

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE

ON-SITE REVIEW REPORT

***Berkeley County
Special Education***

May, 2020



Office of District &
School Advancement



**West Virginia Board of Education
2019-2020**

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Introduction

At the request of Dr. Patrick Murphy, Superintendent, Berkeley County Schools, the Office of District and School Advancement (ODSA) conducted a special circumstance review of Berkeley County Schools, February 25-28, 2020, to obtain specific information regarding the delivery of special education services. The review process was conducted as outlined in West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) Policy 2322: West Virginia System of Support and Accountability. The review included classroom observations and interviews of school and central office personnel, as well as parents. The Team also reviewed Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and staff to student ratios.

A Team consisting of staff members from the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) and educators from other districts in West Virginia (WV) compiled the information gathered during the onsite review and provided findings and non-compliances outlined in this report. The report will acknowledge identified strengths and provide recommendations and corrective actions for improving special education services provided to Berkeley County students. The report will be presented to the WVBE at the May 13, 2020 board meeting.

Onsite Review Team Members

- Allen Sexton, Special Education Director, Raleigh County Schools
- Charlene Coburn, Senior Administrator, Office of District & School Advancement, WVDE
- Chris Walter, Principal, Wright Denny Elementary, Jefferson County
- Dawn Embrey-King, Assistant Director, Office of Special Education, WVDE
- Jeremy Brunty, Coordinator, Office of Federal Programs, WVDE
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- Teresa Brown, Coordinator, Office of Federal Programs, WVDE
- Tiffany Barnette, Special Education Director, Monongalia County Schools

Background

Dr. Murphy became superintendent of Berkeley County Schools on September 1, 2019. Shortly after his arrival, he began an examination of the organizational structure, procedures, and practices of the school system in general. In addition to examining the dynamics of the system, he reviewed multiple sources of data surrounding the operation and effectiveness of Berkeley County Schools. From his examination of the system, he identified areas that required further investigation prior to making decisions regarding positive change. One of the priority areas was special education. To be proactive, Dr. Murphy contacted the WVDE for a third-party examination of the special education system as it currently operates in Berkeley County. Dr. Murphy requested and the WVDE agreed the onsite review Team would conduct a review and prepare the report with an emphasis on the following four areas:

- Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education service
- Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities
- Ensure high-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored
- Determine ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services are in place.

The information provided in this report will assist Dr. Murphy, the Berkeley County Board of Education, and county educators by providing information to guide decision making to ensure special education services provided to students are equitable and offer a continuum of services. Berkeley County Schools serves approximately 19,577 students in 33 schools across the county. Approximately 4,028 students receive special education services.

The Team noted the challenge Berkeley County Schools faces when recruiting and retaining teachers due to competing with surrounding states for quality special education staff. Through interviews with central office staff, the Team determined the Berkeley County Special Education Office has many talented education professionals who are knowledgeable about special education policy and procedures. The central office staff works diligently to recruit and retain qualified teachers, as well to address the various needs of students and school staff.

The Team determined Berkeley County Schools has a comprehensive and effective Transition Program in place to prepare students with disabilities for post-school life. Depending on the disability and the support services required in adult life, successful transition opportunities are planned for and begin in elementary or middle school by providing students opportunities to explore their interests. These services also include exploring post-secondary opportunities and employment options; as well as connecting students to adult programs upon graduation.

While there were multiple findings and non-compliances, the Team was encouraged with the direction and actions current leadership is taking. The school system is focusing on system-wide change to better serve the students and the community. These actions are outlined in the Berkeley County Schools Special Education Reallocation Project. This project includes adapting the county's current special education model of location-based services to one that is more aligned to provide multi-categorical experiences focusing on academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students. The transition to this model will ensure that many of the students currently attending schools outside of their attendance area will receive instruction and services in their neighborhood school and will no longer be transported outside their home communities by bus. This will occur in phases with the first phase set to reduce approximately 12 bus routes by relocating students back to their neighborhood school during the 2020/2021 school year.

Central Office: Focus Areas

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on written evidence and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the county office through the interview process.

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: A consistent and systematic Student Assistance Team (SAT) process was not pervasively utilized throughout the district. It was reported SAT meetings are conducted for the sole purpose of referring students for evaluation to receive special education services. Through interviews with county office staff, it was determined interventions are not being consistently provided to students before referring for special education evaluation.

Policy 2419, Chapter 2, Section 3.C

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: Establish clear expectations for the SAT process aligned with WVBE Policy 2419 and include provisions for when an expedited SAT process is warranted. Provide Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to students before referring for special education evaluation.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: Staff indicated during interviews, services are provided to students based upon exceptionality and specific exceptionalities are assigned to a school or schools. The practice of housing specific exceptionalities, in limited locations, led to expedited referrals in schools that did not have the capabilities to address students' needs. Additionally, most schools were unable to provide a continuum of services to students with disabilities. This practice resulted in an inordinate number of student transfers and out of attendance area placements.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.J and Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Continue implementation of the Berkeley County Schools Special Education Reallocation Project to provide comprehensive services throughout the district to significantly reduce the need to transport students outside their attendance areas to receive services.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

COMMENDATION 1: The Berkeley County Work Exploration Program for students with disabilities is seen as a model program for the state. This program has been in existence for many years and continues to grow and improve. The Work Exploration Program includes 158 businesses that provides work-based experiences for 141 students at this time.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Through interviews, it was discovered approximately 100 students with disabilities are currently receiving homebound services. However, initiating those services often takes an extended amount of time resulting in a lapse of services. Compensatory time is being provided to those students who are not receiving timely services.

Policy 2510, Chapter 6, Section 2.c.7; Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.J

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Review IEP and service documentation for all students placed on homebound to determine how the IEP indicates services will be provided, if appropriate procedures were followed, and if services were provided in a timely manner.

FINDING 1: Coordinators assigned to schools spend most of their time attending IEP meetings and reviewing completed IEPs for compliance. This time focused on compliance prevented them from providing services focused on improving specialized instruction, managing behavior, and improving efficiency of staff and services to schools.

Policy 2322: Chapter 4, Section 1.c

RECOMMENDATION 1: Review responsibilities provided by both the schools and the central office coordinators regarding the IEP processes, to determine how to most efficiently utilize current staff to manage IEPs and to deliver other needed services, such as technical support with IEP tools and processes, professional learning, and coaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

FINDING 2: The Team determined, a lack of communication between the special education department and the remaining departments within the central office had developed over time to become part to the working culture of the office, with the exception of recent practices established by Dr. Murphy.

