



**Office of Innovative School Models**  
 Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) Schools  
 School Improvement Grant (SIG)  
 Monitoring Report

<b>School:</b>	Flushing High School Queens, New York	<b>School District:</b>	New York City Department of Education - District # 25
<b>Date of Site-Visit:</b>	April 12, 2011  (Second Visit)	<b>Members of Site-Visit Team:</b>	Major Capers, Kathryn Ahern, Kimberly Santiago, Jennifer Span, Lee York

<b>STAFFING</b>	
<b>Collective Bargaining</b>	<i>Negotiations are continuing regarding revision of the collective bargaining agreement in order to support: development of a teacher evaluation system, removal of staff based on the evaluation system and changes in work day, duties and hours.</i>
<b>Teacher Evaluations linked to Student Performance</b>	<i>Teacher evaluations linked to student performance have been put into place. The system and data used must be consistent with State APPR system.</i>
<b>Identify and Reward staff or Remediate/Remove Staff</b>	<i>A clear and transparent process for identifying staff for rewards and remediation is in place (A process must be in place immediately upon the development and implementation of the Teacher Evaluation System).</i>
<b>Implementation of Strategies to Recruit, Place, and Retain Qualified Staff</b>	<i>Activities are funded to recruit, place, and/or retain highly qualified teachers. Name and describe the activities.</i>

**Findings:**

- The school leadership team stated negotiations are continuing regarding revision of the collective bargaining agreement and the development of the pilot evaluation system that supports teacher development. School leadership reported they have received and reviewed initial drafts of several documents regarding the teacher evaluation system. The union and New York City Department of Education (NYCDoE) have agreed that 2010-11 school year evaluations will be based only on the use of a four-tiered rating system and at this time will not be linked to student performance.
- The school leadership team reported they continue to use the evaluation process that is currently in place. The school's teachers are evaluated by one of the Assistant Principals and the Principal. The school leadership team is planning to eventually use portfolios for teacher evaluations.

- School leaders stated NYCDoE is continuing work to complete the development of the new evaluation form that includes linking teacher evaluations to student performance, and offers rewards and remediation for staff.
- The leadership team reported merit bonuses and remediation plans linked to teacher evaluations are not yet in place.
- The leadership team indicated four master and two Turnaround teachers (“coaches”) positions remain filled.

<b>PLANNING</b>	
<b>Implementation of Timeline</b>	<i>The district/school is on track to complete activities in accordance with the approved timeline for implementation, or to submit an approvable School Improvement Grant (SIG) application. Identify elements that are off-track.</i>
<b>Performance Targets</b>	<i>The district/school is implementing activities which will help them meet the school's performance targets. (Performance targets are tied to the school's achieving "In Good Standing" by the end of the 3 year grant period. Refer to the school's Performance Plan Template, as available.)</i>
<b>Implementation of JIT Recommendations</b>	<i>The district and school are implementing the plan based on the JIT recommendations. The recommendations of the JIT are addressed as delineated in the SIG application or Restructuring Plan, as applicable.</i>

**Findings:**

- The NYCDoE has currently hired staff in several positions, and now has a staff assigned to work with Flushing H.S. The school leaders reported they have met the staff member assigned from the NYCDoE, and have started to receive direct support from the Department.
- The leadership team and teachers reported teachers within each academy are provided common planning time.
- Leadership indicated student progress continues to be monitored by specific teachers in each content area and there is a fully staffed attendance office that provides outreach and monitors student attendance rates.
- The small thematic learning communities, called academies, have started for students in grade 9, but will be expanded grades 10-12 starting next year.
- At the request of the NYCDoE, the school did not receive a Joint Intervention Team review. However; a 2009-2010 Quality Review was completed that outlined areas where the school needs to improve. They are differentiated instruction and higher order skills, teaching and learning processes to ensure students participate in classes are consistent across content areas, and monitor and revise goal setting across subject areas to ensure student understanding of learning. The 2010-2011 Quality Review is completed and the report will be finalized to share with the high school.

