

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

DBN:	09X403
District Name:	District 9
School Name:	Bronx International High School
School Address:	1110 Boston Road, Bronx, NY 10456
Principal:	Joaquin Vega
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (Year-1) Comprehensive
Area of Identification:	Mathematics: All students; Economically Disadvantaged students
Dates of On-site Review:	May 8 -9, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“Bronx International High School is a progressive, team-based and community-based school. We are dedicated to serving the academic and social needs of recently immigrated young people and their families. Our mission is to enhance our students’ cultural awareness, English and native language proficiencies, and intellectual and collaborative abilities. These skills will empower them to become active participants in today’s interdependent and diverse world. By critically analyzing and responding to complex world issues, students will achieve academic, personal, and professional success, as they become advocates for themselves and their communities.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The school offers a welcoming, supportive, and caring environment that is conducive to learning. Students and parents express confidence that the school is a safe place.
- The staff is collegial, caring, and committed.
- Teachers are accessible and available to provide additional tutoring to students before, after school, and during lunch periods.
- Students are polite, respectful, welcoming, and well behaved in classrooms.
- The school works with numerous community based organizations (CBOs) that support students with their academic, artistic, and personal development.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDING:

A review of documentation by the review team indicates that the school collects data, such as on item analysis of the Integrated Algebra Regents by student, Automate the Schools (ATS) status reports, New York State Report Card, and “Jump Rope Math” grade analysis. There is limited evidence that data is being analyzed to identify specific mathematics skills to improve student performance. As a result, the key programmatic changes required to bring about improvement in student performance in mathematics are not clearly identified.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should offer professional development (PD) in systematic data analysis designed to support the essential skills needed to implement differentiated instruction in the classroom. The school leaders should ensure that data analysis is used to identify the specific mathematics skills that need additional support. School leaders should monitor classroom practice and ensure areas of need are addressed. School leaders should monitor student progress; ensure that teaching is modified; and provide supplemental support for students, as needed.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- In some lessons that were observed by the review team there was limited evidence that teachers consistently used assessment strategies, such as “exit slips,” to determine student understanding of daily learning objectives. As a result, teachers were not consistently able to identify those students that needed additional support during the lesson or to modify instruction to address student needs in subsequent instruction.
- Based on classroom observations by the review team, lesson pacing and modeling activities was inconsistent. In some mathematics classrooms observed by the review team, instruction was insufficiently differentiated to meet the learning needs of all students. As a result, not all students were fully engaged in their learning.
- There were few examples of rubrics assessing student work evident during classroom observations by the review team. Student work displayed on bulletin boards in the classrooms did not include constructive feedback, and some work displayed on the bulletin boards contained spelling errors that were not corrected. As a result, opportunities were missed to highlight high quality examples of student work as models and exemplars for students or to provide feedback.
- Teachers’ use of higher order thinking questions was limited. In most classes observed by the review team, teachers posed recall questions requiring factual responses. In some mathematics classes, insufficient time was given to students to enable them to respond to questions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should provide PD to enable teachers to use assessment strategies in the classroom to determine students' understanding of the lesson's objectives. This training should enable teachers to build an extensive range of effective questioning strategies so that students become more active participants in the learning process. School leaders should ensure that teachers build effective questioning and assessment strategies into lesson plans and then observe the implementation through informal and formal observations.
- School leaders should provide PD for teachers on effective modeling, pacing, and strategies for differentiating content in mathematics lessons to meet individual student needs. School leaders should make pacing, including the effective use of instructional time and integration of challenging differentiated content in lessons, a regular focus for walkthroughs and observations.
- School leaders should ensure that rubrics are used as an integral tool to assess student assignments. Teachers should participate in PD activities that model the use of rubrics to provide teacher feedback, peer-feedback, and student self-assessment. School leaders should monitor student work and evaluate the quality of feedback that is provided to ensure that it provides actionable next steps to help students improve.
- PD should be provided to support teachers in developing a variety of questioning techniques aimed at developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills appropriate to student development. Teachers should ask questions that require students to support answers by citing text, by elaborating on the answers of other students, and by summarizing and rephrasing new information. Lesson plans should include questions that require critical thinking and discussion. These skills should support teacher effectiveness with all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs) with Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs). Teachers should implement the strategies identified in training in their daily instruction. School leaders should make questioning techniques a focus for observations.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- Based on interviews and a document review, the review team determined that some formal and informal observations were conducted; however, there was no classroom observation schedule available to indicate that school leaders sufficiently monitor and evaluate teaching and learning to ensure sustained improvement in classroom practices.
- Documents reviewed by the review team showed that a team leader is assigned to the other content areas; however, there was no individual identified as the lead or coordinator of mathematics. As a result, mathematic teachers are not provided with consistent subject area expertise to improve instruction or to evaluate curricular resources in mathematics.
- Based on interviews and a document review, the review team found that the School Leadership Team (SLT) has limited knowledge and understanding of the goals of the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP)

and does not participate fully in the creation of CEP school improvement goals. Parent involvement in the SLT is limited and the CEP is rarely discussed at meetings.

