

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

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

**SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT**

<b>BEDS Code:</b>	41230001000011
<b>District Name:</b>	Utica City School District
<b>School Name:</b>	Dr. Martin Luther King Elementary School
<b>School Address:</b>	211 Square Street, Utica, NY 13501
<b>Principal:</b>	Mark DeSalvo
<b>Accountability Phase/Category:</b>	Improvement (year- 1) - Comprehensive
<b>Area of Identification:</b>	English Language Arts - All Students; African American Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Dates of On-site Review:</b>	January 4, 2012

**PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT**

"The Utica City School District will provide a quality education for a diverse student population in a safe and orderly environment. Students will develop essential academic and responsible citizenship skills and graduate ready to pursue continuing education, become gainfully employed and/or enlist in military service. This District will provide quality and equity in the distribution of resources including well maintained facilities and emerging technology. Fiscal and administrative accountability and continuous improvement in the education of our students is the goal of the Utica City School District."

**PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS**

- A safe environment for children is a priority. Students and staff are friendly and welcoming in every classroom and throughout the school.
- The school's environment is team-oriented, and a spirit of community is evident throughout the school. Interviews by the review team revealed that the teachers feel supported within their teams. Five full-day team meetings are scheduled every year for each grade level. Special education teachers participate in grade-level meetings.
- The school leader has created a lesson template that is provided to the staff.
- Mentoring is embedded into the school day.
- Computers and SMART Boards are available in each classroom.

**PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

### FINDINGS:

- Teachers use aggregate grade level data during team meeting time.
- There is a systematic administration of assessments that monitors student progress. The school adheres to the District plan for using progress monitoring that is aligned to the District English language arts (ELA) curriculum.
- An analysis of State assessments and Terra Nova assessments is used to create Academic Intervention Services (AIS) groups. An organized system of data collection has been established for the Instructional Support Teacher (IST) process.
- There is evidence of formative assessments being used in classrooms, and there is a system in place to use AIS, Response to Intervention (RtI) and behavioral plans.
- A significant population across all grade levels needs high intensity AIS services

English language learners (ELLs) regardless of their English proficiency level are scheduled with their English proficient classmates for AIS, SuccessMaker Enterprise (SME), and Fast ForWord.

- Multiple data sources are available based on student assessments, but there is limited evidence of progress monitoring for students with disabilities through the use of behavioral intervention plans (BIP).
- The school leadership analyzes multiple data sources; however, the data is not disaggregated by racial/ethnic sub-group performance.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Data analysis for individual students should be conducted. Analysis of data should be conducted based on the identified subgroups, e.g., racial/ethnic, students with disabilities and ELLs, so that a strategic plan that identifies the achievement gaps and interventions to address these deficiencies can be developed.
- Teachers, rather than school leaders, should analyze and prioritize data collected from formative and summative assessments. The school leadership should facilitate, but not conduct, this process.
- School leaders should structure grade-level meetings to ensure that data are used to improve academic instruction for all students.
- The District and school-level leadership should support the implementation of Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) training and monitor student progress on their BIPs by using office discipline referral data.

- ELL and classroom teachers should analyze ELL assessment data collaboratively to identify students' specific academic needs in order to plan interventions to address those needs. ELLs should be provided with English as second language (ESL) interventions specific to their second language acquisition needs.

## **II. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

### **FINDINGS:**

- The District has designed a coherent instructional/programmatic roadmap using the Scott Foresman reading series. The school uses evidence-based strategies provided by Scott Foresman and Early Reading Intervention (ERI) kits. The school has implemented the District's ELA curriculum with fidelity.
- All members of the school staff are given the opportunity to participate in all teaching and learning initiatives.
- Special education classes include students with significantly different needs, e.g., students with classifications of intellectual disability are in classes with students with emotional disturbances and multiple disabilities.
- Support services (all five) are scheduled within a single classroom. This environment is not conducive to the intense learning needs of the students who receive services in the same room. Various disruptions create a chaotic environment, e.g., several transitions within one period, loud voices, inappropriate student behavioral escalations, clapping, singing, and the stomping of feet.
- The special education classes for students with intense management needs require more support than currently available in order to ensure student and staff safety.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The District and school leaders should provide staff with professional development (PD) opportunities focused on learning how to differentiate instruction as well as develop instruction and interventions across grade levels.
- The staff should implement research-based instructional strategies that include a focus on the student subgroups beyond those in Scott Foresman and the ERI kits, e.g., learning centers, inquiry-based learning, differentiated instruction.
- Students with disabilities should be assigned to classes based on the level of support they need. Special education classes should be composed of students with disabilities who have similar needs. Students with disabilities should be grouped according to their levels of academic achievement and learning characteristics, the levels of their physical and social development, and the behavioral management needs of the students in the classes.
- Space allocation should be analyzed and plans made to provide a structured environment to support students who have significant learning needs and intense behavioral needs.

- Training should be provided for all special education staff in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention (TCI).

### **III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- Instructional walkthroughs are regularly completed by the school leadership.
- The school leader has developed a welcoming and trusting culture for students, staff, and the community.
- The school leader has developed a large number of community linkages.
- The school leader's strong belief in an instructional focus (project-based learning) allows him to permit teachers to take risks on behalf of students.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The school leader should focus instructional walkthroughs on specific areas in need of improvement, including classroom management, cultural responsiveness, student engagement, and instructional rigor to support continued student improvement.

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

#### **FINDING:**

The school schedule is not conducive to instruction, e.g., there are students with three special area classes on a given day.

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The school leadership should create an instructional schedule that includes more rigorous instruction.

### **V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

#### **FINDING:**

The District and school leadership provides multiple opportunities for PD.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- PD should be provided that supports school and District initiatives and focuses on meeting the needs of the students.

- District and school leadership should address the fundamental reading and mathematics deficiencies of the students.
- The District leadership should research best-practices that are focused on the needs of the student sub-groups; appropriate PD should then be provided. District and school leaders should monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this PD.
- District and school leadership should provide more intense PD in the area of data-driven inquiry.

## **VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

### **FINDINGS:**

- Evidence collected regarding the condition of the school, the grounds, and facility was provided in the form of the Opening Day Checklist.
- All facilities are well-maintained.
- Classrooms are resource rich with instructional materials and technology.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- School leadership should regularly implement the Opening Day Checklist.
- School leaders should review the school's technology plan and work closely with the District to continue building and updating essential resources.

## **PART 3: 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.