Policy 2322, Section 4.1.a

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Team recommended leadership continue the above practices and further develop a process within the central office that will foster increased communication among all departments regarding the general operations of the school system.

FINDING 3: Special education staff are not included in planning professional learning for county staff. It was also noted there are numerous long-term substitutes assigned to special education classrooms who are lacking specialized training.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.A; Policy 2510, Chapter 7, Sections 10.e and 10.f

RECOMMENDATION 3: To ensure staff servicing students with disabilities are prepared, include a member of the special education administrative staff in the countywide planning process for professional development. During this planning process, review current staffing and prioritize on-going professional learning for schools with the least amount of certified staff.

FINDING 4: Communication between the central office and schools regarding special education was limited. Several teachers and parents expressed the need for additional support from the central office, particularly in providing technical guidance and professional learning for new or substitute special education teachers.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.A; Policy 2510, Chapter 7, Sections 10.e and 10.f

RECOMMENDATION 4: The Team recommended consideration be given to developing a strategic communication process that advertises the expertise and resources that are available to the schools from the central office.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Through interviews and review of digital special education files, the Team determined there is a pervasive practice in place in which IEPs are not finalized in a reasonable amount of time throughout the county. This is leading to changes being made to IEPs without an amendment. Additionally, current IEPs are not available to general education teachers and accommodations are not available during standardized testing.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.M

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Establish clear expectations for finalizing IEPs. Train principals how to determine when there is a pending IEP and to send out reminders monthly to case managers with a pending IEP.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Through interviews, staff did not communicate a consistent method used to ensure all teachers have read the students' IEPs. The Team did not determine all teachers are aware of the contents of IEPs for all students with disabilities they serve. An ongoing process was not demonstrated and those teachers who did review IEPs discussed only reviewing them at the beginning of the school year.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 2

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Establish clear expectations for how general education teachers are to read their student's IEPs. Train principals in how to determine if a teacher has not read an IEP and set the expectation that principals send out reminders monthly. Additionally, establish a process at the central office to monitor the established expectations.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: Staff confirmed during interviews the county did not have a consistent method for general education teachers to document how they are providing supplementary services to students with disabilities. The responsibility is placed on the principals without follow-up from special education administration at the central office.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: Assist principals with the development of a standardized process for teachers to document supplementary services in their school. The Team recommended periodic monitoring of the process by central office staff.

NONCOMPLIANCE 7: It is the expectation from the central office that principals serve as the chair of IEP meetings. However, interviews with staff indicated principals are often not attending IEP meetings, and instead sign documents as the chair after the meeting. There must be a chair at each meeting and only members who are present at the time of the meeting shall sign the attendance document.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5 Section 1.D

CORRECTIVE ACTION 7: Review completed IEPs for necessary attendance.

NONCOMPLIANCE 8: A review of student IEPs from the nine schools visited showed frequent mistakes in service delivery. Additionally, central office staff did not demonstrate a clear expectation for schools to verify IEP services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 8: Develop a standard process for schools to verify student services. Embed into this process a system of accountability that can be monitored by central office staff.

Individual School Reports

Berkeley Heights Elementary

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Students with disabilities at Berkeley Heights Elementary did not meet standard in the English language arts and mathematics indicators for the 2019 school year. However, students with disabilities did meet the annual target for growth in mathematics. Students with disabilities did not meet standard for the attendance indicator and partially met standard for the behavior indicator.

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Berkeley Heights Elementary, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets two times per week and the team consists of appropriate members, including parents. They review STAR reading and math data, work samples, behavior charts, and predominantly take parent input into consideration for decisions regarding student supports. Prior to students being identified for special education services, a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is provided and supported by regular education teachers and Title I teachers. While the school has a SAT, the Team noted comments from a limited number of interviewees stating parents are not always given ample opportunity to contribute to the discussion and decisions made by the SAT. Many parents indicated in interviews that communication has improved at the school during the current school year and parent concerns regarding student services have been addressed in some cases.

RECOMMENDATION 1: While this did not rise to the level of a finding, the Team recommended the school utilize a process that will increase parent input for consideration with an emphasis on communicating to parents their right to contribute to the discussion and decisions made by the SAT.

The Team determined there were no findings nor noncompliance for Focus Area 1 at Berkeley Heights Elementary School.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: Teachers indicated in interviews they were provided the materials and supplies needed to support classroom instruction. However, teachers and parents reported a lack of support and communication from the central office special education staff. Additionally, teachers overwhelmingly perceived they do not have enough special education teachers to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The staff also reported they do not have enough special education teachers to provide co-teaching experiences to the students. The Team determined the teacher caseloads are within guidelines and the current staff could be utilized differently to provide a continuum of services, which could include co-teaching.

Through classroom observations, the Team noted special education teachers and instructional aides had positive interactions with students. During instructional delivery, feedback to students was timely and pervasively delivered with kindness. However, the Team observed instances of ineffective transitions between instructional activities. While students were well-behaved, the Team observed students waiting for the next activity for long periods of time. Additionally, low-level instruction was also observed with students being provided answers with an absence of wait time or prompting to promote learning and problem solving.

FINDING 1: High expectations for student success were not consistently observed in all special education classrooms.

