

UTICA CSD/NYSED JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code:	41230010024
District:	Utica CSD
School Name:	Thomas R. Proctor High School
School Address:	1203 Hilton Avenue Utica, NY 13501
Principal:	Steven A. Falchi
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced/Focused
Area(s) of Identification:	English Language Arts- Black students; Hispanic students, Asian students; English Language Learners; and Economically Disadvantaged, Mathematics – English Language Learners
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	December 13-17, 2010

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

Thomas R. Proctor High School is the sole high school in the city of Utica and serves 2,671 students in grades 9 through 12. The school enrollment is 45 percent White, 26 percent Black, 15 percent Hispanic, 14 percent Asian and less than one percent Native American and Multiracial. Of these students, 471 (18 percent) are students with disabilities and 392 (15 percent) are English language learners (ELLs).

Utica has become one of the largest federal relocation centers for immigrants coming to the United States. The District has absorbed in excess of 1,000 students over the past few years, mostly children from immigrant families. This increase in student population has led to a growing high school enrollment in a facility that was built to accommodate 2,100 students. The overcrowding of the high school, coupled with the large number of ELLs and students with disabilities, continues to have a tremendous impact on the District and school.

The school's administrative team consists of the Principal, who is in his fourth year, and six Assistant Principals (APs), who have between three to five years of service at the school. The school has gone through various changes in administrative structures that began in 2005, from the traditional model of Principal and APs, to an Executive Principal with Academy principals, to four Academy principals and no Executive Principal. At the beginning of the 2007-2008 school year, the high school was returned to the traditional administrative structure of one Principal supported by five Assistant Principals. Before the 2008-2009 school year began, a sixth Assistant Principal was added to further support the ninth grade.

There are 204 teachers; 14 guidance counselors; six social workers; three library media staff; two attendance teachers; two psychologists; five Academic Intervention Service (AIS) Facilitators; two Gap facilitators and a counselor coordinator. In addition, there are 154 support staff positions including secretaries, clerks, security, cafeteria staff and technology staff.

A Department Chair leads each content area. Their role is to provide leadership in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and data analysis. The English Language Arts (ELA), mathematics and special education departments are also supported by a Gap Facilitator who provides strategies for improved student performance in ELA, mathematics and for students with disabilities. All teachers teaching in core academic

subjects are highly qualified. Ninety-four members of the staff have fewer than five years of experience and 41 have fewer than three years experience.

Since the 2006-2007 school year, over 100 professional staff are new to the school, resulting in a turnover of at least half of the professional staff. This was a direct result of the addition of many new positions since 2006 to address the needs for remedial programming, to expand offerings, and to reduce class size. Many of the new positions were also due to faculty retirements. Over the past three school years, there has been stabilization in staff, and no professional staff has left Proctor HS during the District’s annual teacher transfer process for the past two years.

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		
-	Negative trend data for one or more identified subject/areas and subgroups for the past two consecutive years, 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.	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for the past two consecutive years show an increase in the number of subgroups that did not make Adequate Yearly progress (AYP) in identified area(s).	✓
-	Total Cohort Graduation rate is below performance index (for high schools)	✓

B. School Strengths

- The administrative team works well together and is committed to improving student performance. The administrative team has established high expectations for teachers and students and has communicated these expectations to all stakeholders.
- There is a safe and orderly environment. The school is welcoming and student centered. Schoolwide behavior policies have been developed and are consistently implemented.
- The Mohawk Valley Community College Bridge Program, Young Scholars Program, Upward Bound and the Reserve Officers’ Training Corp (ROTC) support and complement the school and District efforts to improve student performance.

C. Key Findings and Recommendations:

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

I. Curriculum

Findings:

- Although there is an articulated, rigorous English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum that is aligned to NYS standards, including sequence and pacing calendars, the ELA curricula for ELLs and students with disabilities are in draft form.
- Although the school uses curriculum maps, there is no rigorous, coherent mathematics curriculum that is aligned with New York State (NYS) Standards, performance indicators, and core competencies that forms the basis for all classroom instruction.

