

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA**

**PRELIMINARY PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF THE  
Educational Broadcasting Authority**

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**Educational Broadcasting Authority  
is not Adequately Assessing the Utilization  
of its Televised Educational Programming**

**OFFICE OF LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR  
Performance Evaluation and Research Division  
Building 1, Room W-314  
State Capitol Complex**

**CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305  
(304) 347-4890**

**September 2001**

**PE01-17-216**

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**September 2001**

**STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA**

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**Educational Broadcasting Authority**

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**CHARLESTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25305  
(304) 347-4890**



**WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**  
*Performance Evaluation and Research Division*

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John Sylvia  
Director

September 16, 2001

The Honorable Edwin J. Bowman  
State Senate  
129 West Circle Drive  
Weirton, West Virginia 26062

The Honorable Vicki V. Douglas  
House of Delegates  
Building 1, Room E-213  
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East  
Charleston, West Virginia 25305-0470

Dear Chairs:

Pursuant to the West Virginia Sunset Law, we are transmitting a copy of the Preliminary Performance Review of the *Educational Broadcasting Authority*, which will be presented to the Joint Committee on Government Operations on Sunday, September 16, 2001. The issue covered herein is the "Educational Broadcasting Authority is not Adequately Assessing the Utilization of its Televised Educational Programming."

We delivered a draft copy to the Educational Broadcasting Authority on September 10, 2001. We conducted an exit conference with the Authority on September 11, 2001. We received the agency response on September 13, 2001.

Let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John Sylvia in blue ink.  
John Sylvia

JS/wsc



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## Executive Summary

### **Issue 1: The Educational Broadcasting Authority is not Adequately Assessing the Utilization of its Televised Educational Programming.**

The EBA is charged with providing educational programs as an enhancement to primary, secondary and adult education. In order to accomplish this task, the EBA provides many different types of programming and focuses some programs towards specific age groups. In addition, the EBA airs a series called “*Ready to Learn*” which focuses on educating preschool children prior to kindergarten. **The EBA does not adequately assess the usage of its programs within the preschool, primary or secondary classrooms to determine strengths and weaknesses, and to determine where its stands against commercial programs.** A scientific statewide survey was conducted in 1993 that determined the extent of usage and how EBA programs compared to commercial programs. However, since that time the agency has relied on a voluntary survey which is not representative of the state and therefore has limited value. Furthermore, some of the information for 1997 and 1998 have not been compiled to provide information regarding the use of programs and any needed programming changes. **Essentially, the EBA does not know if commercial programs are being used more often in classrooms than EBA programs, if this is occurring in any particular grade levels and what weaknesses may exist in EBA programming.**

The agency recognizes the need for better management information and has plans to rectify the situation. A request for proposal is currently being written for educational consultants that will assist the EBA in assessing the utilization of ITV programming. To accomplish the agency’s mandate, useful utilization measures are important, in light of competing educational programs from commercial programs. The agency must know if the funding it expends towards educational programming is being utilized by the intended audience or if it should be redirected towards other more utilized areas of the agencies endeavors.

#### **Recommendation 1:**

*The EBA should consider conducting a statewide survey annually or every two years to determine the utilization of its educational programming. Data should be timely compiled and provided by grade.*

#### **Recommendation 2:**

*Additional methods of utilization assessment should be explored such as internet surveys or electronic methods through digital television to enhance the management information available to the EBA.*



## **Review Objective, Scope and Methodology**

This Preliminary Performance Review of the Educational Broadcasting Authority is required and authorized by the West Virginia Sunset Law, Chapter 4, Article 10 of the West Virginia *Code* as amended. The Educational Broadcasting Authority is responsible for providing enriched educational instruction to all citizens at the preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education and adult levels through the use of television and radio.

### **Objective**

As stated in the *Code*, a preliminary performance evaluation is to determine for an agency whether or not the agency is performing in an efficient and effective manner and to determine whether or not there is a demonstrable need for the continuation of the agency.

### **Scope**

The performance evaluation covers the period from 1993 to 2001. The Legislative Auditor examined documents provided by the agency, and the code. In addition, similar agencies in other states were contacted.

### **Methodology**

The report was compiled from information provided by the EBA staff and from personal interviews. This evaluation was conducted in compliance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS).