Policy 2322, Section 4.1.c

RECOMMENDATION 2: The administration and central office special education staff provide professional learning to school staff who are lacking high expectations for students. The individualized professional learning should be followed with observations and monitoring to assure implementation of strategies to increase high expectations in the classroom.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: It was reported during IEP meetings, for students transitioning to the upcoming programmatic level, service minutes are determined by the school schedule, as opposed to the individual needs of the students.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: IEPs must be written to include the location, extent/frequency, and duration required for each service to address the individual needs of students. IEPs must be written to address the individual needs of students.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: It was observed and reported IEPs are not being finalized in a timely manner and IEPs are sometimes modified after the IEP meeting without an amendment.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2M

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: At the end of the IEP team meetings, Prior Written Notice (PWN) and a copy of the IEP must be provided to the parent. To make changes to the student IEP after the IEP team meeting, documentation of all agreed upon IEP changes must be included on the IEP Amendment Form and a copy must be provided to the parents.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

At the time of the onsite review, there were 96 students with disabilities enrolled at Berkeley Heights Elementary School. Of those students, 61 (64%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 35 (36%) students were not. Included in the 35, ten (10%) of the students' files did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: 10 students with IEPs do not have a case manager assigned.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share supplementary services with general education teachers for students with disabilities at the beginning of the school term. Teachers indicated they collaborate daily regarding this matter. However, the Team did not observe a consistent systematic process for the special education teachers to communicate regularly with general education teachers. One teacher reported having the regular education teachers sign a document indicating they read the IEPs at the beginning of the year; however, there was not a clear process for the administration to monitor or document to assure the teachers were providing the required modifications and accommodations outlined in the IEPs. Teachers also indicated they are only given oral feedback from the administration as opposed to written feedback following observations.

While some parents indicated communication could be improved, others indicated communication is improving at the school, especially with keeping parents informed of students' progress. Concern was expressed regarding teachers arriving at IEP meetings with completed IEPs and disregarding parent input. The Team noted it is an acceptable practice for teachers to bring a draft version of the IEP to the meeting for consideration. However, a discussion should address the draft and allow for input from every team member to suggest changes to the draft. It was communicated to the Team teachers and parents work together. Other parents however, indicated they would like increased visibility of central office special education staff in the building to promote positive communication and support for students, parents, and educators.

Parents indicated they would like their children to attend school in their neighborhood. Some parents reported they, "...must know their rights and push..." before the county staff addresses their concerns. The Team determined the county central office staff has developed a plan to move most students with disabilities back to their home attendance areas over the next three years and these changes are scheduled to begin during the 20/21 school year. Consideration will be given to placement based on individual needs of students.

Additionally, the team completed service verification on five students' IEPs in which all had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and all had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419 Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 7: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 7: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

Bunker Hill Elementary

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Students with disabilities at Bunker Hill Elementary did not meet standard in the English language arts and mathematics indicators for the 2019 school year. However, students with disabilities did meet the annual target for growth in mathematics. Students with disabilities did not meet standard for the attendance indicator but exceeded standard for the behavior indicator.

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Bunker Hill Elementary, it was reported the Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets primarily on days when students are not present, such as staff development days and Faculty Senate days. Bunker Hill Elementary staff use data from benchmark assessments, behavioral observations, and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to inform decisions regarding student evaluation for special education services. Title I teachers provide tiered intervention for students and participate in the SAT process. While Title I services were provided, a clear process for providing instructional interventions was not observed by the Team. It was reported school counselors provide services for students in classroom settings, however the provision of services for individuals or small groups was not observed or reported. Staff indicated in interviews there were instances of aggressive behavior by students and the school lacked a comprehensive plan to address behavioral and social-emotional issues. Teachers reported being provided little or no instruction regarding implementation of Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) for students.

FINDING 1: Multiple viewpoints regarding the purpose of MTSS and SAT processes exist in the school. Items, such as guidelines and timelines for MTSS, SAT referral, SAT members, and parental input have different interpretations among staff.

Policy 2419, Chapter 2, Section 3.C

RECOMMENDATION 1: Provide in-depth training and support for teachers and administrators in best practices for MTSS and SAT.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: Teachers reported a lack of a comprehensive school counseling program which led to students not receiving adequate social-emotional supports.

Policy 2314, Section 5.1.c and supported by Policy 2520.19.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: Ensure counselors provide adequate time in their schedule to meet with individual or small groups of students and document time devoted to individual/small group social-emotional support.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: Teachers indicated in interviews they were provided the materials and supplies needed to support classroom instruction. However, teachers reported a lack of support and communication from the central office special education staff. It was indicated Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) are developed by the Board-Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) assigned to the school with no input from the classroom teacher or SAT. Once a BIP is created, teachers reported a lack of guidance provided regarding implementation, documentation, and evaluation of the plan. Follow-up after implementation of a BIP is not provided. Additionally, teachers overwhelmingly perceive they do not have enough special education teachers to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The Team determined the teacher caseloads are within guidelines and the current staff could be utilized differently to provide a continuum of services, which could include co-teaching.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: Makeup of student special education classrooms are not designed around identified student needs.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Provide special education services that assure a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) based upon student needs in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: It was observed and reported IEPs are not being finalized in a timely manner and IEPs are sometimes modified after the meeting without an amendment.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2M

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: At the end of the IEP team meetings, Prior Written Notice (PWN) and a copy of the IEP must be provided to the parent. To make changes to the student IEP after the IEP team meeting, documentation of all agreed upon IEP changes must be included on the IEP amendment form and a copy must be provided to the parents.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Students with an IEP are moved to a more restrictive environment for a trial period without an IEP meeting or amendment to the IEP. If the new placement is effective, the IEP is then changed via an amendment.

Policy 2419 Chapter 5, Section 2.J

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Prior to making any changes to student placement, an IEP team meeting must be convened to discuss changes made to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) based on data and update or amend the IEP if needed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

At the time of the onsite review, there were 90 students with disabilities enrolled at Bunker Hill Elementary School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 88 (98%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining two (2%) students were not. Included in the two, one of the students' files did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: A student with an IEP does not have a case manager assigned.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share supplementary services with general education teachers for students with disabilities at the beginning of the school term. General education teachers review assigned students' IEPs at the beginning of the year using the READ.IEP application in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). Teachers indicated meetings between special educators and general educators occur at the beginning of the year to discuss student schedules and services. Teachers indicated a lack of common planning times between general and special education teachers and resort to communicating informally during school hours, such as during class changes or via email. Additionally, the Team did not observe a consistent, systematic process for the special education teachers to communicate regularly with general education teachers. Students with disabilities attend art, music, and physical education classes as a group without their same age peers and without a special education teacher. In discussing communication with central office staff, teachers indicated they have little or no interaction regarding how to correctly write an IEP. The Team was unable to acquire parent perspectives about home/school communication due to parent interviews not being scheduled. A clear process for the administration to monitor and document teachers are providing the required supplementary services outlined in the IEPs was not observed. However, teachers did indicate they are provided written feedback via email from the administration following walkthrough observations.

