This decrease is thought to be an impact of the deficit reduction plan. A comparison of revenue received for this same period raises a concern since there was a decrease of \$404,284. This decrease can be partially attributed to a substantial decrease in revenue from Medicaid billing. According to the treasurer, the decrease in Medicaid funds was a result of a revised billing procedure. Revenue from property tax and State aid was also down from the same period of 2012. The treasurer believes this difference is a timing issue. The Team recommended that revenue be closely monitored to make sure revenue is received timely and according to the budget amounts.

A comparison of food service expense and revenue between March 2012 and March 2013 revealed that expenditures were down \$51,469 and revenue was down \$175,713. Expense for food was down, but up slightly for labor. The Team was concerned that the drop in revenue could cause a negative effect on the general fund if additional sponsor's contribution, above amount planned, is required. Staff said revenue was down due to lack of participation caused by the county

adopting stricter nutrition guidelines. The Team recommended that the administrative staff adjust food service labor expenditures according to participation.

Personnel

PROGRESSING. A review of personnel from the certified report showed a decrease in professional personnel of 8.941 positions and 7.765 service positions from 2012 to 2013. These reductions are detailed in the county's deficit reduction plan.

Annual Financial Statements.

A review of the audited financial statements disclosed that they were not presented in conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). According to Statement 54 issued by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), all governmental entities were to begin classifying fund equity into the following categories beginning with the fiscal year ended June 30, 2011: Nonspendable, Restricted, Committed, Assigned and Unassigned. The fund equity classifications used by the Monroe County School District auditors were those used in previous years. Subsequent to the OEPA review, the Monroe County board treasurer contacted the audit firm to have the statements revised to comply with the new GAAP requirements.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE/PROGRESSING. The audit report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2011, has been changed to comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP).

A discrepancy was found between the audited balance sheet and statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance in the 2012 audit report. The balance sheet showed a fund balance of \$272,162 in ARRA funds, but showed a zero amount in the statement of revenues for ARRA funds. It appeared the balance shown on the balance sheet under ARRA funds should be shown under the Debt Service fund. The Team recommended that the auditor be asked to revise the reports.

The Team noticed that a receivable for the allocation to the Public Employees' Insurance Agency (PEIA) was not included in the 2012 general fund assets as is customary. The purpose of this allocation is to provide funds to pay the employer portion of health insurance for the months of July and August. The amount is estimated to be \$292,911 and would increase the general fund balance if included.

The Team recommended that the treasurer determine if the PEIA receivable was mistakenly not included and correct during fiscal year 2013 if appropriate.

Monthly Financial Report to the Board.

The monthly financial reports to the board did not contain all information required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 8100. The treasurer; however, reported the condition of the fund balances, such as expenditures, encumbrances, budget and remaining budget balances to the board. The monthly report to the board did not indicate by fund, the beginning cash balance and ending cash balances as required by State Board Policy 8100 as outlined on Page 53.

The Team recommended that the treasurer adopt a financial statement template that includes all required information prescribed in the policy. A sample format can be downloaded from the West Virginia Department of Education's website.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Treasurer provided monthly finance reports to the board as required by Policy 8100.

Other.

No record could be found of the county board of education approving school support organizations, as required by State Board Policy 1224.1. The Team recommended that all school support organizations be approved by the Monroe County Board of Education.

No specific line item or budget could be found to account for the amount to be transferred from the general fund to food service. This transaction is commonly called "sponsors contribution" and is identified as a transfer out budget item. The treasurer indicated the entry was always made at year end. The Team recommended that the amount to be transferred to food service be identified within the general fund using approved codes shown in the West Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Finance, Chart of Accounts. This action will show a more accurate balance available in the general fund.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. School support organizations were approved by the board on May 15, 2012, and July 5, 2012.

The FY 2013 budget included an amount to be transferred from the general fund to the food service program.

Strategic Plan.

A copy of the Monroe County Five-Year Strategic Plan was on file and included a budget section with documentation supporting expenditures toward meeting the plan's goals.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Five-Year Strategic Plan was on file for the county as well as all schools. All plans contained a budget section.

Review of School Accounting Transactions.

A review of the individual schools' accounting records disclosed the following.

James Monroe High School.

- The audit for the 2010-11 year was complete and a corrective action plan to resolve audit findings was on file.
- The January general fund bank statement had been reconciled.
 - Food service bank statements had not been reconciled nor did the school keep a ledger showing receipts and expenditures other than the check book.
 - The Team recommended that the school take immediate action to reconcile the food service statements and consider incorporating those funds into a subaccount with the school's general fund.
- A copy of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was on file. A budget section was not in the plan, but the principal indicated the local school improvement council LSIC funds were budgeted to meet goals in the plan. Purchase orders indicated those funds were being spent according to the plan.
- Faculty senate funds not expended during the school year were returned to the faculty senate for reallocation the next school year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE.

- The 2011-2012 audit report was not available at the school but was provided by the board treasurer. No corrective plan was provided, but a procedural change had been made to correct a finding regarding documentation of receipt of goods and services.
- The 2011-2012 audit report also indicated that very limited documentation was provided from school support organizations for approval of fund raising activities, by-laws, minutes, etc.
- Bank deposits for the food service program were being reconciled to the deposit transactions in the Primero program. However, receipts were not being issued for food service collections as required in Section 1-15 of the *Accounting Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*. As a result, no transaction journal was being maintained for the food service program as required in Section 1-8 of the manual. The Team recommended that the food service transactions be processed through a subaccount in the school's general fund and require the issuance of receipts and disbursements for the food service program to be documented in the general fund transaction journal.

Mountain View Elementary/Middle School.

- A copy of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was on file. A budget section was not in the plan, but the principal indicated the "Title" funds were budgeted to meet goals in the plan.
 - Accounting records were not in good order and reconciliations were not being made timely.
 - Financial statements could not be located for the past school year.
 - Administrative action had been taken to improve the financial accounting at the school by assigning a different secretary to the school and providing a mentor to the new secretary. The Team recommended that the county's administrative staff provide close oversight to ensure progress is being made and account balances are accurate and readily available.
- Based on an interview with the principal, the faculty senate was operating according to State Board policy and W.Va. Code.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE.

- The 2011-2012 audit report was not available at the school, but was provided by the board treasurer. The audit report indicated some information could not be located and the school's financial secretary had been replaced. No corrective plan was provided. A review of the current financial records at the school indicated the bank reconciliations were up-to-date, financial records were organized and well-documented, and financial procedures were being followed.

- Bank deposits for the food service program were being reconciled to the deposit transactions in the Primero program. However, receipts were not being issued for food service collections as required in Section 1-15 of the *Accounting Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*. As a result, no transaction journal was being maintained for the food service program as required in Section 1-8 of the manual. The Team recommended the food service transactions be processed through a subaccount in the school's general fund and required the issuance of receipts and disbursements for the food service program to be documented in the general fund transaction journal.

Peterstown Middle School.

- A copy of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was on file. A budget section was not in the plan. The principal indicated the template provided for the plan did not contain a budget section.

- The audit for the 2010-11 year was complete and a corrective action plan to resolve audit findings was on file.

- The January general fund bank statement had been reconciled.
 - Food service bank statements had not been reconciled and the school did not keep a ledger showing receipts and expenditures other than the check book. The Team recommended that the school take immediate action to reconcile the food service statements and consider incorporating those funds into a subaccount with the school's general fund.
 - Based on an interview with the principal, and faculty senate treasurer, the faculty senate was operating according to State Board policy and W.Va. Code. The Team recommended that the faculty senate budget be prepared in more detail.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE.

- The Team noted that the latest audit available was for the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Staff indicated that the 2012 audit had been done, but nothing was on file at the school. The corrective action plan could not be located.
- The Team noted that a motion was made within the Faculty Senate to move available funds into individual teacher accounts and to allocate \$100 per teacher for reimbursement. This is in accordance with State Code. However, nothing indicated the budget items for the individual teacher accounts.
- The Team noted that signatures were not included on the purchase order to indicate items had been received and/or were approved for payment.
- The Team noted that deposit slips from Primero were being used as receipts. Reconciliations were being done for the child nutrition accounts. The Team recommended consolidating the child nutrition bank accounts into the general fund as a subaccount as regarded by Section 1-5 of the *Accounting Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*.
- The Team noted that the latest Accounting Procedures Manual for the public schools in the State of West Virginia was on hand, but, was not the current version being used.

Peterstown Elementary School.

