

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DBN:	10X085
School Name:	PS 85 Great Expectations
School Address:	2400 Marion Avenue Bronx, NY 10458
Principal:	Ted Husted
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring (year 1) - Comprehensive
Area of Identification:	English Language Arts - All Students; Students with Disabilities; Black Students; Hispanic Students; English Language Learners; and Economically Disadvantaged
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	December 13-14, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

PS 85 serves 1,091 students in kindergarten through grades 5. The school enrollment is one percent Asian, 70 percent Hispanic, 27 percent Black and less than one percent White students. Of these students, 25 percent are English language learners (ELLs) and approximately 19 percent are students with disabilities.

The administrative team consists of the Principal and four Assistant Principals (APs). The school is organized in academies. The Principal has served the school for five years and the APs have served between four to 12 years. There are 107 teachers on staff; three percent have been at the school for less than one year and 20 percent for fewer than three years. Ninety-seven percent of teachers are highly qualified. The rate of teacher turnover is 1.9 percent.

PART 2: ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

A. Performance on Key Indicators of Student Achievement Trends and School Progress

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	
	NYSED Quantitative Performance Measures	
-	Negative trend data for one or more identified subject/areas and subgroups for the past two consecutive years, as indicated by a decrease in the percentage of students performing at or above Level 3 and/or a decrease in the Performance Index.	✓
-	School is ten or more points away from meeting its Effective Annual Measurable Objective (EAMO) for one or more identified subgroups in subject/area(s) of identification.	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for the past two consecutive years show an increase in the number of subgroups that did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in identified area(s).	✓
-	Performance data for the school on NYSED Accountability Overview Reports (AOR) for the past two consecutive years indicate an increase in the achievement gap between identified subgroups and the <i>All Students</i> subgroup in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
-	Most recent NYC Progress Report Grade of C	✓
+/	NYC Quality Review Score of Proficient	✓

B. School Strengths

- The building is welcoming and student centered.
- The school offers many support services for students.

C. Key Findings and Recommendations

Summary of the key issues (causal factors), and other areas of concern, identified during the on-site diagnostic review that are negatively impacting student achievement in identified areas, as well as recommendations, as related to the seven JIT Indicator Categories:

I. Curriculum

Findings:

- The school does not have a rigorous, coherent and aligned curriculum. A balanced literacy approach is used with units of study from Teachers College (TC) Reading and Writing Project. However, grade level guides lack specificity in aligning grade level expectations to the Common Core.
- There is a lack of a variety of materials to support instruction and have a positive impact on student achievement. The impact of programs has not been evaluated. There is no effective process to ensure effective implementation improves student achievement.

Recommendations:

- The Network should work with the school on the development of a curriculum in all core areas and ensure that it is clearly aligned with the current New York State (NYS) Learning Standards. The curriculum must be aligned to the new P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in English language arts and literacy and mathematics to prepare for implementation in school year 2012-13. All curricula should be developed by individuals (national, State or local) who understand the key elements of curriculum development.

All teachers and administrators should participate in professional development (PD) on how to plan and implement a curriculum with rigor, as well as on delivery methods that are student-centered. The curriculum should be relied upon as the basis for assessing individual student mastery and progress. Walkthroughs and formal evaluations should include how well the teacher knows and implements the curriculum for the subjects being taught.

- The school leadership should evaluate the effectiveness of the school's many commercially produced curriculum resources in raising student achievement in English language arts (ELA) and make adjustments in light of the findings.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Teachers do not effectively plan and use a variety of teaching strategies. There was little evidence of consistent differentiation of instruction. Whole class instruction was predominant. Small groups were observed in which students worked on similar tasks. The workshop model, where instruction is organized into three parts, whole group, small group and individualized instruction, is the primary method of differentiating instruction. Differentiation was not evident for ELLs in general education classes. Differentiation for students with disabilities was not based on student Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) in self-contained or ICT classes. There was differentiation observed in bilingual classes.
- Classroom instruction is not appropriate and flexible for all students. The criteria for grouping students vary among classes. There is no consistent approach to grouping students for instruction. There is little evidence that data supports how students are grouped.
- Teacher questioning strategies to assess student learning vary across the school. Questioning was predominantly at the recall level. In many classes the questioning was not planned. There was little evidence of higher order thinking skills being taught. Many activities consisted of completing worksheets. There was no evidence of student reflection or self-evaluation in lessons.
- The pacing and sequencing of instruction is not predictable and logical. The implementation of the workshop model varies in length and instructional activities from classroom to classroom. Many mini-lessons extended beyond the recommended time frame. Often activities were not directly related to the planned mini-lesson.
- There is no evidence of consistent implementation of a uniform grading policy. Teachers generally create their own policy and method for assigning student grades. Quality academic student work is not consistently displayed with standards-based rubrics that provide specific feedback. Student work in classrooms lacked rigor. Some thinking maps completed by students and displayed in classrooms contain identical information.
- Students are not engaged in meaningful instructional activities. Assignments and class activities lack rigor. The use of worksheets was prevalent and copying and filling in answers were observed by the team in many classes.
- Appropriate technology is not integrated into instruction. There were a lot of technology resources available for instruction, including laptops, laptop carts, SMART Boards and advanced software in the school library. Technology resources were either not used or used primarily as projection devices by teachers.
- Teachers and related service providers do not have complete access to student IEPs as there is some delay in putting them into the Special Education Student Information System (SEGIS), leaving minimal access for teachers. Many teachers are not aware of their responsibility to implement IEPs. Teachers have student goals from their IEPs but not the specific modifications.
- Effective co-teaching and team teaching strategies are not evident where both teachers equally contribute to instruction. There was some evidence of collaborative planning between both teachers.

