

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	19K328
School Name:	PS 328 Phyllis Wheatley
School Address:	330 Alabama Avenue Brooklyn, New York 11207
Principal:	Douglas Avila
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced Comprehensive English Language Arts- All Students; Black Students; Hispanic Students; Students With Disabilities; and Economically
Area(s) of Identification:	Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	February 15-16, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Phyllis Wheatley School serves 521 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school enrollment is 64 percent Black students and 32 percent Hispanic students. Of these students, 15 percent are English language learners (ELLs) and 17 percent are students with disabilities. Some students with disabilities are transported by bus to the school from other districts, but the majority of students live in the immediate neighborhood. The school shares space with a new charter school.

The administrative team includes the Principal and four Assistant Principals (APs). Responsibilities for grade level monitoring are divided among the APs, as is responsibility for oversight of students with disabilities, early childhood, literacy and mathematics. The Principal has served for eight years and three of the four APs have served for five and six years. One AP is new to the role this year, indicating a low turnover among administrators. Three teachers serve part time as literacy, mathematics and Reading First coaches, respectively.

There are 60 teachers on staff, including one new teacher and five teachers who have been at the school for between one to three years. The remaining staff have served the school for many years. Ninety-five percent of the teachers are highly qualified. The teacher turnover rate has declined and is currently at 12 percent.

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	
-	Negative trend data for one or more identified subject/areas and subgroups for the past 2 consecutive years (2008-09 and 2009-10), as indicated by an decrease in the percentage of students performing at or above Level 3 and/or a decrease in the	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	Performance Index.	
-	School is ten or more points away from meeting its Effective Annual Measurable Objective (EAMO) for one or more identified subgroups in subject/area(s) of identification.	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for 2008-09 and 2009-10 show an increase in the number of subgroups that did not make AYP in identified 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	✓
+/-	NYC Quality Review Score of Proficient	✓

B. 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 leaders acknowledge that there is no written curriculum for English Language Arts (ELA). There is no assurance that instructional resources that are used to deliver ELA instruction are sufficiently rigorous or aligned to New York State (NYS) Standards and performance indicators. The lack of a written curriculum and the inconsistent delivery of a variety of programs inhibits horizontal and vertical alignment of the delivery of instruction in ELA.

Recommendation:

The Network should work with the school on the development of curriculum in all core areas and ensure that it is clearly aligned with the current NYS Learning Standards. Curriculum should be aligned to the new NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards in English language Arts and literacy and mathematics to prepare for implementation in school year 2012-13. All curriculums should be developed by knowledgeable and trained individuals (national, state, or local) who understand the key elements of curriculum development.

All teachers and administrators should participate in professional development (PD) on how to plan and implement a curriculum with rigor, as well as delivery methods that are student-centered. The curriculum should be relied upon as the basis for assessing the individual student mastery and progress. Walkthroughs and formal evaluations should include how well the teacher knows and implements the curriculum in the subjects being taught.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Questioning strategies that were observed were factual recall at the lowest level of Bloom's taxonomy in almost all classrooms.
- In many classes students were not engaged in meaningful learning activities. Limited evidence of a variety of instructional strategies was observed across all classes. For the most part, lessons were delivered through whole group direct instruction, with a few instances of small group direct instruction.
- There was little evidence that teachers were using data to formulate small groups and to differentiate their instruction. For example, no cooperative learning was observed.
- Pacing in some classes was slow and caused students to become unfocused and distracted during the instruction. Therefore, in many classes the learning time is not maximized.
- In many classes, learning goals or objectives were posted but most were not expressed in student-friendly language. They did not provide a guide to measure learning and did not always appear to direct the activities observed. It was not clear that students knew or understood the lesson goals.
- Student writing that was displayed showed inconsistency in the alignment of tasks with standards, rubrics and teacher commentary to improve the finished product, as well as to inform next steps. While work on bulletin boards generally included feedback, it was not specifically related to what was posted.
- In the majority of regular classrooms, the available technology, including SMART Boards and computers, were not used. When SMART Boards were observed in use, they were used as projection screens, but were not effectively integrated into instruction.
- Not all Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes have an appropriately certified special education teacher assigned on a full-time basis. As a result, full participation in co-teaching and team teaching strategies were not being effectively implemented.

Recommendations:

- The school should provide rigorous PD and ongoing support to enhance the capacity of teachers to use higher order thinking and questioning techniques, particularly in ELA. Administrators should monitor and model these techniques to ensure that all students have regular opportunities to develop these key learning skills.
- The school should provide PD and ongoing support to increase teachers' repertoire of instructional strategies for differentiation and effective grouping so that students are more engaged in their work and have opportunities to engage in a range of activities and tasks to meet their learning needs. Administrators should monitor and model these techniques.

