

**NYSED/SYRACUSE CSD DISTRICT JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>BEDS Code:</b>	42-18-00-01-0021
<b>School Name:</b>	Franklin Elementary School
<b>School Address:</b>	428 S Alvord St. Syracuse, NY 13208
<b>Principal:</b>	Ann Sherwood
<b>Restructuring Phase/Category:</b>	Restructuring (year 1) - Comprehensive English Language Arts - All Students; Black Students; Asian Students; White Students; Students with Disabilities; English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Area of Identification:</b>	
<b>Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:</b>	December 6 - 9, 2011

**PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

**Community and School Background:**

Franklin Elementary School serves 719 students in kindergarten through grade 5. The school enrollment is two percent American Indian, 17 percent Asian, eight percent Hispanic, 40 percent Black and 33 percent White students. Of these students 25 percent are English language learners (ELLs) and approximately 14.2 percent are students with disabilities.

The administrative team consists of the Principal and one Vice-Principal (VP). The Principal has served the school for three years and the VP has served less than one year. There are 48 teachers on staff; 12 percent have been at the school for less than one year and 14 percent for fewer than three years. One hundred percent of teachers are highly qualified. The rate of teacher turnover is 12 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	✓
	<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.	✓
-	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	✓

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

**B. School Strengths**

- The school has an established behavioral management system. Students know what is expected of them behaviorally in classrooms and throughout the building, resulting in smooth and rapid transitions and an effective Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system to reward good individual and group behavior.
- Grade level social workers involve parents, collect documentation, and develop behavior plans for students who are referred for persistent behavioral issues.

**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 English Language Arts (ELA) program, *Treasures*, and the mathematics program, *Think Math*, are not clearly aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- While Franklin Elementary has written their own curriculum maps and the District has written and distributed pacing guides, the District has not developed curriculum maps to integrate ELA and mathematics with social studies and science.

**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. The District should check correlations between the current ELA and mathematics programs and resources, ensuring that program developers' claims of alignment with CCLS are, in fact, accurate. A taskforce consisting of administrators, teachers, instructional coaches, other appropriate staff and parents should be involved in this project.

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 District should update curriculum maps in ELA and mathematics and develop maps for social studies, science, and health for distribution and use by all schools in the District. These maps should be correlated to the new CCLS and should provide ways for schools to integrate ELA and mathematics into other content areas.

## II. Teaching and Learning

### Findings:

- Lesson plans and instruction tend to be at the skills level rather than at a more rigorous level of identifying what students need to know and be able to do in order to meet standards. While some grade levels have developed their own lesson plan format, many classrooms lack consistency in the content of lesson plans. This leads to infrequent inclusion of effective, research-based instructional strategies.
  - The quality of written objectives varies widely in the school. In a number of classrooms, objectives are posted but not referred to during instruction. In a few cases, teachers pasted pieces from the *Treasures* series into their plan books rather than writing their own plans based on their student needs.
  - Modeling of think-aloud strategies was observed in only one classroom.
  - The team saw inconsistent evidence of scaffolding except in kindergarten and grade four classrooms in mathematics and in kindergarten writing folders.
  - Few examples of the use of formative assessments were observed.
  - The team rarely observed the use of graphic organizers and visuals.
  - The frequency of differentiation at centers, based on individual student needs, is minimal. Three out of nine classrooms observed used mathematics centers to differentiate. Also, students appeared to be compliant at centers, but not necessarily engaged.
  - Consistent use of cooperative learning and instruction in metacognitive strategies was lacking.
  - Little evidence of rigorous instruction, teaching of higher order thinking skills, and high quality questioning that promotes thinking, reflection or deepens understanding was observed.
  - Teachers did not regularly refer to classroom expectations and lesson objectives and were not regularly using formative assessments.
- Although student work was displayed in hallways and in most classrooms with rubrics, most pieces were not graded with a rubric- based rationale.
- There was limited evidence that recommendations from Individualized Education Programs (IEP) were included in lesson plans, and some general education teachers and special area teachers seemed unaware of or attentive to the IEPs for their students with disabilities.
- In a number of classrooms, instruction was primarily teacher-centered with a predominance of teacher-talk.