- A copy of the school's Five-Year Strategic Plan was on file; however, a budget section was not in the plan. The principal indicated the template provided for the plan did not contain a budget section.
- The audit for the 2010-11 year was complete and a corrective action plan to resolve audit findings was on file.
- The January general fund bank statement had been reconciled.
 - Based on an interview with the principal, the faculty senate was meeting every two months instead of monthly as required. The Team recommended that the faculty senate meet monthly as required by State Board policy and W.Va Code.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE.

- The Team noted that the latest audit available was for the 2010-2011 fiscal year.
- The Team noted that the most current *Accounting Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia* was not being used.
- The Team noted that signatures were not included on the purchase order to indicate items had been received and/or were approved for payment.
- The Team noted the Faculty Senate did not have a budget. Minutes did indicate that the Faculty Senate voted to release carryover money to each teacher. The Local School Improvement Councils (LSIC) also allocated \$250 per teacher.
- The Team noted the PTO managed funds through their own books. Only bank statements were on file. There were no bank reconciliations or financial records. Only the PTO conducts fundraising for the school.
- The Team noted that deposit slips from Primero were being used as receipts. Reconciliations were being done for the child nutrition accounts. The Team recommended consolidating the child nutrition bank accounts into the general fund as a subaccount as required by Section 1-5 of the *Accounting Procedures Manual for the Public Schools in the State of West Virginia*.

Facilities

The Education Performance Audit Team reviewed the Monroe County Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan (CEFP), interviewed the Director of School Facilities, the county superintendent, and school principals. A narrative of the Team's observations follows.

The utilization rates were taken from the 2010-2020 CEFP.

Chart 19

School Name	Utilization
James Monroe High School	145.75%
Mountain View Elementary/Middle	77.78%
Peterstown Elementary School	80.73%
Peterstown Middle School	50.91%

The county maintenance staff consisted of four members. At this time, the county is responsible for all grounds keeping, preventive maintenance, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) systems, and asbestos work. The county maintenance director has plans to implement a documented preventive maintenance plan. The maintenance director is new to the position and with time, will move facilities in the right direction through preventive maintenance and energy efficiency.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The county maintenance staff consisted of three members; a reduction of one from the 2012 Office of Education Performance Audits (OEPA) visit. At this time, the county is responsible for all grounds keeping, preventive maintenance, Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC), and asbestos work. The county has started implementing the State-provided Preventive Maintenance Program and is working toward the established goal of 75 percent of HVAC equipment entered and scheduled by July 22, 2013. The county was still using a triplicate paper work-order, but was looking into an automated work-order system and will have the system in place during the summer of 2013.

James Monroe High School.

James Monroe High School was built in 1994. This facility utilized electric and natural gas as energy sources. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system consisted of water-source heat pumps with a cooling tower and natural gas boilers. A combination of programmable thermostats and automated building control systems controlled the system. This combination of controls did not allow for changing the occupancy schedule for holidays and snow days. The kitchen storage accommodated the USDA program storage for the county.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE. The facility issues remained much the same due to limited fiscal resources and the county's efforts to decrease the financial deficit. A combination of programmable thermostats and automated building control systems allowed occupant access to the fan controls. This facility uses T-12 fluorescent lights throughout. These lights will be obsolete in the coming year and the county must make plans to replace the lights. Water infiltration into the auditorium from the roof has marked the wall with efflorescence and stained the carpet. This issue needs tracked and addressed to prevent further damage to the auditorium.

Monroe County Vocational Center.

The main classroom building was constructed prior to 1994. Two separate buildings housed the meat processing plant, the building construction class, and the agriculture class. The building construction class was primarily a storage building with a large canopy area for the construction of a modular house. The storage area was heated only. The agriculture class building had a residential style furnace and air conditioner and did not provide forced ventilation; therefore, it did not meet current ventilation requirements. The dressing/rest room heaters were not working and a work order had not been submitted for these. The roof needed to be replaced on the main classroom facility.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. This facility received a new roof last year. The other facility issues remained the same.

Mountain View Elementary and Middle School.

Mountain View Elementary and Middle School was constructed in 2000. This facility utilized electric and natural gas as energy sources. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system consisted of water-source heat pumps with a cooling tower and natural gas boilers. A combination of programmable thermostats and automated building control systems control the system. This combination of controls did not allow for changing the occupancy schedule for holidays and snow days. The cafeteria dining space required use of the stage to accommodate the student population at meal times. The dry storage was inadequate for 8 to 10 weeks of USDA donated food, the refrigerator will not hold a 15 day supply, and the freezer will not hold a 30 day supply of food as required by the West Virginia Board of Education, Policy 6200. A separate parent drop-off loop was not available at this location.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE. A combination of programmable thermostats and automated building control systems allowed occupant access to the fan controls.

No clear signage directed visitors to the main facility entrance.

Peterstown Elementary School.

Peterstown Elementary School was constructed in 1962 with an addition in 2000. Several separate buildings housed classrooms, a computer laboratory, and a community wellness center. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) at this site was a combination of roof top units, a gas fired boiler, window air conditioners, ceiling mounted heaters, and residential style furnace/air conditioners. Parking was inadequate for staff and visitors. A separate parent drop-off loop was not available at this location. The lighting and the HVAC system at this facility needed to be upgraded.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system in all but the 2000 addition was inadequate and did not meet current ventilation requirements.

The lighting at this facility was T-12 fluorescent, except in the 2000 addition. This lighting will be obsolete in the coming year and must be replaced.

Peterstown Middle School.

Peterstown Middle School was constructed in 1950 with an addition in 1994. The Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) system consisted of unit ventilators, roof top air handlers and a natural gas boiler. Elevated carbon dioxide levels throughout the facility indicated an inadequate HVAC system. The HVAC system at this facility, windows, and lighting, and HVAC system controls all needed to be upgraded. The site was not adequate for future expansion, did not have adequate parking lighting, did not have adequate playground areas, and did not have an adequate media/library space. The band room and weight room were located in a building across the street.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE. The county must explore options for renovating or replacing this facility.

Countywide.

Several buildings utilized T-12 fluorescent light fixtures. These light fixtures needed to be upgraded to more efficient T-8 or T-5 fixtures before the EPA mandated phase-out of the T-12 fixtures. The building control systems for all locations should be upgraded to more complete systems. The current system allowed a general schedule for on and off times. The county should explore all options for funding these upgrades, including performance contracting. The county should also explore options for energy

management to reduce overall expenditures on building utilities. Several opportunities existed for energy savings in each facility.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE.

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)

Job Postings

Jobs were posted in schools, at the county office, on the county website, and Searchsoft. Searchsoft is a software program used by the county for job postings for professional personnel. Searchsoft allows applications to be completed on-line and e-mailed to the personnel office. Two application forms are included: One for current employees to use for transfers within the county and one for new employees. Service position - submit an e-mail or written request for the position to the personnel office during the posting period.

The Team reviewed job postings, applications for posted positions, and documentation showing the qualifications of the applicants for teachers, professional support, administrators, school service personnel, and extracurricular assignments. The Team observed the following discrepancies in postings and filling of vacant positions.

Findings on Postings

1. **Postings.** Postings were available for professional, service, and coaching positions. No posting was available for mentors of beginning teachers and principals. Neither was there evidence that the mentors had been employed by the Monroe County Board of Education this year or in previous years. No one (payroll or personnel secretary) could verify if teachers had been paid for mentor services in past years.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed 25 postings of professional, service, and extracurricular vacancies existing or newly created for the 2013-2014 school term. Extracurricular vacancies included mentors of beginning teachers and principals.

To improve communications of hiring with the payroll department, once a posted vacancy has been filled, a copy of the posting with the name of the individual employed in the position along with a copy of the personnel section of the board agenda is forwarded from the personnel office to payroll for documentation for salary payment.

2. **Job Descriptions.** As required by W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (o)(1)(B), no job descriptions were included with the postings and none was available for teacher positions. On posted teacher positions, the grade level(s) of the position or the

words “self-contained” were listed as the job description (Reference “Grades K-4” on Posting MCP00181; “Self-contained” on Posting MCP00175). On the job postings for administrators, under job description, the titles that the employee would hold were listed (Example. Student Support Coordinator - Job Description: Attendance Director, SAT Coordinator, Coordinator of Homebound Services - Posting MCP00130). For coaches, the job description was to “coach and assist in athletic program” (Posting MCP00140). Job descriptions were included in the job postings for service personnel.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Job descriptions were written for professional, service, and extracurricular positions. Job descriptions for professional personnel positions were included in or attached to the job posting.

