

**NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>BEDS Code/DBN:</b>	12X098
<b>School Name:</b>	JHS 98 Hermann Ridder
<b>School Address:</b>	1619 Boston Road Bronx, NY 10460
<b>Principal:</b>	Claralee Irobunda
<b>Restructuring Phase/Category:</b>	Restructuring Advanced Comprehensive English Language Arts- All Students; Black Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; and Economically Disadvantaged
<b>Area(s) of Identification:</b>	
<b>Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:</b>	May 24-25 , 2011

**PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

**A. Community and School Background**

JHS 98 Herman Ridder serves 470 students in grades 6 through 8. The school enrollment is 33 percent Black; 66 percent Hispanic; and one percent Asian, Native Hawaiian or from other Pacific Island students. Of these students 16 percent are English language learners (ELLs) and 25 percent are students with disabilities. Most students attending the school live in the surrounding neighborhoods of the Bronx.

The school administrative team consists of the Principal and three Assistant Principals (APs). The Principal has been at the school six years. Two of the APs have been at the school over 9 years, while the third has been at the school for three years. There are currently 44 teachers on staff. Five percent of teachers have been at the school for five years. Although staff changes were relatively high five years ago, they have since become more stable, with only four new teachers starting this year. Approximately 90 percent of classes are taught by highly qualified teachers.

**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	
	<b>NYSED Quantitative Performance Measures</b>	
-	Negative trend data for one or more identified subject/areas and subgroups for the past two consecutive years (2008-09 and 2009-10), 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 Objective (EAMO) for one or more identified subgroups in subject/area(s) of identification.	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	<b>School Performance Indicators</b>	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for 2008-09 and 2009-10 show an increase in the number of subgroups that did not make AYP in identified area(s).	✓
+	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for the past two consecutive years indicate the school has reduced the achievement gap between identified subgroups and the <b><i>All Students</i></b> subgroup in ALL identified subject/area(s) by ten percent or more.	✓
<b>NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures</b>		
+	2009-10 NYC Progress Report Grade of A	✓
+	NYC Quality Review Score of Well-Developed 07/08	✓

## B. School Strengths

There are good systems in place for communicating with parents about their children and responding to their needs and concerns. The parent coordinator is effective in working with parents.

## C. Key Findings and Recommendations

### I. Curriculum

#### Findings:

- Lesson plans varied in quality. Most plans reviewed did not include planning for small group instruction or planning for individual student needs. In most plans reviewed, there was an absence of planning for differentiated instruction or differentiated tasks and activities.
- The school provides insufficient instructional resources aligned to New York State (NYS) Standards to support reading and writing processes in English language arts (ELA) classrooms. There were no leveled libraries, no mentor texts and limited classroom support libraries.

#### Recommendations:

- The school should establish criteria for the writing of lesson plans in ELA. The administration should monitor lesson plans across the year to ensure quality of planning and adherence to the established criteria. The school, with Network support, should provide professional development (PD) on planning for differentiation and construction of differentiated tasks to meet the varied needs of the students. Classroom observations should focus on this aspect of teaching and learning.
- The school should consider purchasing leveled libraries aligned to the Fountas and Pinnell running record assessments to support developing readers. Mentor texts and expanded classroom libraries should be provided in all ELA classrooms to support multi-level developing readers and writers, while supporting differentiated instruction.

