

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	21K525
School Name:	Edward R. Murrow High School
School Address:	1800 Avenue L Brooklyn, NY 11230
Principal:	Anthony R. Lodico
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced Focused English Language Arts- Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; and English Language Learners Mathematics- Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners
Areas of Identification:	
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	March 29-30, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Edward R. Murrow High School currently enrolls approximately 4,000 students in grades 9 through 12. The school enrollment is 26 percent Black, 16 percent Hispanic, 26 percent Asian, and 32 percent White students. Of these students ten percent are students with disabilities, and eight percent are English Language Learners (ELLs). Edward R. Murrow is an Educational Option school that allows 300 students each year to audition into the arts and theatre institutes; 700 other students enroll annually as freshmen and live in the surrounding Brooklyn community.

The administrative team includes the Principal, five Assistant Principals (APs) and several content area teacher/supervisors. The Principal has been at the school for seven years. Most of the APs have worked at the school for many years. Most of the 200 teachers are experienced, with ten percent of the teaching staff having been at the school for fewer than three years. The percentage of highly qualified teachers is approximately 89 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	
+	Positive trend data for all identified subject/areas and subgroups for the past two consecutive years (2007-08 and 2008-09), as demonstrated by an increase in the percentage of students performing at or above Level 3 and/or a Performance Index increase of five or more points.	✓
+	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR)	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	for 2007-08 and 2008-09 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.	
-	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 2007-08 and 2008-09 show an increase in the number of subgroups that did not make AYP in identified area(s).	✓
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
+	2009-2010 NYC Progress Report Grade of A	✓
+	NYC Quality Review Score of Well-Developed	✓

B. School Strengths

- The school offers a large number of unique academic courses, seven World languages, and a large array of Advanced Placement courses. Students are expected to be self-directed and to be accountable for their own choices and actions.
- The college office supports the unique needs of first generation college applicants throughout the college application process.
- The faculty makes itself available to students during and after school hours, and students have access to tutors, librarians, teachers, teacher e-mail addresses and websites.

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 written English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is underdeveloped. The school's approach to programming provides students with uniquely designed ELA courses, but the written curriculum for these courses does not consistently reference State standards. The written ELA curriculum is not sufficient to serve as a comprehensive guide to inform instruction and assessment.
- Lesson objectives are not consistently referenced in the written curriculum and in lesson plans and are not clearly communicated to students. Lesson aims lack rigor and are not aligned to State standards. Where State standards are included in written curriculum documents they are referenced by number only (Standard 1). This lack of elaboration makes reference to the standard

meaningless. The aims that are written by some teachers on the board are too broad and do not contribute to student understanding of the lesson.

Recommendations

- The District should work with the school on the development of curriculum in all core areas including all English language arts (ELA) courses and ensure that it is clearly aligned with the current New York State (NYS) Learning Standards. The school's written curriculum should be aligned to the new NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards in ELA and literacy 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.

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.

- School leaders should ensure that teachers have written lesson plans that contain clear and explicit objectives aligned to State standards. Reference to the State standards should include descriptive text that clearly communicates what students are to master. Lesson objectives should be communicated to students in student-friendly language and should drive all lesson activities. Teacher-created informal assessments should be conducted at the end of each lesson so that the teacher knows if all students have achieved the objective. School leaders should evaluate teachers' planning regularly and make lesson objectives a focus of their evaluation on walkthroughs and observations.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Not all teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies to deliver engaging instruction effectively to their students. Differentiation was noted in higher-level classes more frequently than in lower level classes, where students participated in identical activities, regardless of individual need. Direct teacher-centered lessons were observed in many classes, although some teachers employed more strategies to engage the students in rigorous and challenging work. Students in higher-level classes demonstrated more interest in lessons and freely engaged in lively discussions. Some students in lower level classes responded to teacher-directed lessons with passivity and were much less vocal and actively engaged in their learning.
- Grouping of students was not always based on their needs. It was more generally organized to facilitate activities that required partner or group cooperation. Small group instruction was not consistently used as a method to address the needs of identified subgroups. Teachers did not consistently incorporate achievement data to inform grouping or to differentiate their instruction to meet identified student needs.
- The pacing of instruction in some classes was ineffective, resulting in lower student productivity and engagement. The 'do now' in some classes detracted from the day's lesson, as it was not aligned

with the aim or objective of the lesson. The length of the “do now” varied across classes but was observed to last for 20-35 minutes in some classes.