The job description included: 1. Position, 2. immediate supervisor, 3. employment term, 4. salary or reference to the county’s salary schedule posted on the county’s website, 5. evaluation process with reference to state and county policies, and 6. qualifications for position. In the case of classroom teacher, 7. physical demands, and 8. work environment in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) were described.

Job descriptions for service personnel and extracurricular positions were included in the job posting and described the duties and responsibilities of the position.

3. **Qualifications.** For professional positions, qualifications listed on postings were for the most part, “Hold a valid teaching certificate to cover above grade levels”. Example of posting: Position Title: Art and Physical Education - Job description: Grades K-4; Qualifications: “Must hold a valid teaching certificate to cover above grade levels”. With the above listed position, as per the assistant superintendent, the county wanted a teacher certified in both art and physical education so he/she would be both certified and “highly qualified.” However, that was not requested on the posting. An applicant certified in elementary education (who is certified to teach both art and physical education at the K-4 level) received the position.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE.

Professional:

- Recent postings for teacher positions regarding certification qualifications listed “Valid teaching certificate licensing the individual to teach in the specializations and grade levels, pursuant to WV Code §18A-3-2.” No

special criteria or skills were listed as standards of the posting (See postings MCP00229, MCP00252, MCP00255, MCP00258, and MCP00259).

Service:

- For service personnel positions reviewed, the qualifications included passage of the State competency test for the posted classification title. CDA or ACDD certificate is required for aides. Other qualifications were noted as required for the position, such as, a valid food handler's card for cooks, a valid West Virginia Driver's license and reliable transportation to make home visits for an aide required to make home visits, etc., (See postings MCS00177, MCS00180, MCS00184, MCS00187, and MCS00196). Regarding the state competency test for service personnel, posting stated, "One day of in-service is provided prior to taking the test. Applicants will be notified of the in-service date and testing date and location." See W. Va. Code §18A-4-8e (e).

Coaches:

- The qualifications listed for coaches were, "Must be a professional employee of the Monroe County Board of Education (MCBE), a nearby County Board of Education, or meet West Virginia Secondary School Activities requirements and successfully complete the interview process."

4. **Specialized training.** No specialized training or special criteria or skills required by the position were listed on the job posting.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. No specialized training was listed on any posting reviewed and had not been used this year (2012-2013) as per the assistant superintendent.

5. **Salary.** The salary listed on all postings was "Per County Schedule". The postings noted a salary supplement or number of days of employment beyond 200.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIALLY CORRECTED. The county placed its salary schedule for professional, service, and coaches on the Monroe County Board of Education website. Professional and service personnel postings reviewed, stated for salary of the position, "Per County Schedule." For extracurricular positions, excluding coaches, the specific salary was listed as a total salary for the position or an hourly salary (See postings MCP00281, MCP00283, MCP00284).

6. **Applicants for job postings.** Of the 10 professional postings reviewed, only the first page of the application was printed if the applicant was a current employee. Two pages were printed for new applicants. As per the personnel secretary, the application contained several pages, but the application form could not be printed as no professional vacancy was posted at the time of the Team's on-site visit. Neither application, on the first two pages, included all criteria to be considered as listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a. When using the first set of factors (teaching experience in the subject area, relevant specialized training, and past performance evaluations conducted as per W.Va. Code §18A-2-1) were not shown on the application. When using the second set of factors (total amount of teaching experience, existence of teaching experience in the required certification area, degree level, specialized training and evaluations conducted as per W.Va. Code §18A-2-12) were not included on the application.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The county continues to use Searchsoft and has created a one-page application to use when applying for a specific posted position. The new form, if completed by the applicant, will provide data needed to evaluate an applicant's qualification of the seventh criterion in the second set of factors found in W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a and the first six criteria using either set of factors in W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a. This application, as per the assistant superintendent in charge of personnel, will be revised to collect data for the new qualification criteria of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a.

7. **Selection of Most Qualified Applicant.** There was no evidence that the county hired the most qualified candidate when more than one applicant applies for a position. There was no evidence that the county considered all factors of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a(c) when comparing qualifications of applicants. When a permanently employed person applied, it appeared that the county selected and hired the candidate who was the most senior, without considering other factors. Posting MCP00201: Two 4th grade positions, 15 applicants: Two most senior permanently employed applicants were selected. No evidence existed that the other 13 applicants were considered. Posting MCP00175: Three candidates were considered using criteria from the 2nd set of factors of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a. For each candidate, the first criterion on the matrix received a check mark. The second criterion had total amount of teaching experience listed as 2, 1, or 3. The other five criteria were blank on the matrix. The person selected was listed with three years experience. It is assumed the one with three years experience was also the most senior candidate. There was no posting where the most senior applicant did not get the position.

A matrix is not required when using the 1st set of factors; however, the personnel office had matrix forms (mostly incomplete) in the files. When a matrix was completed, it was evident that check marks were just placed under each criterion

for the person selected. Reference Posting for Math 7 at Peterstown Middle School. Check marks (√) were given for all criteria on the matrix, however, the application for the position only provided data for three criteria: Certification, total years teaching (not subject matter specific), and degree level. Check marks (√) were given for specialized training as in the job posting (although no job training was listed on the posting), evaluations of past performance (although the person was never evaluated per W.Va. Code §18A-2-12, and amount of experience relevant to the position (although should be “amount of teaching experience in the subject area.”). Other posting for all new candidates were similar or incomplete. A matrix for the position of assistant superintendent was complete and indicated that the individual who was shown to be the least qualified of the four applicants was the one who was employed for the position. There was no matrix in the file for Posting MCP00174: Math.

Five employees were transferred from one professional position to another professional position after the fifth day prior to the beginning of the instructional term. The State Superintendent and West Virginia Board of Education were not notified of these transfers as the county superintendent was unaware of this requirement as per W.Va.Code §18A-4-7a (l) (3).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The superintendent, assistant superintendent, and executive secretary for personnel received training in the hiring process. Training received included: RESA 1 Monroe County Board Of Education HMS Training, West Virginia Association of School Administrators (WVASA) Personnel Training, and/or training from Bowles, Rice Attorneys at Law on Legal Personnel Issues. The superintendent and assistant superintendent were scheduled to attend training at Bowles Rice May 2013 regarding the new personnel law.

Minutes on file of the September 5, 2012 meeting of the West Virginia Board of Education, documented that “notification per W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a(1)(3) Transfer after 5th [sic] day, had been received from Monroe County”.

8. **Certification.** Two professional postings were posted not requiring a professional license (21st Century Site Coordinator and Head Start Director). Both were paid from Federal Funds. Individuals employed in the positions hold bachelor degrees, but do not hold a professional license.

A review of the 21st Century Grant on file did not list qualification for the Site Coordinator position. The 21st Century Site Coordinator position was identified on the certified list as code 107 (Director of Support Service), which required an undergraduate degree.

The Head Start Director position was posted in 1999 and required a teacher certification or comparable degree in social work. The director was licensed in the professional practice of Social Work. The West Virginia Department of Education advised the Team that this position does not require a professional license for the position. The county has coded the position "107" on the county's certified list. This director's code appeared to require a professional license and was coded incorrectly. This will need to be coded correctly.

Three individuals were hired on an out-of-field authorization which was not approved by the board as the personnel staff was not aware of this requirement of State Board Policy 5202.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The personnel secretary maintains a record of certification (licensure) for each professional employee (listed alphabetically) on Microsoft Excel; however, she was unable to pull reports from the data. Additionally, she enters certification data in WVEIS; however, she has never printed reports from this data. The county relies on the West Virginia Department of Education to notify them of teachers whose certification is scheduled to expire. The secretary has been trained only on the WVEIS Human Resources Management System (HRMS). As a result of being unable to print reports, no list of individuals working on an out-of-field authorization was readily available. As per the superintendent, the board of education approved out-of-field authorizations. A review of board agendas dated September 18, 2012, October 18, 2012, March 5, 2013, and April 9, 2013 documented board approval for six out-of-field authorizations.

- 9. Coaches and Extracurricular Positions.** One posting number was used for all posted coaches positions (MCP00140). Postings reviewed included: James Monroe High School (Cheerleader coach, Boys' Assistant Varsity Basketball, Girls JV Head Basketball, and Majorette coach) and Petersburg Middle School (Track and Soccer coach positions). The one posting is updated frequently as positions are filled and removed from the posting or new vacancies are added. The deadline for applications stated "Until filled". The job description on the posting was "To coach and assist in athletic program". Qualifications for the coaching positions "Must be a professional employee of the Board of Education or meet West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission (SSAC) requirements and successfully complete the interview process." Salary is "Per County Schedule."

