



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

<b>School:</b>	Long Island City High School - Transformation Model	<b>School District:</b>	New York City Department of Education – Community School District # 30
<b>Date of Site-Visit:</b>	January 4, 2011	<b>Members of Site-Visit Team:</b>	LoriAnn Curtin, Sharon Holder, Susan Megna, Alexandra Pressley, Kimberly Santiago

<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.</i>

**Findings:**

- School leaders stated collective bargaining continues around the area of the teacher evaluation system. The union and NYCDoE have agreed that 2010-11 school year evaluations will be based only on use of the four tiered rating system and will not include student growth. Draft rubrics have been provided and the schools are on track to begin implementation in February 2011. The elements of the rubric focus on four domains of Charlotte Danielson Model which are:
  - o Planning and Preparation,
  - o The Classroom Environment,
  - o Instruction, and
  - o Professional Responsibilities.
- According to school administrators, staff has been involved in regular professional development provided by NYCDoE on the Danielson system. Teams have been working to develop the protocols that will be used for the local assessment portion of the evaluation.
- School leaders stated they have not rewarded or remediated staff based on the teacher evaluation system in use.

- School leaders stated NYCDoE policies exist which guide school leaders to hire from the Absent Teacher Reserve (ATR) list rather than giving them the ability to hire the most qualified candidate.

<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:**

#### NYCDoE

- The SED site visit team observed the NYCDoE created a full-time position entitled, "Transformation Mentor Principal" for the school's former principal, and hired a new principal for the school. The former principal mentors the new principal.
- The Turnaround Office at NYCDoE is not yet fully staffed and functioning. Only the Director for Turnaround and Transformation Schools and Deputy Director for Turnaround and Transformation Schools positions at the central office have been filled. Each transformation school was scheduled to receive a part-time School Implementation Manager to monitor plan implementation. Although the job description for the School Implementation Manager is being revised, these positions have not been filled.
- Certain positions at the NYCDoE which are now or will be funded using transformation funds to support the eleven transformation model schools, will not be positions in which the NYCDoE staff interacts on a regular basis or visits with the staff at Long Island City High School.
- The NYCDoE representative interviewed stated the district has not yet hired, but is planning to hire the following: six school implementation managers, an associate director for pipeline development (the director for pipeline development has already been hired), an associate for business/operations, and an operations analyst.
- The NYCDoE representative interviewed stated the aforementioned positions and the following positions which have already been filled will be paid for with the transformation model funding that NYCDoE is receiving: director for turnaround, a deputy director for turnaround and transformation schools, and a director for partnership support and capacity building.

#### Long Island City High School

- Six master teachers have been designated from within or hired from outside the school for the 2010-2011 school year.
- Long Island City High School is spending close to half of its School Improvement Grant (SIG) 1003(g) funding to pay the salaries of six master teachers (three math teachers, two English as a second language teachers, and one science teacher) who will receive professional development and turn key train other teachers to help ensure that effective instruction takes place in the school. Master teachers also serve as mentor teachers.
- According to school leaders and an updated version of the SIG application that was received, 2.4 full-time equivalents were hired in August 2010, as stated by

the principal and transformation mentor principal at the exit conference. These teachers were hired as content area coaches to provide job-embedded professional development. Specifically, the SED team was told that 50% of a Literacy Coach for Special Education, 100% of a Literacy Coach for writing in Social Studies, 50% of a Math Coach and 40% of a UFT Teacher Center Coach were hired and funded as part of the transformation at Long Island City High school.

- At the time of the visit the administrative team stated they have not received from NYCDoE, nor do they have approval to spend the full amount of their School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding, as a reason why they have not selected specific professional development vendors.
- The Performance Plan Template is still under development at the State Education Department, therefore implementation of activities to meet targets are not applicable at this time.
- Long Island City High School did not receive a Joint Intervention Team (JIT) visit during the 2009-2010 school year, therefore there are no JIT recommendations to implement.