<b>PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>Quality, On-going, Job-embedded Professional Development</b>	<i>Implementing job-embedded professional development, as defined by the USED, and as approved by NYSED.</i>
<b>Supportive of Instructional Needs</b>	<i>All professional development is researched based and supportive of the instructional needs of the school.</i>
<b>Monitoring and Analysis</b>	<i>Professional development is monitored and analyzed to ensure staff participation and classroom implementation.</i>

**Findings:**

- The school leadership team stated the Association of Supervisors of Curriculum and Development (ASCD) continues' to provide professional development that is focused on improving instructional effectiveness. The ASCD has provided professional development on differentiated instruction and the ASCD consultant also coaches classroom teachers. ASCD provided reports of their professional development sessions with the principal and faculty.
- The school leadership team reported they have attended some professional development conferences (e.g., leadership academy). Funding is now available to support other professional development activities as outlined in the school implementation grant. The school is now using funding to begin full implementation the transformation plan.
- School leaders participated in continue to receive professional development to understand their role in implementing the plan and to receiving training in instructional practice related to differentiation. School leaders, turnaround and lead teachers will be trained first under cohort I and willing teachers will receive training as part of Cohort II.
- School leaders reported that professional development needs to be expanded for teachers, counselors, security and other staff.
- School leadership indicated school positions listed in the School Implementation Grant and budget remain filled.
- The leadership team stated the master and turnaround teachers have also participated in the UFT professional development.
- The school leadership team reported they would benefit from receiving continued technical assistance on the transformation model and development of inquiry teams.
- The leadership team reported that they will continue to ensure professional development is monitored periodically to ensure staff participates in sessions and use newly learned strategies in the classroom.

<b>DATA ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>Data to Inform Instructional Programming</b>	<i>Data is used to identify and implement research-based instructional programs that are aligned with state standards</i>
<b>Data for Instructional Decisions for Student Achievement</b>	<i>A system is being implemented which allows for the continuous use of data to make instructional decisions for students.</i>

**Findings:**

- The leadership team reported a program called Skedula (DATACATION) is used for data analysis to track student credits and regent examination results and attendance information for each student cohort and provides information for parents.
- The leadership team stated the data inquiry team continues to be led by the transformation mentor Principal. There are teams for teachers, guidance counselors and attendance. Only the ONE guidance data inquiry team is facilitated by the Transformation Mentor Principal. The SLC (teacher) data inquiry team is led by the teacher leaders. The attendance data inquiry team is led by the Principal and Attendance teacher.
- The Principal reported that he reviews and shares school wide data with staff. The cabinet reviews department level data, including credit and Regent Reports. The guidance team reviews credits and credit recovery options and the attendance team looks at attendance data on monthly basis.

- Teachers reported that they focus on using data to support students preparing for Regent exams; however data use needs to be expanded for general instructional purchases.
- The school leadership team provided the SED site visit team with information on both external and internal assessment data the 2009-13 cohorts. The documentation included information on ELA/math performance, attendance, credit and regents tracking, overall school analysis including dropout and graduation rates.

<b>CURRICULUM AND TEACHING</b>	
<b>Increased Learning Time</b>	<i>The school has implemented a longer school day, week, or school year to significantly increase the total number of school hours to provide additional time for instruction in core academic subjects, or in enrichment subject areas, or added time for teacher collaboration.</i>
<b>Mapped and Paced Curriculum</b>	<i>The written district/school level curriculum is aligned to NYS standards, performance indicators, the core competencies and is being implemented. Pacing guides are developed, used and monitored.</i>
<b>Instructional Programming is Linked to Needs Assessment</b>	<i>Curricular decisions have been made to meet the needs of all students.</i>
<b>Effective Teaching</b>	<i>There is evidence of rigor, relevance, pacing, and alignment of curriculum to State Standards, and student engagement from Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT).</i>
<b>ELL/SWD</b>	<i>The necessary instructional programs and highly qualified staff are in place to support the needs of English Language Learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD).</i>