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. The county continued to use one posting number for coaching vacancies. When posted positions are filled, the positions are removed from the posting. When new vacancies are added, they are identified with an asterisk (*)

beside the position. The deadline for the posting is extended so that the new vacancies will be posted for a minimum of five days. A new job description has been written and included with the posting. Qualifications have been revised and included on the posting. Salaries for extracurricular assignments, excluding coaches, are listed on the posting. All other postings under salary state: "Per County Schedule."

- 10. Service Personnel.** The Team reviewed postings for the classifications of aide (MCS00140), secretary (MCS00144), bus operator (MCS00135), and custodian (MSC00136). The postings met the requirements of W. Va. Code §18-4-8b. The job description was included in the posting. The salary was stated as "per County Schedule." The most senior applicant who had held the class title was selected for the vacant position. The personnel office staff did not appear to be knowledgeable that "evaluation of past service" could be considered when filling a posted position.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE/NEW ISSUE. The Salary Schedule for Service Personnel is on the county's website listed by Pay Grade. A new application to be used when applying for a posted position has been created for service personnel. The application states that seniority, qualifications, and evaluation of past services are used to make decisions affecting promotions and filling of a service personnel position.

During the Follow-up Review the Team noted that the postings did not list, as required by W.Va. Code §18A-4-8b(g)(2), the period of employment and start and ending time of the daily shift.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Postings.** As per W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a, (o) (1) all openings (vacant positions) existing or newly created are to be posted, including extracurricular positions such as mentors of beginning teachers and principals. A written system should be designed and implemented to communicate to payroll when personnel are hired. In turn, persons should not be paid unless documentation of employment is noted by the payroll supervisor.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 2. Job Descriptions.** Job descriptions should be written for all positions - professional positions, including extracurricular positions. These are to be included in the job posting.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 3. Qualifications.** Qualifications should include the required certification(s), including grade level(s) for the posted position. To ensure that the largest possible pool of qualified applicants may apply, refer to the West Virginia Course Codes for all certifications applicable. Also list, if any, special criteria skills that are required by the position. For example: To teach an AP® English class, a teacher must complete special training. If a vacancy is posted and the position will include teaching an AP® class, Special Criteria can be listed on the posting for: 1. trained in teaching AP® English (preferred) or 2. Willing to receive training in teaching AP® English. This becomes a standard of the posting. The Team also recommended that a West Virginia professional license be required for all professional positions.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION NOT FOLLOWED. For professional postings, the required certification(s) should be listed. This may be obtained from the list of West Virginia Course Codes found on the West Virginia Department of Education Website.

For coach's positions, the requirement of a West Virginia License should be listed. Although professional employee applicants from Monroe County would hold a West Virginia License, an applicant from a nearby county board of education such as Giles, Virginia, may not.

- 4. Specialized Training.** Often to improve student achievement, counties will adopt a specific curriculum program and provide training for its teachers for implementing the program. This can be listed on the posting under Specialized Training or special criteria if required for the position. Individuals applying for the position must have this training to receive credit for this criterion when using the 2nd set of factors in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a. If no specialized training is listed, the criterion cannot be considered. Relevant specialized training should be considered when considering qualifications of "new" employees. The training does not have to be listed on the posting.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION NOT FOLLOWED.

- 5. Salary.** If the county is to list, under salary, “per county schedule,” the county salary schedules should be posted on the county’s webpage. (Review other county postings on line such as Jefferson County and Roane County). The amount of pay is required for service personnel postings as per W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a (g) (2).

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION PARTIALLY FOLLOWED. Under *salary* on postings state, **See county website: www.boe.monr.k12.wv.us/pages/.** On service personnel postings, add the Pay Grade for the position, as service personnel salaries listed on the county website are by Pay Grade. Although the salary for a specific sport (coaching position) is listed on the county website, it could be listed directly on the posting as other extracurricular salaries are so listed.

- 6. Applicants for Job postings.** Monroe County should work with Searchsoft to revise the application for professional positions to include all information to be used to compare qualifications of applicants. If this is not accomplished, the county should create an application for this purpose and include it in lieu of the Searchsoft application. Applications on the Roane County webpage would be one example.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

- 7. Selection of Most Qualified Applicant.** Training needs to be provided to individuals responsible for the process of applications and the selection of personnel (superintendent, personnel director, personnel secretary, and person in charge of certification). When one or more permanently employed instructional persons apply for a classroom teacher position and meet the standards of the posting, ALL CRITERIA in the 2nd set of factors listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a are to be used with each criterion given equal weight. This can be done using a matrix of the criteria. It is possible for an applicant from outside the school system to be the most qualified applicant. When all applicants are new or permanently employed persons do not meet the standards of the posting, the county is to use the 1st set of factors of W.Va. Code §18A-4-7a, showing that it has considered each of the criterion. A matrix may or may not be used to document consideration given to each criterion. The same criterion is used for non-classroom teacher

professional positions. The county matrix form needs to be revised to reflect the criteria listed in W.Va. Code §18A-4-7.

If a professional employee is transferred from one position to another after the fifth day prior to the beginning of the instructional term, the county superintendent is to notify the State Superintendent of Schools of such transfer.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

8. **Certification.** All certification data should be recorded in WVEIS. This is important so the certification clerk and personnel director can review data to determine certification of employees, expiration date of certificates, be able to notify and remind employees of expiring certification, identify teachers on a permit, out-of-field authorization, etc. According to State Board Policy 5202, all out-of-field authorizations need to be approved by the county board. The secretary needs to be trained to do this. Currently, no certification data were kept in WVEIS.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NEW RECOMMENDATION. The Team recommended that the personnel secretary be trained by a RESA 1 technology representative on how to input and print WVEIS data concerning professional license and other personnel data. Additional computer training would increase the secretary's computer knowledge and skills in the use of computer software making her more efficient and valuable as an executive secretary to the superintendent and personnel director.

9. **Coaches and Other Extracurricular Positions.** 1. If the county continues to use one posting number for coaches and update as needed, the Team recommended that "new postings" be identified each time the posting is updated. Positions not filled could remain on the posting. W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a(o)(A) requires all positions to be posted for a minimum of five days. Therefore, on the posting under "Deadline for Applications," the closing date should be at least five days from the posting date of the revised posting. The deadline for the old positions on the posting can be, "Continue to be posted until filled". 2. A more complete job description should be written for coaching positions. 3. Since coaches are often difficult to find, the Team recommended that the qualifications be changed and require that applicants must be a professional employee of the board of education or meet the WVSSAC requirement. 4. Since the board has an approved salary schedule for each sport, the actual salary for coaches and other extracurricular positions could be listed on the posting or the salary schedule could be placed on the county's webpage. 5. All coach and other extracurricular positions must be posted.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION NOT FOLLOWED. See #3, “Qualifications” and #5, “Salary” above.

- 10. Service Personnel.** A salary pay grade, along with a possible (low to high) salary amount should be listed on the posting or list the pay grade for the classification title and post the salary schedule on the county webpage. (Jefferson County Board of Education is one example for reference.) Also, the evaluation of past services should be considered when considering individuals for a transfer within the system or the employment of a substitute service person into a regular position. Service employees should be knowledgeable that county boards make decisions affecting promotions and the filling of service personnel positions on the basis of seniority, qualifications, and evaluation of past services.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION NOT FOLLOWED/NEW RECOMMENDATION. As required by W.Va. Code §18A-4-8b(g)(2) add the period of employment and the start and ending time of the day shift to service personnel postings.

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 new teacher hire logs for 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011 to determine the 0-3 years experience for required observations/evaluations and compiled an alphabetical listing of personnel and matched the list with current personnel files.

The Team also reviewed personnel evaluations for professional personnel with 4-5 years experience, other professional personnel, support personnel, service personnel, coaches, etc., to determine that the evaluation process was conducted according to W.Va. Code §18A-2-12, West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310, and county policy.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. Although some problem areas existed in implementing personnel evaluation, the current administrative staff has taken seriously the necessity to provide evaluations of personnel that comply with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. If the current effort to get all evaluators to understand and implement the evaluation policy continues, there should be little if any problems with personnel evaluations in the future. The Team reviewed personnel evaluations that had been completed or were in the process of being completed this year (2012-2013) and found them to be improved over the previous years.

A random review of teacher evaluations disclosed the following.