Additionally, the team completed service verification on five students' IEPs in which three had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the Team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

FINDING 2: IEP documents reviewed demonstrated an incomplete understanding of writing and creating an IEP within the West Virginia Online IEP software.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2; Policy 5500, Chapter 4, Section 3

RECOMMENDATION 2: Provide professional learning related to timelines, procedures, and how to write and finalize IEPs within the West Virginia Online IEP system.

NONCOMPLIANCE 7: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and three had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 7: Develop and Implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 8: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 8: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 9: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 9: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

Eagle Intermediate School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Students with disabilities at Eagle Intermediate School did not meet standard in the English language arts and mathematics indicators for the 2019 school year. Eagle Intermediate School students with disabilities did not meet the annual target for growth in English language arts and mathematics. Students with disabilities partially met standard for the attendance indicator and exceeded standard for the behavior indicator.

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Eagle Intermediate School, teachers indicated in interviews the Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets multiple times a week and is used for assessing if students need special education services. Based on interviews, there is a lack of evidence to indicate a consistent use of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to assist struggling students. The data suggests interventions occur only in Title I classrooms and not in general education classrooms. Benchmark assessment scores from the STAR assessment platform are used to identify struggling students who are receiving support in Title I classrooms or are referred for special education evaluation through the SAT. While Title I services were provided to some students, a clear process for providing instructional interventions pervasively was not observed by the Team.

FINDING 1: The staff did not demonstrate an accurate understanding of MTSS and SAT processes such as guidelines and timelines for referral.

Policy 2419, Chapter 2, Section 3.C

RECOMMENDATION 1: Provide in-depth training and support to address best practices for MTSS and SAT followed by monitoring from school and district administration to assure the processes are being followed.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: The Team determined the school exhibited a very positive culture and climate. Parents indicated they were welcome at the school and explained teachers go out of their way to include students with disabilities in all activities provided at the school. Parent interaction with the school was communicated to be very positive during parent interviews. Overall, communication among teachers was very collaborative.

During interviews, teachers indicated they are not provided sufficient materials and supplies needed to support basic classroom instruction. Teachers reported they are required to spend faculty senate funds available to them prior to requesting special education funds. There were several statements from teachers during interviews that indicated the IEP chair is not always present during IEP meetings and the IEP chair will offer advice regarding the IEP either before or after the meeting. It was also reported teachers chair annual review meetings. Teachers indicated Behavior Intervention Plans

(BIPs) for students are stored in a locked cabinet. Statements indicated many teachers do not have access or copies of students' BIPs and a consistent procedure for monitoring the implementation and evaluation of BIPs was not in place. Additionally, teachers perceived they do not have enough special education teachers or aides to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The Team determined the teacher caseloads are within guidelines and the current staff could be utilized differently to provide a continuum of services, which could include co-teaching. One classroom observed exceeded the 1:8 minimum staffing ratio during three instructional periods.

The Team observed eight buses loaded and leaving the school prior to the afternoon dismissal bell. This indicates some students with disabilities do not receive a full instructional day.

Classroom observations indicated some teachers use a variety of methods to engage students in learning, with one class using parallel teaching with the students. Overall, observations indicated a need for scaffolding or modeling content for students, managing off-task behavior, and tools and strategies related to classroom management and student engagement.

RECOMMENDATION 2: While this did not rise to the level of a finding, the Team determined the staff may benefit from professional learning related to scaffolding content, classroom management, standards-based instruction, and behavior in special education classrooms. Additionally, the Team recommended processes be established to monitor implementation of these strategies.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: IEPs are reviewed and comments are written outside of the IEP meeting by the IEP chair, and at times, neither the IEP chair nor a designee is present for the meetings. Changes are made to the IEP after the meeting without an amendment or meeting to address the changes.
Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Sections 1.D, 2.M, and 3.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: Adhere to Policy 2419 regarding staff requirements for IEP meetings and for implementing, updating, or reviewing an IEP document.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: One classroom exceeded the 1:8 minimum staffing ratio in three instructional periods.
Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Provide appropriate staffing or modify teacher schedules to address the classroom exceeding the ratio.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Eight buses are loaded and leaving the school prior to the end of the instructional day.
Policy 2510, Chapter 7, Section 2d

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Correct the bus or instructional day schedule to ensure all students are receiving the required instructional minutes daily.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) are not readily accessible to general and special education teachers, indicating services regarding behavior are not being provided to the students in all settings.
Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Provide teachers copies of BIPs for all students in their classroom, as well as instruction on implementing and monitoring the components of the BIPs.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

Overview: At the time of the onsite review, there were 179 students with disabilities enrolled at Eagle Intermediate School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 140 (78%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 39 (22%) students were not. Included in the 39, 17 (9.5%) of the students' files did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: Seventeen students with IEPs do not have an assigned case manager.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share supplementary services with general education teachers for students with disabilities at the beginning of the school term. General education teachers review assigned students' IEPs at the beginning of the year using the READ.IEP application in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). Teachers print IEP snapshots to use during the year. Teachers indicated that meetings between special educators and general educators occur at the beginning of the year to discuss student schedules and supplementary services. Teachers shared there is a lack of common planning time between general and special education teachers; however teachers meet informally before, during, and after school. Overall, communication among teachers was very positive. The Team did not observe a clear process for administrators to monitor and document required supplementary services outlined in IEPs. Teachers indicated they are provided written feedback through email from the administration following observations. Interviews with staff indicated there was a lack of consistent support from the county special education office staff.

Parent interviews indicated the special educators communicate on a regular basis with the parents regarding student progress and daily activities.

Additionally, the Team completed service verification on five student IEPs in which all had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. There was no evidence of the documentation for the implementation of supplementary services and/or BIPs as indicated in students' IEPs.

FINDING 2: IEP documents reviewed demonstrated an incomplete understanding of writing and creating an IEP within the West Virginia Online IEP software. Through interviews, teachers indicated they have little or no interaction with county special education staff regarding special education issues including using the online IEP program.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2; Policy 5500, Chapter 4, Section 3

RECOMMENDATION 2: Provide professional learning and follow-up for all educators working in special education classrooms. The professional learning should include topics related to special education timelines and processes, student and parental rights, documentation, and how to write and finalize IEPs within the West Virginia Online IEP system.

