NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	32K349
School Name:	IS 349 Math, Science and Technology
School Address:	35 Starr Street Brooklyn NY 11221
Principal:	Rogelio Parris
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced Comprehensive
Area of Identification:	English Language Arts- All Students; Hispanic; Students with Disabilities; English Language learners; Economically Disadvantaged
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	March 1-2, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Intermediate School 349 Math, Science and Technology serves 533 students in grades 6 through 8. The school enrollment is 13 percent Black and 87 percent Hispanic students. Of these students, 25 percent are English language learners (ELLs) and 14 percent are students with disabilities. Most students attending the school live in the surrounding neighborhood. The school shares the building with another school.

The school administrative team includes the Principal, three Assistant Principals (APs) and a mathematics lead teacher. The school is divided into two houses; one AP oversees English language arts (ELA) and social studies; another oversees mathematics and science; and the third is responsible for safety, compliance, and special education. The Principal is serving in his seventh year. APs have served for nine, seven and six years, respectively; this indicates a low turnover among administrators.

There are 34 classroom teachers on staff. Ninety-eight percent of teachers are highly qualified. The teacher turnover rate is eight 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	
-	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 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 2008-09 and 2009-10 indicate an increase in the achievement gap	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	between identified subgroups and the ***All Students*** subgroup in one or more identified subject/area(s).	
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
-	2009-10 NYC Progress Report Grade of C	✓
+	NYC Quality Review (2007-2008) Score of Well-Developed	✓

B. School Strengths

- The school is welcoming and student-centered. Parents and students feel respected in the school.
- The school has continued to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in mathematics.

C. Key Findings and Recommendations

Summary of the key issues (causal factors) and other areas of concern, identified during the on-site diagnostic review that are negatively impacting student achievement in identified areas, as well as recommendations, as related to the seven JIT Indicator Categories:

I. Curriculum

Findings:

- The school is in the process of developing a written curriculum that merges "The Elements of Literature" program and the previous approach to literacy instruction "America's Choice"; however, the impact of this is not yet evident in the teaching and learning in the area of ELA. Furthermore, there are no on-site personnel with expertise to guide this important work.
- Effective implementation of grade level maps, which specify unit focus, timeframe, essential questions, topics, standards, skills, materials and assessments/projects, was not consistently observed in all classes. Therefore the impact of the maps on learning is currently limited.
- Scope and sequence documents for ELA evidence clear links to common core. However, these guiding documents are newly developed this year and the impact of their implementation is not presently known.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should ensure that the curriculum is effectively implemented by restoring the position of the literacy coach and hiring an AP with ELA expertise to lead curriculum development and support effective classroom delivery.
- The school should provide ongoing on-site professional development (PD) for all staff on the use of ELA curriculum materials, concepts and strategies to inform their planning and delivery.
- The administration should increase formal and informal observations and provide more feedback to all teachers, with particular focus on ELA to ensure that all new initiatives are being effectively

implemented. The Network should support the school to establish effective, constructive feedback strategies for teachers and administration. Regular opportunities for intervisitation should be scheduled so that teachers can engage in self and peer reflection and observe good practices, particularly in the delivery of ELA instruction.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Teachers do not incorporate a wide variety of instructional strategies into their lesson planning. There was a predominance of direct instruction and few examples of modeling within classrooms observed. Although students were compliant in many classes, there were too few opportunities for them to interact with one another in meaningful instructional activities. Learning centers were not observed and only one instance of cooperative learning and tutoring/conferencing was observed.

- There was a significant lack of higher order thinking skills and processes being taught in classrooms across the school. Teachers did not consistently prompt higher order thinking through effective questioning techniques. Problem solving and visualization were minimally observed in ELA and English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms.

- The school leaders have not made differentiation a priority for instruction and, as a result, few teachers effectively use groupings and assessments to meet the needs of diverse learners. While the newly implemented program, "The Elements of Literature," provides teachers with differentiated strategies for subgroups of students, teachers received their first and only two-hour training in using the new literacy program in February 2011; therefore, teachers were not observed effectively using the program resource.

- Although student work is displayed with tasks, rubrics and standards, teacher feedback does not include next steps to show students how they can improve their work. In many classes, learning goals are posted, and most reference State Standards. While these do guide instruction, it is not entirely clear that all students understood the link between goals and standards.

- The school's name states an emphasis on technology; however, there is little evidence that technology is consistently embedded into classroom instruction.

Recommendations:

- The school leaders should provide onsite, ongoing professional development in a range of instructional strategies to support the learning of all students. The Network should assist school leaders in identifying model literacy programs for intervisitation so that teachers are able to see best practice in action and leaders are able to build their repertoire and then provide effective feedback on teacher implementation of instructional skills.