1. Two teachers' at Peterstown Middle School evaluation folders contained the required evaluation documents for the 2010-11 school year.
2. Six teachers'(three teachers at Mountain View Elementary and Middle School, two teachers at James Monroe High School, and one teacher at the Monroe County Technical Center) evaluation folders contained the evaluations for the 2010-11 school year, but did not contain the required observations. The observations were being kept in the schools. The Team visited one school and confirmed the observation forms were in the schools.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. The Team reviewed a sampling of teacher evaluations including the evaluations of the teachers cited in Numbers 1 and 2 above and evaluations of teachers from all the schools.

Sixteen (16) of the teacher evaluations reviewed met all requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310.

Two (2) teachers' evaluation files contained no evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year. Both of these teachers have been evaluated for the 2012-2013 school year.

One (1) teacher with fewer than three years of experience received an evaluation for the first half of the 2011-2012 year but did not receive an evaluation for the second half of the year. This does not meet the requirements of State Board Policy 5310 which requires that teachers receive two evaluations each year during their first three years of teaching. This teacher is not an employee of Monroe County School District this year.

3. Four teachers' (two at Peterstown Elementary School and two at James Monroe High School) evaluation folders did not contain evaluations for the 2010-11 school year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Three of the four teachers' evaluation folders contained evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year. One of the teachers was no longer employed by Monroe County School District, therefore, was not evaluated.

A random review of professional support personnel evaluations disclosed the following.

1. None of the seven evaluation files reviewed had current evaluations.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NONCOMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed the evaluation files of fourteen (14) professional support staff and found that five (5) of the professional support staff evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year met all requirements of State Board Policy 5310.

2. Three support personnel (speech and language and counselor at Mountain View Elementary and Middle School and speech and language at Peterstown Elementary School) with five years or less of service in this assignment had not been evaluated during the past three years as required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. Four (4) professional support staff with five or more years of service in the assignment had not been evaluated during the past three years as required by West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. Three of these professional support staff were cited in the original audit. Two of the four staff members had established agreed upon evaluation goals for the 2012-2013 school year.

3. The school psychologist did not have an evaluation for the 2010-11 school year. Evaluations were available for previous years, but they did not meet the requirements of Policy 5310 because the evaluations did not involve goal setting, maintaining a portfolio, and a supervisor's narrative evaluation.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The school psychologist was evaluated during the 2011-2012 school year, and the evaluation met the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310.

4. Three support personnel (Counselor, Peterstown Middle School; counselor, James Monroe High School; and Family Service Coordinator, Peterstown Elementary School) evaluation folders did not contain evaluations.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed the evaluation folders of the three professional support personnel and found one counselor had not been evaluated in the 2011-2012 school year, one counselor had only one evaluation whereas West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 requires two evaluations per year for professional support personnel with less than four years of experience, and the third person had been evaluated during the 2011-2012 school year.

A review of administrators' evaluations disclosed the following.

The Team reviewed 2010-11 evaluations for school administrators and was told it was because of a misunderstanding of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310 that no administrators were evaluated during the 2010-11 school year. However, all administrators had goals established for evaluations during the 2011-12 school year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed the 2011-2012 evaluations for school administrators and found all administrators' evaluations were completed and met the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. The Team also reviewed the administrators' evaluations for the current school year and found all administrators had established goals for evaluations for the 2012-2013 school year and the evaluation process was being implemented in compliance with West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310.

The superintendent of schools was evaluated by the Monroe County Board of Education June 7, 2011.

The Team reviewed the personnel files of 17 coaches with the following results.

1. Six coaches had evaluations for the 2010-11 school year.
2. The evaluation files for eight coaches contained no evaluations more recent than 2006.
3. Four coaches had no coaching evaluations for the 2010-11 school years.
4. No coaches' evaluations were available for review for the 2011 fall sports.
5. Training needed to be completed on the procedures to be used in the evaluation of coaches.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE. The Team reviewed the evaluations of 27 coaches, including the 17 coaches reviewed in the original audit covering the 2011-2012 school year and the fall and winter sports of the 2012-2013 school year, and found 25 of the evaluations met the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. One coach who had no coaching evaluation in the 2010-2011 school year was again not evaluated in the 2011-2012 school year. One coach was evaluated, but the evaluation was not dated by the evaluator or the coach.

A random review of service personnel evaluations disclosed the following.

The Team reviewed 23 service personnel evaluation folders with a sampling of all the job classifications and found most service personnel had not been evaluated during the 2010-2011 school year. The results of the reviews follow.

1. Five service personnel had been evaluated during the 2010-11 year, and the evaluations met all the requirements of policy.
2. Two service personnel received evaluations for the 2010-11 school year, but the evaluations were received after the year had ended. One was dated July 6, 2011, and the other was dated June 2, 2011.
3. One service personnel evaluation was not signed and dated by the employee.
4. Fifteen of the 23 service personnel reviewed did not receive an evaluation during the 2010-11 school year.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. The Team reviewed 29 service personnel evaluation folders with a sampling of all job classifications and found most service personnel had been evaluated during the 2011-2012 school year. The results of the reviews follow.

Twenty-three of the 29 service personnel files reviewed contained completed evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year that met the requirements of policy.

Three service personnel folders contained no evaluations for the 2011-2012 school year. This did not meet the requirement that all service personnel be evaluated annually.

The evaluation forms used for evaluation of bus operators had been torn apart and only the first half of the form was used. Therefore, the evaluations were only half completed, and since the signatures and dates for the supervisor and employee are located on the second page of the form, the evaluations were not properly signed and dated. The county has taken steps to resolve this for the 2013-2014 school year.

The mechanic whose evaluation file was reviewed had not been evaluated since the 2006-2007 year.

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)

Beginning Teacher Internship.

The beginning teacher Internship is under the direction of the Director, Title I, II who directs and monitors the program. Documentation of mentor/beginning orientation, meeting dates, meeting agendas, and staff development provided to new teachers were well documented in a notebook. A second and third notebook contained monitor logs of mentor observations and conferences, county policies, information concerning effective teaching practices, etc.

Findings.

1. Beginning teachers had been assigned mentors; however, no evidence existed that the mentor positions had been posted or that the mentors were hired by the board. Mentor positions for an enhancement component of the beginning teacher internship were posted in September 2009 and two retired mentors were contracted effective for the 2009-2010 school term. There was no evidence that the program was reposted for subsequent years or that the mentors were hired for subsequent years. The program was funded by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All vacancies for mentors had been posted, including the mentors for the Enhancement Program. Last year's enhancement program mentors were rehired for the 2013-2014 school year. With the exception of the mentors of the enhancement program, the salary for the mentor assignment was listed on the posting as \$300/semester. This salary was paid with State funds. The enhancement program mentors were paid \$25/hour for hours worked as per the superintendent. The postings also included a job description. Documentation of the employment of mentors was provided via board minutes. The Beginning Teacher and Beginning Principal Internship programs had been under the direction of the director of Title I and II. When the director retired in January 2013, the responsibility of the programs was reassigned to the assistant superintendent. A notebook documenting training sessions, observations and conferences, as well as materials provided to beginning teachers/principals for the 2011-2012 school year was available for review.

Note: Counties are responsible for writing a plan, Support for Improving Professional Practice to address the implementation of the Beginning Teacher and Beginning Principal Internship programs for next year (2013-2014). The

assistant superintendent received this document during the OPEA visit and is currently working on this assignment. The plan will be forwarded to the West Virginia Department of Education for approval.

2. After a review of documentation (mentor logs) and interviews with the director of the program, school principals, and teachers, it was evident that mentors cannot meet the number of observations and required observation time or weekly meetings listed in W. Va. Code §18A-3-2b. This is due to the mentor having a full schedule him/herself. Beginning teachers interviewed say they usually talk daily with their mentors before or after the school day or during lunch break. The Team also observed that the monthly meetings of the professional support team were not taking place. Two principals interviewed said they talk informally with new teachers and mentors continually, but were not aware of a required monthly meeting with a support team.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. As per the assistant superintendent, at the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year, prior to the director's retirement, the director met with the assistant superintendent, who was then principal of Mountain View Elementary/Middle School, as well as with each school principal and mentor to review with them the county and State policies and their specific responsibilities of the internship programs. Each was given a copy of the policy and forms designed to schedule, record, and maintain records of the mentor's observations and meetings with their assigned beginning teacher. Those completed forms for the first semester of the 2012-2013 school year were on file in the assistant superintendent's office.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Following W. Va. Code §18A-4-7a (o), post all mentor positions, including the mentors of the Enhancement Program, for one year. Include with the posting, a job description and the salary amount. Following selection of the mentor, acquire board employment into the mentor position.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

2. Review with each principal and mentor the county policy on the Beginning Teacher Internship. Provide a copy of the policy and the job description to each beginning teacher. Continue to work toward meeting the requirements of the internship program in required observations and meetings. The principal should schedule monthly meetings of the Professional Support Team in advance, so all members of the team can plan to attend and be prepared for the meetings. Mentors of the Enhancement Program should be included in the meetings.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED.

