

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

<b>BEDS Code/DBN:</b>	261600010050
<b>School District:</b>	Rochester City School District
<b>School Name:</b>	Helen Barrett Montgomery School #50
<b>School Address:</b>	301 Seneca Ave. Rochester, NY 14621
<b>Principal:</b>	Tim Mains
<b>Accountability Phase/Category:</b>	Improvement (year 1) Focused
<b>Areas of Identification:</b>	English Language Arts: Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs)
<b>Dates of On-site Review:</b>	May 25-27, 2011

**PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT**

**VISION:**

“Our high achieving students are of strong character and reach their full potential as independent thinkers.”

**MISSION:**

“Our diverse school community will build students’ knowledge and expose them to a wide range of experiences. We will be creative in meeting the school community’s needs and strive to empower students in achieving goals and exceeding standards.”

**PART 2: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA**

**FINDING:**

- The use of data by different grade level teams is at varying levels of implementation. Some teams use multiple sources and have coordinated approaches. Other teams are just starting to examine State assessment data, especially in ELA.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- School administrators and on-site coaches should structure more team meetings to ensure data is used to improve academic instruction for all students.

## **II. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **FINDINGS:**

- There is a lack of coordination among grade level teams horizontally and vertically, specifically in the implementation of the ELA curriculum.
- The use of technology in many classrooms was in the beginning stages. ELMO document cameras and SMART Board use was not effective, and the technology was underutilized.
- Multiple observed lessons were teacher centered and used direct instruction, with limited opportunities for students to work in teams. There was some evidence of differentiated instruction.
- Primary grade self-contained classrooms did not follow an appropriate curriculum or demonstrate rigor.
- Many observed examples of teacher questioning were at the lower level of Bloom's Taxonomy. Teachers tended to call upon the same students repeatedly and did not structure total class participation in the lessons.
- There were multiple instances of inconsistent implementation of curriculum initiatives across grade levels. For instance, not all grade level teachers were using the adopted ELA core texts or supplementary materials.
- Some English language learner (ELL) classrooms were not providing sufficient supports for beginning ELLs to move to advanced ELL status.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school administration and the ELA coach should structure the summer professional development (PD) activities with teachers and the afterschool grade level team meetings to ensure curriculum alignment to the Common Core State Standards.
- Targeted and strategic PD should be provided to the faculty in technology equipped rooms to increase the effective implementation and use of available instructional technology.
- Teachers should be provided with PD on differentiated instruction and the effective use of small group learning centers.
- The District Special Education Zone Director and other special education training staff should work with the self-contained classroom teachers to develop effective lessons and rigorous activities to meet the educational needs of all students in the classroom.
- Teachers should develop lessons that are less teacher centered and receive PD in questioning techniques, the use of student-centered instruction, and effective models of tracking classroom participation.
- School administration and district staff should conduct frequent, targeted instructional walkthroughs to monitor the implementation of reading programs within the school. Classroom observations, formal and informal, should be used to ensure that teachers are implementing the programs. PD on specific areas of the program should be considered for teachers who are unfamiliar with the core reading programs.

- The District Director for ELLs, in conjunction with the school administration, should provide PD opportunities to teachers working with beginner ELLs that will enhance the rigor of instruction. The administration should then monitor implementation of enhanced PD for its implementation within classrooms.

### **III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- Evidence to document that the administrative staff visits classrooms on a frequent basis is inconsistent. A significant amount of time is used to manage student behavior and provide necessary follow-up.
- The building is currently undertaking three separate initiatives for school improvement, led by three different groups, with different stakeholders. Interviewed stakeholders indicated that meetings consume a significant amount of time, but little is accomplished.
- The administrative team does not frequently collect lesson plans or provide feedback to teachers.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school administrators should ensure that classroom visitations are frequently scheduled for instructional reviews. The Zone Chief and district administrative staff should provide support during the transition phase of the school to a K-8 complex. The administrators should ensure that teachers are following the student management system.
- The school should focus on strategic improvement initiatives that allow for the creation of a strategic Comprehensive Educational Plan that is measurable, actionable, and timely. Redundancies in the improvement process should be eliminated and stakeholder input should be aligned to State and federal shared decision-making requirements.
- The administrative team should create a systemic approach to the collection and review of lesson plans. The plans should be reviewed, and teachers provided with feedback to focus on the Rochester Instructional Framework and improving student achievement.

