

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Office of Accountability**

**Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)**

**SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT**

<b>BEDS Code:</b>	190301040004
<b>District Name:</b>	Cairo-Durham Central School District
<b>School Name:</b>	Cairo-Durham Middle School
<b>School Address:</b>	1301 Route 145 Cairo, NY 12143
<b>Principal:</b>	Kerry A. Overbaugh
<b>Accountability Phase/Category:</b>	Improvement (year-1) – Focused
<b>Area of Identification:</b>	English Language Arts - Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Dates of On-site Review:</b>	December 12 - December 13, 2011

**PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT**

“The Cairo-Durham school community strives to give all students the desire to learn, the environment in which to learn, and the direction to channel that learning into a lifetime of continued growth.”

**VISION STATEMENT:**

The District Vision includes the following:

- Each student will develop academically, physically, emotionally, and socially.
- A positive learning environment will exist for all students.
- All students will be actively engaged in challenging learning opportunities.
- High expectations and standards will be achieved by all students.
- All stakeholders will be involved in the educational process and in dealing with real challenges of education in our community.
- Each student will grow and learn within a caring and cooperative environment.
- All students will be actively engaged in challenging learning opportunities.

**PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS**

- The school has been participating in Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) for the last two and one-half years and, as a result, has created a culture that revolves around the three “B’s”: Be Respectful, Be Responsible and Be Ready to Learn. Discipline referrals are at a minimum.
- The school’s most recent success involves the programming of students with disabilities. By eliminating the traditional self-contained classroom and creating English language arts (ELA) and mathematics classes designed to meet the special needs of these students, students are showing growth both academically and socially. This new program, along with added support staff, has allowed the school to keep at the school students who would normally be “Out of District” placements. The Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) department, classroom teachers and school leaders meet regularly to assess the development of the program and make modifications as necessary. All faculty and staff are committed to ensuring that all students have the opportunity to be successful.
- Over the last three years, much time and effort has been spent in ELA and mathematics professional development (PD) through the use of embedded staff developers and data analysis. The school has structures in place to make changes in these areas, e.g., department meetings, curriculum leaders/coaches, and flexible scheduling for students.

**PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS****I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA****FINDINGS:**

- The school administration and teachers use data from nySTART, Questar III BOCES and internally created data sources to identify areas of strengths and weakness and to develop the school action plan. The school is able to compare different measures among all subgroups, such as students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students.
- Data is not used systematically across teachers/teacher teams, schools, and the District. There is little evidence that there is a system of data sharing and communication among the District’s two elementary schools and the middle school regarding the students transitioning from fifth to sixth grade.
- Although the school recognizes the importance of formative and summative data collection, not all teachers/teams are effectively using this data to track, support and improve student learning and to differentiate instruction for subgroups and individual students.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school should identify staff with expertise in data analysis; create a systematic approach to data utilization, including a consistent, scheduled time for review and analysis; and use the data to make programmatic and instructional decisions. Data should be used to focus team meetings, department meetings, and leadership meetings. This will provide the District and school with a systematic and focused approach to data use.

- A team should be developed to analyze instruction for students with disabilities in order to develop specially designed instruction in the resource room with the assistance of other resources in the building, e.g., the school special education lead teacher. The PPS Director and Principal should ensure that instruction in the resource room addresses the needs of students and is aligned to the New York State (NYS) P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- District leadership should develop a specific plan to monitor the use of data in all classes. Formative and summative assessment data in combination with classroom walkthroughs can be used to provide specific feedback on how to focus instruction, including the need for re-teaching. PD should be provided to enable all teachers to become knowledgeable about the use of data to drive instruction.

## II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

### FINDINGS:

- The school does not have self-contained classes for students with disabilities. Alternative ELA and mathematics classes have been developed to ensure that appropriate differentiation in curriculum and instruction are available to those students with exceptional needs and other students who would benefit from small group instruction. Classes are taught by regular education teachers certified in the content area with support from a special education teacher with the goal to move to co-taught classrooms. However, there is insufficient evidence to indicate that the all teachers are differentiating their instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners, including students with disabilities, to meet the CCLS.
- Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are currently being offered to all students in grades 7 and 8 through the creation of a schoolwide reading program. Students receive instruction from a certified reading teacher in groups of ten or less. In the event that there are more than ten students, a certified teaching assistant is assigned to the class. Variation in intensity and content and skills to address specific student needs are not evident. There is insufficient evidence of a clear, unified approach to the reading program. The Journey's series, used by the elementary schools, has been identified for implementation next year to address this concern.
- Teachers are beginning to use the CCLS in their instructional plans, and there is evidence that the school has developed curriculum maps for every subject. However, not all teachers use the curriculum maps, and there is no clear instructional planning to address the needs of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students.
- There is evidence of high expectations for student and staff behavior/conduct, e.g., student and teacher handbooks, a discipline matrix, and a code of conduct. The implementation of PBIS has led to a decrease in the number of students receiving discipline referrals. This has resulted in a reduction in lost teaching time and students out of the classroom for less time. Not all classrooms have positively stated behavioral expectations posted, and in classrooms visited by the review team, a majority of teachers did not use reminders of these expectations.
- Team meetings are held regularly to discuss student academic, social, and behavior needs. The goal is that action plans are developed as a result of these meetings.