Recommendations:

- The ELA curricula for ELLs and students with disabilities should be completed, disseminated to teachers, fully implemented and monitored by the Principal, the Director of English as a Second Language (ESL) and the Director of Student Support Services.
- A mathematics curriculum should be developed that is rigorous and aligned with the NYSED core curriculum and national standards.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Instructional staff are not consistently using research-based instructional strategies in their lessons. Students were actively engaged; however, there was little evidence of differentiated instruction and flexible classroom groupings.
- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) student progress is not properly reported to parents.
- Not all students eligible for AIS are receiving services.
- Adequate instructional technology is not readily available to students and instructional staff. Existing instructional technology is not consistently integrated into the core curriculum areas.
- The present co-teaching model is not consistently implemented.
- The school lacks a uniform schoolwide grading policy that reflects clear expectations for student academic performance.
- Many teachers use rubrics for the evaluation of student work; however, rubrics are not displayed in classrooms.

Recommendations:

- Instructional staff should consistently implement research-based instructional practices in daily instruction for all content areas. Instructional practices should include but not be limited to: differentiated instruction; cooperative learning; rubrics; higher order thinking skills; inquiry-based learning; research; problem solving; scaffolding; writing across the content; and project-based learning. The implementation of these instructional practices should be monitored regularly by District staff and school administration and be specifically related to the identified subgroups.
- Students and parents should receive quarterly AIS progress reports separate from student report cards.
- A system should be developed to ensure that all eligible students receive appropriate levels of AIS.
- The school staff should develop a plan to effectively integrate technology into all content areas to support teaching and learning and improve student performance.
- District and school leaders should take an active role in monitoring co-teaching classrooms for effectiveness. When possible teachers should have input in creating co-teaching teams.
- The grading policy should be enhanced to include the weight of identified components of each marking period grade. Those components should include homework, classroom participation, quizzes, major tests, and projects. The grading policy should be consistently implemented by each content area department and clearly communicated to staff, students and parents.
- Student academic work with rubrics should be displayed throughout the school.

III. School Leadership**Findings:**

- Although a formal Annual Professional Performance Review process exists and administrators informally visit classrooms, there is no consistent protocol for walkthroughs.
- During interviews and observations, there were concerns related to the amount of student instructional time, sharing of classrooms, and the consistency of assigning teachers to AIS classes.
- There is little parent involvement and participation on the school's shared decision-making team.

Recommendations:

- The District should establish a protocol for classroom walkthroughs. The protocol should focus on patterns of practice in the classroom.
- The present master schedule should be analyzed for effectiveness and revised to best meet the needs of students, with input from staff.
- The Principal and leadership team should explore and create opportunities to actively engage parents and members of the community in decisions that impact the education of the students.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- There is a concern regarding classroom and school attendance, especially during and after the lunch periods, since there is no formal process to monitor students exiting and entering the school.
- Although the school is safe and there is adequate supervision, there appeared to be inconsistencies in the performance of security duties and coverage.
- The library media center is underutilized by staff and students. It lacks adequate resource materials for addressing cultural diversities.
- Although there are regularly scheduled opportunities for articulation among staff, there is a need for greater collaboration among AIS teachers, general education teachers, and teachers of students with disabilities and ELLs.
- The school recognizes the importance of involving parents in their child's education; however, parent involvement is limited.
- While there are programs for career planning, academic support, extracurricular activities, and higher education opportunities; the number of available openings in these programs is insufficient when compared to the number of at-risk students.
- Although there is an informal middle/high school transition plan, it does not prepare incoming grade 9 students for the academic rigor and responsibilities of high school.
- There are limited programs and offerings addressing character education, positive reinforcement, and cultural diversity for students and staff.

