

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

<b>DBN:</b>	08X424
<b>District Name:</b>	District 8
<b>School Name:</b>	MS 424 The Hunts Point School
<b>School Address:</b>	730 Bryant Avenue, Bronx, NY 10474
<b>Principal:</b>	John Hughes
<b>Accountability Phase/Category:</b>	Improvement (year- 1) - Comprehensive
<b>Area of Identification:</b>	English Language Arts - All Students; African American Students; Hispanic Students; English Language Learners; and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Dates of On-site Review:</b>	March 13 – 14, 2012

**PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT**

“The Hunts Point Middle School will work together as a professional learning community to develop and nurture our diverse student population. Through the use of data-driven information, differentiated instruction, technological and green resources, we will develop the twenty-first century student who is ready and able to compete in a global community.”

**PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS**

- The school has provided the opportunity for teachers to regularly meet for common planning by grade level.
- The school leadership has aligned resources to ensure that the school has a full-time guidance counselor and a social worker to support the socio-emotional needs of the students.

**PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**FINDINGS:**

- A review of documents and staff interviews by the review team indicated that State assessment data are collected and analyzed; however, there was limited evidence that data regarding specific academic skill

deficiencies in English language arts (ELA) was collected, analyzed, and used consistently by teachers to inform or differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.

- There is limited evidence that data is disaggregated by subgroup to plan specific interventions for students in ELA, especially for the identified subgroups.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school should revisit the current system for data disaggregation and analysis to focus more closely on student-by-student, class-by-class and subgroup-by-subgroup skill deficiencies in ELA for driving school improvement. An improvement plan should be created to develop a system to collect item analysis data. Professional development (PD) should be provided to ensure that teachers understand how to effectively use this data. The school leaders should regularly monitor teacher use of data in daily instruction through regular observations.
- The school leaders should request PD support from the Network to develop the skills teachers need to ensure that the data analysis includes disaggregation by subgroup. This analysis should be an integral part of Inquiry Team discussions and grade-level meetings.

## **II. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- In many of the classes that were visited by the review team, instructional time was not maximized. Students spent a significant amount of class time copying notes from the board, resulting in less time for instruction. The majority of the class period was spent on whole group instruction, with limited opportunities for students to work independently, in pairs or small groups.
- In the majority of classes that were visited, the review team observed lessons that were primarily teacher-directed, with few opportunities for accountable talk by students. Additionally, teacher questioning focused on basic recall questions rather than higher order thinking questions.
- Although there was some student work posted in the hallways and classrooms, teacher feedback was not specific and did not provide clear next steps to help students to move to the next level. For most of the observed student work, rubrics were not posted to help students evaluate their own work.
- There was limited evidence of differentiation of instruction in the classes that were visited by the review team. There was limited evidence that teachers used instructional strategies, including scaffolding and diversified learning materials, to specifically address the needs of students in Levels 1 and 2 or provided opportunities for enrichment for higher level students.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school leaders should provide PD for teachers to maximize the use of learning time by effectively developing and delivering mini-lessons. School leaders should also ensure that opportunities for small group and individual instruction are provided to meet the needs of diverse learners in all classrooms.

- The school leaders, with the support of the Network, should provide teachers with PD on how to develop higher level questioning techniques that can foster the development of student-centered inquiry and problem solving. The PD should include a session on developing protocols for student-to-student questioning to allow for regular opportunities for accountable talk and cooperative learning within the classroom. The school leadership should regularly observe classrooms to monitor the integration of questioning techniques and the use of protocols on a systematic basis.
- The school leadership, with the support of the Network, should provide PD to give teachers a framework for understanding and developing rubrics that are aligned to the CCLS. Additionally, PD should demonstrate how teachers can provide effective feedback to students using rubrics. This should include modeling by instructional experts to ensure that teachers are able to understand the effective use of rubrics to improve student academic performance and achievement.
- The school leaders should ensure that teachers are provided PD on how to effectively use data to differentiate their instruction to meet the diverse needs of all students. PD should also be provided to teachers on using a variety of instructional strategies, including scaffolding and diversified learning materials that will improve students' overall achievement in ELA. School leaders should regularly observe classrooms to ensure that instructional strategies are effectively integrated into teacher instructional practice.

