

**NYSED/AMITYVILLE UFSD JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>BEDS Code:</b>	58-01-06-03-0004
<b>School Name:</b>	Edmund W. Miles Middle School
<b>School Address:</b>	501 Route 110 Amityville, New York 11701
<b>Principal:</b>	Michele Darby
<b>Restructuring Phase/Category:</b>	Restructuring (Year 1) - Comprehensive
<b>Areas of Identification:</b>	English Language Arts - All Students; Black Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; Limited English Proficient and Economically Disadvantaged Students  Mathematics - All Students; Black Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:</b>	December 12-16, 2011

**PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

**Community and School Background**

Edmund W. Miles Middle School serves 630 students in grades 7 through 9. The school enrollment is one percent Native American, 57 percent Black, 31 percent Hispanic, nine percent White, and two percent multiracial students. Of these students, 11 percent are English language learners (ELLs) and 17 percent are students with disabilities.

The administrative team includes the Principal and an Assistant Principal (AP). The Principal and AP are currently in their sixth month. There are 61 teachers on staff. One teacher has been at the school for less than one year, and three teachers have been at the school fewer than four years. All of the teachers are highly qualified. Teacher turnover rate was 35 percent in the previous school year.

**PART 2: ASSESSMENT OF THE SCHOOL'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

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

<b>Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)</b>	<b>School Performance Indicators</b>	✓
	<b>NYSED Quantitative Performance Measures</b>	
-	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.	✓

<b>Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)</b>	<b>School Performance Indicators</b>	✓
-	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 <u>All Students</u> subgroup in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓

## B. School Strengths

- The school is welcoming to parents and members of the community. The school's climate was reported to be more positive than in previous years.
- The District has developed a partnership through a grant with South Oaks Hospital Outpatient Services that has enabled South Oaks to provide eight hours per week of counseling services within the school.
- The District has established a Guardians of Equity Committee, comprised of administrators, faculty, parents, and community members, that has been responsible for initiating training in conflict resolution, crisis prevention, and culturally responsive education.

## C. Key Findings and Recommendations

**Summary of the key issues (and 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 and District do not have a well-developed, rigorous and standards-based curriculum to provide teachers with differentiated instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students.
- Expert 21 is currently implemented as the ELA curriculum for students at and above proficiency. The program publishers provide scope and sequence documents and professional development (PD). The District provides teachers with a mathematics scope and sequence and varied instructional resources to support instruction. However, Academic Intervention programs, i.e., Read 180 and Systems 44, are being implemented as the entire English language arts (ELA) program for some students.
- There are no agreed upon criteria for lesson planning within the school and District. The curriculum does not provide model lessons plans referencing NYS Standards and Performance Indicators.
- The school's primary instructional resources are programs and textbooks that serve as the curriculum.

**Recommendations:**

- The District should work with the school on the development of 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 knowledgeable and trained 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.

- AIS programs should supplement the ELA curriculum, not serve as the ELA curriculum. All students should have access to the District ELA curriculum.
- School and District leaders should establish, share, and monitor expectations for lesson planning, with attention to NYS Standards and differentiating instruction. The expectations for lesson planning should be consistently applied in all classrooms, and school leaders should monitor implementation by conducting regular walkthroughs.
- Instructional materials should be regularly evaluated to ensure alignment to current NYS Standards. Programs and textbooks should only serve as instructional resources.

**II. Teaching and Learning****Findings:**

- For most instruction, the expectation for student engagement appeared low. Instruction was teacher-centered, and student participation was limited to recalling of facts. Students were not consistently engaged with concepts relevant to the content and standards of the subject. Lessons did not consistently reflect models that support student engagement and collaborative inquiry among learners. Lessons did not purposefully modify instructional practices for ELLs and include strategies to support the development of academic vocabulary.
- Lessons did not consistently differentiate content, process, product, or assessment. Instruction did not consistently meet the needs of diverse learners. Lessons did not include instructional strategies, such as generating questions or developing academic vocabulary. The lessons lacked closure and missed opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking. Lessons did not provide structured opportunities for students to reflect upon, summarize and synthesize outcomes of what they were learning and why.
- Most lessons did not use flexible grouping or demonstrate the use of formative and interim assessment data to inform instruction. Lessons did not consistently include time for conferencing with students and checking for understanding.
- Most lessons did not include lesson aims and objectives. The posting and spiraling back to lesson aims and objectives during instruction were limited or, at times, nonexistent.

