

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

<b>BEDS Code/DBN:</b>	10X475
<b>School Name:</b>	John F. Kennedy High School
<b>School Address:</b>	99 Terrace Avenue Bronx NY 10463
<b>Principal:</b>	Lisa Luft
<b>Restructuring Phase/Category:</b>	Persistently Lowest-Achieving
<b>Area(s) of Identification:</b>	Graduation Rate
<b>Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:</b>	October 26- 27, 2010

**PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

**A. Community and School Background**

John F Kennedy High School serves 1,173 students in grades 9 through 12. The student enrollment is less than one percent Asian; 59 percent Hispanic; 31 percent Black; less than one percent White; and less than one percent Native American. There are 20 percent English Language Learners (ELLs) and 22 percent students with disabilities. Sixty percent of the students live near the school.

The administrative team includes the Principal and eight Assistant Principals (APs). The Principal began in July of 2010 and the APs have been assigned to their current positions for more than three years. Two percent of the staff have been at the school for fewer than three years. Thirteen percent of the teaching staff is considered not highly qualified. According to the Principal, due to large budgetary deficits, 38 teachers were excessed in September 2010. Additionally, 11 school aides, two guidance counselors and the Deans were excessed.

**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 an 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.	✓
-	For 2010-11, the school was identified as a <b><u>Persistently Lowest- Achieving school.</u></b>	✓
-	Total Cohort Graduation rate is below performance index (for high schools)	✓
	<b>NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures</b>	
-	2008-09 NYC Progress Report Grade of C	✓
+/-	NYC Quality Review Score of Proficient	✓

## B. School Strengths

The new PTA President is motivated and expressed a desire to improve the school.

## 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:

- Some curriculum maps were observed, however, they were not being implemented. Lessons did not appear to be connected to prior learning; skills were taught in isolation. Lessons were not standards based. There was no cohesive instructional program developed by the school that was developmentally sequenced from grade to grade in each subject. Pacing charts were not evident.
- The Language Allocation Policy (LAP) had not been implemented to support curriculum development for ELLs.
- There appears to be little input from the administrative staff for curriculum development, as evidenced by the fact that administrators did not attend the weekly Inquiry Team meetings. Teachers met in small groups, without any clear or cohesive agenda or guidance from supervisors. Each meeting was arranged by subject teachers. They had different agendas that appear to lack planning and focus.
- Curriculum content was imparted to students through read alouds by teachers. Students listened and responded to questions that did not generate higher order thinking skills. The lessons did not reflect standards based instruction. Classroom resources were limited to textbooks in the observed classes, as libraries, computers, and resource books were not evident. Some classrooms were equipped with computers and SMART Boards; however, they were not frequently used. Most often, classrooms did not have an adequate number of computers.
- Curriculum in mathematics for identified students with disabilities has not been addressed.

#### Recommendations:

- Curriculum maps across grades that are aligned with the NYS Standards should be developed by the teaching staff. Teachers should implement the content included in the maps and plan daily to meet this goal. Lesson plans should include teaching points that are aligned with the maps and pacing charts.
- Teachers should receive training in developing curriculum for ELLs that satisfies the requirements for the LAP.
- Supervisors should regularly monitor Inquiry Team meetings to be sure that teachers are planning using standards based curriculum that is designated for the grade and the subject being taught. Documentation of the agenda, meeting minutes and next steps should be managed by the teachers. The Team should be held accountable for the implementation and progress of on-going meetings.

- Read alouds should not be used as the primary method of instructional delivery. Rigorous curriculum should be embedded in daily instruction that provides a variety of methods of delivery, including ongoing use of technological resources such as SMART Boards, computers and interactive methods of learning. In addition, independent reading should be a component of each lesson in order for students to reflect upon learning. Students should track their reflections as they read silently and then be given the opportunity to discuss what they have learned.
- Rigorous and explicit curriculum in mathematics for the identified subgroups should be developed by analyzing the data collected to address differentiation of instruction. There should be an explicit and standards based mathematics curriculum developed for the identified groups. Special education teachers, in collaboration with general education teachers and administrators, should receive support in creating curriculum maps and ongoing assessments to monitor student progress.