### **IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

#### **FINDING:**

- Some upper grade classroom teachers utilized the practice of isolating students from their peers for poor behavior. These students were placed away from the main portion of the class and could not see the front of the room. They were not always included in groups for instructional purposes. In some instances, the teacher was not positioned to see the isolated students during instruction.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- Classroom instruction should include all students in learning activities. Teachers should follow the District/school adopted student behavior system approach when behavior problems occur in the classroom.

**V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT****FINDINGS:**

- The master schedule permits some time for team meetings; however, it is not always effectively utilized. In some instances, teachers leave meetings to conduct administrative assignments that an aide has been assigned to perform. In other instances, the Wednesday after school period designated as professional development time is not structured in a manner to permit increased team focus on data review and curriculum discussions.
- In some instances, the co-teaching models were well formulated and effectively implemented. In other observed instances, the model was in its formative stage and not effectively implemented.
- Several interviewed staff indicated that there is a need for increased PD for teachers who teach ELLs and students with disabilities in general education classrooms.
- Some of the lessons observed were not sufficiently rigorous to promote student achievement of proficiency on State assessments. The lack of rigor was especially evident in classrooms of teachers moved from early elementary levels to later elementary levels.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- School administrators should ensure that grade level meetings and Wednesday after school sessions are effectively utilized to improve teacher instruction. Agendas should be planned and distributed in a timely manner, with the focus on instructional improvement. Non-instructional matters should be communicated in writing via e-mail, a community Wikispace or through other means. Teachers should be held accountable for attending meetings and any required follow-up.
- Timely and effective joint PD should be provided to co-teachers. The effectiveness of the co-teaching model should be evaluated at regular intervals and the strategy modified, if warranted.
- Using District resources and administrative staff, there should be a concerted effort to provide and train teachers in effective professional practices for working with students with disabilities and ELLs. Administrators should be held accountable for evaluating the implementation of PD within the classroom. Teachers should be held accountable for implementing the training into their instructional practice.
- The District should develop orientation/PD plans/activities specifically designed to assist teachers making the transitions between lower and upper elementary grades. Further PD and discussions are necessary between teachers and administrative staff over the definition of and exemplars needed to illustrate rigor in classrooms.

## **VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

### **FINDINGS:**

- The school has been identified as a “grow out school” and will be enrolling seventh and eighth grade students in the next two years.
- Many of the classrooms that were visited contained a significant amount of instructional material that was out of date, in poor condition, or haphazardly stored.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The District should ensure that the school receives the support and materials needed to assist in the expansion of the complex to a K-8 school. The District may wish to consider adding an assistant principal as the population increases.
- The Principal should ensure that a comprehensive inventory of all teaching materials is conducted. The school should then strategically reallocate teaching materials to ensure that proper grade level materials are available for use.

## **PART 3: CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

The Helen Barrett Montgomery School #50 is at a strategic moment in its school improvement process. The school boasts success in parental involvement and has recently rebuilt its Parent-Teacher Organization. The school building will be undergoing extensive renovations over the next school year. During the course of the visit, staff, faculty, parents and students were generous with their time and participated in discussions about the challenges the school faces.

As the school creates the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), a strategic analysis of data is essential to ensure that students with disabilities and ELLs are supported in their academic programs. The grade level teams should undertake intensive curriculum development, with the assistance of the Director of English Language Arts to implement the Common Core Standards. The District Director of English Language Learners and the Zone Chief for students with disabilities should take an active role in the provision of PD to all faculty members. The PD offered to staff should be targeted on raising expectations for student achievement and developing teaching techniques that will improve the academic rigor and learning opportunities for all students in the school. It is imperative that the administrative team continues to support teachers in the improvement process and holds the faculty accountable for improving their professional practice. As the school expands from K-6 to K-8, the District should provide all of the necessary resources to ensure a successful educational program are in place for all of the children in the school.