- There was limited evidence found during the review team's document review and interviews that teachers are held accountable for incorporating strategies acquired through PD into their daily instruction. The impact of PD on daily classroom instructional practice is not systematically evaluated during classroom observations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should implement a classroom observation schedule to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school, particularly in mathematics. Written feedback should be provided for all formal, informal and walkthrough observations that include clear targets for improvement. Follow-up observations should be included in the schedule to check on progress. The school leaders should seek support from the Network in developing lesson observation protocols and providing effective teacher feedback. The outcomes of lesson observations should provide a focus for the school PD plan.
- School leaders should create a schoolwide team leader structure that includes effective and focused leadership in mathematics instruction. The school leaders and staff should articulate a clear vision and develop a strategic plan that drives the school towards increased student achievement in mathematics. The plan should outline the responsibilities of staff and school leaders for driving this work.
- School leaders should provide PD for all SLT members to ensure the members understand their responsibilities for assisting in setting goals and developing and monitoring of the CEP. The CEP should be a regular item on the agenda for SLT meetings so that all members of the team are fully aware of school goals and the progress towards reaching the goals.
- Through monitoring and evaluation, the school leaders should ensure that teachers implement the strategies and skills acquired through PD into their instructional practice. School leaders should establish a formal and informal observation process that includes oral and written components centered on improving instruction and meeting the identified needs of teachers.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- A review of student attendance data and interviews by the review team indicated that the school had an average daily attendance rate of 82.1 percent at the time of the review, although attendance data also indicates that attendance has improved.
- A documentation review and interviews by the review team found that parents and guardians who speak languages other than English do not consistently receive communications, such as notifications, progress reports and report cards, in their native language.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should continue to work with school support staff and counselors to further develop and implement strategies to improve student attendance. Follow-up should include assessing and providing the additional student support services needed to improve student attendance. School leaders should work with the Network to identify effective practices in similar schools that could be used to improve attendance.
- School leaders should ensure that all parents and guardians have the opportunity to participate in the life of the school and support their child's learning. Using translation services through the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE), school leaders should ensure that all documents sent to families are translated into all appropriate languages. For documents that require immediate translation, school leaders should seek community volunteers to translate.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDING:

Based on interviews and a document review, the review team found that PD and coaching support are provided to teachers for ELA and literacy. Members of the mathematics department do not receive coaching support or targeted PD to the extent given to their colleagues in ELA. There was limited evidence that the school has developed a comprehensive PD plan for mathematics. Existing PD activities in mathematics generally are initiative driven training rather than comprehensive efforts aligned with school goals to improve teacher capacity or meet student needs. The duration and frequency of PD in mathematics was inconsistent.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should develop and implement a comprehensive PD plan focused on improving teaching, learning and student achievement in mathematics. The PD plan should be aligned with the school's CEP goals and take into account the differentiated needs of the staff and the students. The effectiveness of the comprehensive PD goals for mathematics should be assessed based on data and the impact on classroom instruction as observed by school leaders through formal and informal observations.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- Based on interviews and observations of the collection, the review team found that the school library is not open for student use. The school does not have a full-time librarian or a library schedule. A review of the library collection revealed minimal resources available to meet the varied reading levels or interests of students. The limited access to the library affects the ability of students to conduct independent research projects.
- Students stated that there are a limited number of laptop computers and calculators available for individual use, which results in a lack of student access to technology that supports and supplements instruction.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should review the school budget and work with the Network to identify additional resources at the NYCDOE, seek grant funding, and seek support in hiring a librarian/library media specialist to allow increased opportunities for independent reading and research. Inventories should be kept, and school leaders should oversee and monitor library resources to ensure there are sufficient texts to meet the needs and interests of students. Appropriate instructional library resources that support the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs, should be available.
- School leaders should ensure that technology is accessible to support the learning needs of all students. School leaders should investigate resources, such as grants, in order to improve the availability of technology in classrooms as part of a comprehensive schoolwide technology plan.

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 Common Core Learning Standards, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.