Beginning Principal Internship.

The Beginning Principal Internship is under the direction of the principal of James Monroe High School. The principal also serves as mentor of all beginning principals (one yet to be assigned). In an interview, the principal talked about the responsibility and the implementation of the beginning principal internship; however, there was no Beginning Principal Internship policy available. The principal stated that meetings with the new principals follow each of the county's principal meetings to extend and further discuss topics addressed in the meeting. Other topics that are to be covered with new principals are presented and discussed.

Findings.

1. There was no evidence that the principal mentor position(s) had been posted or that the principal was hired by the board for the mentor assignment.
2. One principal (Peterstown Elementary School) had not been assigned a mentor.
3. The principal was unaware that mentors were to be paid (salary paid by the State) and believed that she was volunteering to do the job to save the county money. Although the Team requested to see documentation to or from the West Virginia Department of Education for past reimbursements paid, such documentation could not be located by the personnel secretary or payroll supervisor.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. All mentor positions for principals had been posted and hired by the board. The principal from Peterstown Elementary School had been assigned a mentor. The assistant superintendent, who did not participate in the principal internship program when a "new" principal, was placed in the program this year (2012-2013) and completed a semester of the program before transferring to assistant superintendent. A pro-rated salary of \$300 was listed on the posting when the posted position was for one semester only.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Post all mentor positions and the selected person(s) must be hired by the board.
2. Immediately, post for a mentor for the principal who has not been assigned a mentor. The posting should be for the remainder of this year (2011-2012) and for the remainder of one year of the program into the 2012-2013 school term. The salary for the mentor, for the remaining of the year, can be prorated. The remainder of the \$600 salary, reimbursed from the West Virginia Department of Education, can be paid for next year's mentorship services.
3. Place the actual salary for the mentor on the posting. If the mentor cannot complete a full year (a minimum of 133 days), the salary on the posting can be a prorated amount.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATIONS FOLLOWED.

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.”

1. With only one policy manual in the central office, access to the county policies was limited and restrictive to the public, as well as school system personnel. Only one person can access this critical information at a time.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. Public access to the county’s policies has been dramatically improved with copies of the county policy manual provided at each school and at the board office. As policies are revised, developed, and approved they are posted to the county school system’s website and to individual school websites. Thirty-six policies were currently available to the general public through these websites.

2. The county has not followed its own policy, Policy Process (BF), regarding review of county policies. As stated in this policy which became effective June 2002, “After a period of three years from the date of the Board’s approval or last modification of a policy, the Superintendent shall notify the Board if the policy is out of date, seems unnecessary, or has proven ineffective, or whether it is in need of modification or repeal for any other reason”, yet according to the table of contents page, some 205 policies have no date of adoption indicating they were approved prior to 2002. As a result of a failure to review current policies, many Monroe County Board of Education policies were not reflective of current West Virginia statutes and West Virginia Board of Education policies. For example, Monroe County Policy Regarding Bullying, Harassment and Intimidation (JG -5 and GBEA-4), did not include intentional “electronic” communications and transmissions nor included transmission of any image or voice, email, or text message as restricted in current West Virginia Code §18-2C-2. The employee Grievance Procedure (GBMA) policy was outdated. Many West Virginia Board of Education policies require annual or bi-annual review of county policies. Two such policies are Substance Abuse and Tobacco Control and Student Attendance, yet there was no documentation that such reviews occurred. This is not an exhaustive list of

policies that need attention. A thorough review of all county policies to ensure compliance with current state and federal regulations is needed.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

EXTENSIVE PROGRESS. The county has made substantial progress toward the recommendations for policy development and implementation. Some 120 policies have been documented as reviewed, revised, or repealed along with 11 newly developed policies. The county has placed on comment a revised policy, Board Policy Development and Adoption, BF, to guide the future development, review, dissemination, and adoption process for county policies.

Concerns for the county's policies governing bullying, harassment, intimidation, substance abuse, and student due process rights have been addressed in the county's policy, Expected Behaviors in Safe and Supportive Schools, JG. The outdated policy Grievance Procedure, GBMA, has been abolished by the county board of education.

Although substantial progress has been made toward policy implementation, a review of all county policies needs to continue. As stated in the previous review, the student Attendance Policy, JED, should be reviewed and revised to comply with the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 4110. This policy has been reviewed and revised subsequent to the Education Performance Audit. Also county policy, Home Schooling, IGBH-1, should contain the same language to align with WVBE Policy 4110. County policies governing programs of study such as county policies IFD, IGA, and IKF should be revised to align with requirements in WVBE Policy 2510. A careful review of the policies in the "Instruction" section, Section I, should continue. Policies and procedures for the operation of the alternative education program need to be developed as required in WVBE Policy 2418-6.1.1 and WVBE Policy 2510-6.1. Additionally, the Team recommended that all county policies be placed on public comment, even those that align exactly with WVBE policies.

3. There was no policy governing evaluation of service personnel, which is in violation of West Virginia Board of Education (WVDE) Policy 5310. There were no administrative guidelines governing evaluation of professional personnel which is also in violation of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The county has developed and the board has approved an evaluation policy for school service employees. Administrative guidelines for professional personnel were also in place.

4. There were no policies governing multicultural education (West Virginia Board of Education (WVDE) Policy 2421), AIDS education (WVDE Policy 2422.45) or student due process rights and nondiscrimination (WVDE Policy 4350). State Board policies 2421 and 2422.45 will be repealed July 1, 2012 and contained in Policy 4373 (effective July 1, 2012). The county will need to be mindful of this change in policy revision and development.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Concerns for the county's policies governing multicultural education and bullying, harassment, intimidation, substance abuse, student due process rights have been addressed in the county's policy, Expected Behaviors in Safe and Supportive Schools, JG. This county policy is extensive and satisfies the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 4373. Additionally, an Aids Prevention Education policy was in the approval process, having closed for public comment on April 22, 2013. This policy has subsequently been approved.

5. The Monroe County Board of Education Policy Manual's table of contents listings for Date of Adoption and Action needed to be updated to reflect current dates of policy adoption, review and revision, and indicate the action taken. The most current date entered was May 2, 2006.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. The Monroe County Board of Education Policy Manual's table of contents has been updated to reflect current dates of policy adoption, review, and revision. A tremendous amount of work has been done involving numerous policies. At the time of the follow-up Education Performance Audit, the board had six policies that just closed for public comment.

RECOMMENDATION.

The Team recommended that the Monroe County Board of Education provide greater access to county policies after a complete policy review has occurred and provide a web based policy manual to the public.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWED. Monroe County has improved public access to county policies by providing additional copies of the policy manual and access through the county and school websites. Web-based access, although incomplete, was being developed as policies were reviewed, revised, and developed.

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 interviewed the Superintendent of the Monroe County School District, the Monroe County Board of Education President, and all members of the board. The Team also reviewed agendas and minutes of county board meetings from July 2010 to the present, the Five-Year Strategic Plan, and the Efficiency Review of Monroe County Schools.

In previous years the Monroe County School District experienced strained relationships between the superintendent and the board of education. The current superintendent began in July 2010 and three newly elected board members started the same time. Two county board members have served for four years. The new superintendent and board members have developed much more amiable relationships and seemed to be united in resolving present-day issues. Board members acknowledged the need for hard work and difficult decision making and vowed to support the superintendent in efforts to correct the school district’s financial deficit and other problems.

Findings

1. A major responsibility of local school boards is ensuring that a long-term vision is established for the school system and that the district remains focused on learning and achievement for all students. Strategic planning provides opportunities for longitudinal data collection and revision of ineffective programs. The Monroe County Board of Education needs to closely examine the strategic plans of the county and schools to determine if budgets adequately address student performance goals. Goals and spending must align.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Monroe County Board members stated that they were all in agreement about the direction of the school system and worked well together. One member had participated on the strategic planning committee and reported back to the others. Central office staff had presented the plan at a regularly scheduled board meeting. Board members reported and board meeting minutes confirmed that the board maintains a focus on learning and achievement for all students by closely monitoring expenditures. Each local school improvement council (LSIC) completed a summary of achievement data, goals, and needs. The

Monroe County Board of Education questioned LSIC presenters to determine if goals and spending were aligned.