## **Issue 1: The Educational Broadcasting Authority is not Adequately Assessing the Utilization of its Televised Educational Programming.**

The EBA is charged with providing educational programs as an enhancement to primary, secondary and adult education. In order to accomplish this task, the EBA provides many different types of programming and focuses some programs towards specific age groups. In addition, the EBA airs a series called “*Ready to Learn*” which focuses on educating preschool children prior to kindergarten. **The EBA does not adequately assess the usage of its programs within the preschool, primary or secondary classrooms to determine strengths and weaknesses, and to determine where its stands against commercial programs.** A scientific statewide survey was conducted in 1993 that determined the extent of usage and how EBA programs compared to commercial programs. However, since that time the agency has relied on a voluntary survey which is not representative of the state and therefore has limited value. Furthermore, some of the information for 1997 and 1998 have not been compiled to provide information regarding the use of programs and any needed programming changes. **Essentially, the EBA does not know if commercial programs are being used more often in classrooms than EBA programs, if this is occurring in any particular grade levels and what weaknesses may exist in EBA programming.**

### **Results of the 1993 Survey**

In 1993 the EBA partnered with the Department of Education to conduct a survey of schools in order to determine the utilization of Instructional Television programs (ITV) broadcast for primary and secondary schools. The survey’s objective was to determine the number of teachers and students using ITV statewide, television usage in the classroom and also attempted to determine the percentage of ITV program usage in comparison to commercial educational programming. In addition, teachers were surveyed regarding the actual titles of ITV programs they used.

Over 2,000 classroom teachers were surveyed representing all 55 counties with a 71% return rate. One category of results indicated that two commercial companies Whittle Channel 1 along with Discovery Channel were also utilized to a great extent in West Virginia primary and secondary classrooms. According to the results, 36% of West Virginia teachers that use television in the classroom, used Channel 1. The Discovery Channel was used by 35% of the teachers. For this same category, 75% of the teachers use the EBA’s ITV. This is not to say that all teachers using ITV, Whittle or Discovery use these sources exclusively. The information from the survey was useful in showing that ITV is highly utilized which suggest quality programming. Table 5 below provides some additional statistics from the 1993 survey.

<b>TABLE 1 1993 Statewide Survey</b>	
Percentage of West Virginia teachers that use television in the classroom.	69%
Number of West Virginia students who viewed TV in the classroom at least once during the year.	216,620
Percentage of teachers who used West Virginia Public Television service.	75%
Percentage of teachers who used Whittle Channel 1.	36%
Percentage of teachers who used Discovery Channel.	35%
Percentage of teachers who used Arts and Entertainment Channel.	15%
Percentage of teachers who used TV the Learning Channel.	10%
Percentage of teachers who used C-SPAN.	5%
Percentage of teachers who used other sources.	25%
Percentage of teachers who used television more than one time per week.	54%

Whittle Channel 1 offers free equipment to schools in return for the use of its programming, and commercials geared towards school age children are aired just as any commercial channel viewed at home. Some teachers are not fans of Channel 1 because of the commercials directed at children. One measure that is not provided in the survey which could also be useful is usage by grade to determine if there is a lack of utilization at any particular grade levels. **Since the EBA has not conducted a statewide survey since 1993, it has no updated statewide utilization figures of its programs in comparison with commercial programming.**

### **Subsequent Surveys not Representative of the State and Responses not Compiled**

Since the 1993 survey the EBA has conducted an annual survey of schools which mirrors somewhat the questions asked in the 1993 survey. However, this survey is voluntary and it does not capture responses from all counties. The annual surveys were conducted by the School Services department within the agency. However, this department has not maintained the survey as expected. Below are some of the specific problems found for each year the survey was conducted:

- 1994-1995 Several responses were not compiled. Only the number of teachers in the sample who used ITV and the number of students who viewed ITV programming were compiled, which provides limited usefulness for the EBA.

- 1995-1996 Only 26 counties responded.
- 1996-1997 Only 41 counties responded.
- 1997-1998 Incomplete results with 7 questions either not asked or not compiled. In particular, usage of ITV compared to commercial broadcasts was not compiled. Also only 45 counties responded.
- 1998-1999 Incomplete results with 7 questions either not asked or not compiled. In particular, usage of ITV compared to commercial broadcasts was not compiled. Also only 45 counties responded.