### **III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- A review of documentation, interviews and classroom observations by the review team indicate that there is limited evidence of a formalized system to support teachers to successfully implement the *100 Book Challenge Program*.
- There is limited evidence (lesson evaluation, observations or feedback to teachers) that teachers are held accountable by school leaders for incorporating strategies into daily lesson plans and integrating the instructional strategies that have been acquired in PD into instruction.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school leadership should develop a plan for regular and frequent informal walkthroughs that monitor the progress of the implementation of the *100 Book Challenge Program*. Based on the results of the observations and teacher needs, on-going PD should be developed to support the implementation.
- School leaders should use the observational process (formal and informal walkthroughs) to ensure teachers are held accountable for incorporating skills developed within PD activities into their instructional practice and delivery. School leaders should also develop an on-going and systematic process for monitoring the implementation of PD.

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

##### **FINDINGS:**

- Some classroom environments were organized in a way that was not conducive to learning and/or did not promote effective collaborative learning or student participation. While desks were arranged in groups, rooms were congested, which limited student mobility within the classrooms, including access to classroom exits and libraries.
- The school has not developed a systematic process to involve parents and families. Based on review team interviews with school leadership and other constituencies, there is limited evidence of active parent involvement in the school.

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school leaders should ensure that classroom learning environments are organized and conducive to teaching and learning. PD should be offered to teachers to facilitate the effective organization of the classroom environments to enable them to maximize the use of space and accessibility to classroom exit doors and libraries.
- The school leadership should work with the parent coordinator, the School Leadership Team, community based organizations and the Parent Association to review and/or modify the school parental involvement policy to encourage parent engagement and involvement. The parental involvement policy should include formal and informal two-way communications, shared leadership, and collaborative decision-making with stakeholders.

#### **V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

##### **FINDING:**

There is limited evidence of a comprehensive and coherent PD plan to meet the needs of diverse learners. PD activities take the form of episodic, initiative driven training rather than comprehensive efforts aligned with school goals to improve teacher capacity based on data that reflect student needs. The intensity, duration, and frequency of PD have not been consistent. School leaders stated that teachers often seek PD outside of the building.

##### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The school leadership should ensure the development of a comprehensive and coherent PD plan based on student and teacher needs that is also closely aligned with the goals identified in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). A needs assessment of teaching staff should be based on teacher interest, as well as teacher needs assessed by classroom walkthroughs. School leaders should also develop a system to monitor the effectiveness of this PD plan that includes evaluation of its impact on student achievement as well as the development of teacher competencies.

## **VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

### **FINDINGS:**

- There are two computer labs in which classes are regularly programmed. However, most classrooms are not equipped with instructional technology, resulting in students having limited opportunity to develop technological literacy skills in classrooms.
- In classes where SMART Boards were in use, they were primarily used as projectors to display Power Point presentations and to show video clips. Teachers and students indicated a need for more technology to support instruction within the classroom.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school leaders should work with Network leaders to develop a technology plan to upgrade and expand technology in the school. They should also seek funding to purchase laptops and desktop computers to support instructional technology in the classroom.
- The school leadership should develop a system to enable teachers to regularly use available technology in classroom instruction. PD should be focused on how to meaningfully integrate technology into daily instruction, including regular opportunities for students to interact with the SMART Boards.

## **PART 4: CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

The findings and recommendations noted in the report are intended to guide the school's inquiry, planning, and the development of the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) for school year 2012-13. The school should also continue its efforts in the implementation of the following Regents Reform Agenda initiatives: P-12 Core Curriculum Learning Standards, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.