THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234
Office of Elementary, Middle, Secondary and Continuing Education

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April 18, 2011

Jean-Claude Brizard
Superintendent of Schools
Rochester City School District
131 West Broad Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Dear Mr. Brizard

Commissioner's Regulations Part 100.2 requires a Joint Intervention Team (JIT) review for schools identified as Persistently Lowest-Achieving in school year 2010-11. The JIT consisted of an intensive two or three day on-site review of teaching and learning in areas that caused the school to be designated as Persistently Lowest-Achieving. Records, interviews and classroom observations focused on the school's educational program as it relates to the identified accountability measures, i.e., English language arts, mathematics and/or graduation rate.

The JIT Report with recommendations to improve student achievement is enclosed for the **Charlotte High School**. The findings and recommendations should be considered when determining the intervention model to be implemented in the school.

Thank you for your cooperation. If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact Sandra Norfleet, Regional Education Coordinator at 718-722-2647.

Sincerely,

Ira Schwartz

Enclosure
cc: John B. King
Sally Bachofer
Beth Mascitti-Miller
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Sharon Holder
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NYSED/ ROCHESTER CSD JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code:	26160010060
School Name:	Charlotte High School
School Address:	4115 Lake Avenue Rochester, NY 14612
Principal:	Wakili Moore
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Persistently Lowest- Achieving/ School Under Registration Review (PLA/SURR)
Area(s) of Identification:	English Language Arts; Mathematics and Graduation Rate
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	February 7 – 11, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Charlotte High School (CHS) serves 1050 students in grades 7 through 12. In 2004, the school changed from a middle school to a high school by growing out a grade each year. There have been four graduating classes since 2007. Student enrollment is approximately 58 percent Black, 23 percent Hispanic, 17 percent White and two percent Asian students. Approximately 23 percent of the students receive special education services, and six percent are English Language Learners (ELLs). Fewer than 10 percent of the student population chose to attend Charlotte and fewer than 10 percent are from the neighborhood community. The majority of grade 7 students who entered the school are from elementary schools that are in various improvement phases of accountability. There are also a significant number of students who enter a grade level over-aged (overall 27 percent). Sixteen percent (156/1050) of the students were placed, enrolled, or transferred to the building after July 1, 2010.

The Principal was appointed to Charlotte HS in August 2010. Administrative staff also includes six Assistant Principals (APs) and one athletic director. Currently, two of Charlotte's teachers are on special assignment and are temporarily acting as administrators in the building. The school has had three Principals in four years. There are 91 teachers, of whom 97 percent are highly qualified. Thirty-eight percent (34/91) of the teachers have been at the school for three years or less. Twenty-one percent (19/91) of the teachers are in their first year of teaching, which indicates a high staff mobility rate. Staff also includes five school counselors, two psychologists, and three social workers.

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 two consecutive years, as indicated by a 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	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	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 the past two consecutive years show an increase in the number of subgroups that did not make Adequate Yearly progress (AYP) in identified area(s).	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for the past two consecutive years indicate an increase in the achievement gap between identified subgroups and the ***All Students*** subgroup in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓
-	For 2010-11, the school was identified as a **Persistently Lowest- Achieving school.**	✓
-	Total high school Cohort Graduation rate is below 60 percent.	✓

B. School Strengths

There are many support services offered to students in the school through a partnership with Hillside Children's Center. Many Hillside staff are located within the school to service students before, during, and after the school day.

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:

- In grades 7 and 8, the lowest performing students are receiving READ 180 as their core ELA curriculum. This intervention program does not meet the New York State (NYS) Standards for English, which require higher level skills.

- There is limited evidence of a horizontally and vertically articulated curriculum that is aligned with the guidance documents provided by the District.

- There is little collegial conversation among staff members, i.e., common planning time regarding the core curriculum to inform day to day instruction.

- There were limited examples of rigorous lesson plans, incorporation of pacing guidance documents, and learning goals that follow the Rochester Instructional Framework and New York State (NYS) Standards.

- Instructional resources were limited and lacked the required rigor necessary to meet the NYS Standards for middle and commencement levels.