- Lessons were not academically rigorous and did not adequately integrate student prior knowledge, life experiences, and learning goals. Lessons did not encourage learners to become independent and self-directed.
  - Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for ELA and mathematics group grades 7 through 9 students together. The structure of these classes makes it difficult to address the wide range of academic content needs and the scaffolding of skills. These classes do not have a curriculum that addresses the different content areas by grade levels.
  - Most mathematics classes visited generally did not use manipulatives to assist students to move from the concrete to the abstract. Mathematics lessons did not actively seek to make real-world connections or provide students with strategies to support problem-solving.
  
- There is no school or District standardized process for the assessment of student work. Lessons offered opportunities for writing, but the quality and purpose of feedback on writing lacked rigor and did not demonstrate the use of standards-based rubrics. Copying, filling in, sentence completion, and creating lists were the primary examples of student writing.
  - Teaching of the writing process did not consistently provide students with rubrics and did not model a drafting and editing process. The review of student work during classroom visits suggests that writing is not regularly monitored and that inconsistent feedback is provided to learners.
  - Writing involved low-level responses to closed questions that did not lead to deeper, meaningful conversation.
  
- Classrooms visited had varied classroom management routines, with inconsistent expectations and procedures for addressing students who did not participate in class or who had low motivation.
  
- The pacing of lessons was inconsistent. Some lessons were missing a cohesive “beginning, middle, and end.”
  - Lessons were not effectively modified to promote access to the curriculum for ELLs and students with disabilities.
  - The implementation of the varied intervention programs did not offer or include consistent and sufficient text-connection clues for ELLs.
  - There was inconsistent use of such tools as graphic organizers to support students with different learning styles who might need more differentiation and scaffolding to understand the meaning of text.
  - Lessons and writing tasks did not consistently support ELLs and students with disabilities in learning academic vocabulary, making clear connections to key ideas, applying words using pictures and using other graphic organizers.
  
- Classrooms had various forms of instructional technology to support student engagement, including SMART Boards, digital overhead projectors, computers, laptop carts and iPods. However, most lessons did not effectively use the available instructional technology. SMART Boards were used more as chalk boards and did not maximize the potential to increase student engagement.

- A select number of lessons demonstrated exemplary co-teaching. However, for most of the lessons, minimal collaborative co-teaching was seen.
- Parents and students can access grades, homework, and other resources online. However, there is no clear, consistently applied grading policy in the school or District.

**Recommendations:**

- The school and District should develop and implement a comprehensive curriculum that provides teachers with consistent and rigorous expectations for learning and for student engagement. The curriculum should address instructional strategies that are to be used to differentiate instruction in all classes and better meet the needs of diverse learners. The school and District curriculum should concentrate on the expectations of how to meet the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities. The supports should pay greater attention to and should include instructional strategies, such as academic vocabulary, subject-specific bilingual glossaries for use in language acquisition to assist students in homework and for use as an assessment accommodation. PD should be provided for all staff. The implementation of the curriculum should be monitored, and teachers should be held accountable for the progress of students.
- Job-embedded training should be provided to enable teachers to be more effective in motivating students, asking questions, and in implementing strategies to improve student learning and engagement. Teachers should ensure that lesson objectives are shared with students so that they understand what they are learning. Lessons should include explicit teaching points and provide practice sessions for independent work to assess student learning before teachers proceed to the next teaching point. Teachers should make sure that teaching points are related within the same lesson and should be standards-based. School leaders should ensure through the observation process that this practice is uniform. School and District leaders should implement a PD plan that addresses differentiating instruction and understanding instructional strategies, i.e., academic vocabulary, generating questions, summarizing, synthesizing, and reflecting.
- Job-embedded training should be provided to enable teachers to be more effective in using flexible grouping, conferencing with students, checking for understanding, asking questions of students and in implementing pedagogical strategies to improve student learning and student engagement.
- School and District leaders should identify an instructional model that provides clear and consistent expectations for planning and instructional delivery. This instructional model should focus on providing clear directions to learners, guided practice for learners, modeling instructional strategies, and differentiating instruction.
- On-going and job-embedded PD should be provided to support teacher understanding of how to effectively plan and implement lessons that value higher-order thinking skills and integrate student prior knowledge and diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The school and District curriculum should address the academic needs of struggling learners. The curriculum should also provide attention to problem-solving and the use of manipulatives in mathematics classrooms.
- Expectations should be raised for the use of rubrics to support student understanding of NYS Standards and Performance Indicators. Teachers should be trained in how to provide high quality feedback regarding student work and then ensure that this becomes embedded in instructional practice. Rubrics and student work should be regularly displayed to support understanding of the purpose of assignments and to provide feedback on how students can improve and reach the next

level. School leaders should regularly review student work that is displayed in hallways and classrooms to ensure that high quality feedback is the norm.