The Executive Director stated the following in regards to inquiries about the survey:

*One small part of the television unification was to examine the revenue and expenses of the School Services department and the effectiveness of the department. Ultimately management became discouraged about the lack of cooperation from this department and the manner in which the department was being operated. [emphasis added]*

As a result, the EBA reduced the funding of the School Services department and redirected it towards development of an information technology department to assist the Department of Education's efforts in this area. Reviews of the agency budget and other information do indicate that the ITV programming budget has dropped from \$72,000 for the 1995-1996 year to \$18,895 for the 2000-2001 year.

The EBA is currently able to broadcast only one signal. In the future the agency will have the capability to multicast. Establishing trends through representative data now, may help begin the multicast programming down the road. One problem the EBA faces in regards to surveys is that there is no requirement for teachers to respond or to provide other feed back regarding the programming. Survey forms are simply sent out to county ITV coordinators who attempt to get teachers to respond. The EBA should explore incentives to encourage a high response rate from all counties. The EBA recognizes the importance of monitoring the use of the television programming. This is evident from the fact that it annually conducts the survey. The EBA has continually cited old utilization numbers from the 1993 survey sometimes attributing these to the survey and other times not.

## **Conclusion**

The agency recognizes the need for better management information and has plans to rectify the situation. A request for proposal is currently being written for educational consultants that will assist the EBA in assessing the utilization of ITV programming. Although technology may bring better methods of assessing audiences, the agency must implement a better method or instrument to assess the utilization of its programs. This may become even more crucial as commercial enterprises such as Whittle Channel 1 become more established in school systems. To accomplish

the agency's mandate, useful utilization measures are important, in light of competing educational programs from commercial programs. The agency must know if the funding it expends towards educational programming is being utilized by the intended audience or if it should be redirected towards other more utilized areas of the agencies endeavors.

**Recommendation 1:**

*The EBA should consider conducting a statewide survey annually or every two years to determine the utilization of its educational programming. Data should be timely compiled and provided by grade.*

**Recommendation 2:**

*Additional methods of utilization assessment should be explored such as internet surveys or electronic methods through digital television to enhance the management information available to the EBA.*



**APPENDIX A**

**Transmittal Letter to Agency**



**WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE**  
*Performance Evaluation and Research Division*

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John Sylvia  
Director

September 10, 2001

Rita Ray, Executive Director  
Educational Broadcasting Authority  
600 Capitol Street  
Charleston, West Virginia 25301-1223

Dear Ms. Ray:

This is to transmit a draft copy of the Preliminary Performance Review of the Educational Broadcasting Authority. If there are questions concerning this evaluation, they can be addressed at the Exit Conference scheduled for September 11, at 10:00 A.M., in our office. We would appreciate your written response by September 13, 2001 in order for it to be included in the final report.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of John Sylvia in cursive script.  
John Sylvia

JS/wsc

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*Joint Committee on Government and Finance*

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **Statement of Work by Hezel Associates**





## **Access to Video and Content in West Virginia's Schools**

**Statement Of Work for  
West Virginia Secretary of Education and the Arts,  
West Virginia Department of Education,  
West Virginia Educational Broadcasting Authority  
in conjunction with the  
West Virginia Distance Learning Council**

**Submitted by  
Hezel Associates**

September 4, 2001

1201 East Fayette Street · Syracuse, NY 13210 · Tel: 315-422-3512 · Fax: 315-422-3513 · [www.hezel.com](http://www.hezel.com)

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**Appendix A: Expertise of Consulting Team**

**Appendix B: Client References**

**Appendix C: Hezel Associates Experience**

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*Hezel Associates*



## **I. Introduction**

Like agencies in many other states, West Virginia's Education Department (WVDE) oversees a number of technology initiatives that are designed to enhance academic opportunities for students and teachers at all levels of public education. Students at the State's 211 public secondary schools have access to technology-rich courses and resources through WVDE's Success program, while students at more than 600 elementary schools can participate in the Basic Skills program. The new West Virginia Virtual School promises to offer high level courses to students, and E-Rate funding has provided schools with much-needed support for wiring and infrastructure. Moreover, WV Public Television, through digital technology, will soon be capable of broadcasting four program streams within its current bandwidth and also capable of embedding additional curriculum data within the broadcast programs. Never before have so many technology options been available to the State's schools.