### Findings:

- The leadership team stated instructional time has been increased for students to make up credits and/or participate in after school tutoring in Math and Science.
- The master schedule reflects a double period of ELA and for all ELLs in Social Studies. The 45 minute increase in instruction is new this year
- FHS offers advanced placement courses in the content areas of: Chemistry, Biology, and Calculus.
- The school also continues to offer an expanded Saturday program to provide academic intervention services for all students and a summer school transition program for incoming ninth graders. Student data was not presented to validate the attendance of this program. Also this program does not constitute as a valid AIS program as recognized by SED.
- ACHIEVE 3000 has a collaborative class of sophomores, of which all are prepared to take the Regents exam in June 2011.
- English turnaround teacher provides supports to other teachers by way of emails daily to input classroom instructional practices.
- Science turnaround teacher assist writing lesson plans for differentiated instruction with teachers.
- Math turnaround teacher models math lessons and coach math teachers.
- Turnaround teachers' classrooms are used as "open labs" for other teachers.
- FHS comprehensive education plan is managed by one teacher with emphasis on differentiated instruction, analysis of student assessments on ARIS database and reading scores.
- The leadership team stated the curriculum has been mapped and it vertically aligned with the NYS Standards, but not to the Common Core Standards.
- There was no evidence of any of the following in the classrooms observed:
  - Teachers using a mapped and paced curriculum

- Instructional programming linked to a needs assessment
- Effective teaching practices used to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) or Students with Disabilities (SWDs) The new assistant principal for ESL was hired February 2011 and have received training from NYCDoE.
- A review of science data indicated some students were barred from taking Regents examinations because they did not complete the required number of labs. To address this problem, the school this year increased the opportunity for students to participate in labs to 5 days a week. The assistant principal of Science reported that science teachers are paired with labs to provide students with 35 lab sessions. The science curriculum is aligned with master schedule and pacing calendar with unit exams.
- The ELA assistant principal reports teachers work together as inquiry group for new English regents.
- The Social Studies assistant principal reported that over 400 SWD received related services this school year. VESID has visited FHS and met with seniors and guidance counselors to get students enrolled in technical and vocational programs.
- The leadership team stated in some content areas, teachers have begun to incorporate some of the strategies they have learned from master teachers. Demonstration lessons have not yet been conducted in all content areas. Some teachers reported they have positive interactions with the master and turnaround teachers. Others reported they had as of the date of the visit little or no interaction with these teachers.
- The leadership team stated the network leader meets with principals on a regular basis. The leadership team also reports they are conducting consistent 3-4 classroom walkthroughs per day. On the day of the site visit, leadership reported conducting math content walk-throughs.
- The leadership team stated Learning Points will not be used to conduct the curriculum audit. ASCD will provide professional development as needed.
- A Quality Review was completed by NYCDoE on March 28-30, 2011 which highlighted school strengths and areas for school improvement.
- The leadership team reported Achieve 3000, an online literacy intervention program, which will be utilized for ELLs, and SWDs, will be purchased by the school to support students both at home and school.
- The leadership team stated students classified as ELLs all participate in English classes. Master and turnaround teachers are being utilized to support teachers. The newly hired ESL assistant principal is assisting with ESL network support, as well as visiting classrooms and identifying student/community needs. Presently FHS has 600 ELL students with over 10 languages. There are 22 students completing the Rosetta stone program. These 22 students have tested at the Beginning level on the NYSELAT Exam.