- The school leaders should ensure that all students are informed and understand the school's code of conduct. The school leaders and staff should post the policies throughout the school, and ensure a consistent implementation of expectations, consequences and incentives. School leaders, through observations and walkthroughs should ensure that staff consistently promote the high behavioral expectations that are set.
- School and District leaders should ensure the use of established lesson plan guidelines in all classrooms. School leaders should monitor implementation by conducting regular walkthroughs and providing consistent feedback to teachers that connects NYS Standards and the lesson plan goals of differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all learners.
- The school leadership and District should provide teachers with training and support to ensure that they have the skills and competencies to effectively use technology 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.
- On-going and job-embedded PD should be provided for co-teachers on how to effectively co-plan and differentiate lessons and how to implement the various integrated co-teaching models, i.e., Alternative, Parallel, Station-to-Station, Collaborative and Consultant. School leaders should monitor the implementation of co-teaching strategies through formal and informal observations and ensure that best practices are shared throughout the school. Where the model is not effective, further PD should be provided.
- School leadership, in collaboration with teachers, should develop a schoolwide grading policy that is accessible to students to ensure they are aware of their academic progress and what the next steps are for them to make adequate progress. School leaders should monitor its successful implementation through observations and walkthroughs.

### III. School Leadership

#### Findings:

- School leadership has experienced turnover in the past four years, contributing to a lack of ownership of practices and efforts by school staff and the community. Interviews indicate a more positive school climate and greater communication among parents, teachers, and school leaders since new school leaders were appointed by the District.
- Student data and other measures are not consistently used to provide feedback to teachers and to inform decisions about PD and pathways for instructional improvement.
- Budget reductions have significantly impacted school scheduling. Scheduling constraints affect the school leader's ability to implement departmental common planning periods. School scheduling reflects common planning time by grade level. Interviews indicated that the time is primarily used to address student behavior issues rather than instructional goals and objectives.

### **Recommendations:**

- District leadership should continue to support the school leadership's efforts to create a more positive school climate. School and District leaders should place a priority on improving student outcomes, raising expectations for learners, and creating a professional learning community.
- School and District leadership efforts should collaboratively focus on articulating structures, tools, and mechanisms for consistent and standards-based (formal and informal) observations of classrooms necessary to improve instructional practice. The process should include the use of student data and other measures to inform decisions about the PD needs of staff.
- School leadership should ensure that the current grade-level common planning structure addresses instructional goals for all learners and effective strategies for the use of data, i.e., student work and benchmarks. The structure should be formalized with protocols, agendas and expectations for the use of this time. School leaders should monitor these meetings through observations and walkthroughs.

## **IV. Infrastructure for Student Success**

### **Findings:**

- Current school leadership responsibilities include a substantial commitment to duties involving student discipline, attendance, and school climate concerns. The school does not have a dedicated position of dean or sufficient resources to protect the instructional time of school leadership.
- Student interviews indicated that some students may feel unsafe during hallway transitions, lunch, and after leaving school. Issues are brought to the attention of school leaders who are directly responsible for discipline. There are some disciplinary support services and interventions in place i.e., attendance officer. Interviews indicated that the emotional and mental health needs of students have been increasing over the past several years, but the ability of school pupil personnel staff to meet these needs has been strained by budget cuts.
- Students have access to the library during lunch, as well as before and after school. The District textbooks and technology budget has experienced severe cuts, and there are limited resources to ensure that the systems currently in place can be adequately maintained. There are also insufficient bilingual and authentic literacy resources to fully meet the needs of a growing ELL population and of culturally diverse students. Budget restrictions further limit research materials available for students.
- Labs are completed based on NYS testing regulations. However, some labs are not selected due to constraints and concerns regarding the size of classrooms.
- School leadership holds regular meetings with pupil personnel staff to discuss behavioral issues. Discipline referrals and suspensions are used to evaluate the need for modifying behavior plans. However, behavior policies and systems of support are inconsistent and lack sufficient resources.
- Student transition to class during the school day indicates a loss of instructional time. Teachers frequently stand in their classroom doorways during class transition, but there was inconsistent communication and encouragement to students during transition. Communication did not routinely address negative student behaviors or praise positive student behaviors. Interviews indicated inconsistent implementation of policies for lateness in classrooms.

