

**NYSED/NYCDOE JOINT INTERVENTION TEAM REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>BEDS Code/DBN:</b>	27Q400
<b>School Name:</b>	August Martin High School
<b>School Address:</b>	156-10 Baisley Blvd. Queens , NY 11434
<b>Principal:</b>	Mr. Anthony Cromer
<b>Restructuring Phase/Category:</b>	Persistently Lowest-Achieving
<b>Area(s) of Identification:</b>	Graduation Rate; English Language Arts and Mathematics
<b>Dates of On-site Diagnostic Review:</b>	November 9-10,2010

**PART 1: INTRODUCTION**

**A. Community and School Background**

August Martin High School serves 1,187 students in grades 9 through 12. The school enrollment is 81 percent Black, 11 percent Hispanic, six percent Asian, and two percent White. English Language Learners (ELLs) comprise approximately five percent of enrollment, and students with disabilities comprise approximately 20 percent of enrollment. Eighteen percent of the students attending August Martin High School live outside the borough.

The school’s administrative team includes one Principal, seven Assistant Principals (APs), Academy Teacher-Directors, and a Lead Dean. The Principal is serving in his tenth year at the school and his sixth year as Principal. The APs experience range from three to 20 years in their positions. There were two administrative positions that currently are vacant, i.e., security and mathematics. These two positions have had four staff members in the last two years.

There are 67 teachers on staff at August Martin High School. Ninety-four percent of the teachers are highly qualified. All of the staff have been in the school for three years or more.

**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>✓</b>
	<b>NYSED Quantitative Performance Measures</b>	
-	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 <b><i>All Students</i></b> 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 <b><u>Persistently Lowest- Achieving school.</u></b>	✓
-	Total Cohort Graduation rate is below 60% (for high schools)	✓
	<b>NYCDOE Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measures</b>	
-	Grade of C on the most recent NYC Progress Report	✓
-	NYC Quality Review Score of Well-Developed	✓

## B. School Strengths

- There are several AP's who demonstrate commitment and leadership potential.
- The school has an advisory committee that supports the programs through a variety of measures. They meet regularly to discuss school issues and support school efforts.
- The guidance program plan is comprehensive and initiates career exploration using "Career Cruising," a software package. Students are regularly seen by their counselors. The college office has a student plan that begins in the spring of junior year and includes test taking requirements, college search procedures, financial aid and scholarship information, college trips, and collaboration with nearby York College.

## C. Key Findings and Recommendations

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

### I. Curriculum

#### Findings:

- Curriculum resources were limited for most core areas. In areas where curriculum documents were available, including State and city documents, topics were identified but not by grade level. Curriculum mapping was not evident in all areas.
- There were few research-based curricula or programs to address the 70 percent of the students who enter this school with scores of Level 1 or 2 on assessments.
- Core subjects observed did not indicate connections to the students' world.
- Few electives exist for high performing students.
- There was evidence of scope and sequence documents; however pacing calendars were not in evidence in all core subject areas.
- The availability of building-based curriculum and instructional expertise is limited.

- Science classes did not have defined lab time attached to classes. There was no evidence that the 1200 mandated minutes for science labs were included in curriculum, pacing calendars, or in observed lessons.
- In isolated areas, such as ELA (English Language Arts), New York State (NYS) Standards were observed. However, classroom observations revealed minimal relationship to lesson plan objectives.
- In most classes that were observed, resources were limited to textbooks, dictionaries, and some SMART Boards. Mathematics classes did not have adequate access to calculators.

**Recommendations:**

- A plan for the development of curriculum, curriculum mapping, pacing calendars, and courses of study that include teacher resources and strategies should be implemented.
- Departments should use item analysis to inform curriculum adjustments.
- Students should be surveyed for course interest.
- Additional courses that prepare students for college, such as college-credited offerings and Advanced Placement classes, should be included in opportunities for student learning.
- Curricula should be monitored on a consistent basis to ensure that all are covered in a timely and in-depth manner.
- Outside resources should be retained to address serious curriculum deficiencies, such as effective relevance and relationship between standards and lesson objectives.
- Scheduling should be reviewed and revised to ensure science classes have defined lab time attached to classes. The 1200 mandated minutes for science labs should be reflected in curriculum and pacing calendars and be fully integrated into lessons.
- Professional development should be provided to ensure that all lesson plan objectives and classroom observations are consistently reflective of State Standards.
- Varied and engaging instructional resources should be available for student use in all classrooms. All mathematics classrooms should be provided with adequate calculators.

**II. Teaching and Learning**

**Findings:**

- All core classes were observed. There was little evidence of varied and effective instructional practices.
- Classroom observations revealed:
  - a low incidence of higher order thinking activities, effective group instruction, and quality student engagement. Additionally, ineffective lesson pacing resulted in a serious loss of instructional time.

