

# *State of the Schools Report*

**Jefferson County Schools  
West Virginia**

**2004**

**Dr. Steven Nichols  
Superintendent**

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## **Introduction**

The 2004-2005 school year dawns with the school system still experiencing growth at all grade levels. As the community continues to grow through new development, the pressures on the schools to maintain a strong instructional program with overcrowded conditions and reduced funding grow more difficult. While the county's citizens have been supportive through the passage of a 100% Excess Levy and approval of \$19 million in school construction bonds, the operating budget is strained to its limit.

The demands of No Child Left Behind and increased instructional commitments have placed additional burdens on the budget without a collateral increase in state funding. With enrollment increasing at approximately 3% per year on average, under current state funding guidelines, financial support for these students is not provided until the state funding cycle of the next year. School funding is always a year behind enrollment figures!

But even in these difficult financial times, the Jefferson County Schools continue to excel. With an increasingly diverse student population, the school system is finding an increase in the college go-rate, increased participation in honors classes, low drop out rate, and a higher than state average graduation rate. At the elementary levels, reading and writing skills along with math continue to improve. Citizens of Jefferson County have much to be proud of in its school system.

With a staff "turnover" rate at about 10% annually (the average turnover rate for the Washington metro area), the need for recruiting and retaining quality teachers is critical. There are presently nine elementary schools, three middle schools, one ninth grade building, one ten through twelve high school, and an alternative education facility (serving secondary students). It should be noted that within this report, all assessments and program data are for the most recent year possible. In this report, the reader will be provided with data and information that will help him/her better understand the Jefferson County Schools (JCS).

Additional questions about schools may be found on the JCS website at [www.jeffschools.net](http://www.jeffschools.net), by contacting the local school, or contacting the Board of Education (BOE) Office at 725-9741.

**Jefferson County Board of Education**

Dr. Lori Stilley, President  
Delores Milstead, Vice President  
Cheryl Huff  
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Alan Sturm

## **Leadership Team**

The opening of the 2004-2005 school year finds the first realignment of Central Office duties in a number of years. To administer the school system more efficiently, the Superintendent has created the Leadership Team comprised of the Superintendent, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Operations, Treasurer, Director of Pupil Services, Coordinator of Maintenance and Facilities Planning, and Coordinator of Construction. The team works collaboratively in addressing the day-to-day issues facing the school system, but also evaluates programs and engages in long term strategic planning. This realignment of the Central Office has permitted the division of the school system into a curriculum and instruction dimension and an operations dimension. This division promises better response to issues by providing clarity as to roles and the chain of authority within the system. The Leadership Team meets weekly to conduct its discussions and a broader meeting with all Central Office program managers is held monthly.

## **Associate Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction**

The Associate Superintendent is the second in command of the school system and serves as the Acting Superintendent in his absence. The Associate Superintendent's role primarily focuses on curriculum and instructional issues with a direct link to the schools via the principal. A close working relationship with the local school leadership provides support to the school and permits better data collection and analysis. As a part of this role, the Associate Superintendent will supervise data collection and analysis related to instructional issues and serve as the chair of the county support team in regard to the standards of No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The Associate Superintendent plays a critical role in providing advice and input directly to the Superintendent in addressing the wide range of issues facing the school system. Simply put, the Associate Superintendent serves primarily the instructional "side" of the school system, but has managerial authority as second in command for all operations and programs.

## **Curriculum and Instruction**

The Curriculum and Instruction Department (C&I) is charged with the day-to-day support of the classroom and the classroom teacher. This department houses a Coordinator for Elementary Instruction, a Coordinator for Middle School Instruction, and a Coordinator for Secondary Instruction. Issues related to curriculum design and implementation, assessment (shared in part with Pupil Services), textbooks, methodology and pedagogy, mentoring, and other related programs are housed here. The C&I staff works cooperatively with the local schools to provide support and leadership. Analysis of standardized testing programs is an essential part of the work of C&I. C&I works directly with the Superintendent and County Support Team in compliance issues related

to NCLB. Work with NCLB is closely coordinated with the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) as required by federal statute. In an examination of testing data, JCS students do as well as or better than their peers. As the requirements of NCLB have, and will continue to increase, C&I will be working with the local school staff in the development and implementation of Content Standards and Objectives methodology, curriculum mapping, vertical and horizontal instructional articulation, and other means whereby JCS students will be provided the continuation of the highest level of instructional excellence possible. Following are various assessment data on JCS students:

SAT Test Results (2004)

JCS Math	504	JCS Verbal	518
National Math	518	National Verbal	508

The combined SAT score for JHS (1022) is 10% higher than the 2003 results.

ACT Test Results (2003)

JCS Combined Score	20.9
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Advanced Placement Test Results (AP 2003)

JCS Percentage receiving a 3 or higher: 73.3 of those who took the exams.

WESTEST (No Child Left Behind)

JCS had 7 of 13 schools achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) from the most recent administration of the WESTEST as required by the federally mandated No Child Left Behind. AYP is the statistical gauge of assessment factors used to determine a school's accreditation status. Of the six schools not making AYP, this was the second consecutive year for five. No Child Left Behind regulations require that any child in a Title I school that does not achieve AYP may transfer to a "School of Choice." Since all JCS Title I schools did meet AYP, this requirement was not involved.

Of the six schools not making AYP as a total school (BRES, WDES, CTMS, HFMS, SMS, and JHS), in reading and math as a total school; however the federal regulations require AYP be met in all subsets as well. Since these schools did meet AYP in one or more subset they were listed as not making AYP.

The following subsets (where AYP was not met) were issues for the identified schools:

BRES	math- disabled students	reading- disabled students
WDES	math- disabled students	reading- disabled students and Low socio-economic students
CTMS	math- disabled students	reading- disabled students and Low socio-economic students
HFMS	math- disabled students	reading- disabled students Low socio-economic students in both math and reading
SMS	math- disabled students	reading- disabled students
JHS	math- disabled students	reading- disabled students Low socio-economic students in both areas

Obviously, additional effort must be expended to identify and address effectively the deficiencies to our special education (disabled students) population. The Office of Pupil Services, working with special education staff and principals, is implementing various strategies to assist these students not only with enhanced skills, but an increased likelihood of succeeding on the WESTEST.

To assist teachers in improving instruction and hence to support identified students as well as the general population, JCS has formed the County Support Team. The County Support Team has representatives from all areas of the school system as it works to address issues within the WESTEST program. The county team meets four times a year with West Virginia Department of Education staff in Charleston for information and training updates. As required by No Child Left Behind, the county team is now working on the five-year strategic plan that will replace the Unified School Improvement Plan and the Unified County School Improvement Plan. The plan has pre-test benchmarks to insure compliance and to maximize student achievement.

Some the strategies already in place for the upcoming year include:

- Curriculum mapping both horizontal and vertical
- On-Line Student Assessment (OSAS) Program (a JCS developed product)
- Extensive test data analysis through TetraData at all grade levels
- Transitional Teams formed with feeder schools to address deficiencies
- Pilot program for partial immersion of ESL students in language studies
- Administrative training for the Marzano strategies for classroom instruction
- Administrative training for Classroom Walkthroughs to monitor instruction
- Specialized staff development for Special Education teachers
- School level tutoring and extended day for remediation
- Reading Recovery Program shared with all regular education teachers
- JHS9 extended math program (modified block) for remediation
- Collaborative regular education and special education classes
- Skill Support at middle school level
- Faculty training for state's "I Know" website for WESTEST preparation
- Accelerated Reader program at elementary and middle school levels



TestMate Clarity is a state incentive for additional data analysis with all principals being trained.

The On-Line Student Assessment (OSAS) program is a comprehensive curriculum and instructional tool for teachers. Utilizing an on-line assessment module, the system collects and analyzes student performance data from which curricular decisions can be made. This program verifies student progress with the aligned state content standards and objectives and provides data for adjustments in the child's program.