- School leaders should revisit PD training in Bloom's Taxonomy and other techniques to assist teachers in developing students' critical thinking skills. Teachers should be held accountable for the routine incorporation of critical thinking and problem solving skills into their lessons. Administrators should regularly monitor and evaluate lesson plans and provide ongoing feedback for improved delivery of instruction.

- The school leaders should make differentiation a priority in all classrooms, especially for meeting the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, at-risk students and overage students. PD to increase teachers' and administrators' understanding of how students learn and why differentiation is critical to meet student needs and improve outcomes should be provided. The school should use resources such as highly respected professional development in differentiated instruction, Quality Teaching of English Language Learners (QTEL) and Pre-Referral Intervention Manual (PRIM) to build capacity. School leaders should hold teachers accountable for differentiating their instruction through the review of lesson planning and the regular observation of instruction. Feedback to teachers to improve their instruction should follow these actions.

- The Network should provide PD and ongoing feedback through walkthroughs to ensure teachers:
  - understand the purpose of posting learning objectives;
  - compose intended learning outcomes in language that is easily understood by students;
  - fully acknowledge the value of communicating standards-based objectives to students;
  - use standards-based rubrics to effectively guide students so that the students know what good work looks like; and
  - provide student feedback that is instructive and supportive, ensuring that students know what they need to do to improve.

- The school leaders should assess the school's technology resources and the school's current capacity to infuse literacy across the content areas to meet the needs of all students. The school leaders should form a committee of teachers, administrators, network personnel and community representatives to review, revise and update any existing technology plan to ensure that a sharp focus on the integration of technology into literacy instruction is implemented. The school should identify capital resources to support this focus further.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- School leaders do not set expectations high enough for academic student achievement. While school leaders have high expectations for outcomes in mathematics, the same focus in ELA is not evident. The goals in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) for ELA are not sufficiently rigorous or challenging and are not likely to improve outcomes for all students. Expectations across the school community are not sufficiently high.

- The School Leadership Team (SLT) is not involved in developing or monitoring the goals and plans outlined in the CEP. School leaders do not actively involve parents in decision making that has an impact on the education of their children.

- School leaders have not provided sufficient oversight or assessed the impact of common planning on student learning in ELA for all students, even though time has been provided for meetings across content areas and grades for all except collaborative team teachers (CTT).

- The school leader does not make available sufficient financial, human, and materials resources to improve achievement in ELA. For example, there are no coaches to support improvements in ELA; there are three APs all of whom are mathematics certified; and there is only one certified English as a second language (ESL) teacher for the 25 percent of the population who are ELLs. The

school has begun to use a new literacy program (Elements of Literature) this year; however, not all teachers have the full complement of resources to implement this program.

- The school leader has not provided sufficient PD in ELA instruction, nor has there been sufficient training to meet the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, at-risk students. For example, teachers first received PD for implementing the new literacy program in February 2011, while the program started in September 2010. During teacher interviews, teachers expressed the need for formal training in the development of inquiry teams. Only a few teacher requests were granted for attendance at external PD opportunities.

- The school leaders have not developed and implemented a timely and rigorous system for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning across the school. There is little evidence to indicate that any feedback given leads to improvement, especially in the area of ELA. For example, as of this school visit, 17 out of 34 teachers have been formally observed and of those 17, only three were ELA teachers and none were ELL and special education teachers.

Recommendations:

- The school leadership should engage all stakeholders in formulating a new vision and mission for the school that is clearly focused on high expectations for academic achievement in all content areas, particularly in ELA. The vision and mission should guide the setting of rigorous goals in the CEP to consistently improve student outcomes.

- The school leadership should request Network support and training to ensure that all members of the school community are actively engaged in establishing effective school goals. The Network should assist the SLT in monitoring and modifying the goals when necessary to attain progress.

- The school should restore the position of literacy coach and appoint an AP with expertise in ELA. These individuals, along with other school leaders, should develop a system and calendar to monitor the work of teachers undertaken during common planning. This should include the submission of agendas, minutes and artifacts. Feedback to teachers regarding the outcomes of common planning with respect to improvements in instruction in ELA should be provided in a timely manner. In addition, the CTT teachers should have common planning time built into their schedules to allow for collaborative planning and conversations about student progress, program delivery and best practices.

- The school should reduce the number of APs to make the size of the leadership team consistent with the current student enrollment of 533 students and hire an AP with certification and experienced in ELA. The school should fill the current ESL teacher vacancy as a matter of urgency. The school should provide the full complement of instructional resources so that the new literacy program can be delivered with fidelity.