- Teachers did not sufficiently align lesson objectives with State standards. Lesson objectives were not consistently shared with students. Although teachers posted aims, there was no clear link between these aims and State standards in most classes. Aims were often written in the form of poorly developed, essential questions that lacked academic rigor and content relevance.
- The level of student-to-student discussion and interaction was noticeably less in lower level classes and self-contained special education classes than observed in upper level courses. Students in more advanced classes displayed higher levels of student-to-student interaction and were more actively engaged in learning. Students experienced more interactive lessons in higher-level classes. For example, in one upper level ELA class, the volume of voices simultaneously engaged in discussion was appropriate but robust. In lower level courses students had to be reminded to talk with each other and, even with reminders, students did not freely engage.
- In most observed classes, recall and comprehension questions were predominant. Students were not consistently engaged in higher order thinking activities and there was a lack of rigor in some lower level classes. Students were not asked to elaborate on responses or to cite evidence. Students passively opted out of active class participation when teachers did not strategically engage all students in discussion but relied on students to voluntarily answer teacher-posed questions.
- Rubrics were under-used by both teachers and students to evaluate student work and to improve student achievement. Rubrics varied among teachers and were inconsistently used to assess student work. Written teacher comments on student work were often vague and included generic praise such as “nice job.” These comments were insufficient to inform the students about what exactly contributed to that comment. Students did not use rubrics to self-evaluate independently or to determine next steps.
- There was no schoolwide approach to grading, and academic performance was not measured uniformly across the school. Rather, published policies reviewed indicate that such things as the weights assigned to class tests and homework vary by department and course without a clear rationale being provided to the school community as to the reasons for these differences.

Recommendations:

- A comprehensive PD initiative should be developed that provides all teachers with strategies to differentiate their instruction. This should ensure that all students can regularly participate in activities that are engaging, rigorous and modified to address their specific needs. Administrators should closely monitor the implementation of differentiation strategies through focused walkthroughs and formal observations.
- All teachers should use a variety of assessment information to group students within classes and provide instruction that reflects these assessment outcomes. For example, teachers should collect homework results, student achievement on teacher-made tests, item analyses, or notebook reviews to inform small group, targeted instruction to support individual student growth. School leaders should monitor the impact of these strategies on instruction and student outcomes.
- The school should review the practice of using “do now” and establish and communicate clear expectations for time limits, relevance and appropriate use. School leaders should monitor for

effective implementation of lesson pace and delivery during walkthroughs and focused teacher observations.

