

ANNUAL SCHOOL EVALUATION
Valley Institute Elementary School
2011-2012

Ms. Tammy Williams, Principal, presented a Comprehensive Plan for school improvement as it relates to Washington County Schools Comprehensive Plan. The objectives for the 2011-2012 School Year included the following: (1) development and implementation of a school wide writing program with opportunities to write in different genres; (2) to enhance collaboration and communication among the school community; (3) to participate in professional development to support school-wide Response to Intervention strategies across all grade levels; and (4) meet all local, state, regional, and federal accreditation standards.

Valley Institute faculty is to be commended for their efforts in implementing a school wide writing program. Training was provided which included an E-book with video training, discussions, modeling, and activities. There was a change in the master schedule to reflect a writing block. Student progress was demonstrated by classroom performance, SOL results and student portfolios and notebooks. There will be continued emphasis on training and professional development to increase student achievement in writing.

The school utilized multiple avenues to meet their second objective to enhance collaboration and communication among schools, communities and parents. They utilized a Parent Advisory Team, increased use of the Parent Portal, and improved participation in the PTA. The school staff provided parents with feedback through the use of Bulldog Folders, agenda books, school messaging system, phone calls, emails and parent conferences to accomplish this goal.

Valley Institute successfully met the goal of professional development to support a school-wide initiative of implementing Response to Intervention (RTI) across all grade levels. Staff participated in an online course, book studies and discussion groups. They also implemented RTI progress monitoring tools.

Valley Institute is fully accredited by the State of Virginia in all areas. Valley Institute did not meet a federal benchmark in one subgroup area and will continue to work towards meeting all federal Annual Measurable Objectives.

The goals for the 2012-2013 school year are the following: (1) to continue to provide training and professional development to improve the writing program and increase student achievement in writing; (2) to collect and analyze data monthly and use the analysis to drive classroom instruction and students' individual success; (3) to participate in professional development to support student success in mathematics across all grade levels; and (4) to meet all local, state, regional, and federal accreditation standards.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION
Valley Institute Elementary School
2011-2012

Valley Institute continued to be fully accredited for the 2011-2012 school year and the students exhibited annual yearly progress as defined through federal legislation of No Child Left Behind.

The staff at Valley Institute Elementary School provided an instructional program that lead to at least a 75% pass rate in English, math, science and social studies, based on the SOL scores.

	Spring 2011	Spring 2012
Grade 5	Pass Rate	Pass Rate
English	96%	87%
Math	98%	64%
History	94%	85%
Science	98%	94%
Grade 4	Pass Rate	Pass Rate
English	87%	87%
Math	76%	69%
History	96%	89%
Science	Test Not Offered	Test Not Offered
Grade 3	Pass Rate	Pass Rate
English	86%	80%
Math	90%	31%
History	75%	69%
Science	90%	91%

Most students continued to do well on PALS. There was concern, however, that those students not meeting the benchmark score for their grade level were in need of a greater degree of intervention than in previous years.

Kindergarten Three students out of fifty-five did not meet the benchmark score of 81. The benchmark score was met by 95% of the kindergarten Students. Of the three students who did not meet the benchmark, two receive speech services and the other student is in the process of being evaluated for resource services.

First Grade Two students out of forty-three did not meet the benchmark score of 35. The benchmark score was met by 95% of the first grade students. Of the two students who did not meet the benchmark, one is in the process of being evaluated for resource services and the other student has moved several times during this school year. Of the forty-three students screened, 88% read at the first grade level or above and 74% read at the second grade level or above.

Second Grade	Six students out of forty-eight did not meet the benchmark score of 54. The benchmark score was met by 88% of the second grade students. Of the six students who did not meet the benchmark, four receive resource services, one receives speech services, and one is in the process of being evaluated for special services. Of the forty-eight students screened, 92% read at the second grade level or above and 73% read at the third grade level or above.
Third Grade	All but nine students met the third grade benchmark during the fall screening. The nine who did not meet the fall benchmark were rescreened in the spring. Four of the nine did not meet the spring benchmark score of 65.

