

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

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	500402060014
District Name:	East Ramapo Central School District
School Name:	Spring Valley High School
School Address:	361 Route 59, Spring Valley, NY 10977
Principal:	Karen J. Pinel
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year 1) - Comprehensive
Area of Identification:	English Language Arts - All Students; Hispanic Students and , Economically Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Review:	February 14 - 16, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission is to provide all students with a safe and supportive learning environment by fostering critical thinking and promoting good character, and academic excellence and responsible citizenship. Each student is prepared to fulfill his or her individual potential necessary for success in the 21st century global community.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The diverse student population has a strong sense of community.
- Professional staff are dedicated and committed to student learning. All support staff are valued members of the school community and contribute positively to the school tone.
- Positive relationships and mutual respect are evident throughout the building.
- Communication takes place in multiple languages.
- Students value extracurricular opportunities and consider them key motivating factors in their school experience.
- The outreach and partnership with community-based organizations appears to be strong.
- The Library/Media Center has resources that are regularly used by students.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- A Data Inquiry Team has been established and has begun to review and analyze data to develop instructional strategies.
- While data is collected and available, it is not consistently used to inform instructional design or programming.
- The use of interim and daily assessments was not evident.
- Access to a full data base by all staff is restricted.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Encourage, support and expand the work of the Data Inquiry Team. All staff should engage in data inquiry. Action research and data inquiry should become schoolwide activities.
- Review, train, and ensure full use of data (interim, formative and summative) for curriculum revision, planning and differentiation of instruction. Monitor for full implementation.
- Incorporate interim and daily assessments in instructional design.
- Review the level of access to data bases, e.g., Instructional Information Portal, E-School Data and increase/expand for ease of use.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- While the majority of teachers appeared knowledgeable in their content area, the predominant mode of lesson delivery in classes reviewed was teacher centered.
- Teacher expectations for student learning are inconsistent.
- There was minimal student engagement in most classes reviewed. Low levels of rigor were observed. The predominant level of questioning was not focused on higher level thinking skills, e.g., application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, integration, inference.
- There was little evidence of differentiated instruction. There were several instances of ineffective use of worksheets with no evidence of scaffolding and/or differentiation.

- There was a lack of lesson structure sequence observed (beginning, middle/development, end /assessment).
- Several instructional interruptions occurred in classes reviewed due to student lateness.
- While many activities were observed, minimal direct or explicit instruction occurred.
- There was little evidence of daily writing and explicit writing instruction with targeted feedback.
- Most rooms had word walls displayed. Staff is in the beginning stages of using schoolwide academic vocabulary strategies that were proposed by the Data Inquiry Team for implementation in the four core subject areas.
- The use of technology to maximize instruction and student engagement was ineffective, e.g., SMART boards were used as chalkboards.
- A wide variety of nonfiction reading materials to support the new P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) were not yet evident in classrooms.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Shift instructional focus to become student centered. Cultivate an environment where students take ownership of their learning, set goals, engage in self-reflection and metacognition. Teachers need to integrate inquiry-based, hands-on and project-based learning into instructional planning.
- Begin to review, train, align and ensure that all teachers develop and deliver challenging, rigorous and engaging lessons in order to meet the demands of the new CCLS (see <http://engageny.org/>)
- Use higher order thinking skills, e.g., application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, integration and inference consistently in daily lesson delivery and assessment. Increase the level of relevant and authentic learning experiences. Ensure that a wide variety of instructional strategies and learning styles are used for all lessons, e.g., workshop model, cooperative learning, think-pair-share, jigsaw, differentiated grouping, role playing, and peer review.
- Ensure that instruction is differentiated and focused on student learning needs. Provide explicit professional development (PD) to ensure this occurs and monitor implementation.
- Establish and monitor implementation of a uniform, engaging, rigorous lesson delivery structure.
- Use effective classroom management strategies to maximize instructional time and time on task.
- Continue and expand academic vocabulary strategies schoolwide. Use academic vocabulary as an integral part of daily lessons.
- Ensure that writing instruction with feedback occurs across the curriculum.

