

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	10X306
School Name:	PS 306
School Address:	40 West Tremont Ave. Bronx, NY 10453
Principal:	Darryl Harrington
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced Comprehensive English Language Arts - All Students; Economically Disadvantaged
Area(s) of Identification:	Mathematics - All Students; Economically Disadvantaged
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	January 25- 26, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

PS 306 is an elementary school located in The Bronx that serves 772 students in kindergarten through grade 5. Building space is shared with a middle school and a District 75 school. The school population is 31 percent Black, 68 percent Hispanic, and one percent other students. English Language Learners (ELLs) comprise 22 percent of the students, and 21 percent are students with disabilities. Most of the students live in close proximity to the school.

The administrative team includes the Principal, one Assistant Principal (AP) and one mathematics coach. The Principal is serving in his first year while the AP is serving in her sixth year.

There are 60 teachers on staff , including one new teacher, two teachers who have been at the school one year or less and 16 teachers who have been at the school between one and three years. Of these teachers, 96 percent are highly qualified. Teacher turnover is high at 16 percent per year.

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.	✓
+	School is within five points of meeting its Effective Annual Measurable Objective	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	(EAMO) for ALL identified subgroups in ALL subject/area(s) of identification.	
+	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for 2007-08 and 2008-9 show a reduction in the number of subgroups that did not make Adequate Yearly progress (AYP) in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) 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.	✓
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
-	2008-09 NYC Progress Report Grade of C	✓
+	NYC Quality Review Score of Well-Developed	✓

B. School Strengths

- The school is well provisioned with resources in literacy, science, social studies and mathematics.
- The school recently changed membership from a Parents' Association to a Parent-Teacher Association.
- A state-of-the art library affords teachers, parents and students open access periods for research and book selection.

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 publisher's literacy program that the Principal describes as the school's reading curriculum is not a full literacy curriculum. The program does not include independent reading, nor are teachers developing interim benchmarks against which to measure student achievement. In addition, teachers have been instructed not to use the guided reading library that was part of the former balanced literacy program.
- The school selected the reading program with insufficient research. The Principal had used the program in another school and felt it would raise the level of achievement. Some staff members participated in a visit to a school where the program was supposedly being successfully implemented. However, the Principal was unaware that this school had received an "F" in Student Progress on the recent Progress Report.

- The writing curriculum is not adequately developed and has no vertical alignment. Thus, students are not making sufficient progress in this area of their work.
- There is a lack of a specific literacy curriculum for students with disabilities as evidenced by the use of two intervention programs, READ 180 and the Wilson program, as the sole literacy curriculum for this subgroup.
- The school has not undertaken a gap analysis of the literacy program to ensure that all State Standards are being adequately met.

Recommendations:

- The school should adopt a literacy curriculum that meets the needs of all students and teachers. The new curriculum should include independent reading and use of the extensive guided reading library that the school has available.
- The Principal should research various literacy programs that have proven successful with similar student populations within the city. The findings should be shared with the staff and a more effective reading curriculum should be collaboratively developed.
- The Principal should thoroughly review the data for other schools before planning intervisitations to schools considered successful.
- The school should establish a grade-by-grade writing curriculum map, based on the common core standards and quality units of study model, including a variety of genres that are culturally responsive. Teachers should be provided the flexibility to self-select resources and writing topics.
- The school should adopt a literacy curriculum that serves the needs of students with disabilities and use the two intervention programs as supplementary programs.
- The school should use the expertise of the Network and consultants to support teachers in establishing a comprehensive literacy curriculum.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- The newly selected literacy program constrains teachers and limits their opportunities to use a wide range of instructional strategies in ELA. Most literacy lesson plans consist solely of using specific pages in the teacher’s manual and do not respond to the specific needs of the students in their classes.
- In most general education classrooms, teachers were employing direct, single modality whole class instruction with minimal grouping and differentiated instruction. As a result, students were not appropriately challenged and were not making adequate progress in their learning.

