

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	09X145
School Name:	Arturo Toscanini Middle School JHS 145
School Address:	1000 Teller Avenue Bronx, NY 10456
Principal:	Robert Hannibal
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced Focused
Area(s) of Identification:	Mathematics - Students with Disabilities
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	March 8-9, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Arturo Toscanini Middle School serves 471 students in grades 5 through 8. The school enrollment is 63 percent Hispanic, 33 percent Black, four percent Asian and one percent White students. Of these students, 29 percent are English language learners (ELLs), and 19 percent are students with disabilities.

The school administrative team includes the Principal, two Assistant Principals (APs), an English language arts (ELA) coach and two lead teachers. The Principal is serving in his ninth year, along with the APs who have served for six and one-half years and six months, respectively. This is reflective of a low turnover rate among administrators.

There are 38 teachers on staff, including three teachers who have been at the school between one and three years. Of these teachers, 98 percent are highly qualified. Teacher turnover is eight percent per year.

PART 2: ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

A. Performance on Key Indicators of Student Achievement Trends and School Progress

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	NYSED Quantitative Performance Measures	
+	School is within five points of meeting its Effective Annual Measurable Objective (EAMO) for ALL identified subgroups in ALL subject/area(s) of identification.	✓
+	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for 2008-09 and 2009-10 show a reduction in the number of subgroups that did not make Adequate Yearly progress (AYP) in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for 2008-09 and 2009-10 indicate an increase in the achievement gap between identified subgroups and the <u>All Students</u> subgroup in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
+/	2009-10 NYC Progress Report Grade of B	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
+/	NYC Quality Review Score of Proficient	✓

B. School Strengths

The school climate is welcoming, nurturing and safe. Students are respectful and follow school rules.

C. Key Findings and Recommendations

Summary of the key issues (causal factors), and other areas of concern, identified during the on-site diagnostic review that are negatively impacting student achievement in identified areas, as well as recommendations, as related to the seven JIT Indicator Categories:

I. Curriculum

Finding:

The school does not have a clear, written mathematics curriculum. The Principal stated that *Impact Math* is the curriculum for grades 6 through 8, and *Everyday Math* is the curriculum for grade 5. The scope and sequence documents were created by the newly appointed AP for mathematics. The contents are aligned with the State standards but do not include differentiated instructional strategies to meet needs of all subgroups.

Recommendation:

The school should develop a written mathematics curriculum that includes the scope and sequence documents provided by the publisher of the programs used in the school. The school’s curriculum should then be aligned with standard expectations and incorporate differentiated instructional strategies to ensure that the needs of all student subgroups are appropriately planned and met.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Most instruction observed in mathematics classrooms used little variation in instructional strategies and few resources to address the needs of students in all subgroups.
- Flexible grouping was used inconsistently in observed mathematics classrooms. In addition, there was little evidence that grouping was based on ongoing assessment data or of differentiated practice based on data. Although in many classes students sat in groups, they all worked on the same task.
- Few teachers in mathematics classrooms used instructional materials reflective of the diverse cultures and languages of students. One teacher was observed conducting three mathematics lessons to three different classes exclusively in their native language and not according to the appropriate language allocation policy.
- There was little evidence of meaningful interaction between students since instruction in mathematics was mainly whole class and teacher directed.