- A system is in place to provide students additional academic support after school and in the summer. However, there is no plan in place to provide academic support over the summer for students transitioning from the two elementary schools into the middle school.
- The school has many resources in the classrooms, e.g., some classes had four adults. However, the roles and responsibilities of the different adults were not clear. It was also not clear how they were assisting students to gain mastery of the content/subject as the adults were not offering small group instruction.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school should provide training for teachers on differentiated instruction to enable them to incorporate these principles into their curriculum maps and into their instruction. The school should continue to develop individual action plans for all students with disabilities, based on the Fountas and Pinnell Continuum of Literacy and State assessment data.
- The school leader should provide PD for the implementation of the *Journeys* reading program to all teachers using the program. The implementation of the *Journeys* program should be coupled with a strong progress monitoring system to measure its effectiveness. The teachers should, in conjunction with the ELA specialist, conduct an inventory of reading and writing materials in their classrooms. Using data gathered from the inventory, teachers should organize materials to facilitate their use in ELA lessons. Appropriate leveled texts and reading materials should be purchased to support all content areas.
- The school should provide PD on curriculum mapping to ensure that all teachers use these maps as the “road” to teaching and learning. Teachers should incorporate differentiation of instruction and multiple measures of assessments to address the needs of students. The school leaders and PPS director should monitor the consistency of rigor in the delivery of content instruction for all students through walkthroughs and formal and informal observations. A consistent lesson plan template aligned with the CCLS should be developed.
- The school should continue to build on the PBIS program by providing tier three intensive targeted interventions and Therapeutic Response training to targeted staff members.
- The school leaders and the ELA coach should structure PD activities with teachers and the afterschool grade level team meetings to ensure curriculum mapping that is aligned to the CCLS. The team meetings should continually incorporate the use of data to fine tune curriculum mapping, instruction, and assessment.
- The District Transition Team, guidance department, Instructional Support Teacher (IST) and other stakeholders should analyze data and consider the creation of a summer program for at-risk students entering the school. The team should consider academic, social, and behavioral areas.
- The school/District should provide additional PD for teachers involved in the co-teaching instructional model. The PD should include an emphasis on the different models that enhance differentiated instruction to effectively meet the needs of all students.

### III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

#### FINDINGS:

- School leaders, faculty and staff share common values and a common mission and vision. There is a shared responsibility for student success; however, there is inconsistency in professional practice.
- All teachers are assigned to courses based on expertise and are highly qualified in the subject areas they teach.
- The school leader has established high expectations for faculty, staff, and students. There are faculty members identified as leaders in their respective content areas, and these teachers have been given 6-12 department facilitator responsibilities. These facilitators are also teaching a full load of classes.
- There is a systematic approach, e.g., Monday Housekeeping e-mail, to disseminate information to all staff members and opportunities for staff to provide feedback.
- There is a District created, web-based, walkthrough tool designed to effectively and efficiently collect data for both informal and formal classroom visits. However, demands on school leader's time prevent this from occurring regularly.
- While there is a contractual "peer partnering" system in place, there is no identified system to ensure that all teachers are critically evaluating instruction for continuous improvement.
- The school leadership team collects lesson plans on bi-weekly but does not have a systematic approach to provide feedback to all teachers.
- There is a system in place to share data with the appropriate teams, e.g., Google Docs.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school leadership should continue to work with the faculty and staff to create and implement initiatives designed to increase student achievement.
- The PPS director should use the team level meetings to work with staff to create and implement effective strategies for students with disabilities.
- The school leadership and PPS director should implement a system of frequent classroom walkthroughs with the. It is critical that the school leaders have uninterrupted time in the classrooms and monitor the instructional practices of all teachers.
- School leaders should expand opportunities for peer observations to enhance the sharing of exemplary instructional practices across departments and grade levels, including those for students with disabilities.
- The school leadership should create a systematic approach to review lesson plans and provide teachers with the feedback to focus on data-driven instruction and the implementation of the CCLS.

- School leaders should ensure that teachers are using data to inform instructional practices and make adjustments based on the needs of the students. Teachers should use the array of available data to group students and differentiate instruction.