Within the OSAS program, teachers and administrators can utilize the curriculum map guide to provide insight on class averages, lesson sequencing, and material references. Once a concept has been addressed in class, the immediate OSAS assessment allows for feedback to the student and teacher.

Reporting data is a key feature of the OSAS program designed to permit rapid analysis and redevelopment of curricular units. Included are reteaching ideas for the teacher to use with the hesitant learner. The OSAS program also allows for real-life preparation for the WESTEST experience.

With OSAS, Special Education teachers can upload student information to permit easier tracking of student progress. Individual Educational Plans (IEP) can be developed with the OSAS program. The automation that OSAS provides to all teachers (currently 25 reports) will greatly enhance the ability to track student achievement and remediate where necessary. In addition, the school principal can access over 20 reports to allow for a school-wide review of curriculum and progress. This same ability to review data and to support decision-making is available at the Central Office for the C&I staff.

#### Honors and Advanced Placement Programs

The Honors Program instituted at the middle school level in the 2003-2004 school year has been a great success. The opportunity to enroll in these classes has been directly tied to the student's ability and likelihood of success. In the appendix section, a chart has been provided that provides data as to current enrollment. With school year 2002-2003 serving as the pilot year of the program, the current school year will be the evaluation year in which data, materials, and curricular design will be examined to refine the program and make it more responsive to the advanced learner.

Advanced Placement classes at JHS continue to show promise. These demanding classes are geared toward the college bound student. Current enrollment:

European History	22
World History	24
Psychology	17
US History	24
English Literature	47
Calculus	24
Studio Art	19
Physics	11

### Programs of Note

At each level within the school system, there are several “Programs of Note” or those programs designed and implemented to serve a very special instructional challenge. In developing Programs of Note, C&I staff, building principals, and WVDE staff are involved in identifying JCS teachers, administrators, and service personnel who are especially qualified to lead the county effort. Great care is taken to utilize JCS “experts” wherever possible to not only enhance the program, but also allow the system to recognize the hard work and expertise of its own employees. On occasion, outside consultants and experts are used, but the focus of JCS efforts is “Teacher-Training-Teacher” with the results thus far being highly favorable. Following are programs of note from across the school system:

#### Elementary Programs of Note

The following programs have been initiated:

- As a part of the JCS Pre-school Collaborative Plan, a partnership with a private childcare facility and staff to create a certified teacher for 2005-2006 as required by No Child Left Behind
- A Primary 1 (P-1) program in all schools for the child not ready for first grade
- Formalized Reading Recovery program in all Title I schools
- Assessment Teams are now working (in conjunction with the system wide Grading Task Force on Assessment) to develop a more comprehensive P1 through grade 5 report card.
- Creation of an active lending library for elementary counselors in the area of Character Education
- Extended Day programs in place in all schools (January 4, 2005- April 4, 2005) to prepare for WESTEST administration for at-risk students

### Middle School Programs of Note

The following programs have been initiated:

- Live TV news broadcast in conjunction with TV19 involving 12 students as participants. Last year, this activity received national attention through a magazine article.
- Project Wisdom is an instructional, multi-media program that involves students in the pillars of Character Counts education.
- 37 students from 12 countries are involved in a more intensive, immersion language program as a part of the ESL program.
- Working with Shepherd University in the operation of the Professional Development School initiative, potential student teachers spend time at the school in various roles prior to student teaching so that once assigned as a student teacher energy is focused on instruction rather than trying to “learn the ropes” at that time.
- Students with reading disabilities are paired with fluent readers during the Accelerated Reading program to foster better skill development on a peer level.
- Working with FOCUS (a community-based drug free advocacy group), students with anger issues receive assistance.
- Career Day helps students focus on learning and skills needed for certain professions of interest.
- The Eastern Panhandle Middle School Academy sponsored by a grant from the West Virginia University School of Dentistry is designed to mentor minority, under-represented, first generation college-bound students with academic enrichment, service projects, and field trips. The goal is to help these students identify a possible career in the science field.
- Project Excel and Aim High are community-based programs to assist students with academic weaknesses (tutoring)
- Grading Task Force is now meeting to evaluate the report card issued at this level as well as other related topics.

## High School Programs of Note

The following programs have been initiated:

- JAFROTC now in its third year enjoys unqualified success.
- Poor math performance will find students at grade 9 receiving an additional period of math instruction daily for remediation in a modified block format.
- New programs such as Server+ and Net+ allow students to become certified in computer repair before leaving high school.
- Graphic design, using computer technology for the principles of design and layout, has become very popular.
- The EDGE program allows students to enter the community college program with credits earned in high school. Last year 80 students were a part of this program and earned appropriate college credit.

## **Pupil Services**

Pupil Services is primarily concerned with issues related to exceptional students as either special education or gifted. In this department, direct support is provided to the schools to develop, implement, and evaluate all Individual Educational Plans (IEP) and 504 plans as required by federal regulations. The Director of Pupil Services provides leadership for this department. In addition, Pupil Services is also a key component of the state-mandated County Support Team that is charged with monitoring the county assessment program in support of the NCLB legislation. In school year 2003-2004, 17.4% of all JCS students were served by Special Education as compared to the WV average of 19.5%.

Recruiting teachers for this demanding field is increasingly difficult. Presently, 31.8% of JCS Special education teachers are on a permit basis, while the state average is 21%. The JCS rate is reflective of other counties in the Eastern Panhandle and supports the ongoing initiative to identify and train more individuals to teach in a special education environment. Preschool special needs classes are very near capacity with student numbers in the Learning Disabled category continuing to rise. 2003-2004 WESTEST results indicate a serious weakness in JCS (and state wide) in the demonstrated ability of special needs students on standardized tests. Anecdotal evidence provided by parents of special education students reflects a high level of satisfaction with the services offered. An indicator of the overall success is the low number of Due Process complaints. Due Process Hearings, where parental complaints made to the state regarding a special education issue, fell to zero in 2003-2004 for all JCS. In addition, the monitoring of the program by the WV Department of Education indicates satisfactory compliance.

## Enrollment in Special Education programs (2004)

Autism	18
Behavior Disorder	65
Speech/ Language	414
Gifted	99
Exceptionally Gifted	3
Deaf	3
Specific Learning Disability	540
Mildly Mentally Retarded	108
Moderately Mentally Impaired	17
Severely Mentally Impaired	5
Profoundly Mentally Impaired	3
Other Health Impaired (ADHD)	95
Orthopedically Impaired	5
Preschool Special Needs	32
Blind	3
Traumatic Brain Injury	2

### **Attendance**

The Attendance Office maintains the records of student attendance as it relates to school funding and various state and federal requirements. With the state repeal of all attendance requirements for graduation in 2002, it has been noted that the system's attendance, while still good, is not as strong as it once was. JCS did formally object to the West Virginia State Board of Education when public comment was solicited regarding proposals to eliminate attendance requirements. JCS held, and still maintains, that young people may well need the motivation some attendance requirements provided to be successful. The attendance rate information appears in the body of this report by school. Leadership in this operation is provided by the Director of Attendance.

### **Vocational, Adult, and Community Education**

The vocational program strives to provide learning opportunities for those students who have elected skill preparation in conjunction with college prep programs or in place of college prep programs. While there are a number of college-prep students in vocational programs, the primary emphasis remains the skills oriented student. This program also serves the larger community through an ever-expanding adult and community education program.

Recently, a \$20,000 program modernization grant was received that will allow for the installation of a meat processing lab at JHS. In addition, a nontraditional education grant was received that will support activities within the confines of the work-based learning program.

