

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	58051303-0005
District Name:	Central Islip Union Free School District
School Name:	Charles A. Mulligan Intermediate School
School Address:	1 Broadway Avenue, Central Islip, 11722
Principal:	Brenda Jackson
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year 1) -Comprehensive English Language Arts - All Students; African American Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Area of Identification:	
Dates of On-site Review:	January 23 - 26, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of the Central Islip Public Schools is to enable all its students to fulfill their potential and become responsible, contributing adults able to thrive in a culturally diverse, changing world.

In partnership with the entire community we will provide a quality educational experience that offers equitable learning opportunities and a safe environment. We will link home, school and community to ensure a positive supportive education that fosters student excellence and success.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- Students are engaged and enthusiastic participants in the learning process.
- According to the parents interviewed by the review team, the atmosphere at the school is friendly. Staff members and students were hospitable and optimistic.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- The District has provided access to BARS (the District database) to each teacher. Once teachers are provided with professional development (PD), teachers should be better able to incorporate differentiated and focused skill instruction.
- The District has access to New York State (NYS) assessment data from BOCES, Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS), Discovery Education (Think Link), NYS English As A Second Language Achievement Tests (NYSESLAT), Boost and Blitz, Wilson Reading, Systems 44, and Read About. However, there is little evidence that data inform classroom instruction.
- Neither student data folios nor student portfolios were used by the school. This makes it difficult to assess the progress that each student is making.
- The content of formative assessments the team reviewed did not match the school's summative assessments. Many worksheets and dittoes required short answers with no attention to development of language syntax. Test preparation materials were given to entire classes, with little regard for student specific skill weaknesses.
- There was no evidence that students had daily opportunities for extended reading to build their "reading muscles," particularly with appropriately leveled non-fiction text.
- Data are not shared across levels. For example, grade five teachers do not receive data regarding what grade four students know, understand, and can do at the end of grade four. The prevalent perception of staff is that the students arrive at the school without basic foundations in either English language arts (ELA) or mathematics.
- There is no evidence that the individual student information from the prior year's ELA or mathematics tests were shared with current teachers or used as a basis for instructional planning

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- PD sessions should focus on data disaggregation and interpretation so teachers can learn how to use data to inform classroom instruction.
- A formal District-wide system to monitor progress toward specific goals should be implemented. The school might consider providing time early in the year for a mock ELA and mathematics test with results analyzed and shared with students so they have the opportunity to monitor their progress to a measurable goal.
- Students should have daily opportunities to read independently using leveled non-fiction texts. The school should use the transition to the New York State (NYS) P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to review and revise instruction in reading.

- The District should develop a series of vertically aligned grade level meetings for teachers in grades four and five and for teachers in grades seven and eight (students entering and exiting this school) so that teachers have the opportunity to examine the work of their incoming students. Spring writing samples, lexile levels and aligned formative assessments should be examined and discussed.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- A disciplined learning environment exists. Classrooms are decorated with student work. Students were engaged and active participants in the learning process in each classroom visited by the review team.
- The predominant method of instruction includes the textbook and an abundance of dittoes; instruction is delivered to the whole class. There was little evidence of differentiation noted by the review team.
- The language of instruction does not match the language of assessments. For the most part, the teacher questions were at the low literal level. The language of each teacher is elaborate; however, student language is halting. Phrases and clauses are accepted with little regard for syntax or context.
- Student work lacks both rigor and relevance. Much, if not most, of the work done by students consisted of worksheets from the elementary grade curricula.
- Neither a School Improvement Team (SIT) nor an Inquiry Team exists.
- The school does not have a curricular map or coherent instructional plan. Teacher plans neither match across grade levels nor coordinate with plans of support staff.
- Although the District purchased an online expository reading program, no students were observed by the review team using the program. At the present time, the lack of necessary peripheral equipment prevents teachers from using this powerful program designed to increase student skill in reading expository text.
- The school lacks a consistent grading system. For example, in some classrooms a zero on homework could not be made up; in others, it could.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Teachers should be provided with sufficient resources to make differentiation possible. Even with large class sizes, teachers should be expected to provide differentiation. Students should be expected to read daily and independently both narrative and expository texts.
- The District and the school leaderships should pursue specific funding for each grade level to increase the classroom leveled libraries and other instructional resources.

- A Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) should be developed that includes strategies to increase student language skills with accompanying PD for all staff. There should be a schoolwide initiative to no longer accept incomplete student answers. Teachers should build lesson plans based on the CCLS that link student reading, writing, listening, and speaking and provide daily guided opportunities for students to develop both general and content-specific language skills.
- The District should purchase necessary peripheral supplies so that the program can be promptly implemented. Teachers should be provided with sufficient PD to ensure successful implementation.
- The District should ensure curricular maps are aligned with the CCLS. Expectations for what students should know, understand, and be able to do at each grade level should be available. The State website <http://engageny.org/> should be used as a reference as teachers and school leaders transition to CCLS.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- The school leadership and staff are collaborative and devote collective and individual energy to create learning possibilities for all students. The school values are reflected in caring and nurturing classrooms where students feel free to take risks.
- There is no evidence that teachers can plan-assess-adjust their teaching. The lack of formal monitoring systems, such as fall/spring writing samples or interim ELA and mathematics examinations, hampers teachers' ability to adjust instruction.
- The present school leader has served the school for the last nine years. During that period, the school has had ten Assistant Principals.
- Although teachers are cooperative and willing to fulfill the District mission and students are capable, polite and resilient, the school has no specific measurable goals.
- The District's communication protocols are inconsistent and sometimes not all teachers, parents, students or school leaders receive important information.
- The PD plan requires follow-through from school leaders. Although the school has three District coaches, there is little evidence that teachers are implementing what they have been taught.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- When the District's PD plan is developed, it should include the same data driven goals as the CEP. Results of data analyses should impact the data-driven goals.
- A SIT should be established and empowered to do its important work. The school leadership, staff, and District should develop a CEP to create an effective schoolwide plan for improving achievement. The school leaders and staff should articulate a clear vision that drives the school towards high student achievement and clearly outlines the responsibilities of staff and leaders. The plan should include goals,

action plans, and PD and use all resources available through the District. The implementation of the plan should be carefully monitored and its impact on student achievement measured.