NONCOMPLIANCE 7: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and all had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 7: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 8: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 8: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 9: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 9: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

Hedgesville Elementary School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Hedgesville Elementary School is a pre-k through 2 school and does not participate in the statewide summative assessment which begins at Grade 3. Students with disabilities had an attendance rate of 93.3% during the 2018 - 19 term. This is slightly lower than the school's overall attendance rate of 93.9%. Discipline data for students with disabilities at this school were not reported in the accountability index. To date, the school had 50 documented discipline instances in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS).

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Hedgesville Elementary School, there is a functioning Student Assistance Team (SAT) which determines if students should be referred for special education evaluation. Through interviews, the SAT was mentioned frequently but the staff shared differing perceptions on the purpose and function of the SAT. Special education teachers viewed the SAT as a means of referring students to special education with minimal comments addressing interventions prior to referral. However, the principal mentioned an active Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) program in the school and a SAT that provides interventions before referral. The Team observed a disconnect between the perceptions of the teachers and administration on the purpose and function of MTSS and SAT for identifying students who may require special education services.

FINDING 1: While there are regular SAT meetings, the staff did not demonstrate a common understanding of the purpose of a SAT.

Policy 2419, Chapter 2, Section 3.C

RECOMMENDATION 1: Establish clear expectations for the SAT with an emphasis on providing interventions to students prior to referring for special education evaluation.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities.

Overview: The Team noted staff perceived they do not have enough special education teachers to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The staff also reported they do not have enough special education teachers to provide co-teaching experiences to the students. The Team determined the teachers' caseloads are within guidelines and the current staff could be utilized differently to provide a continuum of services, which could include co-teaching.

Several staff members expressed concern with the pre-k special needs class. Teachers indicated in interviews a lack of staff to meet the diverse needs of the students in the class, especially behavioral problems. Staff expressed concerns about managing behavior in the classroom. There were multiple comments regarding behaviors that are severe and teachers not having the resources or expertise to manage these behaviors. However, when asked about Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), staff did not mention the development of these plans or implementation of current plans.

A bus containing students with disabilities arrived after the start of the instructional day.

FINDING 2: The staff demonstrated a lack of knowledge on how BIPs are developed, implemented, or documented.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Review all current BIPs for accuracy. Provide training to all staff on the development and implementation of BIPs.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: The Team discovered one classroom labeled as “Special Needs” near the entrance in public view. Special education classrooms cannot be labeled in a way that identifies them, as it discloses personally identifiable information about students.

Policy 4350, Chapter 4, Section 1.o and Chapter 27

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Remove the label of “Special Needs” and review all classroom entrances in the building to assure they are not labeled in a way that identifies classrooms as special education or students with disabilities.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: One special education bus arrived at the school after the start of the instructional day.

Policy 2419, Chapter 1, Section 2.A.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Adjust bus schedule to ensure students arrive before the start of the instructional day.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

Overview: At the time of the onsite review, there were 111 students with disabilities enrolled at Hedgesville Elementary School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 95 (86%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 16 (14%) students were not. Included in the 16, two of the students’ files did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Two students with IEPs do not have a case manager assigned.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Parents interviewed responded positively when asked about communication of IEP services and progress towards IEP goals. Multiple parents commented they are in constant communication with the school regarding their child's academic progress.

Special education teachers are collaborating with general education teachers regarding supplementary services, but general education teachers are not documenting when these services are provided to students. Also, general education teachers are utilizing the READ.IEP application at the beginning of the year but there was no indication that teachers are continuing to use this application throughout the year. Continual use of the READ.IEP application assists all teachers with awareness of IEPs that are amended or updated throughout the year.

Additionally, the Team completed service verification on six students' IEPs in which five had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

FINDING 3: The school did not demonstrate IEPs are being reviewed throughout the school year by the general education teachers.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 2.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The principal communicates the expectation teachers utilize the READ.IEP application to ensure all staff are knowledgeable of IEPs. Additionally, the principal monitors the use of the READ.IEP application to ensure staff are aware of the current status of IEPs.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Six IEPs were reviewed for service verification and five had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 7: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 7: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

Mountain Ridge Intermediate School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Students with disabilities at Mountain Ridge Intermediate School did not meet standard in the English language arts and mathematics indicators for the 2019 school year. However, students with disabilities partially met standard for academic progress in English language arts. Students with disabilities did not meet standard for the attendance indicator and met standard for the behavior indicator.

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Mountain Ridge Intermediate School, it was reported there is a functioning Student Assistance Team (SAT) process used to provide students with academic, behavioral, and social-emotional interventions before referring students for special education evaluation. The SAT meets every Wednesday to discuss student progress after interventions and following the administration of STAR assessments. Title I teachers assist with providing interventions to students through a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that is in place at the school. There is also an active data review committee to provide information to the SAT for potential referrals of students who are not responding to tiered interventions.

The Team determined there were no findings nor noncompliance for Focus Area 1 at Mountain Ridge Intermediate School.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities.

Overview: Teachers indicated in interviews they were provided the materials and supplies needed to support classroom instruction. However, staff and parents overwhelmingly perceive they do not have enough special education teachers to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. A review of teacher caseloads at Mountain Ridge Intermediate School indicated all caseloads are within the allowable range.

Limited co-teaching opportunities were available to students and most special education instruction was being provided in a self-contained setting based on exceptionality. This configuration prevented a full continuum of services to be provided to students with disabilities. Additionally, classroom aides were observed in a behavioral disorder classroom with fewer than three students and were on standby to assist with disruptions in the general education classroom. Best practices suggest utilizing instructional aides as a preventive measure to increase efficiency and meet the needs of more than a few students.

RECOMMENDATION 1: While this did not rise to the level of a finding, it was observed instructional aides are being underutilized at providing preventative behavior assistance to students with

disabilities. The Team recommended reviewing current instructional aides' schedules to determine how they can be utilized in general education classrooms to prevent negative behaviors for students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION 2: While this did not rise to the level of a finding, the team determined student need should be taken into consideration when determining staffing and scheduling options.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: A review of staffing and student need be conducted to develop a plan to provide a continuum of services for students with disabilities.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

Overview: It was reported there is open communication between general education teachers and special education teachers regarding student progress. Discussion of student data happens weekly to provide teachers information which leads to instructional changes. These changes are tracked and discussed at the data meetings.

