

NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BEDS Code/DBN:	19K166
School Name:	IS 166 George Gershwin
School Address:	800 Van Siclen Avenue Brooklyn, NY 11207
Principal:	Maria Ortega
Restructuring Phase/Category:	Persistently Lowest Achieving/School under Registration Review (PLA/SURR)
Area(s) of Identification:	English Language Arts and Mathematics
Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:	March 29 – 30, 2011

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

A. Community and School Background

George Gershwin School serves 514 students from grades 6 through 8. The school enrollment is 77 percent Black; 22 percent Hispanic; and fewer than 1 percent Asian, American Indian and White students. Of these students, 72 (14 percent) are overage or holdovers for two years or more. Approximately 27 percent of students are students with disabilities, and approximately 11 percent of students are English Language Learners (ELLs). The school shares its building with the UFT Charter School, which occupies the entire third floor of the building. Nearly all of the school’s students live locally.

The Principal is in her seventh year as the leader of the school. The administrative team consists of the Principal, two Assistant Principals (APs), with 8 and 7 years service respectively, and a dean. Staff turnover is high. There are 43 teachers on staff. Eighty-nine percent of teachers 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	
-	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 <u>All Students</u> subgroup in one or more identified subject/area(s).	✓

Positive or Negative Indicator (+/-)	School Performance Indicators	✓
-	For 2010-11, the school was identified as a <u>Persistently Lowest-Achieving school.</u>	✓
	NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures	
-	Grade of C on the most recent NYC Progress Report	✓
+/-	NYC Quality Review Score of Proficient	✓

B. School Strengths

The Principal has made many efforts to involve parents in the education of their children and has implemented parental awards night and Saturday workshops for parents to learn new skills.

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

Finding:

Instructional resources for English language learners (ELLs) in their native language were not evident in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics classroom libraries.

Recommendation:

The school leader should ensure adequate resources are available for the current and projected number of ELLs within the student body. Resources should include bilingual glossaries, dictionaries, classroom libraries and other instructional resources and educational software. The school library should also increase and update their instructional resources for ELLs, including both fiction and non-fiction books, subscriptions and software in student's native languages.

II. Teaching and Learning

Findings:

- Teachers' use of instructional strategies was limited to direct instruction in many classes, and this limited the opportunity for students to be active participants in the learning process.
- In Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) classrooms, there was no evidence of shared instruction or other strategies targeted to the specific needs of students. There was no evidence of co-planning with the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher who provided push-in support for one CTT class.
- The scheduled pass time for students is one minute. This resulted in numerous students arriving late for class and led to a significant decrease in seat time for instruction.

- There was limited evidence of meaningful and culturally responsive instructional activities.
- Lesson observations provided only limited examples of teachers using differentiation to promote effective learning. There was little evidence in the ELA and mathematics classes observed of differentiation for ELLs, based on English language proficiency levels.
- Few examples of higher order thinking skills and processes were observed during lessons.
- Although SMART Boards, desktops and laptops were seen in many classrooms, technology was not used in teacher planning and lesson implementation.

Recommendations:

- School leaders, with the support of the Network, should provide all teachers with professional development (PD) in teaching strategies that are focused on engaging students in the learning process. The strategies should promote active collaborative learning and be directly aimed at students taking a greater responsibility for their own learning. Teachers should ensure that they use these strategies in their daily instruction, and school leaders should monitor regularly for implementation.
- Teachers should be provided with PD in research-based instructional strategies for CTT. The PD should include modeling such effective practices as parallel teaching; station teaching; and one teach, one observe. These strategies should provide targeted intervention for students with particular instructional needs within the CTT classrooms. The school administration should hold teachers accountable through the observation process to ensure these practices are being implemented. In addition, the administration should take advantage of all PD opportunities offered by the Network relating to CTT instructional practices.
- The school leader should restructure the bell schedule to ensure that sufficient time is available for students to get to classes on time and, in doing so, reduce the loss of instructional time. The school leader should hold staff accountable for the efficient use of classroom time.
- Teachers should be provided with instructional resources that reflect the multicultural and linguistic backgrounds of the student population, with particular emphasis on native language and bilingual instructional resources. PD should be offered to teachers on ways in which these resources should be used most effectively to address linguistic and academic needs and the prior knowledge of ELLs.
- Teachers should be provided with both internal and external PD in the use of differentiated instruction to improve student performance in ELA and mathematics. The school administrators should closely monitor the use of differentiation within classroom practices and hold teachers accountable for full implementation. Practices should include the data-informed grouping of students. The Network should assist the school in identifying model programs for peer observations.
- Teachers should be provided with PD in the use of questioning and development of higher order thinking skills within the learning process, particularly in ELA and mathematics. The school should use common planning time to develop higher order questioning tiers based on Bloom's Taxonomy.

