

NYSED/ROCHESTER CSD JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code:	261600010045
School Name:	Mary McLeod Bethune No. 45
School Address:	1445 Clifford Avenue Rochester, NY 14621
Principal:	Brian Hill
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Restructuring Advanced – Comprehensive
Area of Identification:	English Language Arts and Math All Students; Black Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	February 13 – 17, 2012

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Community and School Background

Mary McLeod Bethune Elementary School serves 706 students in Pre-kindergarten through grade 7. The school enrollment is 69 percent Black students, 25 percent Hispanic students, 5 percent White students and .65 percent Asian students. Approximately 18.25 percent are students with disabilities and 4.8 percent are English Language Learners (ELLs). The school configuration has changed over the past year. Most recently, the school has added grade 7 and will be adding grade 8 in the 2012-13 school year.

The administrative team consists of the Principal and two Assistant Principals (APs). The Principal has served the school since August of 2010, and the APs have served since August 2011. There are 59 full time teachers; all are highly qualified.

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).	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
-	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 program serving autistic students are model classrooms.
- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have been established and teachers are beginning to take leadership responsibilities.
- The master schedule was purposely designed to allow for grade level team meetings.

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:

- Curriculum programs do not foster rigorous and engaging instruction. In the lessons observed, there was insufficient application of higher order thinking skills, problem solving and project-based learning to stimulate and engage the students.
- English language arts (ELA) materials are not sufficiently differentiated to ensure high academic achievement for students. Standards and curriculum are identical across grades K-7. There are no measures in place to ensure that students are not being repeatedly exposed to the same materials every year. These materials were not consistently sorted by reading level or genre to support independent selection of appropriate reading materials by students.

Recommendations:

- The rigor of curriculum should be improved so that a wide range of instructional strategies can be used to promote student higher level thinking, problem solving and research skills in all content areas.
- The school should select curricular materials that reflect NYS Standards and are differentiated by grade and skill levels. Classroom ELA resources should be organized by reading level and genre to allow students to independently select appropriate and culturally responsive texts.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- The co-teaching model is not skillfully implemented. For the majority of the instructional time, one teacher is primarily responsible for the delivery of instruction and the other teacher plays the role of a teacher assistant. Students are not fully benefiting from having two certified teachers in the classroom.
- Classroom reviews and teacher planning documents revealed that there was a lack of content, rigor and student engagement and little use of higher order thinking skills in lessons.
- Much instruction for all students is teacher-directed, with little variety of differentiated instructional strategies. Students have few opportunities to engage in conversations, work in pairs or talk with different groups of students. There was little evidence that data was used to group students or to match tasks to the differing ability levels of the students.
- There was limited evidence of the development of higher order thinking skills in instructional practices. Questioning skills varied greatly among teachers, with a majority of questions requiring factual recall and one-word answers. Students are not challenged to analyze, evaluate or synthesize information.
- Pacing and sequencing in some classrooms is weak, and learning time is not maximized. The slow pace negatively impacts student attention span, and some students are off task and not deeply engaged in learning. Loss of instructional time was evident as students moved from one activity to another and from room to room. Lack of classroom management was evident in some classes; this negatively impacted student learning.
- Student engagement in meaningful instructional activities was limited. There were many lessons where instructional activities lacked challenge and did little to attract the interest of students. These same lessons did not provide students with opportunities to interact or work collaboratively. In these lessons students were not active participants in the learning process.
- In the majority of lessons, student learning goals based on the NYS standards were neither developed nor displayed. Few students were able to articulate what they were learning. Teachers did not routinely refer to learning objectives or check that students had achieved them.
- Displayed student work did not include specific and concise feedback and did not clearly indicate what each student needed to do to improve and reach the next level.

Recommendations:

- The school should provide on-site training for the full implementation of co-teaching model strategies. Administrators should monitor the implementation of effective co-teaching strategies through the formal and informal teacher observation process and ensure that best practices are shared throughout the school. Where teachers are not effective, further PD should be provided.
- School leaders should facilitate professional development (PD) that would better equip teachers with the skills and expertise to plan and deliver a series of lessons. These lessons should contain a range of tasks to stimulate and engage students in developing higher order thinking skills.