## II. Teaching and Learning

### Findings:

- Differentiated instruction seldom appears in teacher planning or in the lessons observed. While some good practice was seen, mainly in sixth grade classes, it is not consistent across the school. Often, whole class teaching tends to extend for too long at the expense of other instructional strategies. Little use is made of student groupings that draw on prior assessments to ensure that each group is challenged appropriately and individual student needs met. One consequence is that the more able students, in particular, are not challenged.
- Where classes were designated as having two teachers, teachers' plans did not consider the strategic use of their time. Consequently, there was little effective shared or collaborative teaching seen.
- In most lessons the pacing was too slow. The timing of each sequence in some lessons meant that teachers were unable to close the lessons by referring back to the aims and to summarize the learning with the class.
- Transition between classes is not efficiently managed. Students are boisterous and noisy in the hallways as they move between classes. Teachers and other staff do not consistently apply rules for expectations for behavior and courtesy to others.
- Too few students have learning goals for ELA that are based on regular assessment of their work. Most students do not have a clear understanding of the next steps in their learning.
- In many lessons, students were not guided in the tasks set through the use of scaffolding or modeling to help clarify and structure their learning. The effect was uncertainty about how to go about the tasks and complete them.
- There is little emphasis in lessons on promoting higher order thinking skills and processes. Although the school has provided PD on questioning techniques to challenge students to explain, compare, and evaluate, the impact thus far has been limited. The focus has been mainly on extending vocabulary and answering in complete sentences, with little focus on challenge and higher order thinking. Some students undertake research on the Internet, summarize and take notes, but this practice is not sufficiently widespread.
- Displays of student work in common areas were of inconsistent quality. Although the rubric was generally displayed, there was little commentary, guidance, and next steps provided by teachers for students to understand how to improve their work.

### Recommendations:

- The school should provide training and follow-up PD for staff on strategies for differentiating instruction. There should be a particular focus on how to use student prior performance data to group by ability or other learning needs and provide distinctive and challenging tasks. Observations made by the administrators should place a particular focus on teacher planning and implementation. Teachers should rely less on whole class teaching and be held accountable for implementing strategies learned in PD.

- The school leaders should review best practices or seek outside coaching to model good practice in Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) methodology so that these classes are effectively planned for and taught. Monitoring of CTT classes should result in feedback to teachers on how instruction can be improved.
- The school leader should seek outside expertise and build on best practice within the school to provide training and guidance on lesson planning. In all lessons, pacing and sequencing should be appropriately brisk, with the key elements of learning covered, including closing summaries. The administrators should make this a focus for their observations and provide additional PD for weaker teachers.
- The school leaders should take steps to ensure that expectations for behavior, courtesy, and respect, particularly in hallways at transition times, are prominently displayed, well understood by students and consistently applied by all staff. Teachers and administrators should have a highly visible presence at transition times and ensure that transitions are smooth and well organized to maximize teaching time.
- The school leaders should develop a system for teachers to keep individual student logs in which assessed student ELA work is followed up with goals for next steps. The system could be implemented through the use of the recently purchased database. Training should be provided to teachers on how to derive goals from student assessed work. Administrators should monitor student work and hold discussions with students to ensure that they are aware of their individual goals and what they need to improve to reach the next level.
- Administrators should facilitate PD for identified teachers to improve the instructional practice that takes place in their classrooms. The school should draw on the best practice both within and outside the school to demonstrate techniques for modeling and scaffolding tasks to help teachers guide students in making decisions and learning independently. Administrators should observe teaching and learning to ensure that strategies have been implemented with fidelity in all classrooms.
- The school leaders should continue the current focus on extending students' vocabulary and sentence completion skills across subjects. All teachers should place more emphasis on questioning that encourages higher order thinking, both orally and in written tasks, including extending independent research, summarizing, and evaluation. Administrators should, through the observation process, evaluate the quality and impact of questioning in all classrooms.
- The school should develop a standard for the display of high quality student work, including an analysis by the teacher, student reflection on the work and the next step goals for learning. These expectations should guide the monitoring of displays.

### III. School Leadership

#### Findings:

- Goals for school improvement are not high enough and the current pace of improvement in ELA is too slow. There is a lack of urgency evident from the relatively new ELA leader and the ELA coach.

The goals in the CEP have not been translated into a strategic plan that weaves together actions to be taken, training and PD needs, timelines for implementation and accountability for leadership of ELA in relation to success criteria.