Only a few states use a combination of broadcast and satellite technology as extensively as West Virginia. West Virginia faces the expanding array of academic opportunities with a particular perspective based on its extensive use of television, both through satellite and broadcast technologies. Beginning in the 1970s, nationwide, public television stations broadcast full day instructional television programs, with considerable financial support from school systems. During the 1980s and 90s, West Virginia invested considerable funds in creating a statewide satellite downlink system so that geographically isolated areas could receive video-based educational programming.

As the presence of the Internet has grown in education settings, some schools in West Virginia have maintained their satellite receive site facilities, while others have allowed them to depreciate. Today, WVDE confronts a situation in which it realizes that (1) considerable variety exists across schools and school districts in the way the schools receive programming, whether via broadcast, cable, satellite, or the Internet, and (2) steps must be taken to identify and isolate such differences.

To this end, WVDE has invited Hezel Associates to undertake a study with the purpose of ascertaining the receive site facilities and content available to and used by schools in the state. Hezel Associates is a private consulting firm that specializes in education technology and has a nationwide reputation for its work in K-12 settings. Through the analysis of distance learning in the state's college and university system that it undertook in 2000 and its ongoing association with SERC, Hezel Associates has direct experience with the special challenges facing education clients in West Virginia. In this proposal, Hezel Associates describes the activities it will undertake, the deliverables and timeline, and the costs associated with the project.

## **II. Activities, Deliverables, and Timeline**

### **A. Activities**

Hezel Associates will focus its energies on the following activities and tasks:

1. **Analyze existing data.** WVDE and school districts throughout the state have spent considerable time collecting information about schools' access to technology. E-Rate applications and other documents contain a rich array of information that is pertinent to the study of receive site facilities and content. For this reason, Hezel Associates will first review existing information. Hezel Associates will distill relevant information and summarize it in databases that are organized at the school district and school level. Where appropriate, we will also include information from other State sources, such as from WVEBA and the state's Chief Technology Officer. We will complement the information available through the State with relevant information from external sources such as SERC and the US Department of Education.
  
2. **Create an inventory of existing receive sites and content.** Using a list of school district contact names and the names of school-level contacts from the WVDE web page, Hezel Associates will gather information about existing receive sites and use of content at the school level. The exact nature of the information we collect will be determined in concert with WVDE, but we anticipate that the data we gather will include the following:
  - Name(s) of school personnel most knowledgeable of receive site facilities
  - Presence of a working satellite downlink
  - Age of satellite downlink
  - Condition of satellite downlink
  - Plans to repair or upgrade satellite facilities
  - Satellite delivered programming that has been used by teachers and students
  - Classroom-level access to cable
  - School-level access to cable
  - Plans to expand access to cable
  - Cable delivered programming, of off-air public broadcasting stations and cable channel, that has been used by teachers and students

To align with WVDE priorities, Hezel Associates will begin its inventory work by focusing on the State's secondary schools. After we have made at least three attempts at contact with all secondary schools, we will initiate communication with elementary schools. We anticipate that we will rely on multiple methods to communicate with and gather information from school personnel, including telephone interviews, email messages, and web- and print-based surveys. We

will keep WVDE apprised of all attempts at communication and will notify WVDE of any difficulties that arise. Hezel Associates will organize the information in a printed report that describes the receive sites and content available at the school level and by technology.

3. **Document best practices and exceptional school settings in which there appears to be a technology synergy.** By analyzing the inventory data in light of the other information WVDE has, Hezel Associates will strive to identify examples of schools in which there is a "technology synergy" of resources, facilities, and personnel. Hezel Associates will consider factors such as E-Rate funding, number of students participating in technology-enabled courses through SERC and the West Virginia Virtual School, and receive site facilities as it describes best practices in the State.
4. **Identify future trends and directions in distance learning within K-12 schools.** Hezel Associates will bring to the project its extensive experience, data and intelligence about current and over-the-horizon expectations in the development of distance and technology based learning. The trends will ensure that practices adopted by WVDE are consonant with practices in other parts of the USA.
5. **Identify technology, content, and training needs to bring schools to an acceptable level of technology based learning.** On the basis of the inventory of West Virginia schools, ideal and goal level implementation, and future trends, Hezel Associates will conduct a gap analysis. The gap analysis will demonstrate a difference in existing uses and implementation and goal implementation and use.
6. **Provide recommendations for the development of distance learning in West Virginia schools.** Like many other educational ventures, distance learning works best when it exists in a supportive and collaborative environment. For this reason, Hezel Associates will pay particular attention in its analysis to highlighting opportunities for partnerships involving members of the Distance Learning Coordinating Council (DLCC). One of the hallmarks of Hezel Associates' research and planning services is our ability to synthesize data, articulate implications from the analysis, and present to the client recommendations for future strategic development and action. The recommendations will give WVDE, other members of the DLCC, and other West Virginia educational technology and K-12 content developers sound advice on which to base future decisions and to ensure that their strategies are supported in research.