- NYS Learning Standards are not clearly understood by students. The student goals are derived directly from the Independent Reading Level Assessment (IRLA) skills cards. Students can recite the sequence of instructions. However, students cannot articulate what they are learning and why. Most responses were procedural.

Recommendations:

- The school leader, with Network support, should provide professional development (PD) opportunities for teachers on a variety of instructional strategies to promote differentiation of instruction. The focus of the PD should be on the use of data to drive lesson planning and instruction. Strategies should focus on ensuring that tasks match the academic needs of all students. School leaders should regularly monitor teacher planning and instructional practice in the classroom to check that differentiated activities are in place throughout the school. Ongoing PD should be provided for all teachers, including coaches, in using data to match work that meets the individual needs of students.
- School leaders should provide PD on the implementation of flexible grouping based on formative, interim, and summative data. All students should be provided with tasks and activities that address their specific learning needs in all lessons. School leaders should monitor teacher planning and instruction to ensure that the use of data to group students becomes common practice in all classrooms. Ongoing PD should be provided for teachers that continue to struggle with this strategy.
- School leaders should assist teachers in developing questions that do not require one-word answers or are at the recall and comprehension levels. Questions should require students to support answers by citing text, by elaborating on the answers of other students, and by summarizing and rephrasing new information. Teacher lesson plans should include pre-created questions that require critical thinking and discussion. Teachers should use wait time and not allow students to opt-out of class discussions. Teachers should use random selection and/or avoid calling exclusively on willing student volunteers. Teachers should require students to answer in complete sentences.
- With the assistance of the Network, the school should provide PD on effective pacing for the workshop model so that the three components are evident in all lessons and lesson plans. School leaders should make the pacing of lessons a regular focus for walkthroughs and observations.
- The school should establish a schoolwide grading policy that is easily accessible to all students. Rubrics should be used as an integral tool in planning and assessing assignments. Student work should be rigorous and aligned with the NYS Standards. Teachers should participate in PD activities that model the use of rubrics to provide teacher feedback, peer feedback and student self-assessment. School leaders should monitor student work in notebooks and on display and evaluate the quality of feedback that is provided to ensure that it helps students improve and move to the next level.
- Through collaboration during common planning time and PD opportunities provided by the Network, teachers and coaches should ensure that all student work is appropriately demanding. Teachers should provide regular opportunities for students to work cooperatively on challenging activities and have opportunities to discuss issues so that they become more proactive learners. The administrative team should carry out regular observations of lessons to monitor that this is consistently occurring.

- The school leadership, with Network support, should provide training and support to targeted teachers to ensure that they have the skills and competencies to effectively use technology, including laptop computers and SMART Boards, in instruction. School leaders should ensure that strategies learned in PD are fully implemented in the classroom so that technology is routinely integrated into teaching and learning.
- The Principal should ensure that student IEPs are put into the system as soon as the required signatures are obtained. The Principal should ensure that IEPs are current, correct, complete and implemented.
- Teachers should be provided with support, guidance, and, where appropriate, PD to implement a more effective co-teaching model. Teachers should be given opportunities to visit successful co-teaching classrooms. The co-teachers should be given scheduled collaborative planning time to ensure best practices in co-teaching instruction and to implement balanced literacy to support students with disabilities. The school leaders should closely monitor co-teaching classroom practices and provide constructive feedback to teachers.
- The school leaders should identify schools and classrooms where students effectively and purposefully interact with each other and demonstrate high academic achievement. Staff should visit these successful schools to observe model classrooms and good practice. The school leaders should regularly monitor and evaluate outcomes until high standards of learning and teaching are reached.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- The school leadership does not foster a culture of shared decision making. The school Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) goals set low targets. There is no plan to systematically address the low achievement in ELA. All the bilingual classes and most of the special education classes are housed in the World Studies Academy. As a result, students in the World Studies Academy are a self-contained community of ELLs and students with disabilities within the school who do not have opportunities to mix with other students and staff. There is no identified pathway from the World Studies Academy into the other academies where the majority of classes are general education classrooms.
- Financial, human, and material resources are not effectively used to support the instructional program. Money, time and training have been invested in a wide variety of instructional resources to support literacy that have varying alignments to each other and to the curriculum and the CCLS. The effectiveness of these programs/resources is not evaluated. There is inconsistency between grade levels that results in a patchwork approach to improving ELA rather than a consistent and aligned K-5 program. The 100 book challenge, an activity is being used as an instructional strategy to increase reading comprehension. The conglomeration of supports lacks a cohesive focus necessary to improve achievement in ELA.
- The school leadership does not make staffing assignments based on specific teacher expertise and the needs and readiness of students and staff. All the instructional coaches were hired from within. Through reorganization the subject area coaches have become generalists. A daily intervention period is scheduled for all students in which classrooms are flooded with support staff