- Teachers did not use open-ended questioning techniques or problem solving strategies with their students to extend their learning. The majority of teaching was didactic, with passive rather than active student involvement in their work.
- In Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) classes, some teachers were not employing an effective co-teaching model, so there was little advantage in having two adults in the classroom to support students.
- There was an overall lack of student engagement in lessons and poor use of accountable talk across the school, resulting in low levels of academic rigor and weak development of higher-level thinking skills.
- Teacher feedback on students' written work was not reflective of the published rubrics or the schoolwide grading policy. Teachers were not engaging students in self-reflection processes to improve their work. For example, a student received a rating of excellent and a score of three on a writing sample with no indication of the next steps for improvement. As a result, students are not clear about how to reach the next level.
- Lessons did not include clear teaching targets or goals. Students did not understand what they were expected to learn. No teachers checked for comprehension at the end of lessons.
- Although general education classrooms have computers and SMART Boards, teachers were not using technology as an integral part of the instructional program and missed opportunities to enliven and enhance their instruction.

Recommendations:

- Teachers should be afforded the opportunity to be flexible when implementing the new literacy program so that they can use their experience and knowledge to better meet the needs of all students.
- Teachers should use a wide variety of teaching strategies. Data should be used to differentiate instruction, and more small-group learning activities should be planned to meet the needs of students and increase student engagement in their learning.
- Teachers should ensure that all lessons have clear teaching points or goals that are shared with the students at the outset and are revisited at the end of the lesson to check understanding.
- CTT teachers should be provided with professional development (PD) to effectively implement the co-teaching model.
- Teachers should be provided with PD in the delivery of instruction that infuses higher-level thinking through effective questioning techniques and problem solving skills.
- There should be a schoolwide review of the published grading system, focusing on how the policy specifically relates to each grade level and curriculum area to ensure consistency both horizontally and vertically. Additional emphasis should be placed on correlating the

schoolwide grading policy to provide feedback on students' written work so that all students are clear about how they can continuously improve their work.

- Technical assistance should be provided to teachers so that they can effectively integrate technology into their instructional program.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- The Principal's decisions, such as the selection of the new literacy program, are not research based, nor do they take into account the specific student needs.
- The Principal does not effectively communicate to staff the mission and vision for school development and improvement. Strategies are not adequately defined to achieve the school's goals.
- High expectations for student performance are not successfully articulated to the staff, and there is too much variation in expectation both within and between grades.
- The SLT does not effectively monitor the progress of the school in achieving its annual goals.
- There was limited evidence of informal lesson observation and feedback by administrators to support and improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- The Principal does not actively engage in the PD program for the school.

Recommendations:

- The Principal's decisions should be based on the identified student and staff needs.
- The Principal should engage all the staff in creating a common mission and vision in working collaboratively to elevate student achievement.
- The Principal should ensure that all teachers have appropriately high expectations for student progress and achievement in their classes.
- The Principal should ensure that the SLT regularly monitors the school's progress in achieving its stated goals.
- Administrators should develop an agreed upon schedule for conducting walkthroughs and informal observations on a frequent, consistent basis, followed by constructive feedback, next steps and follow-up observations.
- The Principal should take a more active role in planning and providing differentiated PD for teachers to meet both individual and whole school needs.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- There is a lack of urgency conveyed by administrators to the staff about the pace of improvement required. Teachers are not clear about their responsibilities in ensuring the growth in the performance of all students.
- Students have limited understanding of benchmarks and promotional requirements, as evidenced by the poorly constructed student goals maintained in teacher binders, with no mid-point review of student goals evident.
- There is no evidence of vertical articulation or planning to avoid redundancy in the school's curriculum development.
- The extended day program does not have an identified supplemental program that supports struggling students.
- Science instruction is not meeting the State's mandated instructional time.
- The school does not provide materials for parents that are translated into languages other than Spanish, thereby preventing some parents from obtaining information about the school.
- No school surveys are conducted to engage parents in the school improvement process.

