

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

<b>BEDS Code/DBN:</b>	05M125
<b>School Name:</b>	PS 125 Ralph Bunche
<b>School Address:</b>	425 West 123 St. New York, NY 10027
<b>Principal:</b>	Rafaela Espinal Pacheco
<b>Restructuring Phase/Category:</b>	Restructuring Advanced Comprehensive English Language Arts- All Students; Black Students; Students with Disabilities; and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Area(s) of Identification:</b>	
<b>Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:</b>	May 17-18 , 2011

**PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

**A. Community and School Background**

PS 125 serves 247 students in pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The student enrollment is 55 percent Black, 35 percent Hispanic, three percent White and four percent Asian students. Of these students, 25 percent are students with disabilities and 13 percent are English language learners (ELLs). About 75 percent of students live within the neighborhood school zone.

The administrative team includes the Principal and an Assistant Principal (AP). The Principal is in her second year. The AP has been absent on sick leave since February 2011. There are 31 teachers at the school. One teacher has been at the school for less than a year and 94 percent of teachers are highly qualified. Teacher turnover is low.

**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 (2007-08 and 2008-09), 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 2007-08 and 2008-09 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>All Students</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 B	✓
+/	NYC Quality Review Score of Well-Developed	✓

## B. School Strengths

Parents fully support the Principal.

## 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:

- There was no comprehensive English language arts (ELA) curriculum in the school.
- In special education classes, teachers did not modify curriculum resources or content delivery to meet the identified learning needs of the students.

#### Recommendations:

- The Network should work with the school on the development of an ELA curriculum and ensure that it is clearly aligned with the current New York State (NYS) Standards. The curriculum should be aligned to the new NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards in English language arts and literacy to prepare for implementation in school year 2012-13. All curricula should be developed by knowledgeable and trained individuals (national, state, or local) who understand the key elements of curriculum development.

All teachers and administrators should participate in professional development (PD) on how to identify lesson objectives and plan and implement a curriculum with rigor, as well as teaching methods that are student-centered. The curriculum and lesson objectives should be relied upon as the basis for assessing individual student mastery and progress. Walkthroughs and formal evaluations should include how well the teacher knows and implements the lesson objectives for the subjects being taught.

- The school should initiate a comprehensive PD program that focuses on evidence-based practices that support differentiation to address the instructional needs of all students with disabilities. This should include modification of content delivery and resource allocation. School leaders should monitor all special education classes, via the formal and informal observation process, to ensure that all teachers are using differentiation effectively to enable the students to make good progress.

## **II. Teaching and Learning**

### **Findings:**

- In the majority of lessons, particularly for students with disabilities, there was limited evidence of the use of goal setting to meet the individual needs of the students.
- Too few teachers used assessment data to plan appropriately differentiated tasks and activities for the students in their classes.
- The lack of content knowledge of some Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) teachers is a serious weakness that has a negative impact on co-teaching delivery.
- Culturally relevant topics were not routinely included in instructional practice or classroom activities.
- There were limited examples of student-to-student engagement, accountable talk and sharing of findings in the classes observed.
- In most classrooms, questions from the teacher required one word answers with a short time allowed for a response to be given.
- There was a lack of consistency in the use of rubrics. In many instances, the guidance given to students on how to improve their work was limited and did little to indicate what they needed to do to move to the next level.
- Teachers reported that the current computer lab is outdated. There were too few examples of technology being used to support learning in the classrooms.

### **Recommendations:**

- The school leader should provide PD for all teachers on goal setting to more effectively engage students in a self-monitoring, meta-cognitive process. The PD should incorporate several key principles for learning, such as setting clear expectations, fair and credible evaluation, academic rigor and accountable talk in order to support the process of co-constructing understandable goals with all students, particularly students with disabilities and ELLs with Individual Education Programs (IEPs).
- Teachers should be provided with both internal and external PD on the use of differentiated instruction to improve student performance in ELA. The school leader should closely monitor the use of differentiation within classroom practices and hold teachers accountable for implementation through the teacher observation process. PD should be provided on how to

analyze data and use it to guide and inform instruction. School leaders should monitor teacher planning and instruction to ensure that data is being effectively used to group students and match activities to their abilities. Additional PD should be provided for those teachers who continue to struggle.