- only 15 percent of observed lessons had effective lesson starting activities.
  - learning goals were not consistently aligned to NYS Standards (with the exception of ELA).
  - most classes were involved in copying notes, looking up definitions and other low-level thinking activities.
- Student engagement was limited and at a low level on Bloom's Taxonomy hierarchy of questioning. Most classes had low order thinking questions such as who, what, where, and when. Recall questions were typically used in observed classes.
  - No integration of reading/writing skills was observed. In most classes, the effective integration of technology and reading and writing skills was not apparent.
  - Co-teaching classes relegated one teacher to the role of teaching assistant, minimizing the ability of stratified grouping based on students' needs. Team teachers, in inclusion classes, have a limited role in delivering instruction.
  - Differentiated instruction is a schoolwide goal; however, there was little evidence of diverse instructional practices in classroom observations. Only 15 percent of observed classes demonstrated differentiated classroom activities in any manner.
  - There was no evidence of learning centers, individual conferencing, or direct instruction in small groups. A low level of student engagement was observed due to ineffective use of questioning techniques, visuals, graphic organizers, and other instructional strategies that promoted higher level learning. Students were unclear about the purpose of the lesson and were frequently off task.
  - Students did not move from class to class in a timely manner. Student lateness is excessive throughout the school and negatively impacts the ability to maximize classroom time on task. There was no evidence of procedures to address lateness effectively.
  - There was limited use of medial and final summary techniques to ascertain student understandings.
  - There was little evidence of consistent, well-developed homework strategies that stimulated student interest and addressed assessment requirements.
  - Science instruction showed neither evidence of ongoing investigations nor the use of the scientific method.
  - The school's grading rubric does not value mastery, i.e., 30 percent is allocated for assessment results, 70 percent is subjective. Though classes were divided into groups, most observed lessons involved direct instruction for the entire group. Few classes demonstrated effective group work. In most classes observed, students were off task when group work was assigned. Only eight percent of observed classes used grouping effectively.
  - Paraprofessionals assigned to classes had no definitive instructional responsibility.

**Recommendations:**

- Lessons should be created that make learning relevant to the lives of students.

- Lesson plan templates should contain mandated, timed activities that include: a do now that motivates students to participate in the lesson; an aim that is evaluative, open-ended, and aligned to the curriculum and State standards; lesson development activities that promote a high level of student engagement; a series of key higher order questions; medial and final summaries/applications that check for student understanding; and the integration of reading and writing activities in every lesson.
- Bloom’s Taxonomy should be used as a teaching guide when creating pivotal questions, aims, motivations, and lesson development activities.
- To address the need to improve reading and writing, a schoolwide study skills program such as the “SOAR” study skills program should be initiated.
- Staff should be involved in professional development (PD) to learn how to effectively use the co-teaching and team teaching models.
- Varied instructional activities that result in quality student engagement should be required for all lessons.
- An approach to classroom rewards to diminish lateness and stimulate student interest, such as Assertive Discipline, should be considered for schoolwide implementation. Schoolwide procedures to address student lateness should be implemented, communicated, and expected of each student and teacher.
- Effective, high student interest lesson starting activities should be included in each lesson to decrease student lateness and increase lesson effectiveness.
- Homework assignments should be an outgrowth of the lesson and relevant to students’ lives.
- Science classes should be inquiry based, with science demonstrations used in every class.
- A schoolwide grading policy that values and requires assessment results to be a significant portion of the grade should be established.
- PD and schoolwide support should be provided to ensure staff has a thorough understanding of such varied instructional modalities as cooperative learning groups and differentiation in grouping styles. Effective grouping and monitoring of student behaviors and participation should be used to maximize learning.
- Paraprofessionals should be included in all PD opportunities. Lesson plans should outline clear expectations for paraprofessionals assigned to classes to ensure that paraprofessionals have clear instructional responsibilities and are actively engaged to support student learning.

### **III. School Leadership**

#### **Findings:**

- School leadership looks at student demographics and poor assessment results from feeder schools as the cause for lagging student achievement. As a result, the Principal does not lead the school community in analyzing data, researching programs, and monitoring curricula that could result in

the implementation of quality, research-based programs positively impacting student achievement.

- There was little evidence that the school leader promotes high expectations of students as evidenced by document reviews, student and teacher interviews, and classroom observations.
- There is no apparent systemic process for teacher evaluation. Administrators individually reported conflicting procedures for end-of-year evaluations, with some indicating the Principal completes the check off list for end-of -year evaluations only for U-rated teachers. However, the Principal stated check offs are done for all teachers; some teachers have attachments to their end-of-year evaluations.
- The Principal does not make improvement of student achievement his number one goal in making budget decisions, as evidenced by the disproportionate number of “discipline” positions within the budget.
- The Principal does not have high expectations for teacher performance, allowing uncertified teachers on staff in critical core areas.
- Poor student behavior was accepted and expected as evidenced by interviews of staff, teachers, and administration.
- Rather than problem solving to develop solutions to students’ poor achievement, the Principal uses student data to “explain” students’ poor academic performance.

