

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

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

**SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT**

<b>BEDS Code:</b>	460901060005
<b>School Name:</b>	Mexico Middle School
<b>School Address:</b>	16 Fravor Rd. Mexico, NY 13114
<b>Principal:</b>	Kimberly Holliday
<b>Accountability Phase/Category:</b>	Improvement (year 1) - Focused English Language Arts - Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged
<b>Areas of Identification:</b>	
<b>Dates of On-site Review :</b>	December 11, 2011 and January, 10 and 24, 2012

**PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT**

“We will support student achievement by developing and sustaining exemplary educational experiences; creating and maintaining an environment that supports learning and embraces individuality; engaging in professional development that drives good instruction; and connecting with our larger community to present opportunities for adult involvement in the educational process.”

**PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS**

The school maintains a long term commitment to the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) model.

**PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**FINDINGS:**

- The District employs a data coordinator, and there is evidence the school maintains a data spread sheet of local and state assessment data points disaggregated to the individual student level.
- School Report cards and other state data sources are used with staff to identify areas in need of improvement.
- The school tracks student attendance.
- Common benchmark assessments in mathematics are conducted.

- Common benchmark assessments in English language arts (ELA) are being developed.
- State assessment data is disaggregated but not data from local formative and reading assessments.
- Curriculum-based assessments are administered at least monthly, and progress monitoring is done at least every five weeks and reported to parents.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Instructional leadership should consider the use of grade level team time for structured review of data.
- Instructional leadership should continue to develop and implement common formative assessments in ELA.
- Data collection and review practices should be expanded to include the disaggregation of data by subgroup populations for formative and summative local assessments.
- The school leader should take steps to assure that all students with disabilities have regularly scheduled progress monitoring and reporting.

**II. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

**FINDINGS:**

- The school has implemented a co-teaching model in some core area classes.
- The Shared Decision Making (SDM) Team has representation from many stakeholders, including parents and representation from the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) and the Special Education Parent-Teacher Association (SEPTA).
- A team has been assembled to facilitate the implementation of the Race to the Top initiatives.
- All teachers who performed a read-aloud did so with expression and enthusiasm and with embedded questions for maximum student engagement.
- The school offers many after school activities, i.e., ELA tutoring, ninth period help, and an AM academy.
- Some teachers in different grade levels were observed implementing lessons designed to address:
  - cognitive engagement;
  - constructivist learning, with teachers taking on the role of facilitators for their students' learning process;

- the six shifts in literacy; and
  - the instruction of college/career ready skills and the structuring of student learning for “real life roles” outside the classroom.
- The review team observed limited differentiated instruction in core subject areas. The primary mode of instruction in some classes is whole class instruction.
  - All staff is participating in regional professional development (PD) in the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and school-level follow up. As a part of this process, staff is currently engaged in writing instructional units aligned to the CCLS.
  - There is an existing grading policy; however there appears to be inconsistencies in its implementation.
  - Interviews with parents and students revealed a feeling that discipline policies are implemented inconsistently.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- PD in the area of best strategies to implement and monitor differentiated instruction should be provided. Instructional leadership should develop curriculum guides, program outlines, detailed assessments for student progress monitoring, and a mechanism to determine program effectiveness in alignment with the CCLS.
- Instructional leadership should ensure the consistency of implementation of the school grading policy.
- School leadership should review the implementation of the discipline policy, including its implementation for special education students. The discipline policy should be reviewed with students and parents

### **III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- School and District goals as well as the Comprehensive District Education Plan (CDEP) that had been newly adopted at the time of review articulate the District and school values, mission, and vision and have been shared with all staff.
- School leadership time to review teaching and learning has been subsumed by other pressing tasks and duties.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- School leadership should be provided with managerial support to ensure more time for instructional leadership, i.e., reviewing teaching and learning.
- Students should be placed in appropriate instructional programs based on preset, objective criteria.
- Efficient models for use of common planning time should be reviewed.

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

### **FINDINGS:**

- Weekly meetings of the Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) Team include presentations and the development of a school-based health center.
- Reviewers noted evidence of adults caring and showing interest in the students.
- Explicit transition planning is evident from grade four to five and from grade eight to nine. Psychologists and counselors assist in this initiative. Transition and student support activities include orientation to the school, parent night, open house, and regularly scheduled conferences to build student success.
- Over the past several years, the District has acquired multiple intervention programs in support of the ELA program. The curriculum mapping initiative includes a review of these programs to identify resource gaps in the implementation of these programs.
- The school has partnered with the community through programs such as Art in the Park, Art Shop, Privilege Program and community service programs.
- The District included parents as stakeholders in a comprehensive CDEP planning process. Parents actively participate as members of the SDM Team and attend the school open house and regularly scheduled parent conferences.
- Interviews with selected students revealed that for the most part students felt comfortable and safe in the school.
- The reviewers noted a need to address the rigor of instruction in self-contained classes and resource support settings.
- Interviews with selected parents revealed that parents felt welcome and comfortable in the school. However, some concern was voiced about existing resources and availability of up to date resources, i.e., texts and reference materials.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Instructional leadership should examine practices in resource support settings and self-contained classes to implement rigorous instruction that moves beyond class work and homework.

**V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**FINDINGS:**

- The school has been actively committed to supporting the PLC model of continuous learning. This model has been used to promote staff understanding of what students have been taught.
- The District PD Plan focuses on curriculum mapping. PLCs, team, grade level and department meetings are regularly scheduled and include curriculum mapping.
- When necessary, teachers are given an improvement plan with steps for improvement and accountability benchmarks.
- The District is implementing the new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) requirements in the 2011-12 school year.
- The school is currently implementing the “Privilege Program,” an AM Academy and exploring different incentive programs to increase and sustain attendance at school.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

School leadership should use data to develop a school PD plan that targets best practices for raising student achievement of students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students, especially in ELA.

**VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

**FINDINGS:**

- Technology is integrated in classroom instruction, including the use of SMARTBoards, pods of computers, E readers, iPads, nooks and assistive technology. Reviewers observed that ELA teachers in all grades used SMARTBoards, asking students to interact with the technology in different ways. The school uses the resources of a technology skilled librarian.
- The school maintains a cart of materials, including laboratory tools, for hands on science, which is made available to any class.
- The school is clean and orderly, including the classrooms and hallways. There was evidence of student work displayed in classrooms, hallways, and display areas throughout the school.

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