At the time of the onsite review, there were 132 students with disabilities enrolled at Mountain Ridge Intermediate School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 118 (89%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 14 (11%) students were not. Included in the 14, seven of the students' files did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: Seven students with IEPs do not have a case manager assigned.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share what supplementary services are provided to students with disabilities with general education teachers with a checklist found in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). Teachers talk or meet weekly to ensure supplementary services are being provided. However, there was no evidence of a process in place for administration to monitor if supplementary services are being provided. General education teachers use the READ.IEP application to verify they have read current IEPs and administration monitors teachers' completion electronically. Teachers who serve students with Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) have input into their development and full access to the completed plan.

It was reported, orientation and mobility (OM) and occupational therapy (OT) services were not being provided to students. The Team was unable to obtain schedules for related service providers to confirm service delivery.

Additionally, the Team completed service verification on five students' IEPs in which all had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the Team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and four had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: It was reported, orientation and mobility and occupational therapy services were not being provided to students. The Team was unable to obtain schedules for related service providers to confirm service delivery.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: A review of all related service providers schedules be conducted to verify student services.

Opequon Elementary School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Opequon Elementary School is a pre-k through Grade 2 school and does not participate in the statewide summative assessment which begins at Grade 3. Students with disabilities had an attendance rate of 92.7% during the 2018- 19 term. This is slightly lower than the school's overall attendance rate of 93.74%. Discipline data for students with disabilities at this school was not reported in the accountability index. To date, the school had 24 documented discipline instances in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS).

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Opequon Elementary School, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets every other week. They review STAR reading and math data, work samples, behavior charts, and take parent input into consideration for decisions regarding student supports. Parents reported they are included in SAT meetings and their input regarding their child is encouraged and valued. In addition to SAT meetings, the school has team meetings on Tuesdays to discuss data to set up intervention groups using formative assessments and STAR data. Evidence indicated a deliberate and planned collaboration between educators in general, special, and Title I classrooms. A Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is provided and supported by regular education teachers and Title I teachers, prior to students being identified for special education services.

The Team determined there were no findings nor noncompliance for Focus Area 1 at Opequon Elementary School.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: During interviews, teachers indicated they were provided the materials and supplies needed to support classroom instruction. However, it was reported there is a lack of support and timely communication from the central office special education staff. Additionally, teachers perceived they do not have enough special education teachers to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The Team determined the teacher caseloads are within guidelines and the current staff could be utilized differently to provide a continuum of services.

Through classroom observations, the Team noted special education teachers and instructional aides had positive interactions with students. The teachers and instructional aides utilized a variety of techniques, including technology, to facilitate communication for students. During instructional delivery, feedback to students was timely and pervasively delivered with kindness to students. The professional relationship between the special education teachers and instructional aides demonstrates a team approach and allowed students to have their individual needs met when they became anxious or needed to leave the classroom to go to a calming area. Well-established classroom routines and schoolwide expectations support a positive classroom environment needed for instruction. The Team did not observe co-teaching arrangements in classrooms.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: The Team determined that a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

At the time of the onsite review, there were 63 students with disabilities enrolled at Opequon Elementary School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 51 (81%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 12 (19%) of the students were not. Included in the 12, six did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: Six students with IEPs do not have a case manager assigned.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Assign a case manager to all students with an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share supplementary services with general education teachers for students with disabilities at the beginning of the school term. General education teachers review assigned students' IEPs at the beginning of the year using the READ.IEP application in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). Teachers indicated they meet with special educators, on a regular basis, to discuss student progress and supplemental services provided by the general education teachers. Teachers review IEPs on a weekly basis and goal monitoring sheets and supplemental checklists are updated on a weekly basis. General education teachers indicated they are implementing, but not documenting, supplementary services for students with disabilities. Teachers indicated they are provided written feedback via email from the administration following walkthrough observations. Parents and teachers reported all IEP meetings are chaired by either the principal or assistant principal who seek input from all members of the IEP team, especially general educators and parents.

Additionally, the team completed service verification on five students' IEPs in which four had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

FINDING 1: One teacher has a schedule showing English language arts and mathematics being taught at the same time.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Correct the master schedule to allow for adequate time for both English language arts and mathematics.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and four had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

Potomack Intermediate School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Students with disabilities at Potomack Intermediate School did not meet standard in the English language arts and mathematics indicators for the 2019 school year. Additionally, students with disabilities did not meet the annual target for growth in English language arts and mathematics for the 2019 school year. Students with disabilities partially met standard for the attendance indicator and met standard for the behavior indicator.

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Potomack Intermediate School, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) is used primarily to determine if students need referred for special education evaluation. During interviews, staff discussed using data from benchmark assessments, behavioral observations, and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to refer students to SAT and determine if an evaluation was necessary. However, from staff and parent interviews, there appeared to be instances when parents were encouraged by school personnel to write a letter to request an evaluation for their child thus potentially circumventing the MTSS and SAT process. While Title I services were provided, a clear process for providing instructional interventions was not observed by the Team.

FINDING 1: The staff did not demonstrate an accurate understanding of the MTSS and SAT processes, such as guidelines and timelines for the MTSS process and SAT referral. At times, school personnel encouraged parents to write a letter to request an evaluation for special education instead of using the MTSS process.

Policy 2419, Chapter 2, Section 3.C

RECOMMENDATION 1: Provide in-depth training and support for teachers and administrators focusing on best practices for MTSS and SAT.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: Many of the special education teachers, especially those in the autism classrooms, are either not certified in special education, long-term substitutes, and/or have less than five years teaching experience. Teachers indicated in interviews appropriate training or resources are not provided to long-term substitutes in areas such as classroom management and instruction of students with disabilities, especially autism. Teachers also reported a lack of support and communication from county special education staff. Additionally, teachers overwhelmingly perceive there are not enough special education teachers to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The Team determined the teacher caseloads are within guidelines, however they are near maximum capacity including instructional aides. The current staff could be utilized differently to provide a continuum of services. Potomack Intermediate School only provides co-teaching services for gifted students.

In some classrooms, it was observed that teachers use a variety of methods to engage students in learning. The Team also observed instances of students arriving late or leaving early from special education classrooms. While some classrooms were engaging, the Team reported several instances of students off task or disengaged from instruction. The Team noted teachers in some classrooms did not use strategies to address student behaviors or procedures to redirect students to reengage with the task.