## **B. Deliverables**

The consulting team is committed to providing WVDE with a written report that contains the results of all activities described above, as well as other observations about the status of receive sites in the State's schools and school districts. We adhere to the principles and practices identified by the Joint Committee on Standards for Education Evaluation in all our communication with our clients.<sup>1</sup> Our schedule emphasizes multiple reporting points and includes opportunities for formal and informal presentations of findings. The project deliverables will include:

- Kick-off meeting with key consulting team members
- Unlimited telephone consultations with key consulting team members
- A database of schools and school contacts, in Excel or Access format
- A printed directory of receive sites at schools in the state (which will update the Satellite Directory of the mid-1990s)
- A draft version of the final written report, in electronic format
- Two versions of a final written report (a complete version for WVDE and the Secretary of Education and the Arts, and highlighted findings for members of the State legislature)
- An electronic copy, in either Word or Acrobat, of the final written reports
- A final in-person presentation of key findings

We will present WVDE with a draft version of final written reports two weeks before the conclusion of the project. If the draft does not contain complete data, then WVDE will be notified in advance concerning the extent of the content. Our written reports typically include the following sections:

- I. Executive summary
- II. Introduction
- III. Methods
- IV. Findings – 1. Overall and 2. Inventory of schools, organized by school level
- V. Recommendations and Conclusion
- VI. Appendices

Project milestones include:

- Creation of the Inventory instrument,
- Initial identification of technology rich schools and school districts
- Contact made to all secondary schools in the state
- Contact made to all elementary schools in the state
- Delivery of draft and final reports

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<sup>1</sup> Joint Committee on Standards for Education Evaluation (1994). *The program evaluation standards: How to assess evaluations of educational programs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

C. Timeline

Table 1: Activities and Tasks by Date

Activity	Task	Date
Kick-off meeting with WVDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with WVDE and others</li> <li>Refine scope of project; Identify data to be collected</li> </ul>	Sept. 13-14
Analyze existing data about technology in the state	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain documents from WVDE</li> <li>Obtain information from State and external sources</li> <li>Analyze compiled information</li> <li>ID schools and districts with technology rich environments</li> </ul>	Weeks of Sept. 17-29
Create an inventory of existing broadcasting facilities, receive sites, and content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create inventory list in cooperation with WVDE</li> </ul>	Week of Sept. 17-21
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtain district contacts</li> <li>Consult WVDE web page for list of school principals</li> </ul>	Week of Sept. 24
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate contact with secondary school principals</li> <li>ID school personnel with knowledge of video reception capabilities, via broadcasting, cable and satellite, and their uses</li> <li>Interview school personnel</li> </ul>	Weeks of Oct. 1-Nov. 9
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initiate contact with elementary school principals</li> <li>ID school personnel with knowledge of video reception capabilities and uses</li> <li>Interview school personnel</li> </ul>	Weeks of Oct. 22-Nov. 30
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compile information into inventory and Satellite Booklet</li> </ul>	Ongoing
Document exceptional school settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze inventory and information from WV and external sources</li> <li>Identify best practices</li> </ul>	Week of Dec. 3
Conduct gap analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze trends in e-learning</li> <li>Analyze existing and goals implementation levels</li> <li>Identify gaps between existing and goals levels</li> </ul>	Week of Dec. 3
Write report to WVDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Print out Satellite Booklet</li> <li>Submit draft version of reports</li> <li>Compile feedback</li> <li>Submit final version</li> </ul>	Dec. 14 Week of Dec. 31 Week of Jan. 5, 2002
Conduct final presentation		To be scheduled

**III. Budget**

The cost of the proposed project will be \$76,850. Payments are requested in four equal installments, beginning upon execution of the agreement.