**Recommendations:**

- The District should consider implementing the position of school dean. The person for this position should have experience and expertise in group facilitation; understanding the diverse needs of at-risk students; understanding school mandates for discipline; and creating a culture of mentoring and support for students. The school leadership, in collaboration with the school dean, should place priority on creating a culture and a system centered on positive behavioral supports within the school.
  
- School leadership should reexamine the school bell schedule and articulate a clear policy and system for monitoring student transition to prevent loss of instructional time and to ensure student safety. Support should be provided to teachers and staff as they modify, reflect upon, and understand their own behaviors in reaction to student behavior.
  - The school and District leadership should ensure that there is a process and established benchmarks to integrate the work and lessons learned from the Guardians of Equity into the school learning community. In addition, expectations and tools are needed for monitoring training goals and outcomes of this committee.
  
  - The District should pursue grant opportunities to continue the partnership with South Oaks in the next school year.
  
- A committee of teachers, the librarian, and school leaders should be formed to review and select books that reflect the diversity of language and culture of the student body.
  
- School and District leadership should continue to examine resources to determine solutions to address concerns about the size of science classrooms and the implementation of additional science laboratory experiments.
  
- Agendas for grade-level common planning time should be monitored to ensure that they reflect opportunities for teachers and support staff to collect, review, and analyze data on student lateness.
  
- Teachers should be encouraged to be both visible and vocal at transition times. School leadership should ensure that expectations for class transition, behavior and respect are permanently displayed, understood by students and consistently applied by are staff. School leadership should monitor and provide feedback to teachers on the progress made in addressing these issues.

**V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data****Findings:**

- The District implemented benchmark testing in the previous school year to support instructional planning. However, lessons and interviews demonstrated inconsistent use of formative and summative data, i.e., student work, and District benchmarks to drive instructional planning and delivery.
  
- Data is inconsistently used to address issues impacting student achievement in the areas of identification. Teaching and re-teaching priorities are not routinely identified.

- There is an inconsistent use of a range of assessment strategies among staff. Lessons missed opportunities to check for student understanding. Individual data binders are currently being used to collect formative, interim and summative data for some students. The review of student work in ELA and mathematics suggests that data is not consistently used to inform goals for improvement to reach the next level. Special education teachers are expected to collect data on each IEP goal regarding the criteria, criteria period, method of data collection, and schedule; however, this was not routinely seen.
- Data Inquiry Team meetings consist of staff and school leadership. The process is not formalized and part of the school culture.
- Lessons and student work in ELA and mathematics suggest that data is not regularly used to assess student progress and to inform goals for classes for students at-risk (enrichment classes).

**Recommendations:**

- District and school leaders should revise the PD Plan, with attention to the following:
  - developing a greater understanding of NYS CCLS;
  - developing an understanding of how to differentiate content, process, product, and assessment;
  - developing an understanding of how to use all available data and information about student learning to inform instructional planning and academic intervention; and
  - monitoring PD goals and outcomes on instructional practices.
- School leaders, in collaboration with teachers, should frequently identify “teaching and re-teaching” priorities using student data, i.e., NYS assessments, student work, and District benchmarks.
- School and District leaders in collaboration with staff should identify protocols for reviewing data. School leaders should ensure that teachers use multiple forms of assessment to determine student progress. The use of formative, interim and summative data should inform the goals for differentiating instruction. School and District leaders should provide ongoing and job-embedded PD focused on understanding the purpose of data binders, item analysis, and the review of student work and how to use them to inform instruction. School and District leaders should also provide PD for co-teachers on how to better use IEP data in the classroom.
- School leadership should ensure that the data Inquiry Team meets regularly. Meetings should focus on NYS assessment results, benchmark data and student work. School leaders should ensure that the work of the inquiry team filters into the classroom and positively impacts student learning and achievement.
- School leaders should ensure that teachers use grade-level common planning time to establish protocols for the review of data on student work and set goals particularly for students-at-risk. The progress of meetings should be monitored.