<b>STUDENT SUPPORT</b>	
<b>Additional Support</b>	<i>Students are receiving extra academic and developmental support based on student need (AIS, character development, PBIS).</i>
<b>Counseling</b>	<i>Student support services are in place to provide students in need with additional social support (education/career counseling, social work, drug/alcohol/violence counseling, school psychologist, health/mental health professional)</i>
<b>Enrichment Opportunities</b>	<i>Students have opportunities to participate in academic and social enrichment activities during and after the school day and during the summer.</i>

**Findings:**

- Two orientations are conducted for incoming students as well as a summer school Bridge program. The Bridge program, which is available to all incoming freshman, served approximately 120 students last year and is expected to continue this summer.
- The leadership team stated Advanced Placement Exam (APEX learning), an online credit recovery program, has started to help students catch up with credits, and participation for targeted students is 100%. This progress of this program will be reviewed at the end of the school year.
- Students stated they like the diversity of the school and teachers provide support in content areas for math and English and other subject areas.
- Students would like to see security enforce the code of conduct and be less sociable with students that are not getting to classes.
- Students voiced that they enjoyed clubs and diversity programs; however they would like to see teachers be more creative when delivering lessons and have homework made available in several formats. For example, students would like to have opportunities to participate in project-based assignments and receive homework assignments both on computer and in hardcopy.
- The leadership team reported there is a college office that provides services to students. Students stated they would like to have more time with college advisors. One of the schools external partners visited the high school and has agreed to lead the college and career initiative for the school. The high school is also reviewing the option of beginning an after school career program.
- The leadership team and staff stated the Respect for All program has started. Staff has adequate copies of the materials, and some staff stated the program is beginning to expand.
- Teachers and guidance counselors stated grade ninth English teachers and counselors continue to work together one day a week. They discuss different themes, such as bullying and classroom management.
- The leadership team and network partner reported during common planning time teachers continue to discuss student behavior issues. Guidance provides the first level of intervention. The Network partner talks to school leaders about things such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is not currently being implemented at Flushing High School.
- School leadership reported the Ramapo for Children program has started to work with administrations and some teachers to discuss management of student behavior and minimizing misbehavior.
- Leadership and teachers stated tutoring is mandated for all teachers and is provided to students at the end of their school day. Students self select or are selected to participate in tutoring.
- The review team reported in classrooms observed there was a lack of technology (e.g., laptops, projectors) in the building.
- The NYCDoe has released SIG funding and Flushing High School has ordered thirty projectors and other hardware outlined in their proposed budget.
- The schools enrichment program called REACH provides professional development for advanced placement teachers and supports AP students with workshops on test preparation.

<b>TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP</b>	
<b>Effective Leadership</b>	<i>The school leader has the experience and skills needed to successfully implement a turnaround model and to act as a change agent for the school.</i>
<b>Leadership Development</b>	<i>School leaders receive appropriate and timely professional development. Mentoring or coaching programs are in place and effective.</i>
<b>School Improvement</b>	<i>The school is being guided and informed by its partnership with its School Improvement Manager or external provider.</i>

<b>Manager/External Providers</b>	
<b>Building Level Leadership Team</b>	<i>The school is utilizing its Building Leadership Team to implement the intervention model.</i>

**Findings:**

- The school leader is no longer Interim Acting and has been appointed as the sole principal of the school.
- The leadership team stated the Principal is in charge of ensuring the transformation model is implemented.
- The leadership team has received funding to start leadership training with Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).
- The leadership team stated they continue to receive professional development on transformation and development of inquiry teams and meet monthly to discuss issues related to implementing the model.
- School leaders stated transformation meetings continue to be held at least monthly.
- The instructional and small learning community cabinets continue to hold meetings to discuss the expansion of learning communities.
- Teacher evaluation meetings continue to occur at least once a month. There are also small learning communities (SLC) meetings. The principal continues to conduct walkthroughs in the building and provides feedback to teachers.
- During an interview with several school leaders it was ascertained that several (e.g., Vice Principals) did not participate nor receptive to participating in professional development.