## II. Teaching and Learning

### Findings:

- Observed instruction was teacher-directed and text driven. The teachers interpreted the text for the students, followed by teachers asking literal (low level) questions. Students responded; however, there was no evidence of note taking or recording of information. There was no evidence of modeling, scaffolding and accountable talk during teaching. Some content literacy was implemented.
- Diverse needs of students did not appear to be addressed, as evidenced by the lack of differentiated instruction. Teachers were not implementing the findings from conferring or recordkeeping to support differentiation in instruction. Alternative methods of instructional delivery were not observed. Differentiated materials were not provided for students.
- Some co-teaching occurred with the ELL push-in teacher and in the Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) classes. Full participation of both teachers was not evident. In some classes, one teacher taught and the other supervised students.
- Learning time was not maximized as evidenced by the fact that period one tutoring was not serving all potentially at-risk students due to late arrivals. Pacing during lessons was disrupted by late students.
- Most observed questions were literal. Responses were “yes” or “no.” There was little evidence of higher order thinking. Lack of engagement was reflected in students' slow pace during passing and delayed arrival to their next period class.
- Although technology is the stated theme of the small learning communities (SLCs) and was used in labs, it was not used for applications across content areas or for research. It was not explicitly integrated into the curriculum of content subjects.
- The grading policy is not specific or consistent.

### Recommendations:

- Instructional delivery should include workshop methodology that includes explicit teaching points, and independent student work. This methodology would promote higher order thinking and increased student interaction and learning. Training from outside sources is required.

- Teachers should be provided with training in aligning assessments with appropriate instructional materials so that effective differentiation can take place. Leveled materials should be available to classroom teachers to meet individual student needs.
- Effective methods of co-teaching should be modeled so that both cooperating teachers are providing maximum support for students. Co-teaching training should provide opportunities for teachers to implement small group instruction or strategy groups.
- Student lateness should be monitored by guidance personnel and deans. Parents should be involved in supporting students to maximize learning. The school should explore the use of incentives for students who arrive on time.
- Higher order questioning strategies and challenging curriculum that is developmentally accurate should be a primary focus of staff development. Training in instructional delivery systems to create more effective instruction and student engagement should be provided. PD on the creation of rubrics should then be provided so that students have clear expectations and can engage in reflective practice.
- Technology should be fully integrated into the teaching/learning structure of the SLCs, as stated in the school's themes.
- Teachers should develop a consistent and explicit grading system that benchmarks student work and uses rubrics to provide consistent and reliable evaluation. Rubrics should be used to create the descriptors for each level of assessment.

### III. School Leadership

#### Findings:

- Although the Principal states that she would like to improve areas of deficiency and has identified 23 potentially unsatisfactory teachers, she has not followed through on documenting unsatisfactory performance. This was evidenced by only two observations being filed as of the date of the review. Administrative input and supervision is not evident. Supervisors are not permitted to supervise and evaluate teachers during period one (extended day).
- It is not clear that the Principal has a working knowledge of school-based budgeting, as evidenced by 38 teachers being excessed in July without options being developed to reorganize less critical staff positions. Staffing was not reorganized to accommodate the goal of maintaining critical support staff, but instead was kept at a level of eight APs as a priority. Currently, there are no Deans, no AP of Organization and only two guidance counselors. As a result, there is inadequate support for student services for the entire school.
- The Principal has not provided guidance for staff in making clear connections between school improvement and the school theme of Vertical Technology as identified in the SLCs. The purpose for choosing that theme and how it will advance learning for all students has not been embedded in the school goals for learning. It is not clear that the theme of Vertical Technology has enhanced the school program or advanced learning. Senior students who were interviewed felt that the communities cause competition and are not purposeful in promoting success.