- Few instructional practices that support literacy skills across the curriculum were evident in mathematics classes observed. Limited reading and writing was observed in mathematics lessons.
- Observations of mathematics classrooms revealed that teachers were not using higher order questioning skills to effectively extend student learning.
- There is no consistency in the use or format of rubrics for mathematics from one teacher to another or from one grade to the next. In addition, no 'next steps' were indicated through feedback provided to students in bilingual classes.
- SMART Boards were not present in English as a Second Language (ESL and bilingual mathematics classes). This limits teachers in their ability to enhance learning through the use of appropriate resources.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should provide further training in the delivery of differentiated instruction, particularly for mathematics teachers. Staff should be trained in the collection and analysis of data to inform differentiated instruction to meet the identified learning needs of their students. School leaders should seek the services of outside expertise to provide mathematics resources and professional development (PD) opportunities in the area of differentiation. Teachers should align content process and product to address the individual needs of students within the differentiation model. Appropriate materials should be selected to support this initiative. School leaders should ensure the alignment of teacher planning and instruction with results of student assessments to determine the effectiveness of differentiation strategies. The PD program should include the training of teachers to implement a variety of instructional strategies, including modeling, bridging, schema building, contextualization, text representation and metacognition activities. School leaders should ensure that these elements are included in lesson planning, and formal observations should reflect evidence of these strategies.
- School leaders should provide training in using assessment data to create flexible grouping to improve student outcomes. Information from informal and formal assessments should be used to modify and differentiate instruction as appropriate. School leaders should closely monitor instruction through frequent observations to ensure that students are fully engaged in meaningful learning experiences that meet their identified learning needs.
- School leaders should acquire and distribute instructional materials in mathematics that reflect the cultures and diverse languages of the student body. School leaders should train all staff on the content of the language allocation policy for ELLs in both transitional bilingual and ESL classes. School leaders should monitor implementation through regular classroom observations.
- Teachers of mathematics should be trained in maximizing opportunities for student interaction and engagement. This training should include multiple and varied activities that provide opportunities for meaningful learning through student interactions such as turn and talk assessment, pair and share, and accountable talk. School leaders should provide evaluation and feedback through daily walkthroughs and observations to ensure that strategies for effective interaction are being implemented.
- School leaders should develop an intervisitation plan to provide mathematics teachers with opportunities to view and share best practices in integrating literacy skills into all content area

teaching. School leaders should provide opportunities for teachers to participate in high quality PD focusing on the integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing modalities that enhance learning. This training should be provided internally or through the Network.

- Teachers of mathematics should be provided with PD in the use of questioning techniques to elicit higher order thinking skills from their students. School leaders should model these strategies for teachers to facilitate the integration of challenging questioning techniques into their classroom teaching and planning. Classroom observations should reflect the implementation of higher order thinking skills into everyday mathematics instruction.
- Through formal and informal observations of mathematics classrooms, school leaders should ensure that students are involved in performance-based activities that require critical thinking strategies. School leaders should review lessons to ensure that classroom activities include problem solving, inquiry, summarizing, structured note taking, and the use of content area vocabulary.
- Teachers of mathematics should set clear benchmarks through the development of rubrics that establish consistent expectations for achievement across each grade and class. Rubrics should be closely aligned with the mathematics standards. Information regarding rubrics should be communicated clearly to students and parents. School leaders should set clear benchmarks for the display of student work in classrooms and throughout the school that include the requirement for all posted work to include precise next steps for student improvement.
- School leaders should ensure that technology resources are available for all staff, and that bilingual and ESL teachers are trained in the use of SMART Board technology so that all students have equal opportunity to use technology to support their learning.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- The school has not included mathematics goals in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) despite the fact that the school has failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for students with disabilities in 2009-10 and ELLs in 2007-08.
- Members of the School Leadership Team (SLT) were not involved in the writing of the CEP. The CEP was written by the Principal and then given to the CEP team members to review. SLT members were unable to articulate the CEP goals. Members of the SLT indicated that meeting agendas rarely addressed academic issues and parents felt that their role in the team was to be kept informed of school activities.
- The school schedule provides limited opportunities for the mathematics teachers to meet. The mathematics teachers for grades 5 and 6 meet monthly, as well as the mathematics teachers for grades 7 and 8. There is no common planning time in the schedule for all four teachers of mathematics to meet and work collaboratively. There was no common planning time for teachers of students with disabilities or ELLs. In addition, the schedule did not include any time for guidance counselors and support staff to formally articulate with teachers about their students.

- The school has not filled the vacant position of mathematics coach, despite significant underachievement in this core content area.
- Little documentation was provided to indicate that teachers were participating in Network PD activities. The documentation indicated that PD was part of the monthly staff conference agendas but there was no evidence of mathematics PD at these meetings. Agendas for common planning time meetings with the AP for mathematics were the only evidence of PD in mathematics.
- Documentation indicated that there is a vacant bilingual guidance counselor position; consequently, 15 students are not receiving their required bilingual counseling. In addition, two students scheduled to receive bilingual speech are not receiving that required service.
- School leaders do not conduct frequent formal observations. Mathematics teachers are not observed frequently enough to ensure that strategies such as differentiation are part of their daily instructional program. Classroom observations revealed little differentiation in mathematics classes. Although informal observations occur more frequently, there was little evidence of high quality, written feedback that will have an impact on teacher and student performance.