<b>SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	
<b>Environment is Conducive to Learning</b>	<i>The school is safe, orderly and academically-oriented. Supervision is sufficient, respectful and consistent.</i>
<b>Shared Vision</b>	<i>School staff understands the focus/ vision of the school's improvement efforts and supports them in a consistent and effective manner.</i>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<i>Administrators, teachers and staff communicate openly, positively and effectively. Professional learning communities exist and affect improvement efforts.</i>
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of parents.</i>
<b>External/Community-Based Partners</b>	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of community partners.</i>

**Findings:**

- The SED site visit team observed very few instances of students wandering the hallways when classes were in session. Hall security guards were more effective in engaging students who were not getting to classes.
- The SED site visit team observed that the high school was clean.
- The Ramapo Children program has provided three (3 hour) professional development workshops (relationship building, conflict resolution, and managing difficult behavior) for:
  - Deans and Assistant Principals' and 20 teachers
  - Assisting with implementing behavior management teams
  - Has met with school safety officers and developed school-wide action plans.
- Parents stated there is an active PTA that continues to meet monthly. Teachers and the principal participate in the meetings.

- Parents spoke positively about the ninth grade academies, home-school communication and English language classes for families.
- School leaders and teachers reported partnerships have started as the school has received funding.
- La Guardia Community College is in partnership with FHS to provide ESL methodology practice in science classrooms, as well as, support to ESL students in living environments.
- Flushing High School has partnerships with International Network for Public Schools and the Asian Americans for Equality. The partners continue to work toward creating an environment that supports college and career readiness. A private grant supports a full time staff person for the Guidance office.
- Parents believe the school needs a second parent coordinator to provide outreach to new parents. Funding (\$37, 990) has been released to support an additional coordinator and parent involvement activities; however a decision is being made regarding the type of qualifications needed for this position.
- The school continues to receive support from the Children's First network leader who works with the district and school to identify organizations that can provide the school with technical assistance related to areas of identified needs (e.g., behavior and classroom management). ASCD is also providing leadership and teacher support to the school.

<b>OTHER FUNDING SOURCES</b>	
<b>Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding</b>	<i>The LEA is using School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding to support the implementation of or planning for school intervention models.</i>
<b>Use of Other Funding Sources besides 1003 (g)</b>	<i>In addition to SIG 1003(g) and/or 1003(a) funds, the LEA is using a number of other resources to implement the school intervention models or the Restructuring Plan, as applicable.</i>

**Findings:**

- The school leaders stated they have now received funding to support the Transformation Model.
- The school is using other funding sources (e.g., Title IID) to support the intervention model.
- The district and school were asked to make any final budget amendments and forward to SED for final approval.

<b>DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>District Support Provides Operational Flexibility to the School</b>	<i>The LEA provides or is planning to provide the school operational flexibility (such as regarding staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting).</i>
<b>District has a systemic plan for intervention and improvement</b>	<i>The LEA has incorporated all JIT recommendations and requirements of the SIG Application into the improvement plan for the school.</i>
<b>District has a plan to identify, recruit, place, and retain effective leadership</b>	<i>In accordance with SIG requirements, the LEA has a plan for hiring and retaining leadership.</i>

**Findings:**

- The NYCDoE has appointed a School Improvement Liaison to provide oversight the school.
- The leadership team indicated they feel they are afforded flexible means for implementation by NYCDoE, and received funding to purchase services outlined in their implementation plan.
- At the request of NYCDoE, Flushing High School did not undergo a Joint Intervention Team visit; however they participated in a needs assessment which formed the foundation for the development of the school's implementation plan.
- The district has appointed the interim acting principal as the principal of the school.
- The master and turnaround teachers are hired and professional development is provided to support the retention of the new leadership team.

### **Summary:**

The New York State Education Department five member site visit team conducted a full day site visit to Flushing High School on April 12, 2011. Although the visit was brief, the team was able to review information and meet with school and community constituents to discuss the school's efforts to begin the implementation of their reform model for improving student learning. The school has made progress in several areas and needs to continue to make progress in other areas.

During the next full day site visit the team will also focus on findings outlined in this report and will again conduct document reviews and interviews in the following areas: staffing; planning; professional development; data analysis; curriculum and teaching; student support; school leadership; school climate and community engagement; and district support and planning for development.