## VI. Professional Development

### Findings:

- The school and District has a Board-approved PD plan. Faculty has received PD, and the District has recently implemented an online monitoring tool, i.e., *MyLearningPlan.com*, to inform PD goals and to assess the needs of staff. However, there is an absence of tools to effectively monitor, support, and ensure accountability.
- The school schedule includes grade-level common planning time. However, the time is not purposefully used to further understand how to integrate data into instructional planning. Due to significant budget constraints, there are limited job-embedded PD opportunities for teachers, i.e., instructional coaching.
- There are no systems and mechanisms in place to effectively monitor how PD is incorporated into instructional practice.

### Recommendations:

- School and District leaders should revise and implement the PD plan to address the diverse needs of students and identify the goals for greater differentiation of instruction. School and District leaders in collaboration with teachers should identify or develop tools for evaluating PD and consistently evaluate the effectiveness of PD through observations and the impact on classroom practices and student outcomes. The revised PD plan should provide:
  - assistance for teachers to develop a repertoire of instructional strategies and assessment tools.
  - greater attention to goals and expectations for co-teaching and addressing the needs of diverse learners.
  - clear and cohesive expectations for developing greater understanding of instructional strategies to support ELLs.
  - goals for improving instructional planning and for supporting teachers as they learn how to differentiate instruction and effectively use data, i.e., NYS assessments, District benchmarks, and student work.
- Common planning time should maintain a focus on the implementation of the curriculum that articulates what all students should know, understand, and be able to do. Common planning time should focus on the use of data to inform instructional planning and how to better use formative assessments.
- The school and District leaders should conduct follow-up observations after PD sessions to ensure that teachers incorporate the strategies learned in PD into classroom practice. The school leadership should develop detailed recommendations based on the PD provided and specific next steps in their observation reports to focus their next observation.

## VII. District Support

### Finding:

- Collaboration among district directors and school leadership is not consistently supported with formalized structures.

**Recommendations:**

- District and school leaders should engage in planning and should provide attention to structures and tools to improve and further communication and collaboration for the purpose of improving student outcomes.
- The District should support the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) report recommendations.

**PART 3: JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION**

**A. Overall Finding**

Reference	Review Team Finding	✓
(b)	The school has made some progress in identified areas, and may make AYP with the implementation of additional focused interventions to accelerate improved student achievement.	✓

**B. Overall Recommendation**

Reference	Review Team Recommendation	✓
(b)	Develop and implement a School Restructuring Plan that clearly identifies root causes and/or contributing factors for low student performance in identified areas, and that incorporates focused interventions to address identified issues and to accelerate improved student achievement. The School Restructuring Plan must include one of the restructuring options required under NCLB and further defined by the District.	✓

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

- District and school leadership should engage in strategic planning and provide systems and mechanisms needed to improve collaboration among teachers, school and District leaders and to raise expectations for teaching and learning.
- District and school leadership should ensure an alignment of resources, supports, and interventions to address the recommendations of the JIT. The District should ensure that the school Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) addresses the JIT findings and recommendations. Strategies should focus on the identified content areas and subgroups.
- District and school leadership should provide strategies, tools, and expectations for monitoring progress made in addressing the recommendations of the JIT.
- The District should support the school by ensuring that resources are allocated to support the development of an ELA and mathematics curriculum that is aligned to the CCLS. The curriculum should:

- guide instructional planning and delivery and articulate what all students should know, understand, and be able to do.
  - provide attention to the effective use of data, especially as it relates to student work.
  - guide and inform goals for PD, job-embedded supports and formal and informal observations of classrooms.
- District and school leadership should ensure that job-embedded PD is provided so that the implementation of the curriculum in the school defines teaching and learning goals. The implementation of the curriculum should be managed through monitoring and evaluation focused on lesson planning and the review of formative, interim, and summative data.
  - The District should explore and consider implementing the position of Dean.
  - The school and District should continue to support students with extended-time learning opportunities that contribute to improved student outcomes.
  - The District should continue to support school leadership efforts in creating a positive school culture and climate focused on professional learning, the integration of data, and improved student outcomes.