- The school leader should provide guidance on the preparation necessary for the successful implementation of the co-teaching or team-teaching models. Teachers should be offered guidance on the planning and preparation necessary for the combination of teachers' skills to meet student needs and have a discernible impact on student learning. Teachers should be provided with PD on research-based instructional strategies for team teaching. These strategies should provide targeted intervention for students with particular instructional needs within the CTT classrooms. The school administration should hold teachers accountable through the observation process to ensure that these practices are being implemented. The administrators should take advantage of all PD opportunities relating to CTT instructional practices.
- The school should be more sensitive to the varied cultural backgrounds of the student body. This should include cultural references within the instructional process, the availability of culturally relevant materials in classrooms and the library, and celebrations of the differences among the student body whenever possible.
- Teachers should receive PD on introducing strategies such as meaningful group work and how to maintain student engagement. PD should also focus on enabling strategies, such as accountable talk, to become common practice across the school. The Principal, through the observation process, should identify classrooms where student engagement and student interaction is at a high level and arrange intervisitations so that this practice can be disseminated.
- The school should provide PD in the use of higher level questioning techniques to support students in their understanding of lesson content. The Principal should identify and provide PD for all teachers on the understanding of the hierarchy of Bloom's Taxonomy and how it relates to classroom processes. Particular attention in this training should be given to supporting teachers in developing a variety of questioning techniques aimed at developing critical thinking, problem solving skills and the effective support of the independent learning capabilities of students. School leaders should ensure that the questioning strategies learned in the PD offerings become expected practice across the school.
- School leaders should closely monitor the display of all student work in hallways and classrooms to ensure that they include rubrics and specific teacher comments. This should clearly identify next steps to ensure that students fully understand their current educational status and what their targets are for the immediate future. Using the formal and informal observation process, school leaders should speak with students to ascertain if they are aware of the next steps for improving their work.
- A schoolwide technology plan should be developed that includes PD in the use of technology in the classroom. This should be on a differentiated basis so that teachers who lack confidence and expertise receive the most support. The school should research software and technology that supports and enhances ELA as well as all other content areas. School leaders should ensure that the impact of PD offerings is reflected in classroom practice. The school leader should evaluate existing funding or seek new funding streams to enable the school to establish a computer lab that has up-to-date resources.

### III. School Leadership

#### Findings:

- The Principal stated that her vision on instructional improvement has not been embraced fully by all staff.
- The School Leadership Team (SLT) is not functioning as required. The SLT last met in October 2010, and only two parents appear on the sign-in sheet. The SLT was not available to meet with the JIT review team members on the dates of the review. It is evident that parents on the SLT are not involved in decision-making processes that impact the education of their children.
- Sharing the building with other schools brings with it significant restrictions. The current schedule does not allow for the consistent teaching of subject content, and lessons are often disrupted by commitments to other activities, e.g., swimming during the instructional day.
- The absence of the AP for the majority of the spring and summer schedule has impacted negatively on the work of the administration in the school. In particular, this absence has had a significant impact on the management of special education classes and on the schedule of teacher evaluations.
- The school leader's PD plan does not address the school goals to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). A review of the documentation revealed that the professional needs of those teachers working with students with disabilities have not been included within the PD plan.
- The school's internal processes do not ensure the completion of required yearly annual reviews for students with disabilities during the required timeframe. During an interview with the IEP teacher, it was confirmed that the school has been cited in this area.
- Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are not carried out in a consistent manner. Although there is a weakness in the use of data to drive instruction, this is not addressed in any of the observations. This results in a lack of improvement in the quality of instruction in some classrooms.