Students in the vocational area continue to do very well. In business education, 45 students passed the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) exam. In Family and Consumer Science, six students placed first in state competition, while in Business Education six students placed in the top three state competitions. In the on-going effort to involve teachers in real-world training experiences, 10 teachers participated in the Business-Teacher Internship program during the summer.

Coordinated through the local school, the JCS –Business Partners program is highly successful and supervised by the Vocational Education Department. Business partners are a vital part of the school-business-community relationship that continues to grow. JCS now has over 100 business partners serving all schools. From this group, 15 partners participated in the Scholarship Award Program and presented a JHS graduate with a \$1,000 scholarship.

Within the operation of Vocational Education Office, JCS houses the Adult and Community Education (ACE) program and the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. In the ACE program, JCS offers three full session and one summer mini-session each year. Each full session offers about 85 classes per session. A total of 277 adult classes were offered last year with over 2,000 community participants. College credit is offered for many of the computer, business, and occupational classes through the Community and Technical College at Shepherd University. In addition, the JCS real estate program has the highest pass rate of any similar course in West Virginia. In the ABE program, 87 adults enrolled in the GED program. Another 190 adults were involved in other basic literacy programs. 91 persons took the GED exam with 62 passing. This pass rate of 68% was far above the Federal Core Indicator rate of 53%.

JCS does participate in programs offered by the Rumsey Technical Center located in Berkeley County. This facility offers vocational programs that lead to job skills and/or job enhancement. Recently, the Rumsey Center began to offer a full instructional day to JCS students where they would spend all day at Rumsey receiving their regular core education plus courses designed for career certification/ skill development. Presently, there are 79 JCS students enrolled in the more than fifteen vocational offerings. Of this 79, 11% attend Rumsey full time, receiving their regular core education plus job skill training.

### **Specialized Instructional Programs**

Those programs outside the traditional school program will be found here. English as a Second Language (ESL), Title I and associated federal programs, Reading Recovery, and other precisely prescribed support programs reach out to students with very special needs.

To be considered as a specialized instructional program, an initiative must be able to provide direct service to a student that will impact positively on the overall learning situation. Many of these programs are supported in part by state and federal grants and are monitored by each for compliance. JCS has consistently maintained the highest certification levels when the programs are reviewed by the fund-granting agency.

### Title I

Title I continues to offer the pre-kindergarten program at North Jefferson Elementary School and Ranson Elementary School and the Reading Recovery program to first graders in all Title I schools.

This school year, the former Title I Teacher Leader position has been changed to a Literacy Coach serving all three elementary Title I schools. This coach works closely with teachers new to Title I programs providing staff development and shared expertise. Test data evaluation and recommendations on the remediation of areas of weakness are additional services provided by the coach.

Title I pre-K teachers will be involved in on-going training with the RESA VIII Head Start program during the 2004-2005 school year. High Scope (a specialized reading program) and Reading Recovery are key elements in this training. In addition, Math Lab and "Soar to Success" (additional remedial support opportunities) will remain in place due to their high success rate.

### Title III (English as a Second Language- ESL)

During 2003-2004, the ESL program served 187 students. In the current year, that number has risen to 228. By adding 1 ½ teachers in the current year, the program now offers services at the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten levels for the first time. Elementary students receive 30 minutes per day in specialized instruction. Our students speak 13 languages with Spanish being the largest percentage at 77%, with Russian at 8%, and Farsi and Urdu at 6%. The largest school-based ESL population is CTMS with 47 students. It is important to note that ESL students may be found in all schools, and that segment of the student population continues to rise rapidly.

At the CTMS, ESL students are placed with a special ESL teacher rather than a regular English class. Additional ESL class time in the day fosters stronger language acquisition. In this current year, a 3 hour course sponsored by WVU will provide teachers with background in language acquisition theory and effective instructional strategies. This will assist in full licensure for ESL teachers and is being presented as a collaborative project between JCS and RESA VIII.

Leadership in these instructional areas is provided by a Coordinator of Special Programs and a Coordinator of Vocational, Adult & Community Education.

### **JCS Television- Channel 19**

JCS is most fortunate to operate its own TV station appearing on cable channel 19. Through a cooperative agreement with Adelphia Cable, the station is used not only to provide high-quality TV production training, but it is also used effectively as a forum for student views, news items, and community public relations. In 2003-2004, JCS-TV provided 84 student produced programs, requiring over 300 production hours. Also, JCS-TV provided 24 Board of Education broadcasts to the community, and 11 “Super Conversation” programs combining to provide over 65 hours of public awareness television. Presently, over 50 students are involved in television production classes, offered for credit at JHS. Presently, the TV station operation is directed by a TV Analyst who also provides the TV instructional program at the school level.

The station has also received several awards of note. Two students have won positions as guest directors for Channel One programming in Hollywood, CA. and in 2004, the station was a finalist for the “Telly” Award, awarded nationally. The competition for this award is especially strong with productions from such companies as Miramax Films, Disney, and HBO Time-Warner being considered. JCS-TV also works with the Jefferson County Emergency Operations Center to provide the public with emergency information. In 2003-2004, 35 such events took place including live reporting during Hurricane Isabel.

JCS-TV continues to grow and serve the community in more creative and entertaining ways. In May 2003, the station provided up-to-the-minute results of the successful school bond vote, and in November 2004, the station provided live election coverage from the County Courthouse. Throughout the year, JCS-TV will be working in cooperation with the West Virginia Library Commission to air a series of state produced public service programs. The role of JCS-TV will expand when the new high school facility is built, as it will be the center of the long distance learning/ instructional technology operation.

### **Technology Operations**

Presently, the technology operation maintains over 3,000 computers in offices and schools across the system. The staff repairs and maintains computers as well as supervises the installation of new equipment. Through a cooperative arrangement with the West Virginia Air National Guard, Shepherd University, and Freddie Mac, the system has in the last year added over 200 donated computers to the system. All donated



computers meet the highest standards for instructional use. Each is cleaned of previous data and new images are installed before placement in a school. It should be noted that in some cases, the individual school's business partner donates computers for instructional use. All of the gift computers are fully functional and meet instructional needs. Each year, the Technology Department revises the JCS Technology Plan that focuses on instructional technology and serves as a link to all school-based technology applications. This department works to provide cabling, computer program installs, computer repair, virus detection and abatement, and computer installations to all schools and sites.

The Technology Department has been involved in discussions related to the design configuration of the technology components of the new "South Jefferson High School" as well as the renovation of the existing Jefferson High School. This department is directed by the Technology Specialist.

### **Cultural Diversity and Staff Development**

In the last year, the addition of this position to the Central Office staff has greatly increased the impact of the cultural diversity program in all schools. Through outreach programs, many more children have been affected and the programs well received. In addition, the staff development portion of the position has allowed for a better coordination of staff development needs as the system continues to grow. In 2003-2004, the Cultural Diversity program conducted or sponsored the following events (the most in recent history):

- Black College Tour for minority students to encourage college attendance
- Brown vs. Board of Education 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Symposium
- Minority College and Career Fair
- Summer Enrichment Reading Program for Disadvantaged Children
- Parent Meetings to help minority parents with school issues
- Read in Schools Program
- Active work with bilingual education programs including securing translators
- Established a Multi-Cultural Club at JHS to facilitate understanding
- Support to Minority Students in Science program
- Translation services (Spanish) are provided to support schools
- Provide bi-lingual services for school-based meeting

The staff development series that provided eighteen hours of in-service experiences for all employees consisted of a wide range of activities beneficial to the instructional mission of the school system. The Customer Service initiative was supported by a number of workshops to help JCS employees better understand their service role.

Another major initiative of the past summer has been the curriculum mapping project that brought teachers from all schools (total of 84 teachers) to learn the mapping process and during the opening week of school, to share that knowledge with other teachers. The

curriculum mapping is a research based curriculum tool to help teachers insure proper attention to all West Virginia Content Standards and Objectives. Mapping allows for both horizontal and vertical articulation of the curriculum. Benchmarks will be established for all curricular areas. This effort will focus attention on tested elements for the state mandated WESTEST program.