- The school leader has not ensured that the leadership of ELA is effective in bringing about improvements in student achievement. The school lost critical staff expertise in ELA at the end of last academic year. In response, the AP successfully leading mathematics at the time was re-assigned to lead ELA and a new ELA coach was appointed. In addition, goals are not set for individual students for their achievement at key points and the end of the grade to act as benchmarks for monitoring their progress.
- There are insufficient literature resources to support the ELA curriculum both for independent reading matched to students' reading assessment and for instruction. Reviewers did not see evidence of the use of leveled libraries. There are too few resources, particularly books written in Spanish, for the bilingual class.
- The school does not have sufficient Academic Intervention Services (AIS) to support the varied needs of the school's diverse learning community. AIS supports are not all scheduled during the school day. This prevents equal access for all students identified. Due to transportation schedules, students with disabilities, ELLs with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and out of neighborhood students have limited access to AIS support programming in ELA. In addition, there is little collaboration with incoming feeder schools to plan for the needs of at-risk students.
- The school's process for teacher evaluation is guided by a rubric; however, it is not rigorous. Follow-up does not hold teachers accountable for implementing the improvement strategies that arise from training and guidance in ELA. In addition, the AP who is the ELA leader does not observe all ELA teachers because the academy administrative structure does not support this practice.

**Recommendations:**

- The school should set more ambitious CEP goals. School leaders should devise a strategic plan for the implementation of strategies for improving student achievement in ELA. The plan should include steps to be taken, timelines for their implementation, external support and training to be provided to support the initiatives and success criteria for monitoring their progress.
- The school leader should appoint an ELA leader and a coach with the experience and skills to drive the school's improvement strategies. The AP presently leading ELA should assume leadership of mathematics as she has done successfully in the past. Current student achievement should be regularly monitored for all students and for subgroups through the introduction of an effective database system. Student achievement data should be compared with challenging goals that have been set for each student for their achievement during and at the end of the grade. This should enable the school leaders to better measure progress and identify where there are barriers to improvement.
- The school leader should seek to reallocate existing funds or identify new funding streams to provide more resources to support reading and writing in the ELA curriculum. The school leader should ensure that there are adequate leveled reading materials to meet individual student needs.

Resources should be regularly reviewed to ensure that student learning is continuous and developmental.

- The school leadership should increase AIS to support the varied needs of all at-risk students. AIS scheduling should be revised to allow equal access for all students identified in need of support. Bus schedules for students with disabilities, ELLs with IEPs, and out of neighborhood students should also be amended to improve the access to AIS support in ELA. Furthermore, planned AIS support services and programs should be implemented during school hours, inclusive of extended day. The school leaders should develop a more robust system for collaborating and acquiring information about incoming sixth grade students to better plan for their transition and support. Administrators should regularly monitor the quality of all services being offered.
- The school leaders should place more emphasis on the quality of teacher planning and differentiation when observing and providing feedback to teachers. School leaders should ensure that recommendations are followed up to hold teachers accountable for change by implementing the training and coaching they receive. The ELA leader should observe, formally and informally, all ELA teachers to help guide the management of improvement.

#### **IV. Infrastructure for Student Success**

##### **Findings:**

- The school leaders' articulation of high expectations for student achievement is not reflected cohesively in the implementation, planning, and practice of instruction.
- Schoolwide policies and expectations for student behavior are not implemented consistently across the school.
- Access to the library and library media center resources is limited due to scheduling and the multiple duties of the school librarian.

##### **Recommendations:**

- The Principal and her administrative team, with the involvement of the School Leadership Team (SLT), should review expectations for student achievement and align them more closely to curriculum implementation, teacher planning and observed teacher practice. The school leader and the SLT should revise the school's CEP to reflect their articulated high expectations by increasing rigor and strategic planning in the construction of SMART goals. These goals should then be distributed to all members of the school community, posted on the school website and referred to regularly during the year for accountability.
- The Principal, her administrative staff, the dean and the guidance support staff should review the schoolwide behavior policy and ensure that it is articulated to all staff, students, and parents across the school community. The policy should be monitored for consistent implementation, particularly during transition times throughout the school day. The school leaders should provide additional training for hall support staff focused on strategies to facilitate the fluid, safe, and appropriately monitored transition between classes.

