

NYSED/ GENEVA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code:	430700010006
School Name:	Geneva High School
School Address:	Carter Road Geneva, New York
Principal:	William Rotenberg
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring (year 1) Focused English Language Arts – Economically Disadvantaged
Area(s) of Identification:	
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	February 28, March 1 -3

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Geneva High School serves 725 students in grades 9 through 12. The school enrollment is 20 percent Black, 11 percent Hispanic, 67 percent White and two percent Asian students. Of these students, four percent are English Language learners (ELLs) and 14 percent are students with disabilities. Geneva High School is the sole high school serving the Geneva City School District, one of two small city school districts in Ontario County. Geneva High School is physically connected to Geneva Middle School.

The administrative team consists of the Principal, an Assistant Principal (AP) and a Dean of Students, who also serves as director of athletics. The Principal has served for four years. The Assistant Principal (AP) is in his first year at Geneva HS, but has previously served as an AP. The leadership team is supported in student management issues by a full-time school resource officer and three hall supervisors and academically supported by department chairs in all areas, who serve grades 6 through 12.

The school staff includes 66 teachers, four guidance counselors, a social worker, a library media specialist, and a psychologist. Five teachers have one to three years experience and 61 teachers have more than three years experience. For the last three years, the teacher turnover rate has been 13 percent per year. All teachers teaching in core academic subjects are highly qualified. In addition, there are 56 support staff positions, including secretaries, clerks, security and cafeteria staff, teacher aides and teaching assistants.

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, as demonstrated by an increase in the percentage of	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	students performing at or above Level 3 and/or a Performance Index increase of five or more points.	
+	School is within five points of meeting its Effective Annual Measurable Objective (EAMO) for ALL identified subgroups in ALL subject/area(s) of identification.	✓
+	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for the past two consecutive years indicate the school has reduced the achievement gap between identified subgroups and the <u>All Students</u> subgroup in ALL identified subject/area(s) by ten percent or more.	✓

B. School Strengths

- The library media center is well equipped, centrally located and well maintained.
- The school has long standing community partnerships including an articulation agreement with the local community college, many special projects with Hobart William Smith College, the Boys and Girls Club, the 4H Club, and other community organizations.

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 curriculum consists of an extensive written curriculum in the form of curriculum maps. However, most curriculum maps have limited elements and are focused on scope and sequence, rather than the alignment of content, skills and assessment, all of which are essential for effective instruction.
- Extension courses as currently constructed are single year core courses taught over a two year period. The use of two year extension courses lead to students failing to accumulate credits in a timely manner. At-risk students do not have adequate credit accumulation opportunities when assigned to two year extension courses.
- Many at-risk students do not successfully obtain credits on the middle school Foreign Language Proficiency exams and experience a credit deficiency when they enter high school.
- Large numbers of students are unsuccessful in passing the earth science course, thus preventing students from credit accrual and eventually graduation.
- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are poorly structured and not coordinated with subject area classes.
- Content curriculum, especially in English language arts, is not fully developed, lacking rigor and specific, measurable outcomes. The curriculum identifies the New York State (NYS) Standards and

Performance Indicators without inclusion of resources, assessments, expectations, essential questions, and instructional strategies.

- Low expectations for students and a lack of instructional rigor were observed across the curriculum.

Recommendations:

- Revise the curriculum documents to ensure the inclusion of aligned content, skills and assessments.
- Expand offerings of the algebra courses during middle school and summer sessions. Focus personnel resources to achieve student success in mathematics, science and social studies in Grade 9 and 10 without the use of two-year extension courses.
- Increase the number of grade 9 students with Language Other Than English (LOTE) credits when they enter high school. Create an option such as summer school for Spanish 8 within the middle-high school transition.
- Provide students with the opportunity to take the living environment course prior to earth science.
- Restructure AIS to increase teacher contact time and to maximize articulation between AIS and classroom courses and teachers. Target AIS so that it results in specific and aligned activities that improve student academic achievement in core classes.
- Monitor the process for the development, implementation, and revision of the curriculum. The Principal must ensure that the developed curriculum becomes the taught curriculum.
- Increase the rigor of all courses. Eliminate all activities that are below grade level expectations. The creation of common assessments should be used as an effective way to increase rigor and monitor student progress.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- There is no schoolwide model of instruction. This has resulted in a lack of urgency, an over reliance on lecture models of passive learning, a lack of formative assessments, and excessive use of lower-level questioning strategies.
- Instructional time is ineffectively used. In many observed instances, instruction started after many minutes were wasted or stopped prior to the end of the class.
- There is a lack of emphasis on literacy across content areas. There was a lack of non-fiction writing in many of the classes and curriculum reviewed.
- Co-teaching and Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) reflected underdeveloped models that result in an uneven distribution of instructional expertise and time. In multiple classrooms, one teacher is teaching as the second teacher is taking notes or passively sitting in class. There is little or no interaction between the second teacher and the student.
- There is no schoolwide grading policy. In some instances, student transcripts reflected a significant gap between Regents exam score and class grade for the same academic year.

- Technology that has been purchased is not being optimally used. The use of technology is not monitored by school leaders.
- Teacher questioning techniques and class activities are at the lower level of Bloom’s taxonomy (knowledge and comprehension).
- Delivery of instruction is not based on the differentiated needs of students or student performance data.
- In classes observed, the use of formative assessments was not readily evident. Instruction proceeded without teachers checking for student understanding at regular intervals.

Recommendations:

- Provide training and require the use of research-based instructional practices including: explicit and measurable learning goals; aligned and engaging learning activities; and daily formative and summative assessments. The expectation for all teachers should be to teach rigorous, full-period lessons that are informed by data from frequent informal/formal assessments.
- Require all teachers to teach the entire instructional period. The teachers should consider using self-starting warm-ups that are sometimes graded and summative “Tickets out the Door” (with additional challenge questions to reduce unused time) to increase student time on task. These tasks should be aligned to the central learning of the lesson. The daily expectation for all classes should be to teach rigorous, full-period, engaging lessons that are informed by data from frequent assessments for learning.
- Create a schoolwide literacy initiative that emphasizes reading across the content area and non-fiction writing.
- Replace the reading co-teaching model with a coaching model to build teacher capacity to teach literacy and implement best practices. This model should be required for all classroom teachers. Focus on special education (SE) and English language arts (ELA), but also include content area teachers. SE and ELA teachers should work with the coach a minimum of once a week, and social studies and science teachers a minimum of once every two weeks.
- Create a schoolwide grading policy that is standards-based and focuses on student performance relative to the standard and not compliance or behavior. The Principal should monitor the relationship between class grades and summative assessments.
- Provide ongoing training and monitor its use by staff to optimize the technology, e.g., SMART Boards.
- Engage in the ongoing use of student data to improve instruction and student achievement. This responsibility should be shared between the Principal and the department chair, if the District elects to continue to use department chairs.
- Require a common lesson plan format with emphasis on what students, not the teacher, will be doing, and include learning goals for every lesson that can be measured and achieved within that lesson period. Goals should be standards-based.

- Increase the use of formative assessments. Feedback should be provided to the students and to the teacher.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- Based upon the team's observations, interviews and document reviews, the Principal is competent in managerial tasks and student management issues but has not embraced the role of instructional leader. Overall, the school lacks instructional leadership, and there is no sense of instructional focus in the school.
- The role of department chairs does not support instructional improvement for the department.
- School leaders do not set or pursue high expectations for teaching and learning.
- Informal and formal observations and evaluations do not provide sufficient informative feedback to professional growth of teachers.