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

##### **FINDINGS:**

- Community organizations provide support to the students by offering: flu clinics, the Dental Health Van, Health and Safety Presentations, domestic violence outreach and interventions, REACH services, Autism connection parent services, and opportunities for students to participate on youth sports teams.
- The school offers extra help in the form of daily homework clubs and Honor Society Tutoring. However, not all students take advantage of these school-based opportunities to access remediation.
- The school uses the student management system, “Power School,” which enables parents to regularly monitor student progress and attendance.
- The school is working towards improving school/family communications. Important information is conveyed to parents through the monthly newsletter; school website; and the mass calling system, “All Call.”
- The school has adequate technological resources to meet student learning needs. Each classroom is equipped with a projection system; there are two mobile laptop labs, a central computer lab, I-pad labs and a fully equipped Media Center.
- While there is a plan to address the academic needs of students, there is no guidance/counseling plan for addressing the other areas of need that prevent students from meeting standards.
- The school offers parent nights designed to educate parents on important topics, e.g., Open House Cyber Bullying Information. But even with calls, advertisements, and letters sent home, attendance is minimal.
- There is no discernable transition program from the elementary schools to the middle school that focuses on preparing at-risk students and students with disabilities for success in ELA.

##### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school should continue to build and expand upon relationships with the Greene County Public Health, Greene County Mental Health Organization, Greene County Probation and Pre-Pins programming, local law enforcement, Community Action, the Rotary Club and other community organizations.
- The school should implement a process whereby school and District leaders, along with the pupil personnel team, collaborate and provide a clear vision for the counseling/guidance program.
- The school should create more opportunities to increase parental involvement and promote an atmosphere of mutual respect and proactive, two-way communication between school staff and parents/families. Possible strategies include: changing the date of the Open House until later in the school year; creating a “virtual” Open House that parents can watch on the website or on a DVD; changing the

format of Open House so that parents have more time to interact with teachers; and changing the time and/or format of parent/teacher conferences. The school should also incorporate opportunities for parental feedback and volunteer opportunities.

- The school should set aside time so that teachers can meet with teachers from elementary and middle schools within the District in order to collaborate and plan a well-articulated pathway for students. The school leadership team on both levels should revisit the school's transition process to ensure effective planning and collaboration.

## **V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **FINDINGS:**

- General education teachers do not have a full understanding of the needs of students with disabilities and strategies needed to work with the wide range of abilities now that the District has fully included all of its students with disabilities and eliminated self-contained classrooms.
- Communication between the elementary and middle schools is not structured to promote articulation of the educational program or coordination of District wide and schoolwide initiatives.
- While the District and the school have devoted time and resources to PD, limited resources and loss of school conference days have had an impact on the availability of PD.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school and District leadership should develop targeted and ongoing PD offerings for general education teachers. The PD should be focused on understanding the learning and behavioral needs of students that lead to increasing the academic achievement of students with disabilities, e.g., working with students with Autism; grouping of students; and using collaborative student strategies.
- The District leadership should create and support transition team meetings to analyze data of incoming grade 5 students from the District's two elementary schools. The data should include State and formative assessments, attendance, behavioral and other data to inform programmatic decisions and a smooth transition into the middle school.
- The school should collaborate with neighboring school districts to provide high quality PD and to allow for collaboration with other teachers of the same courses, such as the Summer Literacy Initiative.
- The school should provide opportunities for curriculum leaders/coaches to share best practices with the staff as a whole.

## **VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

### **FINDINGS:**

- There is evidence that the school has a variety of textbooks and resource materials; however, special education staff identified a need for additional leveled textbooks and readers.

- The school is well-maintained, with adequate physical space for students.
- The school is well-equipped with technology, and there are opportunities for students without Internet access at home to use the school computers.
- The Media Center is open throughout the day and after school; there is a web link for students and parents to access resources and the school library book database.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school leadership, in conjunction with the PPS director and the classroom and special education teachers, should order texts at the necessary readability level of students with disabilities. The school should have a centralized lending area with a system to track and account for all resources.
- The school should continue to ensure that the facility is well-maintained.
- The school should remind parents through their newsletter and on the school website of the media center resources.

**PART 4: CONCLUDING STATEMENT**

- The collection, analysis and use of student data are critical to implementing recommendations made in this report. The data clearly indicates that a priority of the school should be to focus on the core subject of ELA for economically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities, while strengthening teaching and learning for all students. Implementation of a research based reading program, such as Journeys, should provide a foundation to align reading instruction while helping to bridge the gap between the elementary and middle schools.
- The District and school should support on-going, job-embedded, PD in such areas as curriculum mapping, co-teaching, differentiated instruction, literacy across the curriculum, lesson design, data-driven instruction, and behavioral and learning strategies for students with disabilities.
- The District and school leadership should create a cohesive transition plan among District schools that links academic and behavioral data, supports curriculum alignment, and allows opportunities for staff collaboration.

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.