Out of seventeen Reading Recovery students served, 35% read at grade level or above (Text Level 18 or above). Out of the remaining eleven students, four qualified for special education, two students were retained in first grade and two students were under consideration for referral in second grade. Reading Recovery helped establish screenings twice a year in Kindergarten. The program served as an indicator for placement.

The instructional program reflected a commitment to career and technical education.

- All grade levels had instruction in career and technical education through the guidance programs and utilized relevant Standards of Learning objectives.
- Social Science and Guidance classes provided instruction in career opportunities. Specific examples include:
- Virginia View's Career Exploration program in grades K-5
- John Holland's "What Would I Be Good At?"
- Online research in "Virginia View's Career Town"
- "The Character and Career Connection"

The instructional program reflected a commitment to fine arts and a physical well being of every child.

- All students participated in art and music classes throughout the entire year.
- One hundred percent of the students had a 45-minute physical education class twice a week.
- Daily recess continued to be implemented.
- A walking track was used daily by the school and community.
- Healthier a la carte items were offered in the cafeteria.
- Cafeteria staff prepared meals with whole wheat products and served less items containing a high sugar content.
- Healthier food choices were offered during school functions and parties.
- Children did not have access to vending or soft drink machines.

Valley Institute continued its commitment to provide the best education to all students. When a student appeared to need additional support, the child was referred to the REACH (Raising Educational Achievement in Children) team who suggested appropriate interventions.

Implementation of these interventions was monitored daily or weekly and the data collected was taken back to the REACH team. If the data showed that the student was improving, implementation continued, if it did not, a new intervention was suggested by the team and implemented for further progress monitoring. If the student continued to exhibit difficulties after completing suggested interventions, then a Child Study meeting was held. An active and continuous child-find program was maintained throughout the year.

- Students were referred as needed by a teacher, a parent, or by the student.
- Child study meetings were held throughout the year based on individual's needs.
- Students were identified and served in special programs as outlined by state and federal statute. Individual Education Plans were developed and implemented for each student served.
- As stipulated by federal regulations, Response to Intervention (RtI) Services were provided to identified students.
- Kindergarten Intervention, Reading Recovery, a Reading Specialist and tutors served qualifying students.

A commitment to serve those individuals with special gifts and talents were made by the staff of Valley Institute by providing:

- On-site Gifted Coordinators.
- Creation of POWERUP classes which included enrichment time for students working above grade level.
- Selected units of study which were designed to meet interests and talents of the individual students.
- Units of study with integrated curriculum, including the core subjects and the arts.
- Fourth and Fifth Grade Chorus members opportunities to perform at special functions including PTA meetings, school spaghetti dinner and nursing home visits.
- Instructors and speakers continued to be secured from the community for specific topics.
- Field trips, which correlated with the SOLs, were taken.

DATA ASSESSMENT
Valley Institute Elementary School
2011-2012

Data continued to be used to develop, revise and modify the school improvement plan in reading, math, social studies, and science.

- Phonological Awareness and Literacy Screening (PALS), Reading Recovery data, and/or STAR continued to be used to help identify students in need of early reading intervention in pre-kindergarten through third grade.
- Benchmark tests were administered in grades three through five each nine weeks. Accelerated Math, Accelerated Reader, STAR, iXL Math and Math Facts in a Flash were also used to help assess students' progress. Instruction continued to be adjusted based upon the analysis of individuals as well as group concerns.
- In preparation for the SOL writing test, grade five continued to use a scoring rubric for the evaluation of classroom writing assignments. A Writer's Workshop was implemented at each grade level Kindergarten through second.
- After school tutoring was provided in reading and math to third, fourth, and fifth grade students. Tutoring was also provided in "U.S. History Through 1877" for fifth graders.
- Power Up was a small group intervention period implemented into the master schedule at each grade level. It included 45 minutes of intensive help for all students and included help from classroom teachers, specialist and retired teachers.
- Test-taking strategies and techniques were also provided for review prior to all SOL tests.
- Power Teacher and Data Notebooks continued to be utilized by all staff to maintain student information.