**Table 2  
Costs of Project Activities**

<b>Project Activity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Kick-off meeting	\$5,500
Review of Existing Data	\$2,500
Inventory Creation	\$46,000
Documentation of Exceptional School Settings	\$2,200
Trends analysis	\$2,000
Gap Analysis	\$3,200
Report Writing with recommendations	\$7,500
Final Presentation	\$2,750
Subtotal	\$74,650
Expenses (supplies, communications, etc.)	\$1,200
Travel	\$4,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$76,850</b>

## APPENDICES

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Hezel Associates

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**Appendix A  
Consulting Team Expertise**





Dr. Richard T. Hezel is President of Hezel Associates: Communication Planning and Research. As president, he has been actively involved in the planning and execution of all research and evaluation projects for the company and in directing a staff of seven. As a research-oriented consultant, his services have been sought by many national, state, and local education and technology organizations. Dr. Hezel frequently speaks at professional conferences on topics involving the planning of distance education projects and has authored numerous publications related to distance education research and policy. Prior to founding his company in 1987, Dr. Hezel was Associate Professor of Telecommunications and Director of the Public Communications Program at Syracuse University, where he taught courses in management, technology, research, and evaluation. Before that he was Assistant Professor of Communication at the University of Houston. His Ph.D. program at Indiana University combined the study of telecommunications, media and social psychology, and he has undertaken research and published articles on the effects and effectiveness of media programs. Dr. Hezel began his career in a Brooklyn high school as the manager of one of the first closed-circuit television systems in the USA. He has also been a producer and director for public television stations in Syracuse and Akron, Ohio.

*For the WVDE project, Dr. Hezel will assume the following responsibilities:*

- Official signatory for all contracts
- Leader, project start-up
- Leader, presentations and project deliverables
- Accountable for all reports



Dr. Paula Szulc Dominguez specializes in international initiatives in education. As the director of research and evaluation with Hezel Associates, Dr. Dominguez draws upon research and evaluation experience that spans three continents. She has led K-12 education research projects on behalf of clients including the US Department of Education, the Central Nebraska Distance Education Consortium, Colonial Williamsburg, SERC, the Distance Learning Resources Consortium, and the Children's Television Workshop. Dr. Dominguez's other work includes a Harvard-University sponsored cross-cultural study of instructional video in Japan and a Swedish government-funded assessment of lifelong learning in Sweden. Her teaching has also brought her to India and China.

Prior to her joining Hezel Associates, Dr. Dominguez managed an online degree program at Christopher Newport University, where she worked with faculty members to create online courses and oversaw student support services. Dr. Dominguez focused her doctoral studies at the Harvard Graduate School of Education on a quantitative

analysis of the use of video in public education initiatives. While at Harvard, she served on the editorial board of the *Harvard Educational Review*. She has spoken at conferences on assessment methods and has authored a chapter on evaluating dissemination outcomes. In addition to her doctoral and masters degrees from Harvard, she has earned a masters degree in Television, Radio, and Film from Syracuse University and a bachelors degree from Mount Holyoke College.

*For the WVDE project, Dr. Dominguez will assume the following responsibilities:*

- Project Manager
- Lead, project design
- Major contributor, project activities
- Lead consultant for instrument development, data analysis, and report writing



Michael Agostini is Project Manager at Hezel Associates. Mr. Agostini's research experience includes work conducted on behalf of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he analyzed employment data to recognize trends in international and domestic hiring practices. While with Hezel Associates, Mr. Agostini assumed responsibility for analyzing needs assessment data for us in Montgomery College's (MD) strategic planning. He has also authored a summative evaluation of the Nebraska Distance Education Consortium. Mr. Agostini holds a Masters degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in Administration, Planning, and Social Policy, and a bachelors degree from Yale University.