FINDING 2: Some teachers assigned to special education classrooms lack the appropriate certification or training in classroom management and instruction of students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.A; Policy 5500, Chapter 4, Section 3

RECOMMENDATION 2: Ensure mentoring programs are in place and fully functional for new teachers and long-term substitutes. Provide specialized training in classroom management and instruction with follow-up for teachers and long-term substitutes in special education classrooms to ensure students are receiving the appropriate services related to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and students' IEPs.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: It was observed and reported IEPs are not being finalized in a timely manner and IEPs are sometimes modified after the meeting without an amendment.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.M.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: At the end of IEP team meetings, a copy of the agreed upon IEP must be provided to the parent including the Prior Written Notice (PWN) page. To make changes to the student IEP after the IEP team meeting, documentation of all agreed upon IEP changes must be included on the IEP amendment form and a copy must be provided to the parents.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

At the time of the onsite review, there were 189 students with disabilities enrolled at Potomack Intermediate School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 163 (86%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 26 (14%) students were not. Included in the 26, six of the students' files did not have a case manager listed.

The Team noted some anomalies in students' time at school and how they were coded in the attendance system, if they left early due to behavioral issues. A classroom with two teachers has a per-period student total over the allowable limit based on observations by the Team. The Team did not observe active Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) for students who were consistently noncompliant in classes during the school day.

FINDING 3: Through observations and interviews, there does not appear to be Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) or Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) for students who repeatedly misbehave in the classroom.

Policy 2419, Chapter 7, Section 2

RECOMMENDATION 3: Use the MTSS process, SAT, and IEP annual reviews to address students' behavioral emotional needs and use BIPs or FBAs, if needed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Six students with IEPs do not have an assigned case manager.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Two teachers share one classroom while providing services to two caseloads of students and the total number of students are over the per-period limit as indicated through interviews and classroom observations.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Establish classroom schedules that follow the maximum number of students per instructional period as set forth in Policy 2419, Chapter 6 Section 4 Part B.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share supplementary services with general education teachers for students with disabilities at the beginning of the school term. General education teachers review assigned students' IEPs at the beginning of the year using the READ.IEP application in West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). Teachers print out IEP snapshots to use during the year. Teachers indicated meetings between special educators and general educators occur at the beginning of the year to discuss student schedules and supplementary services. Teachers indicated a lack of common planning times between general and special education teachers. A clear process for the administration to monitor and/or document that teachers were providing the required modifications and accommodations outlined in IEPs was not observed. Teachers indicated they are provided written feedback via email from the administration following walkthrough observations.

Parents indicated in interviews the special educators communicate on a regular basis with parents regarding student progress and daily activities.

Additionally, the Team completed service verification on six students' IEPs, in which four had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

FINDING 4: IEP documents reviewed demonstrated incomplete understanding of writing and creating an IEP within the West Virginia Online IEP software. Through interviews, teachers indicated they have little or no interaction with county special education staff regarding special education issues, including using the online IEP program.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2; Policy 5500, Chapter 4, Section 3

RECOMMENDATION 4: Provide professional learning and follow-up for all educators working in special education classrooms, including those hired as long-term substitutes. The professional learning should include topics related to special education timelines and processes, student and parental rights, and how to write and finalize IEPs within the West Virginia Online IEP system.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Six IEPs were reviewed for service verification and four had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 6: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 6: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 7: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 7: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

NONCOMPLIANCE 8: The practice of contacting parent(s) to sign out their children, due to behavior, and recording the incident as a sign out in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) as opposed to a partial-day suspension.

Policy 2419, Chapter 7

CORRECTIVE ACTION 8: If a student needs to leave school premises earlier than scheduled due to behavior, the incident(s) are to be recorded in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) as a suspension and not a parent sign out.

Tuscarora Elementary School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Tuscarora Elementary School is a pre-k through Grade 2 school and does not participate in the statewide summative assessment which begins at Grade 3. Students with disabilities had an attendance rate of 92.2% during the 2018 – 19 school term. This is slightly lower than the school's overall attendance rate of 92.9%. Discipline data for students with disabilities at this school was not reported in the accountability index. To date, the school had 23 documented discipline instances in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS).

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: At Tuscarora Elementary School, the Student Assistance Team (SAT) meets on Wednesdays at least once a month. They review STAR reading and math data, work samples, behavior charts, and take parent input into consideration for decisions regarding student supports. Three times a year, the school's Data Review Committee meets to analyze STAR data and track students' progress. Much of the collaboration between Title I, general, and special educators is informal and often occurs after school. A tiered system of support is provided and supported by regular education teachers and Title I teachers, prior to students being identified for special education services.

The Team determined there were no findings nor noncompliance for Focus Area 1 at Tuscarora Elementary School.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: During interviews, teachers indicated they were provided the materials and supplies needed to support classroom instruction. At IEP meetings, parents are not always provided a completed IEP at the conclusion of the meeting. Changes and updates are made to IEPs after the meeting and IEPs must receive approval from a county coordinator before teachers may finalize IEPs. It was reported to the Team approval from the county coordinator can take as long as two weeks. Additionally, teachers perceived they do not have enough special education teachers or aides to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The Team determined the teacher caseloads are within guidelines. Tuscarora Elementary School provides co-teaching services in several classrooms.

While some classrooms observed had consistent practices to promote student learning, engagement, and behavior management, other classrooms observed had multiple instances of students not participating in classroom activities and lacked consistent procedures to reengage the students in the learning.

RECOMMENDATION 1: While this did not rise to the level of a finding, teachers would benefit from professional learning related to establishing routines, managing students with individualized needs, and innovative uses of classroom space (flexible seating, stations etc.).