- School leaders should provide PD to introduce teachers to a wider range of differentiated strategies that can be used in the classroom to promote greater student participation in the learning process. 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 identified subgroups. School leaders should regularly monitor teacher planning and instructional practice in the classroom to ensure that differentiated activities are in place throughout the school. Ongoing PD should be provided for teachers who continue to struggle with using data to match work that meets the individual needs of students.
- PD should be provided in supporting teachers in developing a variety of questioning techniques aimed at critical thinking and using problem solving skills appropriate to student development. These skills would specifically support teacher effectiveness with students with disabilities and ELLs with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). Teachers should ensure that strategies identified in training are incorporated in their daily instruction. Students should 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. Students should answer in complete sentences. School leaders should make questioning techniques a focus for observation.
- Appropriate pacing and sequencing of instruction should be provided. Students should clearly understand expectations and should be expected to be self-directed and personally accountable. For example, students should start and complete the 'Do Now' within the first few minutes of class. Teachers should plan effective closures so that students summarize the day's lesson, the teacher is able to assess the degree to which students mastered the day's content, and students are able to efficiently transition to the next class. Classroom rules and consequences should be discussed and posted.
- Through collaboration during common planning time and PD opportunities provided by the District, teachers should ensure that all student work is appropriately challenging and demanding. Teachers should provide regular opportunities for students to work cooperatively and to discuss issues so that they become more proactive learners. The school leadership should carry out regular observations of lessons to monitor that this is consistently occurring.
- School leaders should ensure, by observations and walkthroughs, that standards are displayed in every classroom. Learning objectives should be displayed and discussed with students at the beginning, during and at the end of lessons. The practice should be quickly embedded and follow-up visits by school leadership should be made to classes to ensure implementation.
- Rubrics should be used as an integral tool in planning and assessing assignments. 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 books 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.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- Due to staff reduction, there are too few administrators to primarily focus on curriculum, data and instruction.
- PD does not focus precisely enough on the issues that will increase student achievement.

Recommendations:

- An additional AP should be assigned who is solely focused on curriculum, data and instruction.
- The Principal should ensure that all PD is relevant, fully reflects needs identified to achieve school goals, and is monitored to assess its effectiveness.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- Some classroom environments are not conducive to learning. Some teachers do not organize their classrooms in the best possible way to promote effective, collaborative learning or student participation.
- Student attendance is a significant problem at the school. The school average daily attendance rate is 89.7 percent.
- Some school staff express low expectations for the academic achievement of students and cite external factors as the root causes of the school's accountability status, i.e., student apathy, disinterest and lack of parental involvement.
- There is inconsistency in the implementation of schoolwide behavior policies and the District code of conduct.
- Scheduled common planning time is not used to effectively bring about improvements in teaching, learning and student achievement. In addition, no common planning time is scheduled for teachers of ELLs and teachers of general education students.
- The school does not have a schoolwide grading and scoring policy.
- The school does not provide sufficient Academic Intervention Services (AIS) support staff, supplies and materials to meet the varied needs of the student population, including students with disabilities and ELLs.
- AIS plans for individual students do not contain specific enough data to inform areas for student improvement.
- The school does not have adequate resources to address student socio-emotional needs. The school lost the services of a .6 social worker, while experiencing an increase in at-risk students.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should monitor the management and design of classroom environments to ensure that classrooms are conducive to students working in groups, pairs or as a whole class when appropriate.
- The school leader should seek guidance from the District as to strategies for improving attendance that have proven successful in other similar schools. The school leaders should work with all stakeholders, i.e., the Central Office Attendance Office, parents, school counselors and APs to develop and implement strategies to improve attendance.
- PD should be provided to enable successful implementation of clear behavioral and academic expectations for all staff and students. These expectations should be a central part of school activities and be written, monitored in the classroom, and linked to actions that should focus on high expectations and academic rigor. All staff should cease citing external factors as excuses for underperformance and focus on improving school effectiveness for all students.
- The school leaders and staff should review student disciplinary data using a schoolwide evaluation tool and revise disciplinary procedures to align with the District code of conduct. The school leaders should work closely with the District in developing schoolwide PD on behavior strategies and supports.
- The school leaders should ensure that the purpose and outcome of each common planning meeting are fully recorded through written minutes. School leaders should attend the meetings to ensure that the focus of the meetings is central to improving instruction and student outcomes. The school leaders should also ensure that strategies agreed upon are implemented in the classroom and monitored through observations and walkthroughs. The school leaders should also ensure that common planning time is scheduled for ESL teachers and general education teachers to support ELL student progress and achievement.
- The school leaders and teachers should establish a schoolwide grading and scoring policy that is easily 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 implementation.
- The school leaders should review the school budget so that additional funds are allocated for AIS and other service needs to provide better support for identified subgroups. School leaders should evaluate the quality of these services as a matter of routine. The school and District should strongly consider adding a targeted summer intervention program to address early learning achievement gaps.
- The school should focus PD on writing specific, actionable AIS plans that are based upon formative data and diagnostic information specific to individual student needs and gaps.
- The District should ensure the school has sufficient resources to address student needs.