- The Principal has not taken a leadership role in providing guidance to her staff in implementing the use of data to drive instruction, as evidenced by the lack of assessment data available in classrooms.
- Senior honor students have not received adequate information regarding college admissions. They report that they have no one to direct them and they feel that the school has not provided for their educational needs. Guidance counselors have caseloads of 300 students and disciplinary assignments. Students are not informed of their credit accumulation unless they request it. Counselors are not available to provide appropriate college counseling and graduation support.
- The Principal has scheduled time for common planning during period one on Tuesdays and PD during lunch time. However, there was no evidence of ongoing purposeful agendas that would lead to future goals or strategies for school improvement. Team conversations included discussions that were spontaneously generated and did not appear to be part of a comprehensive instructional plan. There was no indication that planning for meetings was done collaboratively with the Principal.
- The school does not have a functioning library or certified librarian. The Principal was unable to provide a reason why the school library continues to remain closed. Classroom libraries, research materials, or reference books were not available in classrooms.
- The APs indicated that teachers refused to implement the workshop model of instructional delivery. As a result, Professional Development (PD) on assessments (rubrics) was provided, even though it was recognized that it was not sequentially appropriate in the continuum of learning for teachers. No agendas were available to substantiate additional training.
- Supervision for ELLs is inadequate as evidenced by the fact that ELLs were inappropriately referred.
- There is little evidence that the Principal has prioritized her supervisory responsibilities appropriately as leader, as evidenced by few formal observations documented since the beginning of the year and provided to the team. Informal observations such as walkthrough checklists for future training and instructional needs of teachers are not evident.

**Recommendations:**

- Evaluation of extended day programs (period one) is required. Administrators should receive effective training in the provisions for supervision. Observations/evaluations/documentation should be implemented in a timely fashion.
- The Principal should reorganize staff and the budget to allow for deans and guidance counselors to support students and staff. The school should receive ongoing training in school based budgeting. It appears that a large deficit was not addressed over years, due to the drop in student population, and as a result, the excising of 38 positions caused a tremendous disruption in staffing.
- The focus on the theme (Vertical Technology) should be modified and changed to promote standards based instruction and teaching points.
- The Principal should take on a leadership role in modeling and implementing data as a means to inform instruction and track student progress. Department meetings should incorporate effective methods of keeping records and analyzing the results. It is the role of the administrative staff

under the guidance of the Principal to provide ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this practice by classroom teachers.

- The Principal should assign an administrator immediately to oversee the college application process for current seniors. She should ensure that students are receiving assistance in filing college applications and completing graduation matters.
- Supervisory input with the oversight of the Principal should be explicit during all staff development and training sessions. Supervisors who provide training should be integrating teacher needs assessments with planning for future agendas. Teacher-generated agendas should be created in collaboration with administrators and the Principal.
- School funding should be prioritized to provide necessary instructional tools to enhance learning, such as classroom libraries, computers and research materials. In addition, the school library and librarian should be reinstated. The Principal should be in contact with other Principals in the building to develop a partnership through a building council committee that meets regularly to improve the operations of the school. A key issue could be to work on funding for reinstating and renovating the library media center.
- PD should be provided in response to the teachers' needs and desires as expressed or observed. PD agendas should indicate sequentially appropriate opportunities for teacher growth.
- Close monitoring of the requirements for services for ELLs should be monitored by the Principal and /or her designee.
- Observations for the file, both formal and informal, should be conducted regularly by administrators to assess teacher performance and the implementation of best practices.