#### Recommendations:

- School leaders should continue to seek to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school. An experienced mentor should be identified to assist the Principal in managing change and supporting her during the next phase of development.
- The school leader should actively involve parents in the SLT decision-making process regarding school goals and performance. Decisions should be made collaboratively by the entire SLT and not by the school leaders in isolation. The school leader should seek support to better facilitate SLT meetings so that all stakeholders are actively involved in the decision-making process.
- The restrictions placed upon the school by other users of the building should not be allowed to disrupt the continuity of instruction. The Principal should meet with the other Principals who share the building and seek to find a more equitable solution to scheduling so that opportunities for student learning are not disrupted.

- The Principal should urgently examine the options available for dealing with the absence of the AP prior to the start of the new academic year.
- The Principal should initiate a comprehensive PD program that focuses on evidence-based practices that support differentiation and addresses the learning needs of all students, including those with disabilities. The focus of the PD program should be on ensuring a significant impact on student achievement so that the school makes AYP. This program should include close monitoring via formal and informal observations to ensure that all teachers implement strategies learned in PD. A specific focus should be given to the needs of teachers working with students with disabilities.
- The school leader should ensure that all annual reviews for students with disabilities are completed within the required time. If additional staffing is necessary to meet the requirements, the Principal should seek additional support.
- The school leader should develop a strong system for observing classroom instruction. Specific weaknesses should form the focus for lesson observations. Clear and concise feedback should be given to teachers so that they are better able to address shortcomings, particularly in the use of data to drive instruction. In addition, the Principal should use lesson observations to ensure that teachers are held accountable for effectively incorporating the skills learned within PD activities into their lessons.

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

##### **Findings:**

- There is limited celebration of student achievement or public acknowledgement of student success.
- The Academic Intervention Services (AIS) program does not supply Pupil Intervention Plans (PIP) for students with disabilities. In addition, classroom teachers have not developed individual student plans. There was no evidence of supplemental resources to support the AIS program.
- The Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) goal to improve ELA for all students does not have high enough expectations. The target of a two percent increase in students meeting the standard on the NYS ELA assessment is not high enough to achieve AYP.

##### **Recommendations:**

- The Principal should set high staff expectations for displaying and celebrating quality student work. All work displayed should be graded and should recognize success as well as give clear steps for improvement. The school leader should work with staff to identify ways in which student academic, athletic and extracurricular accomplishments can be celebrated both within the school building and outside of it.
- The school leader should evaluate the quality of the AIS program. The Principal should ensure that there are sufficient resources to support AIS and should regularly monitor AIS programs to ensure that students receive the support and resources to which they are entitled.

- The school leader should revise the school’s vision, aims and CEP to reflect high expectations for all students. The goals for school improvement should be set at a more challenging level. Administrators should ensure that high expectations are embedded in all teacher observations and teachers have high expectations for students in all classroom assignments.

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

### **Findings:**

- Insufficient data analysis is undertaken by teachers to drive the school forward. Data use is not widespread and the impact on planning instruction and student achievement is not being maximized. Several teachers, including the two teachers working with students with disabilities, do not interpret this data to adjust their instruction to meet the learning needs of the students in their classes.
- Teachers are provided with data binders that include student data; however, there was little evidence that this data has been fully interpreted to inform instructional delivery.
- There was little evidence that the progress of students was regularly reviewed to ensure that students are meeting the expected standards.

### **Recommendations:**

- Teachers and administrators should receive PD on data analysis and how to use the data to plan differentiated instruction. The school leaders should closely monitor teacher use of data and provide ongoing guidance and extra support to teachers as needed.
- All teachers should make the best use of data binders to improve student achievement. The school leader should regularly check to ensure that the data is used to guide and inform instructional planning and to differentiate instruction. Teachers of students with disabilities should be held accountable for making the best use of all available data and information concerning each student’s learning and achievement to ensure student progress.
- The school should identify the necessary steps for data use to improve and measure student outcomes in meeting standards. This should include the analysis of individual student performance and how teaching strategies can be adapted to meet student needs. All student progress, especially the at-risk subgroups, should be continuously monitored to ensure that growth is maximized.

