

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	27Q042
School Name:	PS 42 R. Vernam
School Address:	488 Beach 66 Street Queens, New York 11692
Principal:	Stephanie Martin Okoase
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced Comprehensive
Area(s) of Identification:	English Language Arts – All students; Black students; Students with Disabilities; and Economically Disadvantaged
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	February 1-2, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

PS 42 serves 758 students in kindergarten through grade 8. The school’s enrollment is 76 percent Black, 17 percent Hispanic, three percent White and two percent Asian students. Of these students, four percent are English Language Learners (ELLs) and 20 percent are students with disabilities.

The school administrative team includes the Principal and two Assistant Principals (APs). The Interim Acting Principal is serving in her fourth month and the APs have served for three and eight years.

There are 73 teachers on staff, including six new teachers; eight teachers at the school for one year or less; and 31 teachers at the school for between one and three years. Of these teachers, 80 percent are highly qualified.

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	
+	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for 2008-09 and 2009-10 indicate the school has reduced the achievement gap between identified subgroups and the <i>All Students</i> subgroup in ALL identified subject/area(s) by ten percent or more.	✓
-	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 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	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	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 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in identified area(s).	✓
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
-	2008-09 NYC Progress Report Grade of C	✓
+	NYC Quality Review Score of Proficient	✓

B. School Strengths

- The Interim Acting Principal has recognized the urgency of the need to address literacy and has implemented new programs in reading and writing.
- A core group of parents volunteer daily in the cafeteria, and as needed in other areas.

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

Findings:

- The school does not have a written English language arts (ELA) curriculum. Instead, there is a schoolwide focus on introducing the *America's Choice* reading and writing program in grades K-5, and the *America's Choice Ramp Up* program in grades 6-8.
- There is no evidence that the school provides pacing calendars or a scope and sequence to ensure horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment in ELA.
- Teachers have not been provided with sufficient resources for the effective schoolwide introduction of the America's Choice program.

Recommendations:

- 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 New York State (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 curricula should be developed by knowledgeable and trained individuals (national, state, or local) who understand the key elements of curriculum development. The school should engage in an ongoing process of curriculum mapping for ELA, in collaboration with teachers and support from consultants and the Network.

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 for the subjects being taught.

- Based on the ELA curriculum maps, school leaders, teachers and Network consultants should collaboratively establish scope and sequence documents and pacing calendars based on NYS Learning Standards. These should be designed to assist teachers with their planning, secure vertical alignment and eliminate repetition in the teaching and learning cycle. School leaders should monitor this practice schoolwide to check for successful implementation.
- The Principal should seek to re-allocate resources to provide sufficient funds to ensure the full implementation of *America's Choice* in all classrooms.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- The predominant instructional method observed was direct instruction. There were few examples of student groupings designed to meet the identified needs of individuals and groups of students.
- The effectiveness of co-teaching was inconsistent between classrooms. Teachers indicated that schedules did not provide sufficient time for articulation between push-in student support staff and classroom teachers.
- The efficiency of transition from one activity to the next was not consistent from class to class. In some cases, this resulted in significant loss of instructional time.
- Learning goals were not consistently integrated into lessons and were not understood by students. Teachers observed did not revisit the learning goal at the end of the lesson to check for student understanding.
- During most classroom observations, teachers provided limited opportunities for student interaction or collaboration.
- Questioning in classrooms was ineffective and did little to involve students in the learning process. The majority of teacher questions demanded little from the students and few questions required students to elaborate on their answers or engaged students in higher order thinking skills.
- There is no schoolwide understanding of, or emphasis on, differentiation within the classroom in order to meet the specific learning needs of students. There is no evidence that differentiation is a schoolwide practice or a priority for the school.
- Effective routines and procedures were not uniformly evident in classrooms or as teachers escorted classes in hallways. Classroom management was inconsistent across the school. A

significant number of students were not monitored while in hallways or when they were leaving classrooms.

- The inconsistent application of rubrics reflects teacher lack of understanding of their use as an instructional tool. This limits students in their ability to learn and know how to improve their work to meet standard expectations.
- Too few examples of technology were observed in the delivery of instruction or to enhance the quality of student learning.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should enlist the support of the Network to provide differentiated PD for all teachers. This PD should be specifically aimed at developing a range of instructional strategies to increase student engagement and encourage independent and small-group learning. School leaders should provide follow up observations to assess the success of the PD in the classroom and provide feedback and follow-up PD wherever required.
- Common planning time should be organized around coherent agendas that include designated time for articulation between push-in student support staff and classroom teachers. PD should focus on improving collaborative planning and practicing strategies that have proved successful in other similar schools.
- School leaders should identify teachers who effectively manage time and transitions. These teachers should function as models for other teachers in the school.
- Teachers should ensure that students clearly understand the learning goals for each lesson. Time should be spent during common planning periods so that teachers can collaboratively identify lesson objectives and craft them in student-friendly, age-appropriate language. PD should be provided where teachers struggle to clearly articulate such goals. All teachers should revisit learning goals with their students during and at the end of lessons.
- School leaders and the Network should provide PD for teachers on the use of a wide variety of instructional practices, including strategies to promote student interaction. It should be the expectation that these strategies are outlined in lesson plans and incorporated into daily practice. School leaders should focus on the occurrence of these practices when undertaking routine observations and walkthroughs.
- School leaders should work with teachers to build a repertoire of effective higher order questioning strategies. Differentiated PD should be provided to teachers who are having difficulty implementing effective questioning techniques. School leaders should evaluate the success of this PD by observing student responses in lessons.
- The school leaders should seek the support of the Network to engage all staff in PD on the use of data to plan differentiated tasks to match the learning needs of all students in their classrooms. Professional study groups should be organized around strategies that will best meet the diverse needs of all students. Student support staff should be included in this work and used as a resource to address student academic, behavioral, and emotional needs.

