

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

DBN:	08X301
District Name:	District 08
School Name:	MS 301 Paul L. Dunbar
School Address:	890 Cauldwell Avenue, Bronx New York 11456
Principal:	Benjamin Basile
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year-1) - Comprehensive
Areas of Identification:	English Language Arts - All students; African American students; Hispanic students; English Language Learners; Students with Disabilities and Economical Disadvantaged students Mathematics - All students; African American students; Hispanic students; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged students
Dates of On-site Review:	February 7 – 8, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“Our Mission is to provide students a school where they will be respected, nurtured socially and emotionally, and of course, educated with rigorous academic standards. We are building students' capacity to think independently, strategically, and objectively and, in turn, create positive change within themselves, their communities, and the world”.

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The school has established a safe and nurturing environment.
- The school believes in educating the “whole child” by addressing the academic and social emotional needs of each student.
- The school leader has collaborations with the Mayor’s Office and local elected community leaders to access funding for a new library and other resources for the school.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- Although data is collected from multiple sources, there is limited evidence that an on-going analysis of this data is conducted to identify student strengths and areas in need of improvement in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics.
- There was limited evidence that teachers were using a variety of assessments or that data is being used consistently to plan ELA instructional supports and strategies designed to meet the individual instructional needs of students who have not yet demonstrated proficiency, English Language Learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should develop a system for data disaggregation and analysis to focus on academic strengths and areas of need for individual students, classes and subgroups, in addition to reviewing whole school and grade level data. The school leaders should develop guidelines for the use of data to develop, implement, and monitor the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP).
- School leaders should set clear expectations for teachers regarding collecting, recording and analyzing data. Multiple sources of formative assessment data should be collected, such as conferring notes, running records, and notebook assessments. School leaders should periodically review student work to ensure consistency of assignments and assessments within and across the grades to ensure instruction is meeting individual student needs.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- Interviews and meetings with school staff conducted by the review team indicated that all of the core teachers are directed to use a balanced literacy/workshop model of instruction. However, in classes observed by the review team instruction that was often teacher directed, and there were limited opportunities for students to use higher order thinking or problem solving skills and to collaboratively interact. The review team observed few lessons that included all the elements of the workshop model.
- Observations in classrooms, interviews with staff and a review of documents by the review team indicated that curriculum maps were available for all core subjects. However, the ELA maps lacked specificity and consistent alignment across grade levels.
- Interviews with teachers and school leaders and classroom observations by the review team indicated limited use of differentiation strategies to address the specific learning needs of individual students. However, some teachers used data to develop differentiated instructional strategies to meet the individual learning needs of the students in their classes.

- Classrooms observations and interviews conducted by the review team indicated that instruction in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms is delivered by the teacher in English and Spanish, as indicated in the Language Allocation Policy (LAP). However, the documentation provided did not reflect that students are consistently receiving the required amount of ESL instruction based on their proficiency levels.
- The team’s review of student folders indicated that student writing is not consistently evaluated by teachers. Folders contained a limited number of drafts of writing assignments. Documentation of revision conferences conducted with students, to encourage next steps and to reach final products in a timely manner, was also limited.
- In classes observed by the review team, there was limited evidence of the use of a variety of strategies to differentiate instruction to address the goals indicated on the students’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should provide professional development (PD) to teachers to support the development of a variety of instructional strategies to ensure that all lessons include opportunities for students to engage in higher order thinking and problem solving activities. Professional development (PD) should also be provided to ensure that teachers plan for and execute lessons using all the elements of the workshop model. School leaders should conduct follow-up observations to ensure that teachers are incorporating strategies that have been introduced in PD sessions.
- The school leaders should work with a team of teachers to revise ELA curriculum maps to provide coherent instruction across and within grade levels. These maps should ensure continuity of instruction within the school and provide students with progressive skill development.
- The school leaders should provide PD for teachers on how to provide differentiated instruction based on the results of data analysis. The PD should include a variety of strategies that can be implemented to address the instructional needs of students, with particular attention to the students in the identified subgroups.
- The school leadership should review the program schedule for ELLs to ensure that each student’s program meets all guidelines in the LAP, including minutes of instruction. Documentation of student progress should be based on data and be updated to indicate current student proficiency levels.
- The school leaders should collaborate with the ELA coach to develop guidelines and protocols for the use of student work folders to document and assess student work. The use of student folders should be monitored and additional assistance should be provided to teachers as needed.
- The school leaders should provide PD opportunities for teachers on a variety of instructional strategies. These strategies should enable teachers to use the information listed in each student’s IEP to differentiate instruction to meet the student's needs. This PD should include the use of data to identify areas of student need and skill levels. Teachers should develop tasks that are appropriate for the student

and scaffold instruction accordingly. School leaders should regularly monitor teacher planning and pedagogy to ensure that differentiated activities are in place.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDING:

There is limited evidence that school leaders consistently use walkthroughs or observations to monitor teacher practice, including implementing strategies learned in PD and using varied instructional strategies to meet targeted academic needs of identified students.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Principal should establish a schedule of formal and informal observations, including areas of focus, to be conducted by all school leaders. Common formats should be used, and school leaders should meet regularly to review their observations, assess the effectiveness of PD and identify areas needing further development.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDING:

The beginning of the school day is organized to provide a zero period for students identified to receive small group and/or one to one tutoring. However, due to chronic lateness, a number of those students who are scheduled for academic support often do not attend and therefore do not receive the benefits of these intervention sessions.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Principal should work with the attendance teacher, other staff and outside agencies to develop a plan to improve student attendance. One part of this plan should make provisions for supporting identified at-risk students who are chronically late. The Principal should also consider adjusting the schedule to provide supplemental academic support at other times during the school day and after school.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- There is limited evidence that teachers assigned to Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classes are given sufficient PD, including opportunities to observe effective ICT classrooms. Additionally, the current class schedule does not provide the ICT teachers with adequate time to plan collaboratively. As a result, the current level of professional support has not fully ensured that the co-teachers differentiate instruction to address the identified individual needs of the students with disabilities.
- The school leaders and coaches provide some PD opportunities for teachers, including teachers with special education and ESL licenses, to support the development of a variety of strategies to promote

differentiation of instruction and active participation of all students in the learning process. However, classroom observations by the review team indicate some teachers need differentiated support to integrate their strategies into their pedagogical practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school leaders should ensure that teachers are provided with support, guidance, and additional PD, including opportunities to visit successful ICT classrooms, to implement a more effective ICT model. The ICT teachers should be given scheduled collaborative planning time to incorporate best practices into the co-teaching framework and support the identified individual needs of students with disabilities. The school leaders should monitor co-teaching classroom practices and provide constructive feedback to teachers.
- The Principal should provide PD to enable all teachers to consistently employ instructional strategies that engage all students in the learning process and are differentiated to address the individualized needs of all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDING:

Technology is available. Some classrooms were equipped with SMART Boards and students have access to laptops. In the majority of classes visited by the review team, SMART Boards served as projectors, if they were used at all. Laptops were not observed in use by the review team. Consequently, students have limited opportunities to utilize technology to support their varied learning modalities and interests.

RECOMMENDATION:

The school leader should provide teachers with on-going PD to incorporate SMART Boards and integrate other technology into instruction to support interactive and hands-on learning. The school leader should develop a technology plan for the school that includes a needs assessment to determine teachers' skills and comfort levels in using technology. School leaders should monitor technology usage through frequent observations and walkthroughs.

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 Common Core Learning Standards, Data-Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.