Recommendations:

- Reassign/eliminate most managerial tasks from the Principal's position. Make changes in the leadership structure that ensures that the Principal's primary function is to provide supervision and leadership of instruction. This should be part of an overall District-wide focus that empowers and holds principals accountable for leading instruction that is aligned with a District-wide model based on research-based best practices.
- Make the AP and dean responsible and accountable for supervising daily management tasks, including discipline, scheduling and budgeting. Consider assigning administrative tasks such as scheduling to the school guidance counselors or other qualified personnel.
- Reconsider the role of department chairs. Consider two options as follows:
 - Department chairs should be trained and assigned the responsibility of reviewing student data and best practices with teachers, while providing non-supervisory coaching activities in order to improve student achievement.
 - Eliminate the department chair role and create an additional leadership position to allow a more comprehensive approach to instructional leadership at the secondary level.
- Provide written feedback to teachers following informal and formal observations relative to the schoolwide teaching model. School and District leadership should visit classrooms and have this practice become routine.

V. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- The co-teacher model currently used is staff intensive and ineffective in implementation. Co-teachers serve primarily as note-takers in general education classroom and do not interact with students during the classes.

- In almost half of the Integrated Co-teaching classes, the percentage of students with disabilities exceeds 50 percent of student enrollment in the class. In at least one class, the number of students receiving Individualized Educational Program (IEP) services exceeds the maximum limit set by Commissioner's Regulations. This situation creates an imbalance in student populations within the classroom.
- Transition from the middle school to high school does not reflect parent and student choice. Students are assigned to classes exclusively on teacher recommendations thus fostering a system that disproportionately assigns low income and minority students to less rigorous courses.
- Guidance services do not seem aligned to student needs. There is a perception that the school does not intervene early enough to support students prior to their dropping out. At-risk students are not appropriately scheduled for classes and guidance counselors do not always assist students in selecting appropriate career/college pathways. The Guidance Center has not received the necessary PD to successfully work with the population the school serves.
- There does not seem to be a robust structure for school improvement. The strategic planning committee dealing with the graduation rate has made little progress, while the committee dealing with literacy and student life seems to have made more progress. There is no schoolwide group dealing exclusively with improvement in student achievement.
- Reading specialists as they are currently deployed are underutilized.
- There is a widespread perception that the Code of Conduct is not universally enforced.
- There are only a few students in the regional alternative education program. This program is designed to support students at-risk of not graduating. Given the graduation rate, this program appears to be underutilized.
- The school building is not properly maintained. There were complaints of dirty rooms as well as odors in lavatories. Gym lockers are extensively vandalized, reflecting problems both in maintenance and supervision. The building is not an inviting place for learning.

Recommendations:

- Use student data to reevaluate co-teaching services as currently structured. Ensure that co-teachers are effectively used in classroom co-teaching settings, resource room models and in co-planning opportunities with general education teachers.
- Ensure that the percentages of general education students and students with disabilities in ICT classes are appropriate.
- Eliminate two-tier extension courses and other courses that track students. Allow parents and students to choose classes in conjunction with teacher recommendations.
- Set as the goal a Regents diploma with Advanced Designation for as much of the cohort as possible. Conduct a comprehensive review of counseling services that includes parent and student input from all student groups. Provide additional PD to guidance counselors on working with at-risk populations.

- Establish and hold accountable a School Improvement Team that deals with overarching issues of teaching and learning, including the creation of a schoolwide model of instruction, data based instructional decisions, literacy across the content areas, differentiation and PD.
- Create a system for early intervention, e.g., Response to Intervention. Restructure academic intervention services so teachers provide services to their own students or are teamed with a service provider for maximum integration of AIS and the core content.
- Hold a schoolwide forum on the Code of Conduct. Make adjustments as needed. Enforce with dignity and consistency. Reduce routine office referrals by requiring progressive teacher action prior to the referral.
- Consider expanding the number of students in the regional alternative education program.
- Complete necessary repairs to the building, including but not limited to: hallways being patched and painted, bathrooms deep cleaned and non-functioning equipment replaced, e.g., locker doors.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- The student information system is inadequate in providing reports such as number and percent of students earning each grade range per teacher, student final grades and student exam grades differences.
- There appear to be wide discrepancies between the number of students who are on course rosters and the number of students who actually are attending the classes
- Teachers are not using data that is currently available to them to improve instruction.
- There was no evidence in classrooms of formative assessments used to inform instruction, increase rigor, and prepare students for college and career readiness.