<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's administrative team and teachers stated Long Island City High School staff has had professional development related to the following topics during this school year: the common core standards, literacy in the content areas, training regarding small learning communities (SLCs), and data inquiry. The school staff submitted a professional development calendar for September through December which included the above.
- They also stated additional professional development takes place related to the core content area departments. For example, English teachers were receiving professional development in administering the new English Regents exam, and social studies teachers were getting trained in conducting item analysis on practice Regents exams.
- The SED site visit team did not see evidence of additional professional development planned for the remainder of the 2010-2011 school year; however, the administrative team and school leaders stated they would be looking at areas of need and planning for additional professional development.
- Teachers, school leaders, and the United Federation of Teachers representative interviewed stated master teachers receive additional professional development.
- The administrative team stated implementation of professional development is monitored by content area leaders and assistant principals. They analyze student work that is posted and they conduct classroom walkthroughs, specifically looking for skills taught in professional development sessions.

<b>DATA ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>Data to Inform Instructional</b>	<i>Data is used to identify and implement research-based instructional programs that are aligned with state standards</i>

<b>Programming</b>	
<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 SED site visit team did not collect specific evidence of the continuous use of data to implement research-based instructional programs that are aligned to state standards. This will be a focus area for the next site visit.
- According to teachers and school leaders interviewed, the following continuous use of data is taking place:
  - Teachers are using data from mid-terms and finals which they construct.
  - The English as second language (ESL) teachers are administering interim assessments from the “Milestones” program every two to three weeks, and conducting subsequent item analysis.
  - In English language arts and math, teachers are using Acuity and Performance Series assessments in February and May of 2011.
  - Data from all assessments is placed on a data reporting system which all teachers have been trained to use. From this system, they can conduct item analysis.

<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:**

- School leaders stated the school has increased learning time by adding three extra periods to the day, four days a week. During these extra periods, academic intervention services are offered.
- Teachers and school leaders interviewed indicated core content areas have curriculum consensus maps, but individual departments will continue to develop curriculum maps and will add pacing information to them.
- According to teachers and school leaders interviewed, the following curricular decisions have been made to meet the needs of all students:
  - benchmark assessments are used formatively,
  - unit review packets are given to low-performing students,
  - the Castle Learning program is used for credit recovery and approximately 120 students in the school are using this program,
  - practice Regents exams are administered, and
  - students can go to the math center for extra help.

- The SED site visit team observed the following regarding rigor, relevance, pacing, alignment of curriculum to state standards, and student engagement from highly qualified teachers:
  - in almost all of the classrooms observed, the lesson objective was posted,
  - all lesson objectives posted were aligned to New York State Standards,
  - in most classrooms observed, students were engaged in lessons,
  - there were differing levels of academic rigor in classrooms observed,
  - almost no differentiation of instruction was observed in classrooms, and
  - most classrooms had some student work posted.
- The school leaders submitted copies of the school's master schedule which showed a vast number of instructional programs for English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD).
- School leaders stated there are 30 teachers on staff for approximately 1,230 ELL students, and that there are approximately 40 staff members on hand for the 470 SWD.
- In ESL classrooms observed, teachers were using the Milestones program, which has been found to be strong on content based academic vocabulary but lacking in literature. Teachers are supplementing Milestones with authentic literature.
- During one classroom visit, interdisciplinary (global history and ESL) co-teaching was observed. One teacher was the master teacher supported through the SIG grant. In this classroom, instruction was differentiated through independent small group activities.
- The SED site visit team observed ESL classes are leveled by mastery and age; and instruction was scaffolded to meet the needs of multiple languages.
- Teaching staff stated having a common planning time in the small learning community has enabled them to better meet the needs of students and provide continuity of instruction across subject areas.
- Parents interviewed stated students are encouraged to take four years of science courses as part of the college preparatory philosophy.

<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:**

- School leaders and teachers report students are receiving extra academic support in the following ways:
  - academic intervention classes are offered during the extended day program, and the guidance department keeps records of students who are participating in that program,
  - students in need of reading intervention participate in the Failure Free Reading program,
  - when extra academic support is needed, students receive immediate intervention through teacher or peer tutoring, and
  - Supplemental Education Services are available after school.