- The coaches' work should become an integral part of the supervision process. There should be an expectation by the school leadership that all plans and lessons developed during PD periods are implemented. School leaders should monitor and evaluate implementation through regular walkthroughs. Additional support should be provided as needed for teachers who struggle with the change process.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- Some persons interviewed by the review team questioned the efficacy of the District's grade level structure. District schools are kindergarten only, grades one through four, grades five and six, grades seven and eight, and grades nine through twelve. Staff, students, and families indicated that having five separate levels makes transitions and effective communications more difficult.
- The District does not have an updated Academic Intervention Services (AIS) plan.
- Not all eligible students receive AIS. The District seems to provide extra pull-out services for the lowest performing students, with the cut point for services depending on the number of staff available rather than the number of eligible students. The AIS mathematics classes seem to be capped at eight, but many classes had only three to four students. There is no set curriculum, and the predominant mode of instruction is whole class, undifferentiated computational skills.
- Data used by the support staff are not regularly shared with classroom teachers.
- The District only provides pull-out services to the lowest performing students, providing intensive work in phonics and/or computation, while others who are eligible receive no service. There was no list of AIS eligible students who are not receiving services; therefore, teachers are unaware that these students are not being served.
- The Youth Enrichment Service (YES) provides after school services to 100 students, although little information regarding the program is available to teachers.
- There is no evidence of congruence between AIS and regular classroom instruction. Although teachers and students in the AIS classes and in other classrooms are working hard, the curriculum is idiosyncratic.
- Although each classroom has five computer stations, during the review no students were observed by the review team using any computers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A District committee should reexamine the present grade level structure. If the committee reaffirms the present design, it should create systems for communication between and among the different schools.

- The AIS delivery system should be evaluated. The records of students assigned should be reviewed for effectiveness and a determination made if students improved on the State assessments. The delivery of AIS in mathematics should be restructured so that students develop conceptual understanding through an increased use of manipulatives and hands-on problem-solving in cooperative groups working on higher level projects.
- PD sessions should be devoted to grade level meetings that include ESL, bilingual, special education, AIS, and reading teachers, as well as coaches, social workers, the in-school suspension teacher, and school leaders. These sessions should focus on creating a road map delineating grade level expectations and identifying data driven goals.
- AIS should be formally aligned with classroom instruction.
- If teachers do not use classroom computers for small group instruction, another design should be considered. One possibility might be a computer lab on the grade five corridor and a second on the grade six corridor. A teaching assistant could be assigned to monitor students working on their portfolios in the lab.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- The school has a 40-minute PD period at the beginning of each day, prior to student arrival. Two literacy coaches and one mathematics coach provide instruction aligned to District initiatives. District leaders and outside consultants also provide services. The school calendar lists 42 formal sessions for the first half of the school year. The staff endorsed the design and praised the school coaches.
- There is little evidence that the strategies presented during the PD periods are implemented in the classrooms.
- Although PD sessions have been devoted to the SMART Board, in most classrooms the SMART Board was being used as a chalkboard.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Once the SIT is established and the school's data-driven goals set, the school leadership should ensure that the PD plan reflects the school goals.
- The school leadership should consider daily classroom walkthroughs to ensure that the PD is being incorporated into instruction. Teachers should be held accountable for their new learning to ensure instructional change.
- PD options should be reviewed and the school leadership should consider including grade level meetings with all staff focusing on a group of students at a specific grade level to develop a system for monitoring each student's academic improvement.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- Although all classrooms are decorated with student work, students, staff, and parents interviewed by the review team spoke about problems with the physical plant, e.g., missing ceiling tiles, unswept hallways, and dirty bathrooms.
- The school reading series that is used in both the general education and ESL/bilingual classrooms is outdated. The workbooks are consumable and are only minimally used, although instruction seems dependent on the use of all pages. The series are neither aligned with the CCLS nor cover the skills required for the State summative assessments.
- The District recently adopted a new mathematics series that will be implemented in 2012-2013 in grades five and six.
- At the back of the gymnasium, there is an In-School Suspension (ISS) room where misbehaving students are sent. The room is monitored by a certified teacher. It is unclear whether the room serves as a deterrent or a means for improving behavior of students who are being disciplined.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The SIT, with District support, should address the cleanliness issue as a priority and create a list of needed improvements to the physical plant.
- Both ELA reading series should be replaced with programs that are aligned to the CCLS.
- The SIT should evaluate the school ISS program, and also determine best practices for working with students with behavior problems. The goal should be to help the student learn effective self-control, not merely to remove them from class. There are several excellent resources available, including behavioral specialists who are a part of Special Education School Improvement Support (SESIS) program.

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 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 CCLS, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.