### Harassment Investigations

JCS has a very strong no-harassment policy in place and takes all complaints very seriously. Each year, all employees and students undergo a training session with a focus on compliance with the anti-harassment policies. Last year, 34 student cases of harassment were reported with 29 being sustained. In each case, appropriate discipline was put in place. Six employee harassment cases were reported, with five receiving letters of warning/ reprimand, and one employee resigning.

All acts of harassment are treated very seriously and the education provided students and staff focuses on elements beyond sexual harassment to include, intimidation/ bullying, stalking, and other anti-social behaviors. Through the use of video, lectures, and printed material, provided each school year, this issue of school safety is fully addressed.

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer (Chief Financial Officer) of the system is assigned to oversee not only the day-to-day financial operation, but also to provide data to the Superintendent and Board of Education needed to make informed financial decisions. Long range planning and maintaining a vigilant eye on state and federal funds make this an essential position. As a part of the Leadership Team, the Treasurer is charged with development of the proposed budget that reflects the needs and instructional goals of the school system through close cooperation with the Superintendent.

The BOE appointed Financial Advisory Committee will continue working closely with the Treasurer and Finance Department staff to make financial operations as transparent as possible, to insure greater clarity among stakeholders and develop appropriate data for better informed financial decision making.

### **Finance**

The Finance Department conducts the daily operations of the fiscal side of the system's operation. With a budget of \$51,184,267 to direct, including accounts payable, payroll, and purchasing, this operation is a major element within the Central Office.

The Annual Financial Report issued September 23, 2004, by the Treasurer is available for inspection at the Central Office.

In addition, each year JCS submits to a full financial audit to determine the system's fiscal health. Over the last several years, very few minor issues have been identified and addressed. The most current audit (2003-2004) is available for inspection through the Treasurer's Office. The current year audit is now underway.

### **Director of Operations**

This position (new position in 2004-2005) is designated to oversee the operations portion of the school system's function. From this office, direct supervision is provided to the Human Resources Department, Transportation, Food Service, Technology, Finance, Maintenance, and Construction. Other offices are supported from this office in any work related to the physical operation of the school system. By separating the major elements of the school system into instructional and operational components, more efficient control and better responses are assured. This position, like that of the Associate Superintendent, interacts directly with the Superintendent, with the Director of Operations providing input and advice as requested in the decision-making process. The goal of this position is to provide efficient, competent, and positive customer service.

### **Food Service**

Food Service holds responsibility for student nutrition by providing food service for all students and staff. Maintaining links to state and federal foods programs and meeting all requirements of the Free and Reduced Lunch Program are key elements of this office. Each year, the Food Service operation is audited as a part of the state and federal requirements. In addition, full compliance with the United States Department of Agriculture Commodities Program is a major responsibility of this office. The Coordinator of Food Service oversees this office.

In 2003-2004, the Food Service Department supervised the serving of 206,335 breakfast meals and 729,721 lunches. During 2003-2004, JCS installed bar code scanners in all five secondary schools to assist with processing payments faster to help eliminate longer lunch lines. Additionally, over 1,000,000 containers of milk were provided to students or about 63,665 gallons of milk! New milk vending machines installed at JHS and JHS-9<sup>th</sup> Grade dispensed over 17,770 pints of milk.

Currently, the system operates with a pre-pay meal program. Under this arrangement, parents pre-pay for their child's meals and are reminded when funds are low and need replenishing. Since the program's inception in 2002, the financial situation in this area has improved.

Year	Outstanding Accounts	Uncollected Debt	Accrued
2002	\$130,989	40,989	none
2003	110,414	20,000	17,306
2004	31,180	20,000	35,320

With the pre-pay plan for meals, all accounts are monitored and any account exceeding \$40 is sent to an outside collection agency.

## Human Resources

The posting of positions, providing support to the interview process, addressing certification, and working with Finance to coordinate payroll are essential elements of the Human Resources Department. As the pool of qualified teachers dwindles nationwide, the challenges facing this department will only grow. The greatest issue facing the HR Department is working to recruit new, high quality teachers for JHS. This office will be supervised by the Coordinator of Human Resources.

In the role of supervising the certification process for teachers, this office serves as a direct link between the teacher and the WVDE. As the 2004-2005 school year gets underway, of the 76 teachers hired, 45 are fully licensed with 31 on permit. State policy allows for a permit status for those new to the profession from outside the field of education or those currently involved in programs that would lead to certification. In the current year, HR received over 60 new applications for employment. Along with these new applications and those already on file, JCS filled 97 positions for the school year.

JCS is working closely with the leadership of RESA VIII to initiate teacher training and support programs to hopefully aid in recruitment and retention of teachers. Presently, RESA VIII is sponsoring and JCS teachers are involved in programs related to:

- ESL endorsements for existing teachers
- Special Education certification in a range of categories
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards program is a collaborative program between JCS, Berkeley County Schools, RESA VIII, and the Marshall University. The inaugural class of JCS teachers involved in the difficult task of becoming Board Certified has five members from a variety of grade levels across the system. Effort will continue to have more JCS teachers certified.

National Board Certification requires teachers to not only demonstrate their teaching competence, but also to perform a reflective analysis of how they deliver instruction, develop assessments, and interact with learners of different types and abilities. This program has strong national research base that supports the premises behind this effort.

## **Transportation and Garage Operations**

The safe and efficient transport of children to and from school and the maintenance necessary to keep the bus fleet on the road are areas of responsibility for this office. For the current school year, JCS operates 75 buses daily with 13 buses in the reserve fleet. The reserve fleet is made up of older buses that cannot be used daily due to age, but are safe and used as “spares” when regular buses must undergo maintenance or when better buses are used for field trips. The Director of Transportation and Bus Supervisor provide leadership to this facility.

There are 75 regular drivers with 3 substitutes. Eight individuals are currently undergoing the extensive training program required for licensure. Substitutes have been most difficult to locate and JCS has had a number of individuals apply for a position that could not be used due to driving violations and other exclusionary factors.

The Bus Operations also houses a repair facility where a team of technicians performs all maintenance on the fleet to keep it operational and safe. Each year, buses undergo a full safety inspection (as well as each time the bus leaves the Bus Operations Center) and an evaluation of needed preventative maintenance. The mechanics also perform roadside service when a bus breaks down while out of the Bus Operations Center.

Last school year; there were 575 curricular trips away from school and 265 extra curricular trips. The fleet last year covered 1,070,659 miles in 70 buses on regular runs and 35,931 in extra curricular miles, and 20,124 in vocational (the bus transport directly related to Rumsey Center operations).

## **Facilities Management and Construction**

As the school system continues to grow, it is this office that will serve as the direct link between the school system leadership and the contractors. In addition, this office serves as a direct link to the School Building Authority. This office works closely with the Superintendent, community committee, and architects in the preliminary designs for all construction and renovation projects. Since these projects expend public funds, citizens play a vital role in sharing ideas, issues, and expertise in these areas.

This office will also be the direct link to the Construction Management firm (Turner Construction, Inc.) employed for the “South Jefferson High School” project, the Clerk of the Works on the JHS renovation, the BOE, and the Superintendent. Leadership in this operation is provided by the Coordinator. Currently in the design phase is the construction of a new state-of-the-art high school for 1200 students that will feature the first school-based science and technology center in the state. Funded through an Economic Development Authority, the grant for this center will allow JCS to train

students for careers in the expanding science and technology field. Also, the school system is renovating the existing Jefferson High School so that upon completion, the two schools will be comparable in space and offerings.