Recommendations:

- The school leaders and the SLT should revise the school CEP to include mathematics goals for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. School leaders should focus their efforts on improving mathematics instruction and student outcomes in mathematics. Frequent monitoring of mathematics instruction, followed by formal feedback and recommendations for teachers should be implemented. Creation of a PD plan that focuses on the differentiated needs of teachers and students should be developed.
- The Principal should involve all members of the SLT in writing the CEP goals and fully integrate the team into all decision-making processes. The CEP goals should include a focus on the subgroups identified on the State accountability reports. These goals should address instruction and PD for teachers. The Principal should ensure that all members of the SLT know and understand the goals of the CEP. The SLT meetings should focus on monitoring the implementation of the plan and revising goals when necessary, alongside discussion about other instructional issues.
- School leaders should create a schedule that provides common planning time for the four mathematics teachers so that they can plan collaboratively, discuss instructional strategies, analyze student data and share best practices. Teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities should also be provided with common planning time. In addition, the schedule should include formal opportunities for guidance counselors and service providers to articulate with teachers to share information about students that they serve. The guidance counselors should provide information to classroom teachers to assist them in meeting the educational and emotional needs of their students.
- The school should fill the vacancy for the mathematics coach to provide additional support for the mathematics teachers in order to address the student performance issues. The coach should share best practices with teachers and model best teaching strategies. In addition, the coach should work with the Network's mathematics specialist to provide additional PD for the mathematics teachers.

- The school leaders should arrange for additional PD for mathematics teachers, including strategies for working with students with disabilities in order to address the needs of the subgroups identified by the State. The Network should provide support for the mathematics teachers. In addition, teachers should be assigned to participate in mathematics PD opportunities by the Network. The school should consider allocating funds to hire a mathematics consultant to work with the teachers of the identified subgroup in order to accelerate their progress.
- The school should hire a bilingual guidance counselor so that all students who are scheduled to receive bilingual counseling receive their required service. Additionally, the school should contact the Network in order to provide the required bilingual speech services to students
- School leaders should conduct frequent formal observations to ensure the delivery of high quality mathematics instruction. Teachers should receive written feedback from school leaders, from both formal and informal observations, that assist them in improving their delivery of instruction and, in turn, lead to improved student learning outcomes.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- There is a lack of urgency evident in the school to address the deficiencies identified in the State accountability report.
- Interviews with teachers revealed that there was some confusion about which staff member to contact when a problem with a student arose.
- There is no formal mechanism in place for support staff to articulate with teachers on a regular basis. Guidance counselors and support staff informally articulate with teachers when they have time to do so.
- The school is not providing all required services to students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). Fifteen students are not receiving bilingual counseling due to the vacancy caused by the departure of the bilingual counselor. Two students are not receiving bilingual speech services. The IEP teacher stated that she had informed the school leaders about these issues and suggested that they discuss it with the Network.
- An observation of the science laboratory shared by the three middle schools in the building revealed that the laboratory was cluttered with piles of unused science books. The fume cabinet was being used as a book storage facility. This environment is not conducive to effective learning.
- Despite the efforts of the Parent Coordinator, attendance at Parents Association meetings averages only 25 parents per month. The Principal stated that low parental involvement hinders school efforts to establish a strong partnership between school and home.
- Presently, some teachers send home mid-marking period progress reports generated from one of two web-based programs. These reports list test data but do not indicate next steps for improvement. The Principal indicated that only 25 percent of the parents look at the Accountability Reporting Innovation System (ARIS) or Engrade to track student progress.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should ensure that all stakeholders are fully informed about the outcomes of all State assessments. Areas of deficiency should be highlighted so that everyone understands precisely what needs to be improved and the urgency with which each issue should be addressed. Roles and responsibilities for necessary improvements should be established so that all are held accountable for required improvements.
- The school leaders should discuss the referral form with teachers at a staff conference in order to clarify which member of the support team they should speak with when an academic, behavioral or social/emotional problem arises.
- Regular meetings should be scheduled to allow articulation between support staff and classroom teachers so that information can be shared about student progress. Support staff should make presentations at staff conferences to share information about successful intervention strategies and proactive measures in dealing with student behavior.
- The Principal should delegate the supervision of services for students with disabilities and ELLs to an AP. The Principal should contact the Network to make arrangements for all bilingual students and students with disabilities to receive their required services. The Principal should consider the option of contracting with a private vendor to provide services for these students. All attempts to resolve this issue should be documented.
- The school shares the building with other schools. The Principal in charge of the middle school with the science laboratory on its floor should instruct the teacher in charge of the science laboratory to remove the clutter and extraneous material in the room to create an environment that is more conducive to student learning.
- The school leaders and Network should arrange for the Parent Coordinator to visit schools with higher parental involvement in order to find ways that these schools have increased the number of parents who play an active role in their children's education. The school should seek support in increasing parental involvement.
- The school leaders, in collaboration with teachers, should construct a schoolwide progress report that is sent home to all parents mid-marking period. The school should select one of its two web-based programs to ensure uniformity in reporting. In addition, the progress reports should include clear next steps for improvement.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data**Findings:**