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: It was observed and reported IEPs are not being finalized in a timely manner and IEPs are sometimes modified after the meeting without an amendment.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.M

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: At the end of the IEP team meetings, Prior Written Notice (PWN) and a copy of the IEP must be provided to the parent. To make changes to the student IEP after the IEP team meeting, documentation of all agreed-upon IEP changes must be included on the IEP amendment form and a copy must be provided to the parents.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

Overview: At the time of the onsite review, there were 112 students with disabilities enrolled at Tuscarora Elementary School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 97 (87%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining 15 (13%) students were not. Included in the 15, one student file did not have a case manager listed.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: A student with an IEP does not have a case manager assigned.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 4.B

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: Assign a case manager to all students who have an IEP.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: Special education teachers share supplementary services with general education teachers for students with disabilities at the beginning of the school term. General education teachers review assigned students' IEPs at the beginning of the year using the READ.IEP application in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). General education teachers indicated they are implementing, but not documenting, supplementary services for students with disabilities. The day prior to the onsite visit, teachers began using the supplemental list from students' IEP to document and ensure supplementary services are properly implemented. Prior to that date, teachers were not documenting. Teachers indicated they are provided written feedback via email from the administration following walkthrough observations. Parents and teachers reported all IEP meetings are chaired by either the principal or county special education coordinator who seek input from all members of the IEP team, including general educators and parents.

Additionally, the team completed service verification on five students' IEPs in which three had at least one inaccuracy in service minute delivery. Therefore, the team could not verify services are provided to students with disabilities accurately across all settings.

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and all had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

NONCOMPLIANCE 4: Due to the lack of documentation, the school did not demonstrate the ability to verify student special education services.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6

CORRECTIVE ACTION 4: Review all special education services being provided to students for accuracy.

NONCOMPLIANCE 5: Documentation of the implementation of supplementary services for students as listed in IEP documents was not observed at the school.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 5: Provide training to all general and special education staff regarding the documentation of supplementary services provided to students.

Valley View Elementary School

The areas denoted as requiring improvement were determined based on observations, written evidence, and consistency of comments describing conditions and practices at the school through the interview process.

WV Balanced Scorecard: Valley View Elementary School is a pre-k through Grade 2 school and does not participate in the statewide summative assessment which begins at Grade 3. Students with disabilities had an attendance rate of 94.0% during the 2018- 19 term. This is slightly lower than the school's overall attendance rate of 94.4%. Discipline data for students with disabilities at this school was not reported in the accountability index. To date, the school had 47 documented discipline instances in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS).

Focus Area 1: Evaluation and identification of students who may require special education services

Overview: The Team observed inconsistencies regarding identifying students who may require special education services. While the principal described a clear multi-tiered approach, which included a Student Assistance Team (SAT), during interviews, teachers were inconsistent in describing the process used to identify students who may need services. While some staff described a system that entailed utilizing data points and providing interventions over time, others described a process that moves more quickly with observations being made by special education teachers, followed with recommendations from the SAT regarding testing for placement in a special education program within a month.

FINDING 1: A SAT process involving a multi-tiered approach was not pervasively present at the school.
Policy 2419, Chapter 2, Section 3.C

RECOMMENDATION 1: Administration ensure all staff members are utilizing a multi-tiered approach that includes providing interventions to students prior to testing students for special education services.

Focus Area 2: Allocation of resources to equitably evaluate and provide services, accommodations, and instruction for students with disabilities

Overview: Teachers indicated in interviews Valley View Elementary School is a supportive school for both students and teachers. Teachers shared the principal works to provide them with the resources needed to teach and support students. Trauma courses have been provided by the county. The staff was complimentary of this professional development and the ways in which it has impacted their ability to address the needs of students who have experienced trauma.

Through classroom observations, the Team noted special education teachers were actively engaged with students and instructional time was used efficiently to address the WV College- and Career-Readiness Standards. Additionally, the Team observed integrated writing instruction with the use of technology. Positive reinforcement and appropriate feedback with one-on-one support was provided to students as needed. However, a collaborative co-teaching model was not functioning at the school. During interviews, school staff indicated they did not have adequate staff to provide co-teaching.

During interviews, special education teachers described a need for additional math professional development and resources for math interventions.

RECOMMENDATION 2: While this did not rise to the level of a finding, the Team recommended the special education central office staff investigate to determine if special education teachers are receiving needed support in mathematics professional learning and the adequate teaching materials to provide instruction to students.

NONCOMPLIANCE 1: It was observed and reported that IEPs are not being finalized in a timely manner and IEPs are sometimes modified after the IEP meeting without an amendment.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.M.

CORRECTIVE ACTION 1: At the end of the IEP team meetings, Prior Written Notice (PWN) and a copy of the IEP must be provided to the parent. To make changes to the student IEP after the IEP team meeting, documentation of all agreed upon IEP changes must be included on the IEP Amendment Form and a copy must be provided to the parents.

NONCOMPLIANCE 2: The Team determined a continuum of services was not available for students with disabilities.

Policy 2419, Chapter 6, Section 3

CORRECTIVE ACTION 2: A continuum of services must be provided to students, which may include co-teaching.

Focus Area 3: High-quality staff provide services to students with disabilities across all settings and systems are in place to assure staff are certified, trained, and monitored

Overview: At the time of the onsite review, there were 80 students with disabilities enrolled at Valley View Elementary School and all files were reviewed for correct case management providers. Of those students, 79 (99%) were being case managed by an appropriately credentialed education professional. The remaining student was not.

The Team determined there were no findings nor noncompliance for Focus Area 3 at Valley View Elementary School.

Focus Area 4: Ongoing monitoring processes for system accountability in delivery of special education services

Overview: During interviews, the school staff indicated general education and special education teachers collaborate regularly and utilize data to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. The school offers pullout and self-contained services for students with disabilities.

To assist ongoing monitoring, the county provides time every other month for data teams to meet and the school participates in strategic planning at the end of each day for 15 minutes with every team meeting once a week. Additionally, grade level meetings take place after the instructional day to discuss at-risk students. Special education teachers meet with grade level teams to discuss data and goals which results in changes to intervention groups.

The administration conducts both formal and informal evaluations. The informal walkthroughs are followed with specific verbal feedback and written feedback through emails. Teachers either have copies of students' IEPs or have become familiar with them by reading them on the READ. IEP application in the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS). It was also reported the general education teachers document instructional and behavioral supports with a clipboard, notebook, supplemental checklist, or frequency chart provided by special educators. The assistant principal also monitors to assure everyone has read the IEPs

NONCOMPLIANCE 3: Five IEPs were reviewed for service verification and all had at least one incorrect service.

Policy 2419, Chapter 5, Section 2.G

CORRECTIVE ACTION 3: Develop and implement a process for service verification at the school. All IEPs will be reviewed utilizing this process to ensure students receive accurate services.

Notes

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West Virginia Superintendent of Schools