### **Maintenance and Facilities Planning**

The day-to-day physical operation of the school system, its upkeep, and planning for future space needs is the charge of this office. Work orders for maintenance, working cooperatively with other offices in the system, and providing on-site school support are elements that insure support of the instructional program. As the facilities within the system age, the work of this department becomes even more critical.

There is presently a staff of four supervisory and clerical persons and a work force of 14 encompassing 4 trades as well as general maintenance. The department serves 18 locations with over 1 million square feet of space. Currently, there are 400 work orders in the system from minor (1 day or less) to the major (200 or more days to complete). The completion rate is approximately 24 per day.

This year will find a major reorganization of the department in an effort to enhance the level of customer service. This office is directed by the Coordinator of Maintenance and Facilities Planning. Great headway is making the department more responsive and less “paper driven” through better design, tracking, and accountability. A part of this is a newly designed program that increases the contact between technician and “school customer.” This interaction between repairman and the person submitting the work order assists in the efforts to “do it right the first time.” Working with an outside contractor to develop a better preventive maintenance program for the operation of HVAC systems will assist in longer life and more productivity from these systems. Under the reorganization, a mission statement for the department has become a priority and a means to better clarify the role of the department in assisting the instructional mission.

Challenges do exist, but through reorganization headway is being made to identify and address issues. A complete review of existing resources within the department is underway to be able to accomplish more. The goal is to reduce the backlog of work orders by 50%. The establishment of a time standard for routine or repetitive work is underway as is a better-defined priority system for repairs and maintenance. It is the goal of the department to completely address all top priority issues within 48 hours. A full inventory system is being developed and refined to maximize the time technicians are actually on a work order driven job.

## ***SCHOOLS***

### **Blue Ridge Elementary School**

Blue Ridge (BRES) serves students in grades K-5 in a very strong community involved school. The location of the school at the top of one of the many mountains in the county has generated the school's slogan of being able to climb mountains. Presently, there are 460+ students being served by a staff of 53 adults. Students at BRES take great pride in the success of their academic support programs. PRIDE (Pupils Reaching Independent Decisions Effectively), the after school Literary Circles, Reading and Math Fun Nights, the Accelerated Reader Program, and the ROAR (Raising Our Academics Responsibly) are of interest to students on a number of levels. Students are also involved socially through club membership in the Student Council, Art Club, PE, and Chorus. To support learning, the school has instituted a number of initiatives to support attendance at school. Last year was most successful with an attendance rate of 94.7%!

In 2004-2005 BRES was named a West Virginia School of Excellence, which reflects the overall success of programs at BRES. Space and technology needs confront BRES, but the greatest emphasis in the school is better serving the at-risk student. Activities such as the Primary 1 (P1) program, after school academic support, curriculum benchmarks, and curriculum mapping are indicators of the great effort being put forth to assist the weakest learners.

### **North Jefferson Elementary School**

North Jefferson Elementary (NJES) serves students in grades pre-kindergarten through five with a staff of 37 professionals, and includes services offered through Title I programs. NJES is a school with a highly diverse student population. In addition, almost 63% of the students receive free or reduced lunch, while 33% receive special education services. Special Education services are provided for students identified with Behavior Disorders, Autism, Mild Mental Retardation, Learning Disabilities, and Speech Disorders.

NJES has made the alignment between instructional strategies, curriculum, and assessment a key element of the academic success of the students. Curriculum mapping in the areas of math and reading have been completed with emphasis moving to include social studies during the current year. Assessment data is to be reviewed by the staff with adjustments to the mapping process as needed.

During the current year, the school has elected to move into a review of assessments. NJES is the "home" of the On Line Assessment System (OSAS) where the program was

designed and implemented. OSAS development was spearheaded by a NJES teacher who was encouraged by the local school staff and the school system to provide this most productive program. The key element of OSAS is to assist students in reaching the mastery level on the WESTEST. The school based curriculum team will provide direction for these efforts. The “I Know” state operated web site and “Test Ready” materials also provide another assessment opportunity.

Title I is a key piece of the instructional program. Other programs in place to enhance the instructional program include Math Lab, Remedial Reading Groups, Saxon Phonics Program, Parent Resource Center, Accelerated Reader Program, Accelerated Math Program, Writing Portfolios, Young Writer Workshop, Reading Is Fundamental, and Take Home Book Packs.

### **Page Jackson Elementary School**

Page Jackson Elementary (PJES) serves students in grades kindergarten through grade 2. The school named for two local, prominent educators and was constructed in the mid-1970s as a solar school, but has been converted to a regular school facility in the recent past. The staff at the school is comprised of 31 professional staff and a strong compliment of support personnel.

The diverse student population requires ESL services for a number of students. The school accepts the participation of a number of volunteers including local businesses as well as parents. The school also boasts a strong and active PTOV (volunteer) organization.

Although the school is only K-2, there are a number of programs in place to support students and instructional needs. Among programs are chorus, multicultural awareness, Book Fair, Extended Day Reading program, as well as National Lunch Week activities and Jump Rope for Heart.

In regard to assessments, the school’s preset goal of 80% pass rate on the Individual Math Assessment and the Individual Reading Assessment has been exceeded. These are the only state mandated assessment at this level since PJES is a K-2 school and there are no WESTEST requirements at that level. In addition, the school’s attendance rate is at 98%. Space and updating instructional technology are the greatest challenges facing the school.

### **Ranson Elementary School**

Ranson Elementary School (RES) is the only school in the system where all children walk to school. The school’s location, in downtown Ranson, is also responsible for the close and supportive relationship between the City of Ranson and the school. Presently, the



school operates with 55 full and part time staff. Ranson has one of the highest rates of free and reduced lunch at 65%. In addition, 18% of the students are identified as requiring special education services. Nevertheless, RES has been named as a West Virginia Title I Distinguished School and a West Virginia School of Excellence.

Numerous instructional enhancement and support programs are in place at RES. The school offers school wide Title I services and an extended day format which provides for a regular and special education homework club, computer, art, and library club, and a full range of tutorial classes. During the summer, the school operates the Energy Express program that maintains reading skills in a more relaxed environment with a free breakfast and lunch component. Pre-Kindergarten and the Primary 1 (Half Step Program) are utilized to support the very young deficient student. RES has always made attendance a top priority. Weekly recognitions, certificates, special pencils, and an annual awards program and field trip help to maintain a very positive 95% attendance rate.

The existing facility tops the concerns at RES. Mechanical equipment such as HVAC and window replacements are needed. With increased enrollment, more instructional and rest room space is also a priority. A larger gym space would be of great benefit; however, RES' "land-locked" position makes any increased space difficult to add. RES' greatest success comes through the conscious effort of the school staff to actively involve all parents and the community as a whole as stakeholders in the school's success. The City of Ranson is a close community that takes the support of the school seriously.

### **Shepherdstown Elementary School**

Shepherdstown Elementary (SES) operates as a kindergarten through grade five school with a professional staff of 25 and support staff of 11. The proximity of the Shepherd University has always been of great value to SES. The current year is no exception. In cooperation with the Shepherd University Music Preparatory program, the school offers students in grades four and five a before school strings program. Additionally, four professional writers work with students in the school interested in prose and poetry writing. These students sacrifice their recess to work with the writing group and publish an annual anthology of their efforts. Attendance at 96% is a point of pride at SES with a number of incentives including "Principal for a Day" to maintain that level of achievement.

Each year the SES parent organization sponsors the Redbud Festival that serves as a showcase for the arts. Included are musical performances, a school-wide art show, and readings of both poetry and prose. Parents and community members have also been most active in the establishment and operation of Habitat Committee that assists students in their understanding of wildlife, nature studies, and wetlands management. An Eagle Scout project has even furnished a boardwalk across the wetlands area to assist in its use. Each spring, the principal conducts the annual bird watch during spring migration.