Recommendations:

- The school and District should ensure all students receive core ELA instruction that meets the mandated NYS Standards and incorporates the developing common core standards. Read 180 should only be used as a supplemental intervention strategy.

- The school administration, in conjunction with Central Office content specialists, should create opportunities for teachers to vertically and horizontally map curriculum in core content areas.

- A structured system should be provided for departments to regularly meet to review and align curriculum based on assessment data.

- A systematic lesson plan review that includes monitoring of implementation, pacing, and level of rigor should be established.

- A review of instructional resources should be conducted and professional development (PD) provided to ensure appropriate pacing and rigor of instructional materials to meet NYS learning standards.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- The staff are not consistently using research-based instructional strategies in their lessons. There was little evidence of differentiated instruction and flexible instructional groupings, efficient use of instructional time, effective classroom management and routines, or integration of available technology, thus resulting in limited student engagement.

- There is minimal evidence that the integrated co-teaching (ICT) class for students with disabilities includes specialized instruction and co-teaching.

- The delivery of English as a Second Language (ESL) services as observed does not constitute a rigorous instructional program.

- Higher order thinking skills and processes were not incorporated in most observed lessons. This was evidence of low teacher expectations for student learning.

- The school lacks a uniform schoolwide grading policy that reflects clear expectations for student academic performance.

Recommendations:

- Staff should consistently implement research-based instructional practices in daily instruction for all content areas. Instructional practices should include differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, rubrics, higher order thinking skills, inquiry-based learning, research, problem-solving, scaffolding, writing across the content, and project-based learning. Students should be provided more access to technology as part of their instructional program.

- District and school leaders should take an active role in monitoring integrated special classes for effectiveness. The District should ensure that special education teachers are provided with substantial professional learning opportunities related to the delivery of special education services within the general education classroom. It is essential that the monitoring of this model is led by an administrator who is knowledgeable about special education requirements; this person should be solely dedicated to this area.

- Instructional planning should be driven by the Rochester Instructional Framework and ELA/ESL standards. It is essential that the monitoring of this implementation is led by an administrator.

- PD to increase staff expectations for student achievement should be provided to the faculty. Lesson plans should be regularly monitored for the inclusion of higher order thinking skills.

- The grading policy should be consistently implemented by each content area department and clearly communicated to staff, students, and parents.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- Although a formal Annual Professional Performance review process exists, there are limited informal instructional walkthroughs.

- The master schedule that has been maintained from previous leadership has limited opportunities for common planning time.

- The currently constituted administrative team does not focus on instructional improvement; the majority of their time is spent on behavior and daily operational issues.

- There was limited evidence of teachers in the hallways during passing periods and multiple examples of security staff ineffectively transitioning students from the halls to rooms after class periods began.

- The Principal was not aware of many secondary school regulatory requirements.

Recommendations:

- The administration should develop a plan for regular, frequent informal walkthroughs that result in data to drive instructional practices.

- Common planning time and opportunities for vertical teaming should be built into the school master schedule.

- The administrative staff should be reconstituted to include strong instructional leaders.

- The Principal, AP (operations) and lead School Safety Officer should plan and implement a formal process for management of the school that includes monitoring students exiting and entering the school at all times, as well as during period transitions and cafeteria usage.

- The Principal should be assigned an experienced secondary administrative mentor and attend PD on mandates and regulations, including Commissioner's Regulations Part 100, Part 154, and Part 200.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- Classroom and stairwell doors were locked after each transition period; many doors have broken hinges and doorknobs and lack a window to provide visibility into the classrooms. This created a safety issue and a loss of instructional time for students. There were some bathrooms with non-working sinks, lacking toilet paper and working toilets.

- Four security cameras had not yet been installed even after numerous requests from the school.

- There is inconsistency in the implementation and enforcement of schoolwide behavior policies and the District code of conduct.

- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) are not being consistently implemented for students with disabilities, as required by Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are not available to students in all four core content areas.

- There is very limited parent involvement in the school.