- Check for understanding regularly and monitor with formal and informal assessments. Use assessment data to revise and adjust lessons, learning goals and focus.
- Incorporate the use of technology to support and enhance lessons and units.
- Purchase or obtain adequate nonfiction materials to support implementation of the new CCLS.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- There appears to be some misalignment regarding the values, mission, and vision of the school.
- Some teachers indicated that school leaders are not sufficiently visible in classrooms.
- A formal continuous improvement cycle, i.e., plan-assess-adjust cycle, does not appear to have been implemented throughout the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Review and re-visit the values, mission and vision. Engage key stakeholders in developing a plan of action that reinforces the values, mission, and vision in guiding the school.
- Establish a consistent schedule of instructional walkthroughs and formal and informal observations. Engage all school leaders in conducting focused walkthroughs with expectations that are stated in advance followed by timely and ongoing feedback.
- Provide PD for all staff to consistently participate in the “plan-assess-adjust cycle.” Monitor schoolwide implementation by department and individually.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- It did not appear that an optimal master schedule was created that meets the needs of all students. Schedules with multiple study halls and lunches were described. There is limited collaboration and planning time provided for staff.
- It did not appear that guidance counselors are effectively being used. Splitting multiple counselors between multiple schools diminishes access and effectiveness in terms of engaging students.
- Some staff indicated there is a perceived disconnect between guidance staff and teachers.
- There is diminished availability of career and technical education options for students.

- Effective collaborative partnerships, i.e., co-teachers are changed from year to year, impacting cohesive instruction.
- There was limited evidence of an Academic Intervention Services (AIS) program, and not all students are receiving the required service.
- Not all students enter freshman year with a clear goal and long term plan in mind.
- Some staff appear unclear about goals for the Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) Program.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Prioritize student needs in building the master schedule and ensuring input from a broad spectrum of constituents. Ensure the input of each subject area supervisor in the school and accountability for implementation of the master schedule. Review scheduling and programming in order to increase time for collaboration and planning.
- Review the appropriate and effective allocation of guidance staff to meet the needs of all students on a consistent and timely basis.
- Conduct a formal evaluation of the guidance department to ensure optimal functioning, perception and effectiveness.
- Reinstate and expand career and technical offerings and options for students as funding allows.
- Coordinate the development of collaborative co-teaching partnerships from year to year, in order to positively impact cohesive instruction.
- Conduct a formal evaluation of the current AIS program and expand and formalize the program to meet State requirements.
- Consider instituting a mentoring program for the entire freshman class, such as a big-brother/big-sister program, to assist with goal setting and long-term planning.
- Review and clarify the goals and objectives of the SIFE Program and monitor alignment with instructional plans.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- There was no evidence of a formal or strategic PD plan.
- Teachers expressed the need for PD in the new CCLS, literacy in the content areas, and best practices among similar schools.

- There was no evidence of PD specifically focused on English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.
- It is evident that the English department has received some PD on the new CCLS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Develop and implement a formal, strategic PD plan based on data, classroom observations, teacher and student needs that it is differentiated and targeted, and ensure that all subgroups are adequately addressed. Monitor and incorporate evidence of PD received and implemented through walkthroughs and observations.
- Provide PD in the CCLS literacy in the content areas, best practices in similar schools and cultural sensitivity training. Monitor implementation.
- Provide PD for the entire staff that is specifically focused on ELLs and students with disabilities.
- Increase articulation and coordination among departments and across secondary schools in the District. Increase dialogue and discussion between the two high schools. Discuss and share approaches and strategies in aligning curriculum with the new CCLS.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- There are some computer labs in need of upgrading. Technology in the classrooms is lacking or out-dated.
- While the building appeared clean, the age of the physical plant is becoming evident.
- Subject-specific classroom resources are limited.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Refurbish and upgrade computer labs and classroom technology to enhance student learning.
- Develop a plan for regular maintenance that is consistently supported.
- Establish leveled classroom libraries. Ensure a print-rich environment.

PART 4: CONCLUDING STATEMENT

It is important that a consistent level of resources is available for effective planning, support, and delivery of instruction to reinforce student strengths and meet all student needs. This should include consistent resources, such as Career and Technical Education courses at BOCES, to provide alternative options to meet a variety of student needs.

Districtwide goals that inform building level goals, departmental goals and in turn, individual instructional goals for all staff should be established.

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 the 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 Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.