SES has always put its best foot forward academically. Named for three consecutive years as a West Virginia Exemplary School, one of 80 in the state, SES is one of 13 to repeat this honor three times. The school has also been named a West Virginia School of Excellence.

Space and safe traffic flow are major issues facing this school. This school is also in a “land-locked” position and increased vehicular traffic has impacted into the surrounding neighborhood. The school system is working to address this issue through the development of a new traffic pattern. Included in this safety situation is the addition of a crossing guard at the school. Additional instructional space on the site will be difficult due to the lack of useable land.

### **C.W. Shipley Elementary School**

The students at the C. W. Shipley Elementary School (Shipley) are served by 31 instructional staff and 14 support staff. Of the instructional staff approximately 1/3 have earned their master’s degree. In 2003-2004, Shipley was recognized as a West Virginia School of Excellence. Each year, the faculty senate of the school awards a scholarship to Shipley alumni who will be pursuing a college career.

Students at Shipley are actively involved in their school community through involvement in the memory garden project, weather station, nature sanctuary, and a major recycling effort. Academically, Shipley students do very well, with 96% of the students meeting or exceeding the state “passing mark” on the Writing Assessment. All standardized test scores reflect the high expectations held for all students.

Students are active participants in the county art show, math field day, and other programs—many times as county winners. This year, additional instruction in reading is being provided at the kindergarten and Primary 1 levels. The Reading Mastery program has been added to the learning disabled and mildly mentally impaired classes, while writing is being enhanced school wide. Math has always been an area of emphasis with K-Z Zone, Versatiles (a math manipulative program), appropriate website programs, and school wide math benchmarks in evidence. Enrichment can be found through the grades 3 and 4 gifted program, Fifth Grade Math Acceleration, and an after school math club.

Space needs and the retention of teachers are issues facing Shipley. The school is one among many that is looking toward increasing teacher retirements in the years ahead; therefore, the hiring and retention of teachers is of concern.

### **South Jefferson Elementary School**

South Jefferson Elementary School (SJES), like all JCS schools, is continuing to grow. The current school year finds a 50-student increase over last school year. Students are mixed heterogeneously (mixed ability) into 22 homerooms with a full range of specialty support classes. The school serves also serves a population of ESL students that is primarily Hispanic and Asian. The current school year was the first for students from Russia. SJES serves a special education population in all categories of 17%. SJES continues to monitor student attendance carefully to insure continuity in learning. Parents are contacted daily to determine the absence of students. In 2001, SJES was named as a West Virginia School of Excellence and in 2002, was named as a West Virginia Blue Ribbon School. The school also serves as a Professional Development School with Shepherd University. In this role, the school serves as a lab for beginning educators and current SJES teachers receive instructional and pedagogy support from the university. SJES teachers serve as mentors for these beginning educators.

This year, Project Wisdom was begun at SJES. This program focuses on helping students to think ethically, to foster an internal motivation to make wise choices, to empower students to do their personal best, to encourage critical thinking, to teach tolerance and understanding of different cultures, by introducing role models who have made positive contributions to humanity.

The greatest issues facing SJES are tied to facilities. The age of the school (from the 1970s), the need for more space as the population grows, the need for enhanced bus/pedestrian safety with this growth, and mechanical issues related to HVAC and roofing are all major elements of concern.

### **TA Lowery Elementary School**

TA Lowery Elementary School (TALES) is the newest elementary school and serves an increasing student population though the work of 81 staff members. TALES houses the county special education center providing services in the following special education categories:

Mildly Mentally Retarded	Profoundly Mentally Impaired\
Behavior Disorder	Learning Disabled
Preschool Handicapped	Occupational Therapy
Physical Therapy	Speech Services

TALES also maintains approximately 10% of a self-contained special education program as well as gifted services.

Instructional initiatives and programs address a number of learning styles and needs. The Math Academy, where teachers receive pedagogy support for better math instruction, has been most popular. Teachers in kindergarten, first and second grades are utilizing specialized writing materials to assist students in becoming better writers at an early age. The Kansas Writing Project, a nationally recognized and research based writing program, is being implemented in the school. Reading Recovery, Title I, and Reading is Fundamental programs are used to support reading instruction. Peer Mediation and a range of support programs are available for students.

Space and growth are also issues at TALES. There has been an increase in the number of sections of classes in kindergarten, and grades one and three. With a number of classes at or approaching capacity, it is likely classes (and portable buildings) will be added to TALES for next year.

### **Wright Denny Elementary School**

Wright Denny (WDES) has been a community institution since 1929 and in its long career has served as an elementary, junior high school, and a high school facility. The school presently serves over 400 children in grades 4-6 with a staff of 32 (full and part time teachers and support staff).

Student Government is a large-scale activity at WDES. This group, with two teacher sponsors, supports the Food Drive for the needy, conducts school pride activities, and works within the community. The arts are popular with WDES students in all areas—the visual arts, band, and choral music. Many activities are instructionally rooted including the School House Ridge visit, the work at Burr Farm, spelling and geography bees, math field day, international luncheon in support of diversity, and career day. Peer Mediation is available and the Character Counts program is in full force.

A WDES business partner, American Public University, provided 26 new computers for the technology lab with plans to add even more. WDES, like all JCS schools, is most concerned about space demands as the school grows and becomes more diverse. One of the great strengths of this school is its staff that has been together as a school team for some years. Concern over the replacement of teachers as they retire is a major concern at WDES.

### **Charles Town Middle School**

Charles Town Middle School (CTMS) is the largest middle school based on student population. Presently, there are 64 classroom teachers and over 33 other adults in supportive and administrative roles. This school maintains a strong attendance rate of 95%. Over 200 students (repeat count) are involved in honors classes with the largest number at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. Due to the school size and need, a full time nurse is on the staff at the school.

Special education has a highly visible role at CTMS with 177 students participating in special services. The largest group is learning disabled with almost half of the total special education enrollment. CTMS has been well represented at regional and state social studies and science fairs with a sizeable number of winners. CTMS has also had two Golden Horseshoe winners.

CTMS hosts a wide range of activities to support the instructional program. Among these are skill support classes for the struggling learner, live TV broadcasts of the daily school news, Project Wisdom, Peer Mediation, and a middle school academy. The school is also serving a large English as a Second Language population with a pilot program of lengthened instructional periods and more teacher preparation for these students.

The size of the building and the large number of portable classrooms makes concerns for security of the site a greater concern. Walkways, installed to assist with foot traffic and safety, have been a most helpful addition to the school. Additionally, video security cameras are being installed at the facility to ensure student safety.

### **Harpers Ferry Middle School**

Harpers Ferry MS (HFMS) is served by a professional staff of 35 and 14 support staff, with student population growth occurring at all grade levels. The school offers a full range of Honors classes with 155 enrolled. Currently, 88% of the students have reached the state requirements in the Writing Assessment program.

HFMS operates with a minority population of about 6%. Overall, the school has 23% of the population receiving some level of special education services. Of this group the highest percentage is 14% identified as learning disabled. HFMS has a very high attendance rate of 94% and has programs in place to support the continuance of that rate.

School-based professional development includes efforts in technology implementation, content standards, writing skills, curriculum mapping, and test data disaggregation. The school operates a number of programs to support strength in the instructional offerings including: special education tutoring, operating as a Professional Development School with Shepherd University, and the Reading Buddies program where honor level students mentor special education students in reading. Like many other facilities, HFMS has a number of portable classrooms. To increase security, security cameras will be added to the site this school year.

HFMS has a strong business partner relationship and Alumni Association. In fact, in the 2004-2005 school year the Alumni Association will be celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a school operating at the Harpers Ferry school site.