and cluster teachers who provide the individual reading support to students. The staff does not always have experience in teaching reading.

- The school leaders do not have an effective system of staff evaluation. The supervision provided teachers has not resulted in changes in classroom practice or improved student performance. Neither school leaders provide instructive feedback to teachers nor does the principal provide APs with instructive feedback. School leaders do not closely monitor classroom practice to assess the improvement strategies being taught.
- The school leadership does not ensure that State/federal program guidelines and regulations are being implemented appropriately for all students.
- Parents on the School Leadership Team (SLT) have limited knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities for developing and monitoring the CEP.

Recommendations:

- The school leadership, staff and Network should develop the CEP to create an effective schoolwide plan to improve achievement. An evaluation of the academy system should be initiated to determine its effects on student learning and to determine its efficacy as a grouping strategy for ELLs and students with disabilities. The school leaders and staff should articulate a clear vision and strategic plan that drives the school towards high student achievement and clearly outlines the responsibilities of staff and leaders. The plan should include goals, action plans, PD, and use all resources available through the Network. The implementation of the plan should be carefully monitored and its impact on student achievement measured.
- The school leadership's management of the school's organization, operations and resources should be addressed to resolve weaknesses in creating an effective learning environment. There should be increased accountability by all staff towards continuous improvement.
- The school leadership should ensure that all staff involved in the daily intervention initiative receives PD in effective reading strategies and that all instruction in ELA is delivered by teachers with the knowledge, skills and experience in the area.
- The school leadership should implement a classroom observation schedule to monitor more closely the quality of teaching and learning across the school, especially in ELA. Written feedback should be provided for all formal, informal and walkthrough observations, including clear targets for improvement. Follow-up observations should be included in the schedule to check on progress. The school should seek support from the Network in developing lesson observation protocols, including training for school leaders in writing effective teacher feedback. The outcomes of lesson observations should provide a focus for the school PD plan.
- The Principal should ensure that all programs adhere to required timelines and guidelines. Particular attention should be given to bilingual and special education programs.
- The school should seek Network support in working with the SLT to develop parents' understanding of their responsibility for setting and monitoring rigorous goals for the CEP. The CEP should be a regular item on the agenda for SLT meetings so that all members of the team are fully aware of the appropriateness of the school goals and the progress necessary for the school to meet AYP targets for ELA.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Finding:

Schoolwide behavior policies are not implemented consistently by all staff members. The *BEST* (Behavior Effort Scholarship Teamwork) behavioral incentive program and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) program are being implemented in response to concerns expressed by teachers in the Learning Environment Survey. However, the implementation of PBIS is inconsistent.

Recommendation:

School leaders should ensure full and appropriate implementation of PBIS throughout the building. Implementation should be supported by PD for all staff, parents and children. Incentives in the *BEST* program should be aligned with the philosophy of PBIS.

V. Collection, Analysis and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- The school has not assessed the academic issues impacting student achievement. The discussions around root causes are centered on the renorming of the testing. Administrators and teachers state that they have not investigated the root causes for the academic failure in ELA. Rather they espouse a philosophy that they are moving forward to fix the problem. To date there is no evidence that this approach has resulted in improved student achievement in ELA.
- The wide range of student achievement data are not used effectively for instructional planning to increase achievement. There is not a clear focus on analyzing data to target improvement in ELA. All teachers have data binders that include student work, but this practice has not yet been shown to be effective in raising student achievement in ELA.
- Regular meetings of administrators and teachers to analyze data and create action plans have not resulted in higher student achievement in ELA.
- There is little evidence that the ongoing review of individual data has had a positive effect on raising student achievement. The CEP goals are not aligned to goals stated by classroom teachers. The CEP goal targeting the increase in achievement of 62 students throughout the school is an effort to making AYP through safe harbor rather than achieving the school's Effective Annual Measurable Objective.
- There is no evidence that students are involved in formulating their improvement goals. The goals are generated from a commercially produced program with little differentiation among students.
- Data reviewed does not indicate that it is used to assess teacher effectiveness or to develop professional growth plans. There was no reference to data in any of the teacher evaluations.