- There was minimal self-monitoring and self-assessing of work by students with disabilities and general education students. We observed inconsistent differentiation of instruction, data collection and progress monitoring of individualized goals by teachers of these students.

**Recommendations:**

- The School Leadership Team (SLT) should develop a schoolwide lesson plan format that includes strategies from the District’s “Components of an Effective Lesson.” Teachers should be trained in writing clear, learner-centered objectives in student-friendly language; developing effective higher-order questions; and building formative, interim and summative assessments, including student self-assessments. Teachers in the building who use these strategies effectively should share their models with other teachers. Teacher surveys should be administered to provide opportunities for self-assessment on these components. More frequent use of graphic organizers and visuals in mathematics lessons should be included in lesson plans. Plans should also include documentation of IEP-based supports for students.
- Rubrics should be used as an integral tool in assessing student work. 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.
- Lesson plans should include reference to the IEPs. A standard document for collection of data should be developed for grades K-4, similar to the document that has been developed and is being used in grade 5 to ensure students are meeting their IEP goals.
- Through collaboration during team meetings, PD and Urban Teacher Center (UTC) time, 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 and responsible for their own learning. The school leaders should carry out regular observations of lessons to monitor that this is consistently occurring.
- Teachers should model how to self-assess and provide on-going opportunities for student to evaluate their own work.

**III. School Leadership**

**Findings:**

- Over the past three years, the Principal has established expectations, academic and behavioral structures, uninterrupted ELA and mathematics blocks for all grade levels, and Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for all students. However, teachers feel as though there is little distributive leadership and that their concerns are not considered, which leads to frustration.
- Teachers report that they would like team meetings to include agenda items to identify and praise student successes and the successes of the school community. Teachers see a need for more frequent cross grade-level meetings for vertical articulation.
- Student schedules do not provide enough time for some subgroups to receive content area instruction in social studies, science and health. Advanced ELLs and resource room students at the intermediate grade levels are pulled for resource room during the only 30 minute period dedicated

to content area instruction each day. They consistently miss instruction in social studies, science and health.

- Beginning and intermediate level ELLs, who need longer daily instruction, are scheduled into classes of 20 or more students, leading to difficulty in meeting the individual needs of these students. One of the ELL teachers with more than 20 students is in a very small classroom. When the ELL teacher pulls out these larger groups of beginners and intermediates, the general education classroom is left with fewer students than the ELL teacher. Yet, general education classrooms have at least one additional support person in the room, while the ELL teacher does not.
- School leadership has not established expectations for submission of lesson plans, although they are briefly scanned during walkthroughs. Also, there is little substantive feedback on the quality of lesson plans.

**Recommendations:**

- Teachers are now ready to accept shared responsibility for decision-making, preparing agendas, conducting their own team meetings, and planning UTC activities. The Principal should begin to transition the school to the distributive leadership model and shared decision-making. The goal of this transition should be to empower teachers, grade level teams, the School Leadership Team (SLT) and the VP to share in the leadership role. The SLT should be empowered to make decisions on building processes, student discipline, teaching and learning. Teams should be allowed to meet independently during most of their weekly team meetings and to submit their agendas and minutes to school leadership. The VP should attend some team meetings on a rotating basis. These changes should result in higher staff morale.
- The school community should develop a culture that includes a celebration of their successes, combined with an emphasis on providing rigorous instruction that supports student success. Celebrating successes, both academic and socio-emotional growth of students, helps a community remain focused.
- A greater focus on reading and writing across the content areas should be reflected in the scheduling of the school day for those students who must miss social studies, science or health instruction. Scheduling should be carefully planned to ensure that students receive the same quality of instruction. The staff should develop content-based instructional units that focus on the critical components of core content areas, e.g., awareness of the earth's geologic history, as opposed to unorganized readings of isolated content during ELA.
- Small group needs should drive the scheduling process, with ELL teachers providing input and/or designing ELL schedules. The SLT should also provide input into the general schedule for the building. Although there is a need for extended ELA and mathematics blocks, content time should be increased or extended science, social studies and health activities should be used more often in the ELA and mathematics blocks. The school should consider re-assigning classroom space to the ELL teachers so those with larger class sizes have the largest ELL classrooms.
- School leaders should establish a procedure for regularly collecting, reviewing, and providing feedback to teachers about lesson plans. This will be especially important once a lesson plan format is developed by the SLT.

#### IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

##### Findings:

- PBIS is being implemented and positive rewards work in most instances. Although most students are compliant, the PBIS system is not set up to deal with youngsters who exhibit significant behavioral problems, and the school has no established procedure for resolving this problem. While some grade levels have developed behavior plans, there is no consistent schoolwide behavioral plan in place. Students and parents report that bullying is an issue.
- Teachers are not allowed to refer students directly to the School Based Intervention Team (SBIT). Referrals must be made by administrators, social workers, and the counselor.
- Parent involvement is minimal, except at "big" events like Open House. One active parent has tried repeatedly to form a Parent-Teacher organization, with no success. There is one parent on the SLT, but her attendance is inconsistent.
- While the *Say Yes* afterschool program is popular, full, and well-attended, there is a long student waiting list.
- Parents are concerned that some students who participate in the breakfast program are sent back outside after they complete their meals, even in inclement weather.
- The building does not have sufficient instructional technology. A few rooms have SMART Boards, but most do not. Numerous classroom computers are not functional and are no longer supported by the District.
- For students with disabilities, the completion of Functional Behavior Assessments (FBA) and Behavioral Intervention Plans (BIP) is insufficient. FBAs do not contain all required information, and BIPs are not consistently implemented and monitored.

##### Recommendations:

- School leadership and the SLT or the PBIS team should develop a schoolwide behavior plan to address more serious behaviors and assure consistent implementation of consequences. The plan should address strategies to deal with bullying. The school should review schoolwide behavior plans from other District schools prior to beginning this work. The school social workers have expressed interest in developing an anti-bullying plan.
- Teachers should be allowed to refer students to the SBIT and commit to completing the necessary written documentation for these referrals.
- The school leadership, in conjunction with Parent Partnership Network staff and interested parents, should develop a plan to increase parent involvement. There should be an analysis of parent and community needs and an exploration of roles and responsibilities available for parents and the community. The school staff could develop activities that parents and students can do together. The school should also work with the Refugee Center to identify and implement strategies to work more effectively with the many ELL newcomer parents.
- The *Say Yes* coordinator and school staff should seek additional funding and other resources to expand the after school program to eliminate the waiting list.

- For students participating in the breakfast program, an alternative location with proper supervision inside the building should be identified when weather is inclement.
- The District should work with the school to obtain and support more instructional technology, including SMART Boards and computers. The presence of technology would help to expand student independence and self-monitoring and provide more opportunities for differentiation within classrooms.
- The District has developed new FBA and BIP forms that contain all required components. PD should be provided for all staff that may be involved in the completion of FBAs and the development, implementation and monitoring of BIPs.

## **V. Collection, Analysis and Utilization of Data**

### **Findings:**

- Although the school is committed to the use of data to inform instruction, identify individual student needs, assign students to AIS groups and centers, and drive conversations during team meetings, the data management process appears to be primarily the responsibility of the instructional coaches and school leaders, with only passive involvement of classroom teachers.
- The consistent use of formative assessments during class instruction was not observed.
- The school analyzes data of students for placement in learning groups, but there is no evidence that teachers meet with parents for the purpose of setting goals for next steps in academic progress.
- The team did not see evidence of the use of data to determine differentiated PD for teachers.