Recommendations:

- If the District continues to support an open campus, a formal process should be established for monitoring students exiting and entering the school at all times.
- Duties and responsibilities of security personnel should be clearly identified and monitored. Security should have a presence in all parts of the building.
- A plan, which includes professional development (PD), should be developed for the library media specialists to support literacy across the content. The plan should include the use of technology to support instruction. Library media specialists should serve as resources for students and teachers at all grade levels, paying particular attention to identified subgroups. Resource materials should be available in multiple languages.
- The schedule should be reviewed to find time for frequent and ongoing articulation among AIS staff, general education teachers, and teachers of students with disabilities and ELLs. The use of time should be monitored.
- The school should develop a plan to involve parents in decision-making roles and other schoolwide initiatives. Surveys should be created for parents on topics related to school improvement and the

education of their children. The District and school should maintain current information on the District and school websites.

- Student access to the current programs should be expanded. The District should explore other options for supporting the academic achievement of at-risk students. The Counselor Coordinator and counseling staff should take an active role in this process.
- A well-defined transition plan to support incoming grade 9 students should be developed. The plan should include strong communication and collaboration between middle and high school administration and staff. The focus should be on individual student achievement and placement. Consideration should be given to restructuring grade 9 to create a smaller learning environment. For example, teams might be created of academic core teachers and support staff that are assigned exclusively to grade 9 students.
- Offerings and programs addressing character education, positive reinforcement and cultural diversity should be expanded. (See Diversitycouncil.org for an overview of available programs.)

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- The Principal, Department Chairs and AIS Facilitators regularly analyze schoolwide and content area student performance trend data. However, all teachers are not systematically using the data to identify students' strengths and needs and to inform instructional planning.
- Student enrollment, attendance, and cohort data is not updated in a timely manner.

Recommendations:

- Teachers should systematically use trend data to identify students' strengths and needs and to inform instructional planning. Administrators should model the use of data.
- School and district administrators should establish procedures that ensure all data is accurately maintained in a timely manner. The system should include roles, responsibilities, and timelines.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- There is a Districtwide PD plan, but it lacks school specificity. It does not provide opportunities for research-based PD in mathematics.
- There is a need for more PD opportunities for teachers to meet the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, and all at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- A comprehensive PD plan that includes mathematics and is based on student performance data and teacher input should be developed. This plan should be monitored for implementation and effectiveness.

- Additional PD opportunities for teachers to meet the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities, and all at-risk students should be provided. Topics should include, Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol; differentiated instruction; teaching in the block; co-teaching; and use of data to inform instruction. In addition, training on effective strategies for dealing with students at-risk should be provided for support staff, i.e., teaching assistants and security. Implementation should be closely monitored for use and effectiveness.

VII. District Support

Findings:

- Although the CEP is regularly monitored at the school level, there is no systematic, on-going monitoring by District Directors.
- Students exiting Division for Youth (DFY) placements may be inappropriately placed at the high school.

Recommendations:

- The District Directors should regularly monitor the implementation and progress of the CEP.
- The District should establish a transition plan for students transitioning from the DFY with administrative input from the high school. The plan should include provisions for mentoring and monitoring student progress.
- The District should provide support in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT).

PART 3: JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Overall Finding

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.

- Implement Smaller Learning Communities.
- Continue with the school's ELA curriculum and implement research-based instructional practices especially for students with disabilities and ELLs.
- Implement a schoolwide "Response To Intervention" (RTI) model.
- Conduct periodic reviews to ensure that the curriculum is being implemented with fidelity, is having the intended impact on student achievement, and is modified if ineffective.
- Provide additional intensive supports and PD to teachers and the school's administrative team in order to implement effective strategies to support at-risk populations.
- Use and integrate technology-based supports and interventions as part of the instructional program.
- Improve student transition from middle to high school through summer transition programs or freshman academies.
- Increase graduation rates through, credit recovery programs, re-engagement strategies, competency-based instruction and performance-based assessments, and acceleration of basic reading and mathematics skills.
- Establish early-warning systems to identify students who may be at risk of failing to meet State Learning standards or graduate.
- Provide ongoing mechanisms for family and community engagement.