- Teachers should ensure that lesson objectives are clearly stated in their planning and that these are referred to and shared with students. School leaders should review lesson plans to ensure that State standards are clearly identified and that they are communicated to students in all classes. School leaders should monitor for full implementation by looking for posted objectives in each classroom and ensure that all students understand the posted objectives.
- School leaders should, during routine classroom observations, identify teachers who successfully engage all students in interactive and engaging lessons. An intervisitation policy and a calendar of visitations should be scheduled to provide teachers with models and examples of effective practice and appropriate student engagement. School leaders, with Network support, should provide differentiated PD for teachers who struggle to offer challenging, interactive and engaging learning experiences for students.
- School leaders should use classroom observations to identify teachers who successfully engage all students in higher-level discussions and questioning. An intervisitation policy and calendar should be established to provide all teachers with models and examples of effective practice. Where there are teachers who have difficulty providing effective and challenging questioning, additional PD should be provided.
- The school philosophy of student self-direction and personal responsibility should be incorporated into the use of rubrics for self-evaluation. Training should be provided for students so they can effectively use rubrics to score their own work. Training for leaders and teachers should be provided, with Network support, on effective rubric development within courses and/or departments. School leaders should monitor the use of rubrics across the school.
- The Inquiry Team should be engaged in the examination of each department's grading policies. They should monitor pass rates and grading trends by teacher and department. The school should revise policies if inequalities between policies are linked to performance trends that do not accurately reflect student learning and student achievement. A consistent grading policy reflecting department expectations should be implemented so that all constituencies (administration, teachers, students and parents) are fully aware of student strengths and areas in need of improvement. School leaders should monitor classroom practice to ensure that the policy is universally and effectively applied.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- School leaders have not effectively engaged all School Leadership Team (SLT) members in addressing the school's pressing academic needs. SLT members are unaware of the school's accountability status.
- Formal structures for regularly scheduled articulation between general educators, ESL and self-contained special education teachers have not been established. This lack of coordination and articulation is negatively impacting the capacity of some special education teachers and some ESL teachers to provide effective instruction.

- PD and teacher observations are not sufficiently focused on the development of the ELA curriculum or the needs of the identified subgroups. There is no documented plan to specifically address the needs of teachers who teach ELLs, former ELLs or students with disabilities. Feedback from teacher observations is not sufficiently focused on improving the quality of instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should contact the Network to request training for the SLT to enable them to understand the school's accountability status and root causes of weak areas. School leaders and the Network should assist the SLT in creating a comprehensive needs assessment for the school and create action plans to address the achievement gaps in the identified subgroups.
- School leaders should ensure that ESL and ELA teachers collaboratively work on the skills and knowledge required in the ELA Regents test to increase the pass rate of ESL students. Special education teachers should be integrated into their respective content areas. For example, ESL and self-contained special education teachers who teach mathematics should collaborate with the mathematics department to ensure that all mathematics teachers understand how to support all students in achieving State standards.
- School leaders should establish a multi-year approach to the whole-school PD plan and conduct an annual comprehensive needs assessment to determine the foci for PD priorities. The needs assessment should include student progress, teacher observations, and teacher self-identified needs to determine priorities. PD should be ongoing and embedded and should be routinely monitored for full application in all classrooms. Teachers should be provided with feedback on their implementation of specific instructional strategies to address the needs of the targeted subgroups.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- The school has not formally established relationships with community-based organizations (CBOs), to effectively and efficiently support all families represented in the identified subgroups in order to overcome barriers to academic achievement.
- The school has not established a well-defined system to identify at-risk students. The school relies upon one-to two year-old performance data from State tests and report cards to identify at-risk students and to place students in leveled classes. The school's efforts to provide Academic Intervention Services (AIS) through leveled classes is not effectively producing increased student achievement in identified subgroups.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should seek the assistance of the Network in identifying CBOs to help support students and families to overcome barriers to academic progress. The school should establish a system to link parents and families to CBOs to ensure that all families who would benefit from community services access these supports.

- The school leaders should collaborate with the Network to identify and administer reliable diagnostic assessments that will be used to identify students for AIS to meet the needs of identified subgroups. For example, students should be placed in ‘on-track classes’ and provided with structured support as needed, such as mathematics tutoring to support students in regular integrated algebra.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- The school is focused on improving the performance of the students in the lowest third and is not sufficiently focused on monitoring the progress of individual students in the identified subgroups. The school historically relies on creating lower level, tracked classes to address the lowest performing students. The recent gains made in student achievement in the lowest performing third of students in the school have not improved student performance in the identified subgroups.
- The school has not sufficiently analyzed the root cause of poor attendance issues and has not created a plan to address these issues in an aggressive and effective manner.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should seek the support of the Network to expand the school’s focus on the lowest third to include students within the identified subgroups. School leaders should more closely monitor the individual performance of students in the identified subgroups so that interventions and supports can be quickly implemented as needs arise.
- The school leaders should seek the support of the Network attendance outreach specialist to assist in analyzing attendance data to identify which students are most at-risk due to poor attendance and to identify root causes of poor attendance. Attendance trends and patterns should be analyzed to determine if there is a correlation between student absences and the achievement of all subgroups. The Principal should seek further Network support to visit similar schools where poor attendance has been an issue but has been effectively addressed.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- There is no documented PD plan to specifically address the needs of teachers who teach ELLs, former ELLs, or students with disabilities. There is no comprehensive, cohesive program of PD to address the identified needs of the students in underperforming subgroups that is differentiated to support the instructional needs of each teacher.
- The weekly 60-minute meeting times are not maximized to serve as PD opportunities to improve instruction and student outcomes.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should conduct an annual comprehensive needs assessment for PD planning, based on student progress data, outcomes from classroom observations, and teacher self-identified needs. The plan should take into account the identified needs of the whole staff, groups of