Data was used to assess and revise, if needed, the current curriculum as documented in grade level meetings.

- Weekly joint planning time was available once a week at all grade levels. When concepts were not mastered or when new materials needed to be developed, the grade level teachers cooperatively planned strategies to address the areas of concern. Testing results were discussed in all grade level groups. Additional websites were utilized in the content areas, some suggested by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), and some shared by staff members through their own searches.
- Writing continued to be emphasized at all grade levels and a Writer's Workshop was created in the schedule each day to ensure writing strategies were practiced.
- Overall, students continued to show progress in Reading Recovery and PALS screenings. (Refer to *Curriculum and Instruction* for specific percentages.)

OPERATIONS & FACILITIES

Valley Institute Elementary School

2011-2012

An annual list of renovations and projects to be completed is maintained.

- Valley Institute maintains a list of renovations and those projects that need to be completed. Those yet to be completed are maintained in a database for review by administrative staff and maintenance personnel.
- A Smart Board and overhead projector were installed all remaining classrooms.
- Landscaping, including mulching and planting numerous flowers was updated by maintenance staff and community volunteers. All flowerbeds were mulched and trees and flowers were planted. Raised vegetable beds were constructed by volunteers and have been maintained by various classrooms.
- Continued emphasis is placed on a clean, inviting, and aesthetically pleasing environment for all students, staff, and the community. The following were completed during the 2011-12 school year:
 - Parking lot was paved.
 - New landscaping was added around the school sign.
 - New pathway and lines were painted to help speed up the car rider line.
 - New playground was installed for primary students and students with disabilities.

Access for persons with disabilities is provided at the main entrance.

- Valley Institute Elementary School complies with all federal and state regulations in regard to access for the disabled. There is preferred parking, access to the building, marked appropriately on the outside of the building, and restrooms designed for those who are disabled.

A long-range facility plan has been developed for Valley Institute Elementary.

- A long-range facility plan is maintained. Input from all stakeholders and the Principal's Advisory team, in regard to facility planning, has been considered and used in decision making for school projects.

Funding for replacing and/or refurbishing buildings and/or equipment is requested annually.

- Broken or outdated equipment and furniture are posted on the Internet for sale.
- Equipment and furniture needs are sent annually to the Assistant Superintendent.

Facilities to provide a safe environment are evaluated semi-annually.

- Facilities are continually evaluated for safety. A safe schools audit is conducted annually, which is available for review. There is also an examination of the facilities at the beginning of each school year as a part of our summer clean-up.
- When there is a concern noted by staff, students, or parents, it is immediately submitted to the administration for action.
- The custodial and maintenance staff does an excellent job maintaining the building. Necessary repairs and upkeep are performed in a timely manner.

- A tour for community leaders to all schools is conducted in August to secure suggestions from those who do not see our schools routinely.
- An automated school announcement system continues to be used to notify parents of snow schedules, school closings, and early dismissals.
- All visitors must check in at the office and get a visitor's badge after being admitted to the building by the office staff. Those without identification are stopped by staff and redirected to the office. There is also a buzzer system for entering the building which is controlled in the main office.
- Staff members and substitute teachers wear identification badges.
- School Resource Officers and other local law enforcement agencies make weekly visits to the school and inspect the building and grounds for potential safety and security violations.
- Two way radios were purchased through a grant from Alpha Natural Resources so that every teacher in the building has constant contact with the office and each other in case of emergency.

PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Valley Institute Elementary School

2011-2012

Communication, interaction and collaboration have been continued between the school and parents by formally inviting parents to events, contributing material to the county-wide calendar/handbook, and posting school news and student achievements through electronic communication. A school website is maintained and updated regularly to keep parents informed of events and announcements.