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

##### **Findings:**

- Interviews with school personnel indicated concern about student success. Teachers, students and parents expressed concerns about disruptive classrooms, students' disrespect for authority, and student lateness. There is no consistent school wide behavior policy implemented. Teachers, students and parents all indicated that disruptive behavior is an issue during class time. Deans have been eliminated. There is no SAVE Room. These changes in the school program have resulted in a negative impact on student discipline and their accountability for inappropriate behavior. Supervision is not sufficient on the first three floors during passing.
- Attendance during the early morning extended day is low. Learning time is not maximized since there are few students attending periods one and two. Period one is designated as intervention. Seniors were seated on the floor waiting for period two to begin. They stated that they are not scheduled to attend the period one intervention. Supervisors appeared to be unaware of the situation.
- The Pupil Personnel Team's (PPT) binder included agendas, but there was no evidence of attendance for team or classroom teachers at regular meetings. There is evidence of IEP services recorded in the Related Services Status Information Report; however these services do not appear to have been implemented. There are only two Special Education Teacher Support Services

(SETTS) teachers in the building for 1600 students. There is no psychologist on the School-Based Support Team.

- It was observed that there was only one earth science lab. It is not clear that there are sufficient labs to meet the academic needs for the number of students at the school.
- Parents are not involved in the creation of the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), as evidenced by interviews.
- It was observed that the impact of the School Leadership Team (SLT) upon school success is not evident. Collaboration between the Principal and the team was not evident.

**Recommendations:**

- The school should institute a school wide behavior policy, which might include student signatures, if deemed appropriate. The policy should be communicated to all parents, students and staff members and ongoing follow through should be communicated to students. . Dean positions should be reinstated to support teachers and students in developing and implementing positive behaviors. Supervision on the first three floors during passing should be provided by all administrators. A SAVE room should be reinstated to handle disciplinary matters and be staffed by teachers to provide meaningful instructional support.
- The role of the APs and guidance counselors should be redefined so that they do not have the primary responsibility for discipline. They should assist in monitoring early morning attendance for intervention services and be in contact with parents of students who have high absence rates. Their priority should be to provide student support services and articulation as well as college counseling and graduation information for seniors.
- There should be an active, effective PPT. Members should be accountable for providing minutes of the meetings and agendas. Work completed should be recorded. A member of the administrative staff should be in attendance at all meetings. The addition of a psychologist on the School-based Support Team, as well as appropriately trained and experienced SETTS or Collaborative Team Teachers (CTT) as members would help to ensure that IEP services are implemented appropriately and effectively and that all services and goals for students with disabilities are met.
- All students should have access to an appropriate number of science labs to help facilitate integrating hands-on and performance based learning in science.
- An effective school CEP requires meaningful collaboration between all stakeholders: parents, the Principal, and teachers. The school should work collaboratively to assure successful outcomes for students.

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

**Findings:**

- Data is collected by the Inquiry Team; however it is not used to drive student instructional planning. There was little evidence that the data that was collected and reviewed impacted schoolwide student achievement, planning or classroom practice, particularly for students with disabilities and ELLs .

The Inquiry Team meets weekly; however, as a result of insufficient leadership, they were not able to articulate a unified purpose or ongoing plan for data collection and analysis. They reported that their focus for data collection currently was on essay strategies related to Global and US history student performance. They provided no rationale as to why these subjects were selected for inquiry.

- Guidance staff stated that they review credit accumulation on an ongoing basis, but there was no evidence that this information is used to develop a specific student intervention services plan. Seniors were lacking information about college application procedures. They stated they were concerned that they would miss the deadlines for college entrance.
- Accountability Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS), Acuity and Scantron are data sources that are available schoolwide and were introduced to the parents; however, training in interpreting the data was not provided.
- Student portfolios were not evident.

**Recommendations:**

- Data analysis and ongoing informal assessments should be used to drive instruction for all subgroups and be used to develop specific student intervention plans for students with disabilities and ELLs.

Data collected by the Inquiry Team was analyzed for the Global Studies Regents exam. However, analysis for the identified subject area (ELA) should be the first priority of the team. Additional information can be gleaned from the other subject exams. Teachers should be trained in collecting and reviewing data from a wide range of test instruments (not only Regents), such as informal assessments, to inform instruction and develop content specific units of study.

Ongoing data collection should be targeted for all groups, and should include collaborative assessment of student work. Assessment binders should be required of all teachers to track student progress. Protocols for data collection, organization and analysis should be integrated into the school PD plan.