Recommendations:

- School leaders should conduct a thorough item analysis and subgroup analysis to determine the causes of underperformance and create a CEP based on data. The data should be reviewed from year-to-year across cohorts with instructional needs adjusted accordingly.

- School leaders should investigate and identify resources on how to effectively use data provided by assessments to inform teachers on how to tailor their teaching to meet the specific needs of a single student or whole class. PD should be provided schoolwide to help teachers to implement this practice in their effort to improve student performance.
- School leaders should reassess the use of data meetings to improve instruction. School leaders should provide modeling for teachers in the creation and execution of action plans to increase student performance in ELA. Individual student data should be used rigorously to identify those students requiring additional support services. School leaders should also take steps to ensure that school goals for improvement in ELA achievement are appropriately ambitious and widely understood by all staff.
- School leaders, with support from the Network, should provide targeted PD to assist teachers in working with students to establish their learning goals.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- Comprehensive PD is neither aligned with school goals nor based on data that reflect student and teacher needs. There is regularly scheduled PD based on teacher requests and Network support, but this PD is not part of a wider array of school strategies for improvement in ELA. Coaches have grade level responsibility, and supervisors attend meetings to support them and ensure goals are being addressed. There are many offerings, but they are not aligned with school goals, and there is no evidence that this PD has positively affected student achievement in ELA.
- Teachers are provided with opportunities to regularly collaborate on the use of data-driven instructional techniques, including group or team inquiry and action research that is focused on improving student learning outcomes. However, there is little evidence that the collaboration time provided to teachers has resulted in an increase student achievement.
- Staff is not held accountable for incorporating strategies learned in PD into their daily teaching. To date those strategies have not positively impacted instruction.
- The PD provided to staff is insufficient to meet the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities and at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should seek Network support to develop a comprehensive PD plan based on student and teacher needs that is also closely aligned with the goals identified in the CEP. The plan should have as its primary focus improving teaching, learning and student achievement in ELA.
- School leaders should re-examine with staff the translation of data analysis into effective classroom practice, including the work of school Inquiry Teams. They should examine closely the capacity of the staff to explicitly teach reading and writing strategies and skills.
- The school leadership should conduct follow-up observations after PD sessions to ensure that teachers incorporate the strategies learned into classroom practice. School leaders should develop detailed recommendations and specific next steps in their observation reports and focus on these in their next observation.

- School leaders should provide teachers with PD to adequately address the needs of ELLs, students with disabilities and at risk students.

VII. District Support

Finding:

The District provides guidance and support for teaching and learning in the school. However, representatives from the Network were not aware of the groupings within the various academies, specifically that bilingual students and student with disabilities were restricted to the World Studies Academy.

Recommendation:

The Network should support the school in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations.

PART 3: JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION

A. Overall Finding

Reference	Review Team Finding	✓
(c)	The school has not made sufficient progress in identified areas, and is unlikely to make AYP under the current structure and organization.	✓

B. Overall Recommendation

Reference	Review Team Recommendation	✓
(c)	Develop and implement a School Restructuring Plan that includes <u>significant changes in staff, organizational structure, leadership and/or configuration</u> to address issues that continue to negatively impact student academic performance in identified areas.	✓

C. In the space below, include specific information to support the District in determining how the above JIT recommendation should be implemented.

- School leadership should be provided support to effectively meet the needs of low achieving students and present alternative perspectives regarding school improvement efforts. The Principal should work to expand his repertoire of leadership strategies to reverse the current trend of declining achievement.
- School leadership, with the assistance of the Network, should work collaboratively with the staff to develop and address the declining student achievement in ELA. The targets in the CEP goals should be raised significantly to ensure student proficiency.
- The school leaders should evaluate the effectiveness of the current academy system and determine whether reorganization is appropriate. The Principal should ensure that all students have access to all

instruction, programs and support services. The Principal should closely monitor the access of ELLs and students with disabilities to all school programs.

- The school leaders should evaluate the many commercially prepared materials, programs and initiatives in use to determine their effectiveness. They should determine which materials and programs are the best fit for the students and create a clearly aligned K-5 program.
- The Principal should ensure that there is a defined sequence of instruction to teach reading comprehension skills. The Principal should ensure that technology is optimally used by teachers and students as a tool in ELA instruction.
- The Principal should reconsider decisions around staffing the intervention period with an “all hands on deck” approach. He should consider staffing the period in a manner that ensures that students receive individual assistance from personnel who are experienced and/or trained in teaching reading and writing.
- School leaders should develop a PD program that is aligned to the needs of students and teachers that teaches the explicit strategies necessary to improve instruction in ELA. School leaders should rigorously monitor instruction to ensure that specific strategies are in use in every class.