- The school leaders should establish a PD committee that has the responsibility of assessing student and teacher needs, developing a comprehensive PD plan and calendar, and evaluating the implementation and impact of the programs that are delivered. Providing high quality PD in the area of ELA should be a priority for all members of the school community and should be delivered as a matter of urgency. Also, the plan should include high quality training to assist teachers in developing skills to meet the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, and all at-risk populations. The school should provide PD and ongoing one-on-one support to teachers so that they can effectively integrate technology into their instructional practice, especially in ELA. The Network

should provide ongoing assistance to Inquiry Teams to guide the development of effective practices in using student data and student work to identity necessary revisions in planning and improve learning for all students, especially in ELA. School leaders should set aside sufficient funds so that teachers can attend outside PD and then turnkey the information. The school leaders should monitor the effectiveness of the PD and its impact on instruction.

- The school leaders should establish and adhere to a formal and informal teacher observation time line that includes walkthroughs. The impact of the PD and literacy programs can be assessed and revised in a timely manner. School leaders should provide timely written and oral feedback to all teachers so that their professional practice can be better informed and improved, particularly regarding best practices in the areas of ELA. Moreover, the observation process should provide recommendations specific to improved instructional strategies. For teachers identified at risk of an unsatisfactory rating, professional action plans should be developed and monitored by administrators with the appropriate content expertise.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- The school is not sufficiently staffed to ensure appropriate guidance to meet the needs of the 533 students and their families.

- The school staff does not actively involve parents in decision-making processes that impact the education of their children.

- There was no indication of any other school survey provided to the parents beyond the yearly survey provided by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE).

Recommendations:

- The school leader should reinstate a second guidance counselor to meet the academic and emotional needs of the student population and their families.

- The school leadership should request training from the Network to ensure that all members of the school community, particularly parents, are actively engaged in school decision-making processes. The Network should assist the school leaders, as well as the parent coordinator, in recruiting the full complement of parents to the SLT so that parents are fully engaged in substantive decision making.

- The school leaders should work with their Network to craft quarterly parent surveys, in the appropriate languages, to identify parent concerns and interests regarding the education of their children. The results of these surveys should be analyzed to inform modifications of school practices.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- The school leaders and teachers are not rigorously analyzing all available data to identify precisely what aspects of ELA need to be the focus for improvement in instruction.

- A plan to strategically and rigorously address identified shortcomings in ELA is not in place. The school lacks a sense of urgency to bring about improvement and meaningful change in student achievement in ELA.

- The school leaders have not guided teachers to use a wide range of assessment strategies. There is limited evidence that teachers collect and record predictive data. There is limited evidence of the analysis of student work to generate data on student strengths and next steps. Few teachers use data to inform ELA instructional planning**.** The lack of effective use of data extends to Academic Intervention Services (AIS) programs**.** Classroom evaluations have not been used consistently to guide and inform instruction, particularly in the area of using data about student learning to inform and adjust planning and instruction.

Recommendations:

- The Network, as a matter of urgency, should provide PD to school leaders, the data specialist and the Inquiry Team members in the effective use of data to drive instruction. This training should go beyond the analysis of the range of standardized tests, so that all parties learn how to disaggregate information and diagnose student learning needs. This information should be used by all teachers so that instruction is directly informed by the knowledge of how students need to be assisted in the learning process. Further training should be provided in how to use data to identify trends and priorities in evaluating the impact of all aspects of the educational program. The school leaders should monitor how this data is being used in driving the instruction in the classrooms.

- The literacy coach and AP with expertise in ELA should be charged with the responsibility of conducting rigorous analysis of all data and student work relative to ELA and, with a committee of representative teachers, to develop a strategic action plan aimed at producing a high level of learning gains for all students in ELA. Leaders should ensure that all members of the school community are informed of this action plan and are enlisted to implement it schoolwide.

- The school leaders should hold teachers accountable for making the best use of all of the available information they have about student learning. School leaders should review data binders, student portfolios, teacher lesson plans, student work and evidence from inquiry teams in addition to the statistical data that they already take into account, such as standardized tests, ACUITY and report cards. The school leaders should hold regular meetings with the teachers to monitor and evaluate the progress and achievement of students in their classrooms.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- There is no evidence of a PD plan, nor is there a PD committee. The PD that is provided does not reflect a direct link to the CEP goals for improvement in ELA. While the administration offered after school PD opportunities, signature sheets indicate poor attendance.

- There is no evidence that feedback mechanisms, such as teacher evaluations of the quality and impact of PD, are in place. Therefore, there is no evidence that PD has been adjusted to meet teacher needs. The needs of students have not been identified or considered with respect to the choices made for PD programs.

- School leaders have not provided sufficient time for PD. Opportunities such as common planning time are not used well to develop the skills of teachers across content areas and, in particular, for ELA.

- The seven Inquiry Teams are in their first year of practice and team members indicated that they did not receive sufficient training so that they could effectively carry out their roles.