The administrators should monitor lesson plans during classroom visits for the inclusion of effective questioning practices as well their implementation. Walkthroughs and peer observations should focus on observing the use of higher order questioning in practice.

- The school leaders and faculty should collaboratively develop a comprehensive technology plan to assess needs, acquire resources, train staff, plan for instructional integration, assess the impact of the plan and revise the plan appropriately. The school leaders should monitor how the effective use of technology impacts student performance and student engagement through the observation process. Walkthroughs and peer observations should focus on the growing integration of technology within teaching practice.

III. School Leadership

Findings:

- The school leader has not successfully communicated high expectations to all staff, nor has she fully engaged all staff in the school improvement process and achievement of student success.
- School leaders do not ensure that the school's behavioral policy is implemented schoolwide, which results in a number of behavioral incidents.
- The school leaders have not provided a schedule for on-going articulation to enable the Individual Education Program (IEP) support team to share their expertise with classroom teachers.
- The school leader has not ensured that there are adequate instructional resources to support teaching and learning in science.
- The school leader has not filled a teaching vacancy with a tax-levy teacher, resulting in the loss of instructional delivery. As a result, guidance counselors had to cover some teaching duties.
- The Principal and AP have not adequately monitored the assessment requirements for students with disabilities. Twenty-eight annual reviews have not been completed and entered; six initial cases have not been completed and entered; and three triennials have not been completed and entered within the required time frames.
- The school leaders have not effectively monitored the delivery of test modifications for students with disabilities. There is no system in place to ensure that these needs are being met in a consistent way to allow students to demonstrate their learning in the correct time frame and environment.

Recommendations:

- The Network should assist the school leader in identifying outside expertise in team building strategies. A focus of this work should be to further improve staff morale and accountability and to ensure that the total school community is actively engaged in school improvement activities. The school leader should acknowledge the professional strengths of staff and celebrate success. The drive for high student achievement should be expressed through department meetings, student assemblies, parent-teacher association meetings, faculty conferences, the interface with

community-based organizations and the SLT to ensure understanding and commitment from all stakeholders.

- The school safety committee should conduct an annual review of the code of conduct and make appropriate revisions. The monthly meeting of the safety committee should include a review of the On-line Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) report to identify trends and patterns that impact safety, impede student learning and interfere with teaching. The AP in charge of safety and the dean should provide guidance on approaches to behavior management within the classroom and in the hallways. The AP in charge of safety and the dean should undertake research into behavior management programs like Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) and/or Response to Intervention (RtI) and implement the programs in the school.
- The school leader should provide regularly scheduled opportunities for the IEP team and support staff to articulate with teachers during common planning and inquiry team times. Support staff should regularly share their expertise with classroom teachers in the areas of social/emotional growth and in the ways that a student learns best. School leaders should monitor the impact of these meetings on classroom practice and student outcomes.
- The school leader should ensure that vacancies are quickly filled to alleviate any disruption to the academic program. The difficulty of recruitment should be referred to the Network in order to help identify suitable candidates for specialist roles. Guidance counselors should not be distracted by class coverage duties. More time should be allotted for counseling with response to intervention being managed by the dean.
- The school leader should contact the supervisor of school psychologists to address the school's personnel needs in order to complete required assessments within the required time frame. The school leader should establish a compliance committee that meets on a weekly basis to review pertinent reports regarding assessment and delivery of related services. The committee should develop a plan and timeline to meet all requirements. The AP in charge of students with disabilities should supervise this process and alert the appropriate off-site DOE staff to acquire the necessary personnel to comply with all legal requirements. This process is necessary to ensure that students receive the all the services needed for academic success.
- The school leader, the IEP team and the support staff should develop a comprehensive plan to ensure that all required test modifications are being delivered during classroom tests. The AP responsible for students with disabilities should train all staff in the delivery of required test modifications, as indicated in student IEPs.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

Findings:

- The library was not open at the times indicated by the schedule posted outside. Students have limited open access to the library during their scheduled lunch periods. The number of books within the library was scarce, and there were limited titles for native language speakers. Five of the thirteen computers were not functioning.