Recommendations:

- Classroom and stairwell doors should be unlocked and adequately supervised at all times. The facilities department should work with the school to address full compliance with safety regulations as related to restrooms and doors.

- The facilities department should work with the school to address safety and security needs related to functioning security cameras.

- The school should work closely with the NYS School Comprehensive Resource Center and the District School Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) team to review student disciplinary data using a schoolwide evaluation tool (SET) and to revise disciplinary procedures.

- CHS should be included in a current Quality Improvement Process (QIP) targeting Functional Behavioral Assessments (FBAs) and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs). School administration needs PD regarding strategies for discipline of students with disabilities.

- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) in core content areas should be available to all non-proficient students and documentation of these services maintained in a schoolwide database. While the Response to Intervention team (RtI) is in its first year of implementation, it is important that the team focus more strongly on academic support services and development of a Standard Protocol for Tier II academic interventions.

- The school should develop and implement a plan to involve parents and the school community.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- There is minimal evidence of data usage to inform instruction and improvement planning.

- There is a disproportionate representation of overage students in all grades (27 percent overall); in grade 9, 43 percent of students are 16 years of age or older.

Recommendations:

- Administrators and teachers should systematically use trend data to identify students' strengths and needs and to inform instructional planning. The School Leadership Team (SLT) should model the use of data. The District should provide mandatory training on the usage of data tools, data analysis, and the use of data for instructional improvement and differentiation.

- Retention policies and practices should be revised to reflect research in this area. Additionally, alternative programming and options for credit recovery should be considered.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- There is no evidence of a cohesive plan for schoolwide PD.
- There is no evidence of PD at the school level that focuses on meeting the diverse learning needs of students.
- There is no strategic plan for ensuring that staff are held accountable for incorporating strategies learned in PD into their daily teaching.

Recommendations:

- The SLT should ensure that PD is aligned to the school improvement goals and student outcomes.
- The school should provide PD opportunities for teachers to meet the diverse student needs, including students with disabilities, ELLs and at-risk youth.
- Teacher evaluations should include implementation of the strategies learned during PD.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- There is little evidence of the District actively monitoring the implementation of the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP).
- The District appears to have provided the school with sufficient staff positions and instructional resources. However, there is no evidence that the District has monitored the implementation of these resources.

Recommendations:

- Collaborative monitoring by the Office of Teaching and Learning, the Zone Chief, and other District offices should be conducted frequently. The CEP should be evaluated for effectiveness regularly.
- A strategic Resource Review should be conducted regularly by the Zone Chief.
- The District should provide support in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Intervention Team.

Other Concern(s):

The practice of using Room 11 as a late room for tardy students should be discontinued. Children should not be denied access to instruction. The school should implement an alternative model of consequences for student tardiness to class. Any removal of a student from instruction should be documented.

PART 3: OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Overall Finding

Reference	Review Team Finding	✓
(c)	The school has not made sufficient progress in identified areas, and is unlikely to make AYP without further significant change.	✓

B. Overall Recommendation

Reference	Review Team Recommendation	✓
(c)	Develop and implement a new plan that could include significant changes in staff, organizational structure, leadership and/or configuration, 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 recommendation should be accomplished.

- The administrative staff should be reconstituted to include strong secondary level instructional leaders.
- A schoolwide plan for student behavior led by the SLT should be implemented immediately. All staff should consistently enforce the agreed upon plan.
- The faculty, as currently constituted, should be evaluated; all staff should reapply for a position in the school. The remaining and new staff should undergo mandatory, intensive PD in researched based instructional practices.
- Under the selected federal model, the school should work with an Educational Partner to develop a positive identity and unique, curricular offerings as an asset in the District's school portfolio. This change will address the need to attract students and change traditional placement practices.
- The District and school should implement an attendance improvement plan.
- Central office Department of Specialized Services should monitor and support the school to ensure compliance with regulations for students with disabilities.
- Central office staff should monitor and support the school to ensure compliance with regulations for ELL.
- The Zone Chief should lead regularly scheduled monitoring and technical assistance visits to the building and identify and deploy the necessary resources to improve student achievement. The building needs to maintain compliance with federal and State regulations.