**Recommendation:**

Support should be provided to ensure the phase-out process.

**IV. Infrastructure for Student Success**

**Findings:**

- Although there is a well-developed infrastructure and scope and sequence provided by the guidance department, the poor instructional program inhibits the ability of guidance to provide much needed support for student success.
- There are not enough research-based, academic intervention programs for students who are not proficient in reading, writing, and mathematics.
- Programs are reactive rather than proactive. More programs are available to address student failure rather than to promote student success.

**Recommendations:**

- A process for identifying at-risk students upon entrance to school that then provides a concise plan for academic intervention, guidance support, as well as giving students access to the most challenging classes, should be developed and consistently implemented.
- Research-based programs such as READ 180, Expert 21, and Wilson Reading Level 1 and 2 should be explored to address serious academic student deficiencies.

- Required extended day and weekend academic opportunities should be made available for all students deficient in reading, mathematics, and writing. Saturday academy and extra help programs should start the first day of school rather than later in the school year.
- Recognition programs of student success, such as awards, academic certificates of achievement, and a student of the week program, should be in place.

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

### **Findings:**

- Data is not collected, analyzed and used by teachers to determine root causes of failure.
- Teachers do not use data to plan for differentiation of instruction that is a school initiative aimed to increase student achievement.
- Teacher data binders do not reflect the systematic collection and utilization of data to identify strengths and individualize instruction.
- Data is not used to identify and program students in need of Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

### **Recommendations:**

- Use the Network to develop an in-depth and comprehensive system for the collection, analysis, and use of data to inform instruction.
- Use multiple assessment data, including formative and summative assessments, to group students. Align instructional strategies to the diverse needs of students, including identified sub-groups. This should be the focus of the inquiry teams.
- Develop a data system that can be used to identify students in need of AIS and continuously monitor their progress.

## **VI. Professional Development**

### **Findings:**

- There is neither a cohesive nor coherent plan for PD. Efforts are duplicated, not focused on specific teacher needs, and not impacting classroom instruction. Although this is the second year of differentiated instruction being the school goal, there is little evidence of its effective implementation. PD is duplicative, as evidenced by the identical PD being offered at both faculty conferences and department meetings.
- Supervisory staff has little opportunity to develop and hone instructional leadership skills. There is no evidence that the Principal has developed an observation/end-of-year teacher evaluation process that monitors and supervises the implementation of PD initiatives for all curriculum areas.
- Inquiry Teams, Grade 9 teams, and academy teams are working at a rudimentary level in providing instructional feedback for teachers, as well as developing instructional strategies that engage students in the learning process.

- There was little evidence that PD reflects student and teacher needs.
- Teacher end-of-year evaluations did not include PD goals in all content areas.

**Recommendations:**

- After the school leadership identifies a school PD goal, i.e., differentiated instruction, department agendas, Chancellor’s Staff Development days, faculty meetings, and other PD offerings should reflect this goal. School PD should be aligned with school goals and should have an accountability component to monitor implementation.
- The observation process should be focused on specific, identified school goals.
- PD should be provided to team teachers, such as the Inquiry Teams and academy teams, to learn how to work as a team, focus their tasks, identify and implement successful instructional strategies, and create plans for improved student achievement.
- Each teacher should have a specific, achievable PD goal with concomitant support and resources to ensure implementation.
- The recommendations from the observation process should direct and provide individualized PD for each teacher and be linked to the teacher's end-of-year evaluation.

**VII. District Support**

**Finding:**

Although the Principal indicated that the Network Team has adequately assessed school needs to appropriately identify and implement their goals, there was little evidence of the effectiveness of this support.

**Recommendation:**

- The Network Team should monitor the outcomes of their support. All members of the cabinet require additional support from the Network Team to enhance their skills as it relates to instruction and instructional supervision.
- The Network should provide support in implementing the recommendations of the Joint Intervention Team (JIT).

**PART 3: OVERALL FINDING AND RECOMMENDATION**

**A. Overall Finding**

Reference	Review Team Finding	✓
(b)	The school has not made sufficient progress in identified areas, and is unlikely to make AYP without further significant change.	✓

**B. Overall Recommendation**

Reference	Review Team Recommendation	✓
(b)	Phase-out or close the school.	✓

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

The teaching and administrative staff, as presently constituted, will not support August Martin to make AYP. It is recommended that the school be phased-out. Currently enrolled students should be given the option to complete their high school requirements in existing academies or elect to transfer to another school. Given the grave deficiencies, it is recommended support be provided to ensure phase-out process.