*For the WVDE project, Mr. Agostini will assume the following responsibilities:*

- Major contributor, project management and communication
- Major contributor, survey distribution and collection
- Major contributor, data analysis
- Contributor, report writing



G. Thomas Rhoades acts as Project Coordinator for Hezel Associates. Mr. Rhoades' research experience includes both qualitative and quantitative methods. He has worked on several projects that target academic achievement and high school students' transition to college. For Project Lead The Way, Mr. Rhoades assumed primary responsibility for recruiting and gathering data on multiple cohorts of high school students. To collect data, he maintains frequent contact with teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators at more than 100 sites throughout the United States in addition to the student participants. He also followed the academic success of former participants of the Science Research in the High School Project, and related their college experiences to skills they had cultivated in high school. Mr. Rhoades manages data collection for a number of multi-year, large-scale projects on

behalf of distance education clients. Mr. Rhoades holds a bachelors degree in policy studies, with a specialization in government, business,, and information technology from Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

*For the WVDE project, Mr. Rhoades will assume the following responsibilities:*

- Contributor, project management
- Contributor, survey distribution and collection
- Major contributor, data management
- Collaboration of team data

**Appendix B**  
**Client References**

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Hezel Associates

12

## **Client References**

Shirley Ann Smith, Ph.D., SERC  
(803) 252-2782  
[shirley@serc.org](mailto:shirley@serc.org)

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(601) 252-0005  
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(518) 877-6491  
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**Appendix C**  
**Hezel Associates Experience**

Hezel Associates is an independent sole proprietorship owned by Richard T. Hezel, Ph.D. The company's full time staff is complemented by a cadre of professional associates who work on projects on an as-needed basis. In this manner, the company is able to structure staffing and expertise to match the needs of a particular project. As the consulting team credentials indicate, the key team members all have trained at top research universities and have considerable practical experience in K-12 settings.

As a result of its experience in projects of a similar scope, Hezel Associates is well prepared to carry out the WVDE project. Hezel Associates has tracked the development of education projects for the past 14 years, and we are experienced evaluators at every level of K-12 education. We have documented the successes and failures of education initiatives through our own independent research, as well as through the work we have conducted on behalf of our clients. Our projects have brought us into more than 30 states. The clients we have assisted include individual schools, school districts, state departments of education, colleges and universities, and systems of higher education.

For 12 years, Hezel Associates has led the evaluation of the Satellite Education Resources Consortium (SERC) Star Schools projects. Beginning with the delivery of high school courses via satellite through SERC's current delivery of web-based and multimedia based content to middle school students, Hezel Associates has mapped the progress of SERC and provided recommendations for its continuous improvement. For SERC, we have evaluated the **use and impact** of products including CD-ROMs, online courses, videoconferences, and electronic field trips that tie closely to national and state curriculum standards. In addition, we conducted a **cost effectiveness study** to allow SERC to determine the relative merit of each of the projects it funded.

Hezel Associates has worked with projects like **Project Lead The Way** and the **Science Research in the High School Program** that directly target high school students, underrepresented populations, and academic excellence. Both of these projects required that we **develop and maintain extensive databases** of information on schools, school districts, students, and teachers in multiple states. Our work evaluating the **Regents Review Live** series in New York tracked how well a video-based series met the needs of college-bound viewers intent on taking the state's Regents examination.

Our other clients include **Colonial Williamsburg (CW)**, which has relied on our services for a two-year study of its education outreach program. CW was interested in determining which of its many resources middle school social studies teachers relied on the most, and why teachers decided to use particular materials over others. Based on our extensive recommendations, CW modified its array of print-based and electronic resources to meet the needs of the teachers who subscribe to the electronic field trips.

Hezel Associates currently acts as the evaluator of the **Distance Learning Resources Consortium (DLRN)**, the official dissemination agent of the US Department of

Education's Star Schools Program. As an Internet-based dissemination entity, DLRN's chief concern is identifying the needs of its largely anonymous audience. Hezel Associates work, therefore, has focused on developing evaluation methods that will describe for DLRN its K-12 audiences and their interests. Hezel Associates has paid particular attention in the DLRN project to identifying the professional development needs of teachers and administrators.

The **Central Nebraska Distance Education Consortium (CNDEC)** called upon Hezel Associates to conduct formative and summative evaluations of a distance learning initiative which targeted rural, underserved high school students. Over a two-year period, Hezel Associates has examined the reactions of students taking the courses. Another important component of the evaluation involved determining the level of support among school principals and district superintendents for the distance learning initiative.

For **Educating Everyone**, we examined how satellite distributed programming was integrated into home schooling environments. Among our evaluation activities, we distributed background questionnaires to understand the differing experiences of members of the target audience. We also conducted site visits and held focus group interviews with participants to determine how they had used the programming.