### **Shepherdstown Middle School**

Shepherdstown Middle School (SMS) operates with a faculty of over 50 adults serving an increasingly diverse student population. This middle school facility, like all in JCS, once served as a high school. The location of the school facility in a residential area of Shepherdstown helps to maintain its strong community connection.

In 2002, SMS was named as a West Virginia School of Excellence and maintains a long list of academic achievement including, middle school honors program, award winners in the areas of the geography bee, math field day, Golden Horseshoe, Young Writers competition, and the county science fair. Special education students are taught whenever possible in collaborative arrangements in regular education classrooms.

A number of curricular and extra-curricular activities enhance the program at SMS. Among these are SMS Choir, AWESOME Club which promotes an anti-substance abuse message, West Virginia University's Health Science Technology Academy which promotes health careers for under represented student groups, Team Pride, and student government.

SMS was built in 1929 and although well respected by the students and staff, the school is showing its age and the need for additional space is a major issue.

### **Jefferson High School (Including the 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Complex)**

Jefferson High School (JHS) is the largest high school in the state of West Virginia with a professional staff of 159 and service staff of 43 support personnel. A majority of the staff has degrees or course work beyond the bachelor's level. The main building operates on a departmental basis, and is planning a major renovation in the near future.

Academically, JHS offers many programs to enhance the student's preparation for college or life. Honors classes are offered in English (grades 9-11), Coordinated and Thematic Science (grades 9 & 10), US History, World History, 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> Century History, Trigonometry, and Pre-Calculus. Advanced Placement (AP) courses are offered in Biology, Calculus, Chemistry, European History, Literature, Physics, Psychology, Studio Art, US History, and World History. Also, there is a program in place that allows JHS students to earn college credit through Shepherd University in History 101, History 102, and the Shepherd University Honors Program. Students may also earn nationally recognized certifications in the areas of A+, Hospitality, JAFROTC, Computer Repair, Microsoft Office Specialist, and Culinary Arts. Last year, four students were named National Merit Scholar Finalists and six were identified as Advanced Placement Scholars.

Guidance is a key element in high school success and the JHS Guidance Department works very hard to present programs to benefit not only the student, but the parents as well. Program offerings include: Scheduling Night, Sophomore Orientation, Financial Planning & College Planning, Scholarship Directory for available scholarships,

Alternative Scheduling for at-risk students, Flexible Scheduling, and an email list serve for better communication with interested parents.

Last year, the graduation rate was 84 % (grade 9-12) with 65% continuing with some form of post-secondary education. Over 17,200 hours of community service were performed by students at JHS.

Sports are always a big part of any high school. At JHS, the following sports are available:

Boys' Soccer	Cross Country Track	Freshman Football
Freshman Volleyball	Girls' Soccer	Golf
JV Cheerleading	JV Football	Varsity Cheerleading
Varsity Football	Volleyball	Boys' JV Basketball
Boys' Varsity Basketball	Swimming	Wrestling
Boys' Freshman Basketball	Girls' Freshman Basketball	Girls' JV Basketball
Girls' Varsity Basketball	Boys' JV Baseball	Tennis
Boys' Varsity Baseball	Freshman Track & Field	Girls' JV Softball
Girls' Varsity Softball		

Clubs too are a very special part of the high school experience. JHS clubs and organizations include:

Academic Competition for Excellence (ACE)	Active Christians Club
Babysitters Club	Bible Club
Card Club	Chess Team
Dance Line	Dance Team
Debate Team	DECA
Destination Imagination	FBLA
FCCLA	Fire & Rescue
Future Farmers of America	Future Teachers of America
Tactical Games	Horsing Around Club
Jazz Band	Marching Band
Symphonic Band	Concert Band
Steel Band	Percussion
Internet Club	It's Historic
Japan Animation/ Anime Club	Key Club
Movie Club	Multi-Cultural Club
National Honor Society	N-O-T
Peer Mediation	Poetry Club
Raze	Spanish Club
Step Team	Student Government
Thespian Club	Varsity Club
Chorus	Concert Choir
Show Choir	Chamber Choir
Women's Chorus	Walking Club

## JHS Clubs and Organizations (continued)

Webpage Design Club  
AFJROTC

WV Outdoors Club  
Theatre

The greatest issue facing JHS is the need for space and renovation of the 30-year-old facility.

### **Opportunity Learning Center**

The Opportunity Learning Center (OLC) operates as a stand-alone program serving at-risk students. Placement is made via the school-based Student Assistance Team and is geared toward remediation as well as addressing other issues that have led to school failure. There are 18 students in the secondary program (grades 9-12) served by a staff of five and two support persons.

### **Growth Demands and JCS Efforts to Respond**

Jefferson County School (JCS) System consists of 13 schools, one central office building, one maintenance building, and one transportation center. Each of the schools is experiencing overcrowding in the majority of facilities. JCS currently utilizes 36 portable units. During the 2004-2005 school year, rest room portables are being added at two middle schools. Jefferson County is faced with unprecedented growth and schools must directly face this challenge. School enrollment has been increasing at about 3% per year, and if maintained will require an additional 4 to 5 classrooms per year in the form of portables. This 3% growth is based on the actual number of students in attendance at the end of the second month of school. This second month count is the official count used by the state of West Virginia.

Several obstacles exist in dealing with this new growth. Many of these obstacles stem from a need for change in the state legislation. Changes to the state aid formula for funding school systems, and implementation of locality pay our teachers to help keep the system competitive are essential.

Locally, the system must continue to work with the County Commission and municipalities to gain support for our schools. Education is at the core of economic development and strengthening the schools to promote the commercial base is needed to sustain excellence.



### State Aid Formula

The state aid formula for funding school systems is in need of major reform. Growth counties are penalized under the current system. Funding for the 2004-2005 school year is based on the student enrollment of October 2003--almost one year and a half behind existing need. Counties that are growing are not being funded for these children. This delay in sending the appropriate funding means that for that period of a year and a half, Jefferson County Schools is educating up to 350 children without state funding. The current operating expenditure of approximately \$6,500 per student translates to \$2.3 million for those new students. For counties that are decreasing in enrollment, they are being funded for "shadow" children. Work must begin immediately for legislative change that would base the funding formula on current year enrollment.

In addition, the current state aid formula does not fund many positions required to operate a successful school system. For example, the state aid formula currently does not fund the following: school nurses, school guidance counselors, speech pathologists, physical education teachers, music teachers, art teachers, librarians, theatre arts, etc. These are important positions designed to enhance the children's education. All of these positions currently come out of our 100% excess levy passed in November 2002, or local dollars. The state aid formula must reflect these necessary positions so that local funds can be used to enhance the system.

The state aid formula is also designed to provide for the cost of new school buses each year. Last year the legislature decided to balance their budget by cutting the money to counties for new school buses. The system purchased six new buses at \$ 59,146 each, for a total of \$444,180 that we had not budgeted because this decision not to fund was made by the state after the local budget had been developed and approved. In addition, the money allocated to growth counties has not been fully allocated for the past two years. Last year, the system did not receive approximately \$93,000 of this "growth money."

Change to the state aid formula must be made to ensure the appropriate, legal, and fair funding for Jefferson County Schools.

### Locality Pay

We have a serious situation in our county regarding teacher pay. Our teachers' salaries are much lower than surrounding areas and the cost of living in Jefferson County is among the highest in the state. Our highest paid teacher with 35 years of service and a master's degree makes \$46,049. A similar teacher in Frederick County, MD makes approximately \$65,863, while in Loudon County Virginia the same teacher would earn \$59,257. JCS teachers cannot afford to live and work in Jefferson County. The state legislature must provide for the increased cost of living in Jefferson County so that our teachers can afford to live here. The system is also losing a great number of our highly qualified teachers to neighboring counties offering higher salaries and benefits. Effort must be made to keep these teachers and service workers in Jefferson County.