The positive and effective home-school connection is evidenced by:

- Newsletters, produced by the administration, are sent at least monthly in the students' agendas as well as electronically to those who have requested it. Upcoming events, accomplishments, and successes of the students are highlighted.
- Parents and the school community are formally invited to Open House, plays, student productions, and family involvement activities.
- Written notices are sent to each parent about parent-teacher conferences, and conferences are scheduled at times convenient for the parent. Parents are also notified using our school messaging service.
- Valley Institute is represented at the Superintendent's Parent Advisory Meetings, and our representative openly solicited comments from the parents and the community.
- Contributions are made to the county-wide calendar, and articles are posted on the Superintendent's Uniting Our Division through the Internet.
- Activities and events are also posted on the school system's main web page, in addition to being posted on the Valley web page and teacher web pages.
- Teachers willingly return parent phone calls after school and at night. Many staff members maintain open lines of communication through e-mails and weekly letters. Pre-K, Kindergarten Intervention, Kindergarten, and first grade send weekly letters with their activities and suggestions to assist the students at home.
- Before the opening of school, Kindergarten had a grade level orientation meeting held in the evening with parents to meet teachers and review expectations.
- Community groups and organizations are welcomed and encouraged to use our building. Valley Institute strives to be responsive to the needs of those we serve.
- Appointment of a school volunteer coordinator has implemented parent volunteers in the schools for helping teachers make copies and cut or sort items and also for things like listening to students read, helping with PTA items and running errands for office or other staff.

Communication, interaction, and collaboration between the school and the community were increased. Communication, interaction, and collaboration between the school and the community include:

- Newsletters are sent at least monthly in the students' agenda books.

- A school announcement system, purchased by the PTA continues to be a success. This system allows parents/guardians and staff to receive important school related notices via the telephone.
- Students in grades 1-5 use a daily planner, which should be initialed by parents on a daily basis.
- Students in Kindergarten through second grade have a daily folder, which contains nightly assignments, review sheets, parent/teacher correspondence and news.
- In addition to the nine weeks grade reports sent home to parents, grades K-5 send mid-nine weeks reports. Parents are contacted officially every four and a half weeks or more frequently as needed regarding the progress of their child/children.
- Students requiring additional support with behavior and/or academics who are served by the Highlands Community Services Day Treatment program receive daily progress reports to parents.
- Parent/community volunteers continued to contribute to the needs of Valley Institute by assisting in classroom activities or with school-wide needs.
- Parents are actively encouraged to be a part of their children's education. Many parents come to assist with holiday art projects, chaperone field trips and assist at parties.
- Evaluation questionnaires are given to parents of Reading Recovery students annually upon completion of the program.
- The PTA has worked to increase membership, provide for the ancillary needs of teachers, and provide events that foster community cohesiveness. The events have been well-attended.
- The Valley Chorus, composed of fourth and fifth grade students, acted as goodwill ambassadors to a local nursing home.

SECURITY & SAFETY

Valley Institute Elementary School

2011-2012

To enhance learning, annual training of staff members with the school crisis plan provides a safe and secure environment.

- The school crisis plan is reviewed annually with all staff members. Following execution of certain drills, such as fire, tornado, bus and lock down drills, the staff discusses the procedures in order to determine if any alterations to the printed plans are needed. New crisis handbooks were developed and distributed with assistance from the Assistant Superintendent.
- When changes to current procedures are deemed necessary, they will be reviewed with the faculty and staff. Upon approval, the plan will be updated or supplemented.
- Not only is it essential for the staff to know all procedures, but also the students need to understand the importance of drills. Lessons are incorporated into the regular curriculum to address the drill rationale and procedures.

To provide a safe and secure learning environment, staff members are integral in its creation.