- Students should receive ongoing and current information from the guidance staff regarding college entrance requirements, the application process, graduation and credit accumulation.
- Parents should receive training in the interpretation of student data and the impact on their children's learning.
- Portfolio assessment should be an embedded practice throughout the school and should be compiled in all subjects for each grade. Benchmark work that is standards based should be included, and the portfolios should be cumulative and maintained from grade to grade.

## **VI. Professional Development**

**Findings:**

- Planning time is scheduled weekly; however, there was no evidence of the implementation of a comprehensive PD plan created by leadership and teachers that was data driven and that reflected

the needs of students and teachers. Development of rubrics was presented at workshops, but there was no evidence of implementation in classrooms.

- Achieve 3000 is used for ELLs. The Frustration Anxiety and Tension (F.A.T.) City Workshop for at risk students provides differentiated instruction. There is little evidence of the implementation of these programs to support student academic success.
- Needs assessments for PD generated by the teaching staff are not evident.
- Content for PD sessions (lunch hours) is not sequenced appropriately to provide a logical and smooth development of teaching and learning outcomes.
- Time has been allocated to teachers for PD. However, limited emphasis is being placed on incorporating into classroom practice innovative research based instructional strategies and resources that are targeted to address the ELA needs of subgroups or low achieving students.
- Limited opportunities for mentor teachers are provided.

**Recommendations:**

- A comprehensive PD plan should be developed and sequenced developmentally in order to address the implementation of standards based differentiated instruction for students. Appropriate assessments such as running records, mathematics skills assessments, and conferring notes should be modeled for all staff. Supervisors should be responsible for monitoring and evaluating recordkeeping of all teachers. Assessment binders should be required as one of the established practices for data collection in the school. Ongoing analysis of assessments to inform instruction should be a major component of teaching and learning and be integrated into the school PD plan. PD for the teaching staff should also be differentiated to meet the goals of the school, individual teachers and the outcomes as cited in the CEP.
- School programs that are currently in use should be evaluated for their impact on students' achievement (Achieve 3000 and F.A.T. City). The needs of all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, should be met by an effective, standards based intervention program. The school should offer sufficient PD sessions that are designed to meet the needs of these diverse learners.
- In order to plan effectively, a needs assessment survey should be distributed to teachers, students and parents. The survey results should be collected and reviewed by the school administrators and then incorporated into the PD plan yearly. Also the results of walkthrough and informal classroom checklists should provide information for future PD workshops.
- The PD plan should address the greatest areas of need first, such as instructional delivery systems. Smooth transitions of learning outcomes are the desired goal of PD. Teaching points should be developmentally appropriate to maximize student learning and to provide students with the basic skills and concepts they need to build higher level learning. Instructional delivery systems followed by assessment training (rubrics) forms a logical development for teaching and learning.
- There should be an emphasis on incorporating innovative research based instructional strategies into PD that are developmentally appropriate. Multicultural materials that are aligned with the NYS learning standards should be used.

- To ensure that the PD plan meets the needs of teachers and administrators, a variety of opportunities should be available for growth and development. Mentors for teachers and administrators should be available to support teaching and learning. A mentoring program should be designed to meet the individual needs of staff.

## **VII. District Support**

### **Findings:**

- Although the District/Network has provided the school with some PD on curriculum mapping and data collection/analysis, there was no evidence of its integration into instructional practice.
- Large budget deficits were carried over from previous years due to the drop in student population that resulted in excessing of staff and closing the library. It is unclear what fiscal support and oversight was provided by the District/Network to prevent this type of disruption in the future.
- The District provided funding for facilities, however during the review, ceiling tiles fell on a staff member's head while teaching.
- The District/Network assisted the school in funding for technology resources such as computer labs, mobile laptop carts and SMART Boards; however, no evidence was found that PD was provided in order to integrate these resources into the instructional program.