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

- The analysis of data is not consistently used as a tool for driving forward school improvement.

- There was minimal evidence that teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities used assessment data to inform instruction.
- The analysis of data is not focused sharply enough to identify the key changes required in programs and delivery to bring about urgent improvement in student performance.
- Teachers do not use data to inform their instructional planning or to modify instruction other than to group students. They uniformly implement the curriculum, regardless of the need of the students for differentiated instruction to address their specific learning requirements.

Recommendations:

- The school should revisit the current system for data disaggregation to focus more closely on student-by-student, class-by-class and subgroup-by-subgroup analysis in addition to the whole school and grade monitoring. Particular attention should be given to monitoring the development of student skills as they move from grade to grade to check for vertical alignment in curriculum programs in each content area.
- Teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities should receive training in using data to inform instruction for these subgroups. In addition, teachers should receive training in selecting appropriately leveled materials that are closely aligned with a standards based curriculum for these students. The school should provide resources to meet this need.
- The Principal should request PD support from the District in developing the essential teacher skills needed to implement a more rigorous and systematic analysis of data. The school should hone these skills to identify precisely the aspects of ELA instruction that should then be addressed on either a school, grade or class level to ensure that these areas are a focus for teaching and learning. The school administration should monitor the analysis down to classroom practice and hold staff accountable to ensure that improvements are made.
- Teachers should use student performance data, summative, interim and formative, to create instructional groups, design skill-based activities for small groups of students with similar needs and adjust the planned curriculum, with a special focus on at-risk students and identified subgroups.

VI. Professional Development

Findings:

- The school PD plan has had little impact on improving student performance. Although there is a great deal of data in the school, there was little evidence indicating that it was used to inform the plan.
- Teachers are not held accountable for incorporating PD practices into their instructional practice. There is no mention of the PD in the Principal’s observation reports.
- Not all members of the staff who work with ELLs receive PD to improve their work with the identified students.

Recommendations:

- The school should develop a comprehensive PD program that aligns with school goals by using the data available in the school. School leaders should seek support for PD from the District and other outside specialists to help them develop a detailed plan that focuses on improving teaching and learning to better meet the needs of students and teachers.
- The school leaders should conduct follow-up observations after PD sessions to ensure that teachers incorporate the strategies learned into classroom instructional program. The school leaders should develop detailed recommendations based on the PD provided and specific next steps in their observation reports to focus their next observation.
- The school leaders should ensure that all members of the staff who work with ELLs receive PD in effective ELL instructional practices. Additionally, the school leaders should monitor the schoolwide implementation of PD opportunities made available and evaluate the impact on meeting the needs of ELLs.

VII. District Support**Findings:**

- During the past budgeting cycle, this Restructuring Advanced school has lost almost 5 FTE positions that included ELA, mathematics and AIS coaches.
- The school has been designated as a 'grow-out' school, adding grade 7 this school year and a grade 8 next year. Almost 100 percent of the incoming grade 7 students were from elementary schools identified for improvement. Based upon accelerated timelines and limited resources, the grade 7 team did not receive adequate orientation to the school.

Recommendations:

- The District should consider adding staff to the school to address academic and social emotional needs of the at-risk students.
- The District should ensure the school receives adequate resources to address the academic, social and emotional needs of middle school students. This should include adequate lab space, lockers, library books and counseling services. An additional administrator may be required to assist in the transition to a K-8 program. The District should consider creating a transition program for the new staff.
- The District should support the school in the implementation 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 significant <u>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.

- The current staffing should ensure the effective use of resources.
- An additional AP should be assigned who is solely focused on curriculum, data and instruction.
- The school leadership team in collaboration with the Principal and APs should initially focus the improvement efforts on the top three areas of need as identified in the contents of this report.
- Additional resources should be provided to ensure the socio-emotional needs of students are met.
- The District should make every effort to ensure the school leadership is stabilized.
- The District should consider adding a school-based summer school program focused on the early grades to address the continued achievement gap.
- The school should consider restructuring the grade level building organization of the school to promote collaborative learning and student participation.
- The District should conduct a safety assessment of the surrounding community in order to examine factors impacting attendance and tardiness.