- Much attention has been placed on developing a safe and secure atmosphere where students, staff, and parents feel comfortable. Outside doors are kept locked, and all staff members work together to insure that only properly authorized individuals are in the building.
- The custodial staff provides a safe and secure environment by closely monitoring the building after school and on weekends.
- Staff agendas verify the commitment of the school administration and staff to a safe and secure environment, which is conducive to learning and essential for success in school.
- Staff members countywide have picture identification badges to be worn at all times while at school. There is strict adherence to the sign-in procedure for guests and visitors, which includes signing in at the office and wearing a name badge while in the building.
- The Washington County School System is participating in SACS-CASI District Accreditation. As the process has shifted from school to district-wide accreditation, the school continues to address safety standards. Staff agendas document the discussion of safety concerns as well as the climate of the building.
- All staff members receive e-mailed Virginia State Police notifications of sexual offenders who live within our community. A notebook with picture profiles is maintained in the school office.
- All parents of students that car riders after school display a tag on their vehicle indicating the child they are to pick up.
- Reminders of pick-up and parking lot procedures are listed in the newsletters and discussed with parents and staff as needed.
- A front door ID scanner and camera entry system is used to monitor all visitors.
- CPR training was offered to interested staff members.
- ALL staff were given two way radios to be in constant communication with the office staff.
- An annual safety audit and playground safety check was conducted.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Valley Institute Elementary School

2011-2012

Opportunities are provided to participate in activities that will enhance the development of the “whole child”.

- Each student participated in extra-curricular and curricular activities. All students participated weekly in art and music classes with opportunities provided for students who wished additional explorations.
 - Art – PTA Reflections contest, Washington County Calendar Contest, Student Art Month, SOL-related art projects, use of the wireless computer lab to participate in interactive art activities with the National Art Museum.
 - Music – recorders in grades 3, 4 and 5, a 4th and 5th grade chorus, school-wide talent show, making instruments, wireless computer lab used to research instruments and composers, practice note names, and compose music.
- All students were provided a structured physical education program twice a week, with a certified physical education teacher, which included a balance of exercise, planned activities, and opportunities for choice activities.
 - Students in grades 1-5 participated in Walk Across Virginia.
 - Students in grades 2-5 participated in Physical Fitness testing.
 - Fourth and fifth grades participated in Recess Before Lunch.
 - All students participated in the Project Fit America grant and program.
- Unless grade-level specific, all students attended plays and programs brought to Valley Institute. Programs included content area presentations as well as the arts. Grade levels were given opportunities to showcase their talents at PTA meetings and for school performances.
- Field trips are taken each school year by students in each grade level as appropriate. There is a balance of exposure to the visual and performing arts. Field trips also include places of historic or cultural interest throughout the community and the region. All trips are correlated to the SOLs and are specific to the grade level taking the trip in content and duration.
- Planned library periods were offered weekly with additional opportunities for research, AR quizzing, and book exchange. Children utilized Accelerated Reader to assess comprehension levels for books completed. School-wide incentives, and those used by the classroom teacher, encouraged students to reach their goals. Valley Institute hosts two Book Fairs each year – one in the fall and one in the spring.
- All classes were assigned a weekly computer period. Additional class periods were available, and many classes went more than once per week to the computer lab. Computers within the classroom allowed students to do research and follow individual interests.
- Two wireless computer labs with laptop computers provide additional opportunities and greater access to all students.
- All classroom teachers have a minimum of two computers, with the PC platform and a stand-alone printer. Each grade level is networked to a laser printer housed in one of the grade level’s classrooms.

- Student successes were recognized and celebrated. Names were announced on the intercom and stories were placed on the Washington County Schools website, in *Uniting the Division*, and in school newsletters.
- Honor Roll students were recognized in grades 3, 4, and 5 by having their names both announced over the intercom and also submitted to local newspapers for publication.
- All Fourth and Fifth grade students participated in 4-H.
- All students participated in the Jumpstart Read for the Record by reading or listening to *Llama Llama, Red Pajama*.
- Literacy Month was celebrated during February with an emphasis on Flat Stanley books.
- Special activities were planned throughout the year to promote the enjoyment of reading. Students participated in Hat Day, Funny Footwear Day, School Spirit Day, Pajama Day and Read to Your Favorite Stuffed Animal Day.
- Read Across America was celebrated during March to commemorate Dr. Seuss's birthday and to promote reading. Community members were invited to be guest readers in classrooms on that day.
- Fourth graders participated in the Virginia History Bowl sponsored by 4-H.
- Students in grades 2-5 participated in our school Spelling Bee. One finalist from each grade-level was selected to participate in the Washington County Spelling Bee.
- Several students rode on our school's float in the Washington County Christmas Parade.
- Chorus members from the fourth and fifth grades visited with and performed for nursing home residents during the school year.
- Fourth and fifth-grade students participated in the D.A.R. essay contest.
- The entire school participated in the One School, One Book Program where all students and families read *Flat Stanley* together and took part in projects and discussions of the book.