- The school leaders should develop and implement a schoolwide policy outlining the expected routines and procedures to be followed in the classrooms by all teachers and students. This should include the movement of students in hallways and how student behavior will be monitored by school leaders and teachers. Specific roles should be assigned to school personnel to ensure that hallways and bathrooms are adequately supervised.
- The school leaders should provide training in developing and using rubrics to assess student work. Teachers should be encouraged to work together to improve how they use rubrics and provide constructive feedback to students. School leaders should talk with students about the quality and impact of the feedback they receive.
- The school leaders and staff, with the support of the Network, should develop and implement a plan to significantly increase students' exposure to technology as a learning tool. School leaders should assess the impact of this plan on student learning.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- The current draft of the school Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) does not include a thorough and accurate evaluation of the challenges presently facing the school.
- The newly implemented character development program and the creation of a character development cluster position to address student discipline issues have resulted in little change in the severity of these incidents.
- The use of common planning time is inconsistent and has little impact on classroom practice. Some observed meetings involved mostly administrative tasks.
- PD is focused on grades K-5, resulting in gaps in the supports provided to middle school teachers.
- Teachers reported that there are infrequent informal observations, and little follow-up feedback is received. This limits the opportunities in the teacher evaluation process to bring about sustained improvement in the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom.
- Feedback on formal observation does not reflect an emphasis on the collection, analysis and use of data to inform instructional planning and to address students' diverse needs.

Recommendations:

- The Network should provide support to the School Leadership Team (SLT) in revising the CEP to include a comprehensive needs assessment. This should include data analysis to identify clearly the most urgent school needs. The SLT should be provided with PD to help them gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by the school.
- The school should allocate resources to implement a schoolwide program to address the behavioral issues in the building, e.g., Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). The school leaders and Network should ensure, through observation, that all teachers consistently implement the program. All school staff should ensure that high expectations for behavior and

self-discipline among students is the goal for the entire school community and that all stakeholders work together to achieve this goal.

- School administrators should closely monitor the organization and use of common planning time, and ensure that it is used for collaborative planning using an inquiry framework. School leaders and teachers should ensure that the impact of common planning is reflected in the classroom through improved teaching and learning.
- School leaders should assess and evaluate the allocation of supports and the effectiveness of PD to provide equitable training to all teachers and support staff across all grades.
- School leaders should provide written feedback to all teachers following all observations and walkthroughs. The feedback should focus on the quality of student learning and should lead, as appropriate, to follow-up visits, PD opportunities and the sharing of good practice.
- When providing feedback to teachers, school leaders should ensure that they provide clear recommendations regarding teacher use of data in planning and that this information is used to effect future planning and instruction.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- The school building is 83 years old and has been poorly maintained. The building does not meet the teaching and learning needs of the staff and students.
- Programs that have been implemented to address the behavioral issues confronting the school have not been effective. Parents and teachers raised concerns about student behavior and bullying. Parents indicated that instances of bullying and specific instances of violence were frequent and were not effectively addressed by the school leaders.
- Interviews revealed a breakdown in communication between school leadership and support staff. This has resulted in a negative impact on the resolution of attendance, discipline, family, and food/nutrition issues.
- Promotion requirements are only communicated to students and families after students have been identified as 'promotion in doubt.' Transition counseling is not provided for grade 8 students.
- There is no clear system for identifying and supporting at-risk students. While teachers have identified low performing students for inclusion in the morning extended day program, too few targeted students attend the sessions.
- There is limited open access to the library during the day due to staffing constraints.
- The school science lab is a converted classroom and is inadequate for middle school science requirements.

- All information distributed to parents is in English only, which results in parents who do not speak English having less access to information.