teachers and individuals and should include strategies for monitoring the implementation of strategies learned during PD, with opportunities for further PD if required.

- The school leaders should effectively use available PD time to provide all teachers with support in delivering rigorous and engaging instruction that ensures increased student performance. Every opportunity should be taken for staff training, modeling, intervisitation and debriefing on successful strategies to consistently improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- The Network has not provided additional leadership support to address the underachievement issues associated with the special education and ELL programs. The management/operational/HR support provided by the Network is not timely. APs repeatedly have to reach out to some Network support specialists to access assistance with operational concerns.
- The Network has not sufficiently advised the school to focus on identified subgroups and has not communicated a sense of urgency concerning the performance of students in these subgroups.
- The Network has not provided the school with the support needed to implement periodic diagnostic assessments more accurately or assess student achievement and analyze the effectiveness of school interventions and programming.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should work with the Network to identify high schools that have achieved success in improving the progress of students with disabilities and ELLs and conduct intervisitations. School leaders should insist that Network specialists respond to school requests promptly and inform the school when they will be able to provide the assistance required.
- The school should seek the support of the Network to conduct a thorough needs assessment to assist with the efforts to address the learning needs of identified subgroups.
- School leaders should seek the support of the Network to assist the school in the creation of and proper use of diagnostic assessments.
- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations.

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.

Edward R. Murrow High School is a non-Title I school. The 2009-2010 CEP indicated that in 2008-2009 it was a School Requiring Academic Progress (SRAP) Year 5. As a result of the changes in the new No Child Left Behind/State Education Department (NCLB/SED) Differentiated Accountability System, the school is now identified as Restructuring Advanced.

The current Principal should be supported by a mentor who has successfully improved achievement for the school’s identified subgroups. A Restructuring Plan should be developed that is significantly focused on improving the performance of Hispanic students, ELLs, and students with disabilities in ELA and mathematics.

The Restructuring Plan should address five central themes:

- a more specific focus on the needs of the identified subgroups;
- the quality of instruction in all classrooms;
- the appropriate identification of at- risk students within the identified subgroups;
- service provisions for at-risk students in the identified subgroups that include the highest expectations for academic achievement; and
- PD to address the instructional needs of the identified subgroups.

The Restructuring Plan should address the following:

- The school’s current practice of using middle school performance data to place students in tracked/leveled classes should be reconsidered. The school should use developmentally appropriate standardized reading and mathematics diagnostic assessments to identify students for academic interventions. The school should collaborate with the Network to identify and administer reliable diagnostic assessments that will be used to identify students for in-school AIS support.
- Academic interventions and course placements for all students should ensure that they make progress and remain on track to pass courses and Regents tests. Support should be provided during the school day to ensure that all students make expected progress.
- The school should apply the same expectations of high-achieving students to all students in the school, and ensure that all students are provided with high quality instruction. All content teachers should receive the same level of support. Teachers of students in special education self-contained classes and ESL teachers should be included in all content department meetings and in department PD sessions.
- The school should collaborate with the Network to identify high schools that have achieved success for students with disabilities and ELLs and conduct intervisitations.