Recommendations:

- The administrators should take a more active leadership role in conveying the importance and urgency for improved student achievement so that students are supported to meet or exceed their expected levels of performance.
- Teachers should be engaged in developing strategies to support their learning communities with an understanding of goal setting appropriate to student age and grade level. Teachers should assist students in understanding benchmarks that meet or exceed grade standards.
- The Principal should schedule opportunities for intra-grade planning, intervisitations and articulation so that teachers develop a deeper understanding of curriculum alignment.
- The Principal should identify and implement a supplementary program that supports the school's core curriculum and meets the specific learning needs of students experiencing difficulties with their work.
- The administration should work with classroom teachers to ensure that appropriate time is allotted to science instruction to meet State mandates.
- The Principal should use translation funding to ensure that all parents have equal access to information about the school and student performance.

- Regular surveys to canvass parental opinion should be conducted to ensure that the parent body has a voice and are fully involved in and committed to school improvement.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- Teachers are not using data to inform their instruction, thereby impeding student learning.
- There is no clear plan outlining strategies to identify at-risk students, particularly in ELA, including the identified subgroups.
- Teachers are not uniformly analyzing on-going formative data and adjusting their instructional program throughout the year to meet specific student needs.
- The school's bi-monthly progress reports to parents do not include any next steps for improvement in student performance.

Recommendations:

- The Principal should create a strong schoolwide focus and staff development plan to support teachers in using data to inform their instruction.
- The Principal should provide leadership in creating a plan that targets at-risk students to ensure academic success.
- Teachers should be supported in understanding and using available data to make appropriate adjustments, such as differentiation, to their instructional program based on student needs.
- The school should revise their progress reports to reflect student achievement, including strengths, weaknesses and next steps for improvement.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- PD is not meeting the observed or expressed needs of staff or students. It is, at present, mostly limited to implementing the new literacy program rather than focusing on improving the quality of teaching and learning in the school.
- Teachers are not effectively using the inquiry process to modify instruction and to improve student learning outcomes.
- There is no internal mechanism to monitor and assess whether PD impacts teacher practice or student learning.

- Although the Principal has a mentor and participates in a leadership study group, certain administrative decisions and behaviors reflect a need for greater leadership skills.
- PD for teachers does not adequately address the needs of at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- The Principal should use lesson observation outcomes and survey the staff to create differentiated PD to meet the identified needs of teachers and to positively impact student performance and achievement.
- The school should continue to employ the services of a literacy consultant so that teachers can improve their knowledge and understanding of data driven instruction.
- The Principal should provide PD to guide and deepen the inquiry process so that teachers can collaboratively develop strategies to support student learning.
- Additional mentoring in targeted areas should be provided to support the leadership skills of the Principal.
- A comprehensive PD plan should be created to give teachers the tools to meet the needs of all students on an individual and collective basis. All teachers should participate in the Quality Teaching for English Learners (QTEL) PD initiative.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- Although the Network provides support in various areas, there is limited evidence that the school effectively uses this support.
- The Network provides resources and support to teachers; however, it has not had an impact on teacher performance or student achievement.

Recommendations:

- The Network should provide additional support to the Principal in best management practices to improve leadership capabilities.
- Regular walkthroughs should be conducted by the Principal and Network staff to monitor the implementation of PD and school improvement initiatives.
- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team's (JIT) recommendations.

Other Concern:

Insufficient funds are being allocated to provide Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for struggling students in grades one and two.

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.

The school leadership team and the Network should analyze student data to design a literacy curriculum that is better balanced to meet the instructional needs of all students, while offering an AIS program that meets the needs of the identified student groups. The Principal should meet with the Network Leader, mentor and budget specialist to review the allocation of funds in order to better provide AIS services to grades one and two, in addition to increasing AIS services throughout the other grades. The Network should help the Principal to become more focused on the needs of students and staff and assist him in making appropriate leadership decisions.