- There is no dedicated science laboratory. While the grade 8 earth science curriculum requires laboratory seat time, the school only offers labs after school and not during the instructional day. This limits the number of students who will be eligible to take the Regents exam.
- The school leadership team (SLT) does not reflect the required balance of parents and staff.
- There are a number of negative interactions and inappropriate behaviors between students from this school and another school that shares the building. This is particularly the case at transition times and in shared common areas.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should ensure that the library is open during all scheduled periods. The librarian, content area coaches, a representative group of teachers and the APs should form a committee to assess the limited collection of titles in the library and develop a plan for expansion and optimal use. The AP who supervises technology should ensure that all computers within the library are operational and available to students and families.
- The school leader should reallocate funding to support the delivery of the science curriculum within the school day. This should include the development of a science laboratory to ensure that students have the resources to meet all New York State (NYS) science requirements and promotional standards. The school leader should ensure that earth science labs are scheduled during the school day so that the highest level of participation on the Earth Science Regents can be achieved.
- The school leader should ensure that there is appropriate parental representation on the SLT.
- The Principal should seek to establish a 'Building Committee' with representation from the schools that share the building. The committee should meet on a regular basis and establish procedures and protocols that help to establish greater harmony and respect between students from the two schools. The school leaders should closely monitor transition times and shared common areas and reduce the number of behavioral incidents.

V. Collection, Analysis, and Utilization of Data

Findings:

- Not all staff use the available data to address academic issues that impact student achievement, particularly in the cited areas of ELA and mathematics.
- Data is not being consistently used within all classrooms to target and develop strategies to improve student performance in ELA and mathematics for all students.

Recommendations:

- Content area teachers should plan lessons collaboratively during common planning time to ensure that all available data is used to address the individual needs of students and increase student achievement. The school leaders should closely monitor the work of the planning teams and their impact on improved student outcomes in ELA and mathematics in the classroom.

- The APs for ELA and mathematics should dedicate department meeting time to focus on using data to develop strategies to meet the individual needs of students. Data-driven strategies should include differentiation, informed grouping and effective use of technology. Previous training in this area should be reevaluated and more PD should be offered as necessary. Using data to drive instruction and learning should be a key focus for classroom observation by school leaders.

VI. Professional Development

Finding:

Teachers are not held directly accountable for ensuring that strategies and skills learned through PD are implemented in their daily instruction.

Recommendations:

School leaders should make their expectations known to all teachers that additional skills and strategies acquired through PD offerings should be implemented through planning and instructional delivery in the classroom. School leaders should use walkthroughs and observations to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of PD on improving student achievement in ELA and mathematics, and on improving the overall quality of instruction and student learning.

VII. District Support

Finding:

There was no evidence provided indicating that teachers attended Network-sponsored PD.

Recommendations:

- The school leader should request sign in sheets for all Network PD to ensure teacher attendance at the workshops.
- The Network should support the school in the implementation of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations.

Other Concern:

Students with disabilities comprise 27 percent of school enrollment. This current 1:4 ratio of the student body is projected to increase next school year. This will place a significant pressure on staffing at the school.

PART 3: 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 new plan that could include <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 recommendation should be accomplished.

- The school leader should enlist all stakeholders in creating a Restructuring Plan that incorporates the JIT report recommendations. The plan should include, but is not limited to the following:
 - The school leadership should replace ineffective staff, particularly in the cited areas of ELA and mathematics. The current number of ‘U’ rated observations should be used to identify those teachers who are unable to respond to the skill development opportunities that have been offered to improve their instructional delivery. The observation procedures should continue to be implemented in a rigorous manner to identify the weaker teachers and to identify best practice that should act as the benchmark to which all teachers aspire.
 - The Network should help identify experienced mentors for the Principal and APs to help guide them during the creation of the Restructuring Plan to assist them with its implementation and to guide and support them in monitoring and evaluating its impact and effectiveness on improving student achievement and the quality of teaching and learning.
 - The APs should be provided with Network training in leadership skills, and for their growth and development as instructional leaders.
 - The school should hire a dedicated full-time literacy coach to drive the development of ELA work.
 - The Principal should work with the APs and teachers in closely evaluating the school programs, and instruction that is available for the large number of overage students that attend the school. Visits should be made to successful schools that have a similar student population and seek to introduce best practice into this school.
 - The Principal, in collaboration with teachers, should construct a schoolwide progress report that is issued to parents at mid-year and include next steps for improvement.
- The Network should take an active role in implementing the Restructuring Plan by assisting the school leaders in:
 - supporting teacher capacity to consistently deliver effective instruction especially in ELA and mathematics.

- arranging a schedule of visits from ELA and mathematics specialists to support teachers so that they can improve their instructional skills and accelerate student learning.
- refining skills in the analysis and use of the significant amount of student performance data that is now available.
- supervising the implementation of the Special Education Student Information System (SEIS) to include IEP development, quality assurance and compliance issues.
- supporting the School Safety Team to conduct an immediate review of the schoolwide code of conduct and review how discipline is being monitored.
- ensuring that long term vacancies are being filled in a timely manner.
- assisting the SLT as it reaches out for more parent members.