- The written observation reports do not reflect a direct relationship between PD provided and suggestions for improvement in teaching. While the school has an intervisitation calendar, few teachers have taken advantage of this opportunity. Teachers who engage in intervisitation report that administrators do not provide feedback on the implementation of any new strategies that they have learned from their peers.

- There is no evidence that all staff is provided with sufficient PD to meet the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities and all at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should institute a PD committee tasked with creating a comprehensive schoolwide PD plan. The targeted topics should be directly informed by rigorous analysis of data and should reflect far more challenging goals than the ones reflected in the CEP. School leaders should develop routines and practices that provide teachers with regular and rigorous feedback about the effectiveness of their implementation of skills learned through PD.

- School leaders and the PD committee should analyze the existing schedule and identify opportunities where PD can be infused, such as the creation of "lunch and learns" and study groups. School leaders should capitalize on existing opportunities, such as faculty conferences and department meetings, as avenues for providing targeted PD sessions. Further accountability in the form of agendas, minutes and impact of actions should be instituted to ensure that common planning time is used optimally.

- The Network should provide on-site training and ongoing coaching to members of the inquiry teams to ensure that their work results in improved student outcomes.

- The school leaders should, through formal and informal observations, hold teachers accountable for implementing new skills and strategies that they have learned through PD and/or intervisitations.

- The school leaders, with the assistance of the Network, should provide PD that includes high quality, rigorous, timely training in the identified areas of need for ELLs, students with disabilities and all at-risk students.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- The Network offers PD at the school. However, not enough staff members take advantage of these after-school programs.

- While the Network signed off on the CEP and provided written feedback, a review of the CEP reveals that much of what is written is not current, timelines for measuring interim progress towards goals are insufficient and overall growth targets are too low to improve student learning and improve AYP outcomes.

Recommendations:

- The Network should provide on-site PD, embedded during the school day, in order to maximize professional participation and thereby initiate and support improved teaching and learning in ELA.

- The Network should read and rigorously evaluate all aspects of the CEP, with particular emphasis on ensuring that school goals are data-based and rigorous, that timelines and responsible parties are delineated, and all information provided is current.

- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations.

Other Concerns:

- During teacher and administrative interviews, staff at the school reported that the bilingual program is being phased out. The Appendix 2 Part B of the CEP states that there were not enough students on register for a grade 6 bilingual program. Consequently, there appears to be a disparity between the high percentage of ELLs and the phasing out of the bilingual program**.**

- Two members of the administrative team provide direct classroom instruction to students for a total of sixteen periods per week. This has negatively impacted their capacity to provide effective instructional leadership to teachers.

- Looping students, for a three year cycle, began in 2007. However, there is no evidence that the school leaders have assessed the impact of this practice on student learning in ELA for all students. The lack of consistent student achievement in ELA over time draws into question the effectiveness of this practice.

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</u>, <u>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.

- Reorganize the administrative structure to ensure effective support for teaching and learning in ELA. Currently, there are three APs, all of whom are certified in mathematics. Reduce the number of APs from three to two to reflect current enrollment levels. Further, one AP position should be filled by a highly qualified and certified individual in the area of ELA to drive and improve student achievement. This administrative restructuring should provide the necessary content expertise to effectively assist teachers in implementing the curricula to increase learning. Furthermore, this restructuring enables the Principal to reallocate funds to support the reinstitution of necessary positions delineated below.

- Restore the position of literacy coach and hire a highly qualified individual to enhance student achievement in ELA, to support the implementation of the ELA curriculum and provide sufficient support to teachers.

- Restore the second guidance counselor position to better support students and their families.

- Fill the current vacancy in ESL, to ensure that there is a sufficient number of certified staff to meet the needs of ELLs.

- Replace staff that is unwilling or unable to implement the school's Restructuring plan.

- Create a new restructuring plan to reframe the emphasis on the school's identified themes, and infuse the development of these with a strong focus on literacy across the content areas. All stakeholder groups should engage in developing the new restructuring plan.

- Develop a clearly defined PD plan that is sufficiently robust to produce the expected outcomes for improved teaching and learning, especially in the area of ELA and literacy in the content areas.

- Implement a leadership support system for administrators including direct one-on-one leadership coaching for the supervision of ELA. The Network should assist the school leadership in identifying outside professional affiliations that are highly qualified to provide this support. The Principal's previous success in leading the school in raising student achievement in the areas of mathematics and science, coupled with evidence that during some years, the school has made AYP in ELA, strongly suggests the capacity to make steady improvements with the proper support, under his leadership.

- The Principal and one AP, who currently teach eight periods per week respectively, should significantly reduce or reassign these teaching duties so that they can focus their professional time and energy on their administrative responsibilities.