- The Principal should review and revise the budget to include expanded staffing in the library to facilitate open access to all students.

## **V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data**

### **Findings:**

- Analysis of schoolwide data is not effectively used to identify patterns and trends in subgroups and for the whole school to drive improvements forward in ELA. Data use is not widespread and the impact on planning instruction for student achievement is not being maximized.
- The school has not implemented a comprehensive strategic plan to improve instruction in ELA. The lack of urgency by some teachers and administrators in addressing school priorities is affecting the pace of improvement. Teachers have data binders that include recent student assessment results; however, there is little evidence that this data has been fully interpreted to inform instructional delivery.
- There are insufficient AIS supports and no existing written Pupil Intervention Plans (PIPs) to support the diverse needs of the students with disabilities, ELLs with IEPs and ELLs.

### **Recommendations:**

- Teachers and administrators should be provided PD in the area of data analysis and data driven instruction. Additionally, PD should be provided for all teachers of ELA, focused on differentiated planning to guide their instruction. The school administrative team should closely monitor teacher planning and review it for alignment to the assessed needs of ELA students. Particular attention should be given to reviewing student grouping throughout the year.
- The school leadership should develop a strategic plan for improved student performance based on a thorough review and analysis of student data in ELA. The leadership should ensure that all ELA teaching staff have copies of the recommended plan and are clearly aware of the implications for their planning and teaching practices. The Principal and administrative staff should regularly monitor the plan's implementation and revisit and amend it as required. Monitoring should include systematic and comprehensive ongoing data analysis with strong implications for differentiated instruction and AIS. Additional PD should be made available to teachers on differentiated instruction, and school leaders should ensure that teachers use their data binders to guide and inform their planning and delivery of instruction.
- The school should provide PD for the school's instructional support/AIS team on writing PIPs based on student data and performance. Ongoing monitoring by administrative staff should ensure that these plans are fully implemented for all identified students. The school leaders should also review the school AIS supports to ensure that they are both tailored to support the students' assessed academic needs and sufficient to provide effective support for all eligible students.

**VI. Professional Development**

**Finding:**

Some teachers are not incorporating strategies learned in PD into their daily teaching. PD is not being used strategically as part of a school plan for improving ELA. Not enough is done to ensure that teachers are held accountable for acting on the training and PD offerings that they receive.

**Recommendation:**

The Principal should ensure that all administrators consistently hold teachers accountable for incorporating key elements of PD provided to support and improve ELA teaching and learning. Teacher planning and lesson development should also be monitored for the use of key elements to improve ELA teaching and learning. The school leader should review, across the year, the impact of improved teaching practice on student achievement.

**VII. Network Support**

**Finding:**

There were no significant weaknesses to report relating to Network support.

**Recommendation:**

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	
(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 Principal should be provided with support from a Principal mentor focused on setting challenging goals based on an assessment of students’ prior performance. The support should focus on devising a

strategic plan for improving student achievement, particularly in ELA, that incorporates actions to be taken, timelines, and success criteria against which the goals can be monitored and reviewed. In addition, the Principal should be mentored in strategies for increasing staff accountability at all levels for the implementation of the plan.

- The AP currently leading ELA, who was a successful leader of mathematics and science until the end of last year, should resume the role of mathematics leadership. The school should recruit an experienced leader for ELA and a full time ELA coach.
- Support and training from outside experts should focus on teacher use of student prior assessments to guide their planning. Particular emphasis should be placed on differentiation of instruction and appropriately and flexibly grouping students.
- The school leaders should seek support to raise expectations for student achievement and monitor how higher expectations are translated into more challenging goals for students, rigor and challenge in teaching, and involvement of students in reviewing and improving their work. The inquiry teams should be at the heart of this process.
- The scheduling of staff to classes, AIS and other administrative roles should be reviewed with the aim of reducing fragmentation and matching expertise better.
- The current academy structure undermines aspects of whole school management, such as content area leadership. School leaders should determine the effectiveness of the current administrative structure of the three academies.