- A plan to strengthen mathematics instruction and address shortcomings for ELLs and students with disabilities is not in place. The school lacks a sense of urgency to bring about improvement and meaningful change in student achievement in mathematics.
- There is limited evidence that teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities collect and record predictive data. There is limited evidence of the analysis of student work to generate data about student strengths and next steps. Few teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities use data to inform mathematics instructional planning. Classroom observations indicated that mathematics

teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities have not been consistently using data to guide and inform instruction.

- Student progress reports are completed and sent home to parents/guardians with information on students' performance in their classes by a limited number of teachers. The school does not have a schoolwide system in place for the completion and dissemination of progress reports. See previous section last finding and recommendation.

Recommendations:

- The Network should provide PD to school leaders, mathematics Inquiry Team members and the data specialist in the effective use of data to drive instruction. This training should go beyond the analysis of standardized testing so that all parties can learn how to disaggregate information and diagnose the learning needs of ELLs and students with disabilities to directly inform teaching. Furthermore, all school staff should be taught how to use data to identify trends and priorities in evaluating the school's educational program. These priorities should be turned into mathematics goals and incorporated into the CEP. The school leader should hire a mathematics coach. The mathematics coach and the AP should be charged with the responsibility of conducting an analysis of all mathematics data. The school leaders should monitor how this data is being used in driving classroom instruction.
- Teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities should be held accountable for making the best use of all of the available data and information they have about student learning and achievement. School leaders should review teacher data binders, lesson plans and student portfolios weekly to provide quality feedback and next steps. The school leaders should meet regularly with all of the mathematics teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities to monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of students in their classrooms.
- The school leaders should create and implement, with the assistance of the entire teaching staff, a schoolwide formal progress report process that includes information on student performance in all of their classes. The progress reports should be sent home mid-marking period to the parents/guardians of all students.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- Documentation did not reveal the existence of a comprehensive PD plan to address identified school deficiencies. The PD binder included evidence of agendas for common planning time meetings between two groups of mathematics teachers and the AP for mathematics. Agendas from staff conferences did not indicate training for teachers of mathematics, students with disabilities or ELLs.
- Documentation indicated that few teachers were attending Network PD sessions. There was no evidence that the school is providing coverage for teachers so that they can attend Network PD to improve the quality of their instruction.
- The school schedule does not include common planning time for all four teachers of mathematics to collaborate. This limits their ability to share strategies and best practices as well as review student work and analyze formative data.