Recommendations:

- Upgrade the student information system to provide real time data needed by school leaders and teachers.
- Examine the actual number of students in classrooms relative to the enrollment number per section. Complete an attendance analysis to determine the reason for the discrepancies. Adjust the master schedule as needed.
- Provide targeted PD for all staff and leadership in using data analysis to inform instruction. Ensure teachers use classroom assessments for formative and summative data.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- Most PD has not focused on moving from a teacher directed, lecture based model of instruction to a differentiated instruction based, student-centered classroom environment. There is no evidence faculty has received training on the feedback cycle of student learning.
- PD has not focused on formative and summative assessment within the classroom.
- PD has not focused on strengthening daily lesson plans and creating a schoolwide instructional model.
- There appears to be a mind set that students are limited in their ability to improve academically upon entering high school. The faculty has not received sufficient PD in the areas of student resiliency and expectations for all students to be successful.
- Although there have been numerous PD opportunities made available to faculty over the years, there is little that the results of these opportunities have been consistently or effectively implemented in the classroom.

Recommendations:

- Increase PD time in order to move the school from a teacher directed model to a differentiated instruction model. PD needs to occur that emphasizes the feedback cycle between teachers and students. PD should focus first on assessment, and then on the schoolwide model.
- Provide and require training in assessment. Train staff in creating effective assessments and writing effective rubrics.
- Include the following non-negotiable requirements for classroom instruction in a schoolwide teaching model: engaged students; clearly specified learning goals; embedded assessment of student progress toward those learning goals; rigorous and meaningful content; modeling and the provision of models; guided and independent practice; and a focus on student work.
- Conduct faculty-wide discussions on student growth, development and expectations that are imperative to improving the academic focus of the school.
- Consistently monitor the implementation of PD with classroom teachers and counselors, overseen by the Office of Curriculum and Instruction.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- The school has adequate resources and technology, although students complained that textbooks are dated.
- The building is sound but is in need of extensive maintenance and improved daily cleaning.

Recommendations:

- The District and school should conduct by the end of the school year an inventory of textbooks and develop a plan to update the older editions as funding allows.
- The District Director of Facilities should meet with the building maintenance staff and implement regularly scheduled cleaning procedures. Maintenance needs should be documented and remedied within a reasonable time frame.
- The District should provide support in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT).

Other Concern:

While the overall graduation rate is 71 percent, graduation rates for subgroups show a decline from past years, i.e., Black students (42 percent), Students with Disabilities (37 percent) and Economically Disadvantaged students (42 percent). There is a significant achievement gap between the general population and the subgroup performance levels.

PART 3: JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Overall Finding

Reference	Review Team Finding for Restructuring (year 1) 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	Review Team Recommendation	✓
(c)	Develop and implement a School Restructuring Plan that includes significant <u>changes in staff, organizational structure, leadership and/or configuration</u> to address issues that continue to negatively impact student academic performance in identified areas. The School Restructuring Plan must include one of the restructuring options required under NCLB and further defined by the district.	✓

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

- Restructure the entire leadership team.
- Insist on higher expectations for faculty, staff, and students.
- Provide leadership in meeting strategic planning goals.
- Take concrete steps to eliminate tracking, including elimination of extended.

- Adopt an instructional framework for the school in using research-based best practices, including optimal use of instructional time and data analysis for improved student learning.
- Make comprehensive improvements to the AIS program, including, but not limited to, extended contact time for students at risk.
- Increase early intervention options for students at-risk that include restructuring counseling and other student support services.
- Conduct a comprehensive review of the code of conduct and insist on consistent implementation by all faculty and staff.
- Conduct staff evaluations that measure teacher use of best practice and active engagement of students.
- Restructure course offerings and offer the living environment course before earth science by 2012.
- Improve transition from middle school to create more credit transfer, e.g., LOTE.
- Adopt a schoolwide literacy initiative.
- Evaluate CT and ICT placements to maximize general education placements and reduce homogeneous grouping.
- By September 1 complete comprehensive building maintenance improvement, making all minor repairs, replacing lockers where necessary, and ensuring daily maintenance of lavatories.
- Monitor for continuous improvement.