### **Recommendations:**

- 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 to enable teachers to take ownership of their data, including determining what data is needed.
- School leaders should investigate and identify resources on how to effectively use information provided by assessments to inform teachers on how to tailor their teaching to meet the specific needs of a single student or whole class. Formative assessment activities such as 'Do It Now' (DIN) or Ticket Out the Door should be linked to the learning objectives that are written into lesson plans and used to determine how well students learned, identify the effectiveness of an instructional strategy, and determine the need for re-teaching. PD should be provided schoolwide to help teachers to implement this practice in their effort to improve students' performance.
- Academic goal setting with parents should be an agenda item during parent orientation and parent-teacher conferences.
- The identification of PD should be made using a variety of data sources, including teacher and teaching assistant surveys, analysis of student performance indicators, and administrator observations of classrooms and the resultant written evaluations.

## **VI. Professional Development**

### **Findings:**

- ELLs are scheduled into four of the five classrooms at each grade level. However, a number of general education teachers have not received Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Training.
- Teachers feel that they have minimal input into the PD plan and the UTC schedule. Regular education teachers request the same PD that teachers of special education students have received. Also, UTC time is not allocated for specific PD for special education teachers, even though they have requested it.
- Some teaching assistants (TAs) are not effective in dealing with disruptive students and in assisting in ELA instruction.

### **Recommendations:**

- All teachers and teaching assistants should complete and implement SIOP training.
- The process of planning PD should be explained to all staff so they understand their input into planning. Regular education and special education teachers should participate together in the same PD experiences. The planning process should identify the PD needs of all teachers and these should be included on the UTC calendar.
- PD in handling disruptive students and effective processes for working with students in the ELA block should include TAs as well as teachers. Classroom teachers and TAs should have input into planning this PD.

## **VII. District Support**

### **Findings:**

- The District lacks a policy that ensures consistent grading of report cards and overall grading for all K-5 students.
- Administrative and support staffing is limited at Franklin. Although the school has the largest K-5 enrollment in the District, only one VP is assigned. Some other smaller schools have administrative interns on staff. School leadership reports that they were told that the school would again have an intern assigned, but that did not happen. The school also has one full-time psychologist, which creates a challenge in completing the required initial and re-evaluations of students with disabilities in a timely manner.
- Classes for English language learners are too large, with both levels of students combined.
- In most cases, communications are sent home with students. Parents report that they don't always get these communications. Critical memos are hand delivered to parents by school staff.

### **Recommendations:**

- A District-wide report card grading process should be written and implemented, with input from school leaders, teachers, and parents.

- The District, within budgetary constraints, should assign an additional administrator/intern to the school. It should also assign an additional part-time school psychologist.
- If the school can find teaching space for an additional ELL teacher, the District should assign that teacher to Franklin.
- The District should work with the school to plan the most cost effective means of ensuring all parents receive important communications. The school should also develop and maintain a website for the school that includes parent-friendly communication in their native languages.

### 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 incorporates focused interventions to address identified issues and 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.

- The development and use of a schoolwide lesson plan format that requires all items in the District’s “Components of an Effective Lesson” and ongoing training in and monitoring of lesson plans should be instituted. This plan format would have to be developed by the SLT, and the process would have to adhere to the language in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- The District should review both the number and the roles of pupil personnel to ensure that the school has sufficient well-trained staff to work effectively with students and with their families. Because the school has a significant number of newcomer families, there should be easy access to translation services and links to the immigrant relocation centers. Within the school, there is need for more appropriate scheduling of ELL classes and for more appropriate classrooms and resources.
- The school should collaborate with their after-school *Say Yes* program staff to find links between school day and after-school programs and to learn from each other. Science and other topics begun during the school day can be extended during *Say Yes*, often with hands-on and project-based learning opportunities. Staff may also explore links across the disciplines.