2. W.Va. Code §18-5-14 (a)(1)(B) states that each county board develop and submit to the local school improvement council an agenda for the annual meeting which requires the chair or a member designee to address such items of the county board and include: School performance, curriculum, and status in meeting the school and county improvement plans. If these areas are not made priorities, then it is not likely that the resources and energy necessary to improve them will be appropriately targeted.

W.Va. Code §18-5-14(a)(D)(5) directs school boards to use school-based accreditation and performance data in decision making. A review of board minutes indicated that the local school improvement councils made reports to the board at annual meetings, but the minutes did not contain a method to verify that presentations addressed student learning and improved academic achievement. In several instances the minutes referred to budgets addressing non-academic purchases, such as athletic and playground equipment. Interviews indicated that local school improvement councils were not provided agendas to follow. Furthermore, these presentations were for the purpose of presenting a school improvement budget earmarked by the levy call to the board for approval.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Central office staff developed an agenda for the annual local school improvement council (LSIC) meetings. While Monroe County Board of Education meeting minutes were very brief, separate summaries completed by LSIC members included school performance, curriculum, and status in meeting the school and county improvement plans. Interviews indicated that LSIC presentations addressed student learning and improved academic achievement. Central office staff members maintained a file of LSIC summary reports.

3. A primary function of a board of education is in setting policies and procedures. The Monroe County Board of Education did not conduct board meetings within their own adopted policies and procedures. For example, the board allowed delegations to speak longer than 15 minutes and public comments to go beyond 5 minutes. Numerous policies were out-of-date and numerous policies were not evident in the policy manual.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Interviews and a review of meeting minutes indicated that the Monroe County Board of Education conducted board meetings within their own adopted policies and procedures. Board members attended two trainings on how to conduct meetings efficiently. The Executive Director of the West Virginia

School Board Association has been helpful in providing training to board members on the board leadership findings identified in this report.

4. Minutes of the Monroe County Board of Education contained an item “Delegations” and another item “Public Comments.” The “Delegations” portion of the meeting included various topics. For example, the November 15, 2011, minutes contained a recognition of a student, food service employees and a custodian speaking to the board (six individuals addressing the board on the same topic), a presentation highlighting programs at the technical center and the Monroe County Technical Center local school improvement local school improvement council (LSIC) budget. The October 18, 2011, minutes contained a similar format, but the LSIC president began the presentation by questioning the superintendent about cuts in the LSIC budget this year. The board was provided training and an update on the head start program.

The Team found several issues with this item.

- Some topics under “Delegations” required action by the board of education.
- Instances in which speakers directed questions to the board or superintendent and received answers or engaged in conversations.

The Team recommended that the Monroe County seek assistance in developing a policy on the appearance of delegations and adjust board agendas to place action items on another item of the agenda. It is further recommended that the president explain briefly the parameters of delegations according to policy and the board strictly follow its own policy.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Board members stated that they now follow policy on the appearance of delegations and public comments. Minutes indicated that delegations and public comments were kept within the stated time requirements. Action items were listed separately on the agendas.

5. A review of the board minutes indicated that Monroe County board meetings typically lasted several hours. The board should strive to follow the agenda and limit discussions about past issues and conflicts. Additionally, the Team recommended that the board request technical assistance from the West Virginia School Boards Association on conducting meetings more efficiently.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Monroe County Board minutes indicated starting and ending times. In the past year, the shortest board meeting lasted 15 minutes, the longest was four hours. Many were approximately two hours. No meeting continued later

than 11 p.m. Board members maintained that adopting the consent agenda format and following procedures presented in trainings had helped focus and streamline meetings. They expressed appreciation of the training.

6. The process used to determine the most qualified applicant for a position was not always followed by the Monroe County Board of Education. Board minutes indicated that on one occasion the board employed the fourth candidate recommended by the superintendent as decided by a committee that used the county approved form. Employees and the public need to perceive that the employment process is fair and not politically motivated. While the county board of education has the statutory authority to accept or reject a personnel recommendation of the county superintendent, circumventing county set policies and procedures for hiring personnel creates distrust and suspicion.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. Central office staff members provided documentation of the process used to interview and hire personnel. A matrix system was followed that included scoring for all pertinent information. Experience, education, and interview responses were all scored and tallied. Staff also provided documentation of the process utilized in the recent reduction in force. The limited number of grievances filed would indicate that the process was perceived as fair and not politically motivated.

7. Minutes of board meetings were vague and provided limited detail. Executive sessions regularly covered several topics in one session. Minutes neither recorded beginning time nor ending of executive sessions. The minutes did not reflect that “no action was taken during executive session.” Furthermore, in most cases the minutes failed to provide the legal citation for entering executive session. Agendas of meetings were explicit in listing discussion items. April 19, 2011 “Executive Session” a. Peterstown Middle School Student Discipline Hearing, b. James Monroe High School Employee Discipline Hearing, c. Employee Lunch Bill Collection, d. Personal, e. Board Property Owned- Discussion for possible action following executive session. 1. Blue Lick Property 2. Red Sulphur PSD – Right of Way/Deed, 3. Second Creek Property. The Team recommended that the county review agendas and minutes of other counties such as Randolph County and the agenda and executive sessions reflect only those topics allowed under law.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

COMPLIANCE. Minutes of board meetings were brief and provided limited detail. However, central office staff maintained an extensive file with supporting information. Executive sessions addressed a single topic in one session, most frequently-student discipline. Minutes provided beginning time and ending time

of executive sessions. Minutes needed to include more information to inform the public of board action.

8. The new superintendent has new and inexperienced staff members in key positions: Assistant superintendent and principals at four of the five county schools. These positions are key factors in assisting the superintendent's leadership to provide quality learning for all students in Monroe County. The lack of experience in these positions demands extensive training and the desire to learn job roles and functions quickly. The Team observed this lack of experience at the leadership level of Monroe County as being detrimental to progress at this time.

Principals interviewed appeared to be performing well. One of the principals interviewed was new; however, had experience as an assistant principal. The superintendent appeared to have a good rapport with the principals, and included them in the decision making to reduce staff.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE. Turnover in county leadership continued. A new superintendent had been appointed. The assistant superintendent had been replaced by two assistants that had other responsibilities, including the major federal programs of Special Education and Title I. None of the new administrators had previous experience working in a central office. The Team observed that ongoing high quality training had been provided. The lack of experience in these positions demands continued training.

9. Administrator Turnover. Administrative staff at the county and school levels has undergone significant transformation since July 1, 2010. The following chart represents the position and number of employees who have held the position since July 1, 2010.

Position	Employees Who Have Held the Position
Special Education Director	new
Assistant Superintendent	new
Maintenance Director	new
School Nurse	same
James Monroe High School Principal	same
Peterstown Middle School Principal	same
Mountain View Principal	new
Mountain View Assistant Principal	new
Monroe County Vocational Director	To be hired July 1, 2013

The administrative instability has affected the ability of Monroe County to move forward with a unified system. The superintendent is advancing in strengthening and stabilizing his leadership team and mobilizing resources for effectively leading the county to eliminate the financial deficit and improve student, school, and county performance.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

NO CHANGE. The changes in the people occupying the administrative positions continued since last year. There is a different person in four of the administrative positions this year and two positions were vacant with consideration to eliminate the positions and those duties assumed by other administrators. The superintendent of Monroe County Schools was also new this year (2012-2013).

10. The superintendent was attentive, cordial, inviting, respectful, and exhibited a behavior of sincere interest in the school system and his responsibility as a superintendent. It is evident that he wants to do his job well. During the Team's visit, it appeared that he was eager to grasp knowledge of W.Va. School Law by writing down the Code where an item or situation was addressed in law. He was very appreciative of having a former superintendent, Braxton County, working with him as a mentor stating that he had learned so much from her. He was disappointed that she was no longer available.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

CONTINUED. The superintendent was attentive and respectful. She expressed sincere interest in the school system and her responsibility as the superintendent. It was evident that she wants to do her job well. She was very appreciative of having a former superintendent of the Raleigh County School District working with her as a mentor. This resource provided invaluable assistance to the county superintendent and board of education.

8.1. INDICATORS OF EFFICIENCY.

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.