### **Recommendations:**

- The District/Network should provide PD and support designed to integrate data collection/analysis results into instructional practice focused upon subject areas and subgroups that did not make AYP.
- The District/Network should be providing explicit and ongoing support in school-based budgeting to ensure that deficits are addressed and repaid yearly. The District/Network should work with the administration to secure additional funding to increase the variety and amount of classroom resources, hire a librarian, and make the library/media center an active center for the support of instruction.
- The District/Network should conduct a facilities survey and make appropriate repairs to ensure a safe and effective instructional environment.
- The District/Network should provide PD and support to help the school integrate its technology resources into the instructional program, targeting priority areas that impact upon identified subjects and subgroups.
- The Network should support the implementation of the JIT recommendations.

### **Other Concerns:**

The team was provided with a brief budget for the school's extended day and after-school programs. The format and category breakdown of what was presented indicated that training on school-based budgeting is needed.

**PART 3: OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION**

**A. Overall Finding**

Reference	Review Team Finding	
(b)	The school has not made sufficient progress in identified areas, and is unlikely to make AYP without further significant change.	✓

**B. Overall Recommendation**

Reference	Review Team Recommendation	
(b)	Phase-out or close the school.	✓

**C. In the space below, include specific information to support the District in determining how the above recommendation should be accomplished.**

The team recommends that a plan be developed and implemented during the phase-out period.

- The leadership of the school has not demonstrated an ability to communicate a clear vision of exemplary practice to develop an educational institution that advances student achievement and academic success. The roles of the APs have not been clearly defined and their deficiencies in supervision and instructional leadership have had a negative impact on student achievement. Professional development for the APs, as well as guidance in developing a standards based curriculum that teachers adhere to and incorporate daily in their lessons have not been adequately provided.
- The SLCs have shown no positive impact on student progress. The focus on the school theme, Virtual Technology, fragments the curriculum by implementing teaching activities that are neither rigorous nor standards based.
- The APs do not provide or engage in effective instructional leadership, or effectively evaluate teacher progress to promote exemplary practices. The Principal has not created a leadership team that appears to be working toward common goals and mission. There is little evidence that there are ongoing goals based upon collaboration between the Principal and the APs. It appears that they work independently and have varying points of view as to how best to improve teacher performance. The vision of the Principal does not seem to be inculcated as the guiding principle that drives the educational program to promote student success.
- Standards based instruction should be embedded in the school curriculum. This requires explicit teaching and learning strategies that represent the acquisition of rigorous and high level skills. Curriculum maps that are aligned with the NYS core curriculum should be developed by the teaching staff. Teachers should implement the content included in the maps, and plan daily to meet this goal. Pacing charts should be aligned with the curriculum maps and implement the sequential development of curriculum so that there is grade to grade alignment.
- Differentiated curriculum for students with disabilities and Ells and at risk students should become part of daily instruction by introducing grouping and appropriately leveled and content driven materials.

- The didactic method of instructional delivery currently in use should be replaced with the workshop method, including explicit teaching point, assisted performance, independent work and share. This method would advance learning that generates critical thinking, accountable talk, and reflective practice.
- The school should eliminate four of the APs and hire two additional guidance counselors, one to be assigned as the college counselor. In addition, Deans should be reinstated to support staff and students
- There should be a consistent and clear code of discipline which is followed by all administrators. Students should be aware of expectations for appropriate discipline and understand that there are appropriate consequences for disruptive behaviors. Parents should be involved in all levels of disciplinary action and kept informed as to the status of their child.
- Training school based budgeting and monitoring of yearly spending should be provided by the District/Network so that deficits do not accumulate year after year.
- Parents and teachers should have an active and meaningful role in creating the CEP. Their input should be ongoing during the year as they review and modify the document.
- College bound students should be provided with more challenging course selection to advance their learning and facilitate their ability to be better prepared to enter college and succeed.
- Explicit use and implementation of data collection, and analysis should be embedded in daily instruction and in yearly goals for student performance.
- There should be a systematic and explicit PD Plan. Needs assessments should be collected from teachers and used for the content of future agendas.