## Local Issues

On January 26, 2004, the County Commission enacted an impact fee for schools to offset the impact of new students entering the system. The fee amount passed by the Commission represents a 15% reduction from the Full cost impact fee that better reflects the average cost per home to the school system. The Impact Fee Advisory Committee determined that the cost of providing a seat in the school system is actually \$9,400, which requires that current citizens make up the difference in this cost. While waiting for impact fees to accrue, the system must deal with the cost of purchasing portable buildings to house the children while permanent schools are being constructed. During 2004-2005, the system will be adding five trailers for a total of ten total classrooms (based on "double-wide" portables). Additionally, this school year two portable restroom facilities will be added to schools with the largest number of portable classrooms (HFMS and CTMS). Until the building projects are completed, the system will be forced to add more trailers to the school system.

The system is most grateful for the county's help with school impact fees. However, citizens must work together in other ways to support the school system. The local schools of Jefferson County receive no increased benefit from the race track monies. The system would benefit from receiving a portion of the funds allocated to the county and municipalities. Work with the planning commission and municipalities could help bring donations and credits toward the impact fee in the form of land, buildings, and other school needs. Effort should be expended in working with the county to help bring much needed county services to our citizens through our schools. Shared athletic fields, auditoriums, music, band, nursing facilities, etc. would improve services provided by both entities. Students utilize these facilities approximately eight hours per day, leaving a considerable amount of time to be used by the community. Work with the County Commission and the municipalities to develop, improve, and operate facilities would help make these available to more citizens.

## School Construction Plans

As construction begins on a new high school and renovations on the existing high school, the school system faces further great financial challenges. Please note the great stresses on the budget caused by growth and the inability to get adequate and timely funding for the operations means that there are fewer funds available for repair and maintenance to the schools. There is a serious backlog of maintenance requirements, which cannot be readily met. A bill was passed during the last legislative session to allow some tax monies to be retained by the county for capital improvements in the school systems to help with these needs. It is anticipated that the system would receive approximately \$500,000 this year, but this amount will only scratch the surface of the repair needs.

The new second high school is expected to open by fall 2007. The renovation at the existing Jefferson High School is also to be completed by fall 2007. In the fall of 2003, a \$6 million dollar grant from the state Economic Development Committee was received. A grant of \$19 million dollars was received from the State School Building Authority in the fall of 2003. In May 2004, a school bond was passed by 71% allowing the sale of bonds totaling \$19 million dollars. These funds will complete the renovations at Jefferson High School and allow the construction of the much-needed second high school. The second high school will seat 1,200 students with a core capacity of 1,500 as will the existing Jefferson High School. In addition, the construction of the second high school will allow the conversion of the current 9<sup>th</sup> grade building to become the intended fourth middle school for 600 students.

A Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) as required per 7-20 of West Virginia Code has been approved and forwarded to the County Commission. This plan details these upcoming projects. In this CIP, information was provided about other needed building projects. Current plans call for two additional elementary schools over the next six years as well as other much needed facilities.

It should also be noted that as a part of growth and the effects of age, other facilities are quickly deteriorating to the point of being minimally effective or non-functional. Presently, the existing bus facility cannot adequately service the largest buses in the fleet due to the bus' length. An enlarged bus facility with safe and appropriate lift capabilities, adequate storage for parts, training and support areas for bus operators, and adequate parking for buses and staff is critically needed.

In addition, the existing Central Office, built in 1950 to serve as the segregated high school, is in dire need of repair. The building's water service, electrical service, HVAC system, roof structures, and flooring are all at the point of failure. While it is essential that students have safe and efficient facilities in which to learn, it is equally important for the system to have facilities for administrative operations that enhance the instructional mission and are safe for employees.

The Jefferson County School System does not have the authority to approve or disapprove growth. All children are accepted into our school system. The goal of excellence in education requires the cooperation of the entire community. Support and cooperation of other governmental agencies, the development community, and the citizens of Jefferson County are essential components to success. Obviously, what is best for this school system is mutual concern for the benefit of all the children.

Chart of Existing Enrollment and Building Capacities

Enrollment for 2004-2005 (current) and School Building Authority Building capacities for all schools:

School	Enrollment	SBA Capacity	
Blue Ridge ES	462	441	
Shipleigh ES	407	357	
North Jefferson ES	318	378	
Page Jackson ES	390	504	
Ranson ES	373	357	
Shepherdstown ES	318	399	
South Jefferson ES	456	399	
TA Lowery ES	571	477	
Wright Denny ES	393	399	
Harpers Ferry MS	469	326	
Charles Town MS	886	742	
Shepherdstown MS	468	440	
Jefferson HS- 9 <sup>th</sup> Gd	622	600	
Jefferson HS	1583	1349	
Opportunity Learn. Ctr.	10	27	
Headstart	80	80	
Total Enrollment	7806		
Total SBA Capacity	7275	Seating Deficit	531

**Funding Related Issues**

The development of a budget for the current budget year (2005) has proved to very difficult. The budget proposed by the Superintendent early in the budget cycle had to be reduced by over \$ 3 million to balance the budget as required by law in light of available funds. This required action by the Board of Education reduced spending in maintenance, instructional support, and program initiatives. This is especially difficult in a year when the state reduced overall state support by \$ 1 million. Also, the state did not provide funding for buses that required the school system to draw over \$ 444,000 from the operating budget to cover the costs of a lease/ purchase of seven new buses required by growth and the resulting addition of bus runs. Portable classrooms continue to affect the budget by adding approximately seven units per year (double wide- 2 classrooms) at a cost of over \$65,000 to lease/purchase, site, and equip. For the first time, the number of portable classrooms and their distance from the main building dictated that the school system add two toilet portables; one at CTMS and one at HFMS.

It should also be noted that state aid to the system's technology plan has been reduced as to be non-effective. The Superintendent has expressed to the WVDOE and State BOE the need for a consistent funding stream for this important part of instruction. This allocation should be reasonably funded on a per-pupil expenditure basis. Each year, JCS submits a technology plan to the state, but the funding necessary to make the plan operational is not there. Currently, much of the equipment, while very serviceable, is furnished through donations and not provided by state funds.

### **Regulatory Issues**

The state of West Virginia is very top-down in its operations of public schools. Items that in most states are left up to the local BOE are dictated by the Legislature and/ or the WVDOE. Issues such as calendar development, opening day of school, in-service training days, attendance requirements, snow make-up days, and similar items are tightly held by the state. Further, any deviation from the regulations imposed by the state can bring swift sanctions.

Locally driven pilot programs, enhancements to funding without affecting state aid, accountability to state rather than locality are issues that could best be addressed through a system of waivers at the state level. Ideally, waivers would be granted to programs in many areas that reflect deliberation and contain appropriate means of assessment. The waivers would be permitted for a designated period of time and would undergo review. If the pilot program were found to be positive, the state would have a mechanism in place to quickly make these a part of the local school system's operational plan.

### **Conclusion**

School year 2004-2005 finds the school system providing a high quality instructional program to an ever-increasing population under tremendous pressure. While the school system is working to address issues from NCLB, incorporating foreign speakers into the mainstream, serving a wide range of special education needs, and the myriad other issues—funding, space, and growth concerns continue to dominate.

As has been mentioned above, the school system is enriched by a cadre of highly motivated professional and support staff, who are all concerned about the quality of the education we are providing. All see the importance of curricular alignment and appropriate assessments in meeting educational goals and standards, but most are also concerned about the future.

The school system must be able to accommodate the growth that continues, while working to secure the funding necessary not only to meet the increases in enrollment, but also to hire and retain quality teachers. The school system will no doubt be more active on the regional and state level to meet these issues now and in the future.

Aside from the concerns, JCS does provide a quality education to all its students in a safe environment. The dedication of the staff, the participation of the BOE, and the involvement of the community ensure the system's success.

## **Appendix**