In recognition of our outstanding reputation among the evaluators of distance education projects, the **US Department of Education's Star Schools Program** asked Hezel Associates to review all evaluation reports of Star School projects with the goal of creating a compendium, which is now undergoing final editing before submission to the US Congress.



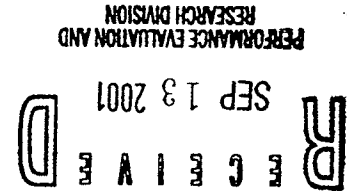
**APPENDIX C**  
**Agency Response**





September 13, 2001

Mr. Michael Midkiff  
Senior Research Analyst  
Office of Legislative Auditor  
Performance Evaluation and Research Division  
Building 1, Room W-314  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston WV 25305



Dear Mr. Midkiff:

Thank-you for giving me the opportunity to respond to your audit of the Educational Broadcasting Authority (EBA). In general, I concur with your finding that the EBA is not adequately assessing the utilization of its televised educational programming. As you have noted, we recognized this fact several years ago and have been working to correct the problem. Nevertheless our program selections are not made in a vacuum but with the guidance of educators on the state and county levels.

I am pleased to report that through the collaborative efforts of the EBA, the WV Department of Education, the Distance Learning Coordinating Council, and the Office of Education and the Arts, a comprehensive study of K-12 distance learning in West Virginia will be conducted this year. I submitted a copy of this proposed study to your office on Tuesday.

There is, however, one observation in your report with which I must respectfully disagree. The first paragraph of your report puts preschool programming in the same category as instructional school programming; however, as the name suggests, this programming was not designed for formal school use and therefore cannot be assessed in the same way. We do have measures for the Ready To Learn (RTL) service, which is an umbrella title for the PBS children's programming and, most importantly, for the related adult training that accompanies these programs.

There are two types of measurements for Ready to Learn. The first measurement documents the number of children whose caregivers have received RTL training. The outreach or adult training component is funded by a \$75,000 federal grant to the EBA from the U.S. Department of Education through Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), which requires measurements as a condition of the grant. In FY 2001, the EBA documented to PBS that more than 46,000 preschool children in West Virginia benefited from the training that the EBA provided to adult caregivers. The Ready To Learn service has been so successful nationally that the U. S. Department of Education doubled its grant to PBS last year.

The other measurement is the traditional broadcasting measurement based on numbers watching. Below are national ratings for the top children's programs in all of television according to their ratings among kids aged 2-5 during the month of June 2001. The

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*A service of the West Virginia Educational Broadcasting Authority*

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Mr. Michael Midkiff  
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September 13, 2001

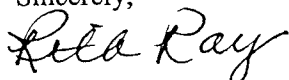
ranking includes all regularly-scheduled children's programs during Monday-Sunday daytime (6a-8p) among broadcast, cable, and syndication. (All ratings are reported as a percent of total U.S. population using television.)

Rank	Network	Program	Kids 2-5
1	PBS	Dragon Tales M-F	12.6
2	PBS	Arthur M-F	11.3
3	PBS	Clifford M-F	10.8
4	PBS	Barney & Friends M-F	8.1
5	PBS	Caillou M-F	7.5
6	NICK	Dora the Explorer M-F 11A	6.9
7	NICK	Bob the Builder M-F 10A	6.2
8	PBS	Sesame Street M-F	5.8
9	NICK	Blues Clues M-F 930A	5.7
10	PBS	Zoboomafoo M-F	5.4

In addition, our local production, **Homework Hotline** is designed strictly for school students, as the name suggests. This is a live, after school, phone-in program that helps students with math and science and communicates to students that learning is valued. Although the program is viewed at home, we have reliable measurements for usage, which include the number of students who call each night for help and the number of hits on the **Homework Hotline** web page. For example, 1,947 students called during the last school year and the number of web hits tripled from the previous year to more than 48,000.

Thank-you for the opportunity to respond. We will try to implement your recommendations and find a cost-effective way to measure the K-12 instructional service. Currently, our ITV non-personnel expenses are \$27,000 compared to \$25,000 in revenue for this programming. The 1993 study required a full-time employee dedicated to this project for many months with considerable out-of-pocket costs. I will try to find a balance between the expense of the service and the cost of evaluating it.

Sincerely,



Rita Ray  
Executive Director