- The school does not have a mechanism that provides feedback for school leaders on PD activities that teachers have attended. There is no evidence that PD activities are adjusted during the year to meet the changing needs of students and teachers.
- Although teachers received training in differentiated instruction, observations of all teachers of mathematics revealed that only a few lessons included any form of differentiation. Some teachers indicated that grouping was the same as differentiation; however observations revealed that each group was working on the same task in most cases.
- There was little evidence of mentoring support for mathematics teachers. The AP for mathematics stated that he occasionally models instruction for teachers but that his busy schedule limits his ability to do this.
- Documents provided indicated little evidence that teachers of ELLs or students with disabilities received PD to assist them in meeting the needs of their students. Additionally, there was no evidence of PD to assist teachers in working with at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should create a PD plan based on the needs of teachers and students in order to improve pedagogy and accelerate student achievement. This plan should address the deficiencies identified on the State’s accountability report. School leaders should analyze data throughout the year and adjust the PD plan as needed. The Principal should seek assistance from the Network in developing a plan that addresses school needs and uses the PD opportunities supplied by the Network.
- School leaders should make arrangements to cover teachers’ classes so that they can attend Network PD sessions in order to increase their knowledge of mathematics instruction and, in turn, provide better instruction for their students. The school should arrange for an outside expert to visit the school to work with mathematics teachers on learning strategies to increase the achievement of ELLs and students with disabilities.
- The school schedule should be revised to provide a weekly common planning time for the four mathematics teachers so that they can plan collaboratively, address common student learning problems, create common assessments, analyze student data and share effective practices. These meetings should be monitored by the school administration to ensure that all outcomes positively impact on student progress.
- School leaders should create feedback forms to receive pertinent information about PD sessions attended by teachers. School leaders should analyze these forms and structure future offerings that meet the current needs of teachers and students.
- School leaders should observe mathematics instruction on a more frequent basis. Formal and informal observations should focus on differentiation and other effective teaching strategies. Teachers should be held accountable for incorporating strategies learned in PD into their daily instructional program. School leaders should provide additional PD for those teachers who struggle with implementing these strategies. School leaders should model lessons that include differentiation and other effective teaching strategies to improve the delivery of instruction for students.

- School leaders should devise a PD plan for teachers of students with disabilities, ELLs and at-risk students so that these teachers acquire the skills necessary to accelerate their learning. School leaders should request specialized PD for these teachers from the Network.

VII. Network Support

Findings:

- The Network has not adequately monitored the school's CEP. The Network did not recommend the inclusion of mathematics goals, even though the school failed to make AYP in two of the past three years.
- The Network has not provided appropriate support to address the specific academic needs of the school. The Network has not provided any support to assist the school in improving mathematics instruction or provided any targeted support for the identified subgroups of ELLs and students with disabilities. Documentation provided little evidence that teachers of ELLs, students with disabilities or mathematics participated in Network PD activities.
- The Principal stated that he had recently requested assistance from the Network's mathematics specialist and, to date, the mathematics specialist has not visited the school. The Principal indicated that a Network curriculum specialist supports the school and visits monthly. No evidence was provided to indicate what support this curriculum specialist provided in mathematics instruction or curriculum.

Recommendations:

- The Network should assist the Principal in modifying the CEP to include goals for mathematics instruction and student performance. These goals should focus on students with disabilities and ELLs and should include strategies to enable teachers to improve their teaching to meet the specific learning needs of these identified subgroups. The Network should assist the Principal in monitoring the CEP goals.
- The Principal should meet with the Network Leader and set up a schedule for visits from the Network's mathematics specialist as well as the curriculum specialist to ensure ongoing support for the mathematics teachers so that they can improve their instructional skills and accelerate student learning. In addition, the Principal should ensure that the mathematics teachers are included in all Network mathematics PD opportunities.
- The Network should provide support in addressing the areas of deficiency in mathematics. The Network should provide PD and support for the school in teaching mathematics to ELLs and students with disabilities. This support should include discussion of best practice, modeling lessons and visitations to schools to observe high quality mathematics instruction to the targeted subgroups.
- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations.

Other Concern:

The school's accountability status for ELA is *In Good Standing*. However, for 2009-10 the schools did not make AYP for the first time for All Students, Black Students, Hispanic Students, Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students.

PART 3: JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Overall Findings

Reference	JIT Finding for Restructuring Advanced Schools	✓
(b)	The school has made some progress in identified areas, and may make AYP with further modification to the Restructuring Plan.	✓

B. Overall Recommendation

Reference	Recommendation by the JIT for Restructuring Advanced Schools	✓
(b)	Continue implementation of the current Restructuring Plan with <u>modifications</u> recommended as a result of the review.	✓

C. In the space below, include specific information to support the District in determining how the above JIT recommendation should be implemented.

- The school should review mathematics curricula that have been successfully used in other schools to meet the needs of the identified subgroups. The school should involve teachers in the process of selecting the new mathematics curriculum.
- The school should take steps to hire a mathematics coach to provide assistance for teachers in improving mathematics instruction for all subgroups.
- The Principal should create specific roles and responsibilities for each AP so that teachers have one person to relate to for specific help, assistance and guidance.