Character Education is incorporated as a vital part of the curriculum and student activities program. Valley Institute Elementary School maintains a list of citizenship/sportsmanship activities.

- Character Education (built on goals established by the school to enhance the six pillars of character):
 - Respect
 - Responsibility
 - Caring
 - Trustworthiness/Honesty
 - Work Ethic
 - Citizenship
- Kindergarten: *Creatures of Character*
 - Friendly Duso the Dolphin
 - Caring Sophia the Sea Otter
 - Curious Lefty the Octopus
- 1st Grade: *Froggy and Friends*
 - Bullying
 - Empathy

- Manners
- Tattling
- 2nd Grade
 - Respectful Pat Bat
 - Responsible Bertram Beaver
 - Citizen Rachel Raccoon
 - Caring Carol Pelican
- 3rd Grade
 - Courageous Albert Lion
 - Justice Miriam Eagle
 - Teamwork unit
 - Conflict Resolution unit
- 4th & 5th Grade
 - Friendship
 - Career Exploration
 - Prejudice & Discrimination
 - Bullying
 - Cyber Bullying
 - Goal Setting
 - Middle School Orientation
- Life Skills sessions were provided for third and fourth grade students.
- Selected students took turns raising and lowering the American flag and the Virginia flag. The entire school participated in Freedom Day in remembrance of the 9/11 victims and heroes.
- Citizenship Awards were given at the end of the year by grade level.
- Students helped make the morning announcements which included:
 - The Pledge of Allegiance and messages for special occasions
 - These experiences enhanced public speaking practice.
- Field Day by grade level promoted sportsmanship. Guidance lessons addressed good sportsmanship in grades 3, 4, and 5.
- Fifth grade students participated in Drug Awareness Resistance Education (DARE) classes.
- First Friends, a group of 4th and 5th grade students, participated in service projects throughout the year.
- Students participated in several community outreach programs:
 - Food Drive for the Second Harvest Food Bank
 - American Heart Association's Jump Rope for Heart
 - Several grade levels chose to participate in service projects instead of classroom gift exchanges at Christmas.
 - Canned goods were collected for The Haven of Rest and ministries targeting homeless families.

Multi-cultural activities are provided at least three times during the school year.

- All grades participated in a variety of activities for Black History Month. Some of the activities were content based, involving presentations for mastery of famous black Americans, correlated to the SOL's at specific grade levels.
- In the guidance program, tolerance of differences was a major theme. Tolerance includes those individuals with handicaps, differences in culture, skin color, or beliefs.
- Multiculturalism was part of the content lessons in social sciences throughout all grade levels. Students learned the culture of countries such as China, Japan, Africa, Mali, Greece, and Rome. It is important to not only study the cultures but to also to learn of the accomplishments and problems associated with other cultures. Teachers' lesson plans illustrated the frequency of the activities.
- Students participated in various multi-cultural activities in art and music classes.

Programs or presentations during the 2010-2011 school year that were educationally stimulating, entertaining and school-spirit oriented were:

- Classrooms had varied programs and presentations throughout the year. Valley Institute students and the school community have a strong sense of devotion and school spirit. For all presentations, parents have been encouraged to attend.
- Two Family Night Celebrations, sponsored by Title I, were held, with parents, siblings and students attending. Both events were very well-attended and received.
- Zumba classes were provided on a regular basis throughout the course of the year to supplement the regular physical education curriculum.
- Students auditioned and participated in a school-wide talent show. Two performances were held, one for the school, and the second at night for parents and the community.