- Administrators should build on existing data collection and analysis practices to increase the capacity of teachers to use routine formative assessment in crafting lessons to address the identified needs of students.
- School leaders should require teachers to plan lessons that include thoughtful subdivision of activities with clear timelines for completion so that the pace increases, resulting in higher levels of engagement and challenge for all students.
- Teachers should incorporate learning goals that are aligned to NYS standards in student-friendly language into all lesson plans and communicate these in writing and verbally to students so that they have a clear understanding of how to improve the quality of their work.
- The school should develop and use consistent rubrics to guide students in understanding the key aspects of high-quality work and provide instructive feedback.
- The school should develop a plan for how technology is to be used in classrooms and ensure that teachers are provided with sufficient support to integrate technology into their instruction.
- The Principal should ensure that staff is appropriately qualified to meet the identified needs of all student populations at all times.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- The school leader does not communicate clear expectations for high academic performance. The school leader identifies social issues as the main challenge faced by the school, rather than issues of instructional delivery and systemic support for students.
- The school leader does not fully engage parent members of the School Leadership Team (SLT) in deciding the necessary next steps for school improvement.
- The school leader has assigned numerous staff, including two deans, three school aides and an AP, to a variety of roles related to student behavior. Disciplinary incidents have decreased only minimally and challenges to learning occur daily, resulting in behavior that interrupts some classes, halls and the cafeteria. Surveys report high concerns for safety and discipline among teachers, students, and parents.
- The Principal and four APs for just over 500 students is a disproportionately large number of administrative positions for the size of the school. The Principal has redistributed their roles during this school year, resulting in confusion about the chain of command and content responsibilities among teachers and some administrators. Responsibilities for staff supervision are distributed disproportionately among APs, further impeding capacity for effective support of improved teaching and learning.
- The school leader has reassigned coaches to class teaching, which has decreased their impact on developing teachers' skills. Thus, direct support for teachers is insufficient.

- Formal and informal observation documents reveal a lack of timely feedback and precise next steps for teachers, thereby limiting the impact on improving teaching and learning. The quality and quantity of instructive feedback to teachers varies widely among observers

Recommendations:

- School leaders should engage all stakeholders in developing appropriately high expectations for students and staff, and should communicate these with regularity so that the school is clearly focused on improved learning for all students.
- The school leader should ensure that all members of the SLT are equally and fully engaged in establishing goals and action plans that encompass the vision, reflect the assessed needs, and provide sufficient monitoring of goals for continuous school improvement through carefully devised plans of action.
- The Principal should evaluate the effectiveness of current staffing with respect to student behavior and discipline. A behavior committee should be formed to assess the critical issues facing the school and to develop a comprehensive, schoolwide behavior plan. The school should engage the assistance of the Network in developing and implementing proven approaches to improving behavior.
- The school leader should ensure clarity and equity in the assignments of the administrative staff and should clearly communicate these to all members of the school community.
- The school leader should restore coaches to full-time support positions so that they can focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- The Principal should require all APs to provide timely and instructive feedback to teachers after observations of their teaching. The school leader should provide guidelines, expectations and protocols for effective observations, including the review of the APs observation reports. Further, the Principal should ensure that the distribution of responsibilities to APs for the supervision of staff is aligned to their identified strengths, enabling them to effectively monitor instruction to increase student achievement.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- Many staff do not communicate high expectations for student achievement that is supported by the belief that all students can learn at high levels.
- The school does not have a behavior plan, except for the Chancellor's Discipline Code. Inconsistent behavior practices across grades and classrooms exacerbate already high rates of misbehavior. Students and staff report a desire for more consistent school policies and practices.
- Students with disabilities who are age 12 and over do not have transition on their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs).
- There are no regularly scheduled cross-grade articulation meetings.

- Students with disabilities are not receiving mandated psychological and social assessments or annual reviews in a timely manner.
- While all students with disabilities are considered at-risk, they are not receiving additional Academic Intervention Services (AIS) because transportation limits their access to the extended-day program, resulting in only 10 minutes of additional instructional time per day.
- The library is not currently open to students.
- The annual NYC Learning Environment Survey is the only instrument provided by the school to formally survey parent views about the school. On that survey, parents expressed dissatisfaction with safety, respect, and academic expectations.

Recommendations:

- The Principal should hold teachers accountable for communicating high expectations for academic achievement to all students, through reviews of teacher goals, their teaching, the work of their students, and evaluations of student progress.
- The school leader should engage the staff in developing and implementing a coherent and consistent schoolwide approach to behavior management that is sensitive to the varied needs of the student population. Staff should be held responsible for implementing the plan with fidelity. PD should be provided to assist all staff in developing a repertoire of strategies for dealing with student behavioral issues and to foster classroom and schoolwide community building.
- Training should be provided to ensure that school personnel can properly use the newly implemented Special Education Student Information System (SEIS). The school leader should monitor all SEIS reports with regard to social/psychological evaluations and annual reviews to ensure full compliance with mandates.
- The school leader should create scheduled time for cross-grade articulation meetings to include general education teachers, special education teachers, teachers of English language learners, and related service providers to ensure vertical alignment of the delivery of curriculum, especially in ELA.
- The school leader should work with the Office of Pupil Transportation to explore the possibility that busing schedules can be changed to ensure that students with disabilities have access to the full extended day intervention programs.
- The school leaders should provide increased staffing so that students have access to the school library to extend and enhance their learning.
- The school should regularly survey parents regarding school improvement and the education of their children, as well as the environment of the school, and use the findings to make timely revisions to programs and practices.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- There is limited evidence to demonstrate that school leaders effectively use data to evaluate the quality and success of instructional programs.
- There is no evidence of common formative assessments or on-going assessments embedded into daily instruction. There is presently a limited range of different types of assessments used to regularly monitor student achievement in classrooms.
- There is no clear policy or practices regarding the identification of students at-risk of not being promoted to the next grade.
- There is limited evidence of the use of data by teachers in the planning of their instruction.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should analyze data regularly to evaluate the impact of all school programs and practices. Assistance from the Network should be sought to streamline the use of data to improve overall school practices and programs.
- The Principal should request available resources from the Network to support teachers in improving their practices in student assessment and in using that data to improve learning. APs and coaches should assist teachers in implementing common formative assessments and using them effectively to address identified student needs.
- The school leaders should engage teachers in developing clear benchmarks for early identification of students at-risk of not meeting promotional standards. This would make students and families aware of student promotion status and enable a range of interventions to be accessed to support students in meeting grade-level expectations.
- The Principal and APs should review lesson plans and observe instruction with regularity to monitor the routine use of student assessment data in planning and delivering instruction, so that the varied needs of students are fully met.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- While teachers were surveyed about their professional goals for the year, there was little evidence that the PD provided was based on an analysis of teacher needs.
- Although teachers meet regularly in grade level teams, there is limited evidence of collaborative planning for the effective delivery of ELA in these meetings.
- Inquiry teams are in the early stages of development. There is no evidence of teachers engaging in analysis of their work, including what students are taught and strategies used to ensure that students are effectively learning. Inquiry team work is viewed by teachers largely as a compliance exercise.

- Observation reports do not provide feedback on strategies learned during PD sessions to hold teachers accountable for implementation and to assist them in improving their new skills.
- There is insufficient PD provided for teachers to effectively meet the needs of students with disabilities, ELLs, and at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- The school leaders should use a range of information to identify teachers' PD needs, including outcomes from lesson observation, data analysis and teacher requests to develop the comprehensive PD plan. Teachers should be included in developing the schoolwide plan. The plan should support the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) goals and be focused on improving the achievement of all students.
- Administrators should ensure that common planning time is used for collaborative planning, including the development of lessons, common assessments, and differentiated approaches to meet the assessed needs of students.
- The school should engage the Network to provide on-site coaching for Inquiry Teams and to develop leadership skills among teacher leaders and administrators. Additionally, support should include modeling for teachers of the analysis of their work and that of their students, including reflection on teaching and learning strategies.
- The Principal should require the APs to routinely include feedback on the implementation of all relevant PD when observing teachers' delivery of instruction.
- The school leader, with assistance from the Network, should provide robust training and ongoing support for teachers to understand and be able to effectively meet the specific learning needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, and other at-risk students.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- The Network and the school have not established a relationship to support improved teaching and learning.
- Walkthrough feedback provided by the Network does not sufficiently address the core issues facing the school and does not provide a clear path to school improvement.
- No assistance is provided by the Network to support and increase parental involvement.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should work with the Network to develop an infrastructure to provide the necessary support to improve teaching and learning in the school.

- The school leader should work with the Network to ensure that all visits focus on specific areas of identified need, with the intended outcome of providing a clear strategy for continuous school improvement.
- The Network should work with the school to develop plans and implement strategies to engage a greater number of parents in school activities.
- The Network should support the school in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) review.

PART 3: JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Overall Findings

Reference	JIT Finding for Restructuring Advanced Schools	✓
(c)	The school has not made sufficient progress in identified areas, and is unlikely to make AYP under the current structure and organization.	✓

B. Overall Recommendation

Reference	Recommendation by the JIT for Restructuring Advanced Schools	✓
(c)	Develop and implement a new Restructuring Plan that includes <u>significant changes in staff, organizational structure, leadership and/or configuration</u> , to address issues that continue to negatively impact student academic performance in identified areas.	✓

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

Develop and implement a new Restructuring Plan that addresses the aforementioned recommendations and:

- Includes significant changes in the instructional staff to support implementation of the plan;
- Redesigns the organizational structure to reduce the number of APs from four to two and restores coaches to full time positions;
- Provides the Principal with substantial on-going support for developing his skills in instructional leadership, collaborative decision-making, the effective use of data, and forward planning. This support should be provided by a highly skilled leadership coach from a recognized independent entity (institution of higher learning or consulting organization) for the period of at least one year and ensure one-on-one, on-site services at least bi-weekly.