## **VI. Professional Development**

### **Findings:**

- The PD plan is not fully aligned to the school goals as indicated within the CEP.
- Inquiry work was at a very low level and was not being effectively used to improve student outcomes or to inform planning for future staff development themes.
- Teachers were surveyed in March 2011 to identify their PD needs. No evidence was provided to show how this information had been used to inform or change the current PD program.

- Lesson evaluation reports revealed that there were only isolated examples of teachers being held accountable for incorporating the skills learned in PD into their daily instruction.
- Staff expertise in teaching students with disabilities was only partly addressed in recent PD and did not include guidance on reading strategies in the classroom for students with disabilities.

**Recommendations:**

- The Principal should develop a comprehensive PD plan that is closely aligned with the school goals and has a driving focus on improving instruction and student achievement. This program should include close monitoring via formal and informal observations to ensure that all teachers are using differentiation within their classroom instruction. The plan should be based on a needs assessment and data that informs instruction. The plan should focus particularly on meeting the needs of identified subgroups of students.
- The work of the school inquiry team should be evaluated by the school leader for its impact on instructional practice and student achievement. The required focus on ELA is overdue. The school leader should closely monitor the work of the team to ensure relevance and contribution to student progress. The Principal should provide PD on appropriate inquiry protocols, how to select targeted students for study groups and on the development of profiles for target students. This work should include systems for tracking successful strategies that meet and support the students under study. In addition, any identified weaknesses in teacher performance that are highlighted through the process should be a focus for PD. School leaders should, through the observation process, evaluate the impact of the inquiry team’s work in the classroom.
- The school leadership should revisit the current topics for PD, together with the results of the survey. This work should be undertaken to place greater emphasis on developing the individual skills of teachers to meet the learning needs of students in ELA and improving pedagogical practice in all content areas. The Principal should ensure that the individual teacher needs, identified in the survey, are addressed.
- School leaders should use the observation process to ensure that teachers are held accountable for incorporating the skills learned in PD into their instructional delivery. Where weaknesses remain, additional PD should be provided and future observations focused on the impact of the PD on instruction.
- The Principal should monitor the quality of PD to ensure that it meets the identified needs of teachers and students. Additional PD should be provided for teachers of students with disabilities to help them develop better quality strategies for improving student achievement in reading. School leaders should monitor instruction to check that the PD has an impact on improving student outcomes and the quality of instruction.

**VII. District Support**

**Findings:**

- The Principal confirmed that the Network has offered some expertise to the school in the analysis of data. However, it was not evident that data analysis is being used by teachers to deliver differentiated instruction.

- There was no evidence that the Network has provided guidance on the setting of priorities for the school improvement plan. This has limited the school leader’s ability to make timely improvements to address all aspects of student performance.

**Recommendations:**

- The Network should target the school for intensive PD in data collection, analysis and use to support differentiated instruction and student progress. The Network should support the Principal in ensuring that the PD transfers to the classroom and improves student achievement.
- The Network should provide targeted support to the administration and the SLT in revising the CEP to reflect the school’s priorities for improvement, especially in ELA.
- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations.

**Other Concerns:**

The last Restructuring Plan, produced in 2004, was neither implemented nor monitored.

**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 Principal should be provided with an experienced mentor to support her growth and development as an instructional leader. A transformational leader with demonstrated success at turning around a low-performing school should be identified for this role.
- The mentor and the Network should:

- Support the school in the development of a comprehensive Restructuring Plan that clearly identifies roles and responsibilities within the school. This should include the continuation of the procedures to replace ineffective teachers.
- Support the school leader in the development of SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) CEP goals and action plans that are aligned with urgent needs in ELA and special education.
- Support the school leader in fiscal planning to improve instruction, curriculum development and the reorganization of human resources to meet the changing demographic needs of the school community.
- Assist the Principal in resolving the current uncertainty surrounding the AP on medical leave since February 2011.
- Support the leader in developing a lesson observation process that improves the quality of teaching and targets areas of development in pedagogical practice.
- Provide objective feedback on improving the school and empowering all stakeholders, including parents, teachers and students.
- Monitor teacher use of data to plan and inform instruction.
- Ensure that high quality PD is differentiated and matched to the needs of teachers and students.