Recommendations:

- The Network and school leader should conduct a comprehensive building facilities assessment and identify areas in need of urgent and/or long-term repair. The school leader should seek to reallocate any available funds to help with building improvements.
- The school leaders, staff, students and parents, with help and guidance from the Network, should develop a student code of conduct for behavior expectations that reflects the challenges within the school building. School leaders should work alongside staff in ensuring that the agreed policy is implemented uniformly across the school and should consistently monitor classrooms and hallways to ensure that improvements are established and maintained.
- The school leaders should establish strong and effective channels of communication with all staff members, especially those responsible for intervening with students at-risk due to attendance, tardiness, behavior difficulties, family, and food/nutrition issues. Once established, these channels should be maintained at a high standard so that all concerned are working together to ensure that the needs of students are met.
- The Network should assess the current student support system and assist school leaders to better use existing resources and personnel. The school should develop more consistent communication with students and parents regarding academic expectations and promotional requirements via newsletters, workshops, and a range of other means.
- The school should develop an Academic Intervention Services (AIS) team charged with the identification of at-risk students and the coordination of services to support their academic needs. Once established, school leaders should monitor these services to ensure that they consistently meet the needs of identified students.
- School leaders should reallocate staff to ensure that the library is regularly available to students to provide greater access to the resources.
- The school leaders and science teachers should create a comprehensive plan for the development of the science curriculum that takes advantage of the facilities in the newly constructed wing, expected to open in September 2011.
- The school leader should ensure that all written communications are sent home in languages that parents can understand.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- There is limited use of formative assessment data. There is little evidence that data is used to inform schoolwide and grade level decision-making.

- Too few teachers used data effectively to group their students or to adjust their instructional plans. Teachers are inexperienced in developing common formative assessments to monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of students.
- The analysis of student progress in ELA is limited, and not all students have yet been assessed on their reading levels. This means that programs, instruction and support cannot be adapted or adjusted to respond to individual needs.

Recommendations:

- The school leaders, with Network support, should urgently review the use of data to inform whole school planning and the identification of academic priorities. The information should be used to set challenging academic goals and targets at grade and classroom levels. All teachers should be held accountable for the progress of the students they teach.
- PD should be provided by the Network in using data as a tool to improve instructional planning and delivery. The PD should be designed to enable teachers to devise accurate formative assessments that assess student achievement and provide a good indicator of student progress. Teachers should work together to ensure consistency of the formative assessments, and school leaders should evaluate their impact on improving student learning.
- The school should develop an assessment plan, in which formative assessments in ELA are identified, data collection tools are developed, and timelines for assessment are created. Teachers should ensure that the plan is implemented in every classroom and school leaders should monitor classrooms to ensure full compliance.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- PD is not based sufficiently on the use of specific data, analyzing students' learning needs, or on providing strategies to support teachers in addressing these needs.
- Teachers are not held accountable for incorporating strategies learned from PD into their daily instruction.
- PD has been focused largely on the implementation of the new reading and writing program. This means that no time was available for teachers to work on key issues around improving the quality of teaching and student learning.
- PD is largely offered on a whole-school basis with little or no support provided to meet the specific needs of individual teachers.
- There is no PD provided for teachers in addressing the specific learning needs of students with disabilities and ELLs.

Recommendations:

- Student data should be used as the center of planning when PD plans are created with school and student priorities identified. School leaders should ensure that the PD program equips teachers

with the necessary skills to meet whole school priorities as well as addresses the diverse needs of students.

- School leaders and the Network should ensure that PD focuses on providing strategies that lead to improvement in the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Classroom observation outcomes should be used to identify the specific needs of individual teachers, with focused PD and support provided to address these deficiencies.
- School administrators should closely monitor outcomes from PD and evaluate how they impact teacher practice and student performance.
- PD should be provided for all teachers to enable them to effectively address the specific learning needs of students with disabilities and ELLs.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- There is limited evidence of the Network providing PD for staff or school leaders on the use of data as an instructional tool.
- Although the Network provides walkthroughs with written feedback and PD offerings, the frequency of these visits is insufficient to address the urgent academic and discipline issues faced by this school.
- The Network provides oral translation services for the school, but the school has not adequately accessed support for the translation of written documentation.
- The building has not been adequately maintained. Rooms are not completely painted, treads on stairs are heavily worn, and student and adult restrooms are inadequate and unclean.

Recommendations:

- The Network should provide urgent training to school leaders on the effective use of data. The data specialist should receive coaching on engaging in data-driven conversations with teachers to increase student achievement.
- The Network should provide ongoing, on-site support for the whole school community to rapidly develop staff and leadership capacity, with the goal of improving safety and student achievement.
- The school should access translation services to facilitate communication with all parents and families.
- The Network should advocate for the speedy resolution of any longstanding and incomplete requests for building repairs and maintenance.
- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team's (JIT) recommendations.

Other Concern:

While the school has a Level Three Officer and three Safety Agents, the Principal reported that an intruder gained access to the building during the school day. Members of the JIT review team were not required to present identification to access the building, and security was not present at the front door upon their arrival.

PART 3: 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.

- The Interim Acting Principal should be retained and provided with a high quality mentor to enable him to address the problems and challenges of low student achievement and discipline problems.
- The Network should provide ongoing support to enable school leaders to provide a safe and effective learning environment. Regular visits should be made by the Network to ensure that the building stays safe.
- New staff that can bring about improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and in doing so improve student achievement should be hired.
- The school should be truncated to allow the creation of a separate administration for the newly created Middle School.