1. Monroe County School District has experienced a steady decrease in student enrollment since 2003, with a total loss of 46 students last school year (2010-2011). Yet, during the same period of time, personnel employment increased placing the county well above the number of positions outside the school basic foundation allowance (26 positions for the 2011-2012 school year). The new superintendent of two years has and is working to reduce personnel in an effort to get the county back within the school-based formula. Seven individuals (two professional and five service) remained on the reduction in force (RIF) list from last year. Twenty-four (13 professional and 11 service personnel) will be placed on the reduction-in-force (RIF) list for the 2012-2013 school year. The result of the deep cuts should bring the county back within the State formula.
2. The superintendent has worked to cut positions while maintaining a quality education for the students. James Monroe High School is going to an eight period day. All programs of study will continue to be offered along with AP® classes for core subjects. Foreign language will continue to be offered on-line. Students can also earn up to 25 hours college credit at Bluefield State College in engineering through classes provided at the Monroe County Vocational Center. The ROTC program at the high school was maintained with the partial use of levy funds. Art and physical education in the elementary schools will be taught by the elementary classroom teacher. No split grades were established in an effort to cut personnel. Levy funds provide an elementary counselor as well as for two custodians and a maintenance person. One nurse serves countywide and a nurse is located on each school campus. One-half of the cost of the nurse is funded by Health Center.
3. Cooks are assigned on the basis of meals served and custodians are assigned on basis of square footage of the facility. The number of aides is determined by the requirements for kindergarten, preschool, and special education programs.
4. Although this report includes several findings in the area of personnel, at no time did the Team find that those findings were due to knowing what to do and not doing it. For each finding, it appeared to be because the person responsible did not know...even those individuals who had been in the county a long time. When the mentor positions were first created several years ago, many counties did not initially post the positions, but were later told in personnel training sessions that all positions must be posted. See W.Va Code §18A-4-7a (o) (1). The director of the Beginning Teacher Internship program would not have attended those training sessions.

5. Other than the superintendent, there was no evidence that persons assigned or working in personnel had gone to any training on personnel, conferred with other county individuals who work in the same or similar positions or had worked “on their own” to learn more about their job responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATION.

Due to the financial crises in Monroe County, the personnel reduction, and the fact that the mentor is no longer available to the county superintendent, the Team recommended that the State Superintendent or State Board of Education provide the superintendent, a new mentor who has worked as an assistant superintendent of personnel or county superintendent, who will visit with him on a regular basis and provide both knowledge of W.Va. Code and State Board policies as well as assist him and his office staff in receiving training in areas of personnel, WVEIS, policy development, creating needed documents, etc. A mentor in close proximity to the county would be most helpful.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

PROGRESSING. Following the resignation of the county superintendent, the Monroe County Board of Education hired a new superintendent. The superintendent was assigned a mentor by the West Virginia Department of Education, Dr. Charlotte Hutchens, former superintendent, Raleigh County School District. Dr. Hutchens has visited with the new superintendent on-site several times (approximately twice a month the first semester and once a month the second semester or as needed). Additionally, Dr. Hutchens is readily available via telephone, text message, and e-mail. The new superintendent stated that Dr. Hutchens’ mentorship is invaluable. Training has been provided regarding school law, State and county policies, superintendent duties and responsibilities, etc. One example of assistance was the process to follow in the transfer and reduction-in-force of employees during the personnel season. With Dr. Hutchens’ guidance, the superintendent found this process, which is often most difficult, to be implemented smoothly.

The new superintendent not only has limited school administration experience, but her two assistant superintendents, who basically make up the county office administrative staff, are also inexperienced in school administration. One assistant superintendent formerly served as assistant principal and principal and was in the beginning principal internship program the first semester of this year. Both superintendent and assistant superintendent have and are continuing to participate in training sessions relevant to their job responsibilities. This extensive training along with the guidance and training by Dr. Hutchens is crucial to their success. In addition, for a higher level of success, the three central office administrators must be self-motivated and disciplined to independently read and study West Virginia School Law and State Board of Education policies.

The superintendent and the assistants appeared to have a good working rapport and were focused on ensuring that their jobs are done well. They were attentive and interested throughout the audit process, appearing to take every opportunity to learn more. With continued hard work and positive attitudes, this team should reach a success level in their leadership role for Monroe County 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.

Monroe County School District needed to reorganize the evaluation policies and procedures for employees. A policy and implementing procedures needed to be developed for the evaluation of school service personnel and administrators needed to be trained in the policy and procedures. Employees also needed to be oriented to the evaluation system. Procedures needed to be developed and implemented for the evaluation of professional personnel and to fulfill the requirements of West Virginia Board of Education Policy 5310. The county needed to develop forms and procedures to ensure the requirements of Policy 5310 before the evaluation of school administrators are effectively implemented. The form needed to provide clear instructions on how mutually agreed upon goals are recorded, the mid-year conference are documented, and the end of year conference and evaluation narrative are documented.

From board meetings, it appeared that some LSICs were not strategically targeting the levy based school improvement funds to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance. Such purchases of school improvement included a golf cart, painting and graphics for a school's score board, and a trip to an amusement park (Carowinds). In view of the county's financial deficit and student performance, the LSICs need to exercise discretion in the budget and manage the budget more effectively to target resources strategically to the teaching and learning process to improve student, school, and school system performance. The superintendent and board will need to provide guidance regarding expenditures of school improvement public levy funds.

February 1, 2011, minutes of the board of education, contained a direction to the superintendent to list funding for a drug dog on the April 19, 2011, agenda for discussion and possible board action. This dog would be owned by the Sheriff's Department and also used for the school system. Under the present financial conditions of the Monroe County School District, this seemed not to be a prudent use of funds.

Monroe County developed a comprehensive plan to eliminate the county deficit and the plan was approved by the West Virginia Board of Education March 14, 2012. The Monroe County Board of Education will need to support the superintendent in following through with the plan.

Monroe County School District lacked the capacity in leadership and organization for targeting resources strategically to improve the teaching and learning process. Team interviews with the superintendent and board members supported by recent personnel action affirmed the board's desire to improve the financial and academic problems. Monroe County has a clear vision and plan for improvement. This will enable the county to develop the capacity for leadership and organization.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

Monroe County School District, county office personnel, and the Monroe County Board of Education have demonstrated the capacity in leadership and organization for leading the school system. Notably, Monroe County has reduced the financial deficit and appeared ready to move forward in concentrating on curriculum and instruction. The board of education has participated in training on conduct of meetings and board minutes and interviews with individual board members substantiated that the board conducted meetings appropriately and did not appear to influence personnel.

EARLY DETECTION AND INTERVENTION

One of the most important elements in the Education Performance Audit process is monitoring student progress through early detection and intervention programs.

The Monroe County Board of Education is at a critical stage in that the board of education can consciously determine to lead the county to financial solvency and concentrate attention on improving student, school, and county performance. The board has been off track in its meetings and regularly expended time and energy on discussions and deliberations that hindered meaningful decision-making.

During the Education Performance Audit, all board members expressed a clear understanding of how the financial deficit occurred and the difficult and challenging decisions necessary to eliminate the deficit. The board seemed postured to improve the board's effectiveness and follow the superintendent's recommendations in making difficult and informed decisions that will get the county back on track.

The county superintendent possesses the qualities and skills to lead the county. He has grasped the systemic sources of the impasse for the Monroe County School District. Through joined forces of the board, superintendent, the educators and personnel, the Team is of the opinion that Monroe County now has the will and commitment to improve school district effectiveness.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The Team determined that the Monroe County Board of Education made a conscious change in board leadership and effectiveness to make difficult and informed decisions to improve the county. The OEPA cautions the board to maintain this leadership and stabilize county office personnel.

MONROE COUNTY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is the recommendation of the Office of Education Performance Audits that the Monroe County Superintendent of Schools receive renewed and continued support from a liaison of the State Superintendent of Schools who will be committed and accessible to the superintendent.

It is further recommended that the Monroe County Board of Education conduct meetings in accordance with the rules of conduct for public meetings. Monroe County Board of Education should contact Howard O’Cull, Executive Director of the West Virginia School Board Association, for training and guidance in facilitating productive board meetings.

It is recommended that Monroe County Schools follow their deficit reduction plan and show progress in reducing the budget deficit.

Finally, it is recommended that Monroe County Board of Education be given until the next accreditation cycle to correct the findings noted in this report.

FOLLOW-UP REVIEW

The Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the West Virginia Board of Education continue the Full Approval status of the Monroe County School District. However, due to the inexperienced and new superintendent and central office staff, the Office of Education Performance Audits recommends that the superintendent receive continued support from the liaison of the State Superintendent of Schools. It is also recommended that the two assistant superintendents be provided sustained support and guidance in personnel practices and personnel evaluation.