- The SED site visit team observed academic intervention services (AIS) take place during the school day. Extra support is also available at the math center and the science center. However, the team was unable to ascertain if the AIS offered are sufficient to meet AIS compliance guidelines. This will be a focus area for the next site visit.
- The SED site visit team had the opportunity to observe the “Gear UP” (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) program. “GEAR UP” is a partnership program with St. John’s University available to all students. It was created by the U.S. Department of Education with the purpose of increasing the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. During the class observation there were over 25 students in a very small classroom. All of the students were actively engaged in their learning. Staff were assisting students with the financial aid portion (FAFSA) needed for college applications.
- School leaders, parents and students stated guidance counselors are available to students and are helpful in tracking college forms.
- School leaders also stated every ninth grade student attends an advisory period led by a classroom teacher. During the advisory period, students receive supplemental instruction as needed in core content areas, and learn organizational and study skills.
- The student focus group was attended by eight students, many in active leadership roles in the school. All grade levels were represented. Students spoke positively of small learning communities (SLC) and commented the renaming of the Academies (which predated SLC) was positive and removed the stigma.
- Students interviewed stated the following:
  - teachers are extremely accessible and available to provide extra help,
  - credit recovery can be done through mechanisms such as: “night” school and Saturday academies,
  - all classes provide Regents preparation and opportunities to make up lab work,
  - advanced classes are open to all students in good standing, and
  - there are abundant electives and opportunities to pursue interesting courses.
- Parents interviewed stated special curricular and extra-curricular opportunities (opera, orchestra, culinary) are strengths of the school.

<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 Manager/External Providers</b>	<i>The school is being guided and informed by its partnership with its School Improvement Manager or external provider.</i>
<b>Building Level Leadership Team</b>	<i>The school is utilizing its Building Leadership Team to implement the intervention model.</i>

**Findings:**

- Teachers interviewed stated while the school principal is new this school year, the former principal has assumed the role of transformation mentor principal at the school..
- Teachers stated they receive support for the school’s administrative leadership.

- The SED site visit team observed the school’s transformation mentor principal conducted classroom observations along with the SED site visit team, and answered most of the focus group interview questions.
- The SED site visit team did not request specific evidence regarding the new principal’s experience and skills.
- School leaders stated the following professional development has been offered to school leaders:
  - four full day professional development sessions regarding the new teacher evaluation system,
  - the Network provided professional development related to the Common Core Standards this past summer,
  - the Network provided professional development on conducting instructional rounds, and
  - the transformation mentor principal has attended several leadership development session at Teachers’ College.
- School leaders at Long Island City High School were not aware that a school improvement manager (SIM) would be hired to guide and inform the school during its transformation period. However, according to a NYCDoE representative, six full-time SIM will be hired to help the eleven transformation schools implement the transformation model.
- The school’s leadership stated the school is utilizing members of the school cabinet to implement the transformation model.

<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:**

- During the SED site visit, the school was safe, orderly, and academically-oriented. Students were not seen roaming hallways, and discipline issues in classrooms were minimal.
- Students were quiet and well-behaved in almost all classrooms observed, however, attendance in classrooms was consistently well below the enrollment numbers listed on the master schedule.
- School staff interviewed expressed enthusiasm for the school’s transformation process which they stated began five years ago when the small learning communities (SLC) were formed. Teachers reported the small learning communities were renamed this year, and restructured to include common planning and extended learning time.
- Teachers expressed collaboration takes place during common planning time in which each SLC participates.
- The Institute for Student Achievement (ISA) works in collaboration with teachers, students, parents, and administrators to improve student performance. The major activity is to provide professional development on Small learning Communities.

- The parent focus group was attended by three parents (one by phone), mothers of a freshman, a junior, and a special education student. All are active with the Parent Association. Parents interviewed stated the following:
  - teaching is more focused since SLC have been reconfigured, lead teachers are in place, most of the teaching staff are veteran teachers, and curriculum is being aligned to common core standards.
  - SLC have made parent conferences more parent-friendly because all teachers are in one place.
  - The school has implemented School Messenger (an automated phone messaging system) and is beginning email groups.
  - Freshman academies were not in place in summer 2010.
  - The school has an open door policy and allows opportunities for parents to meet with school leadership on a regular basis. They indicated information about the progress of their children and the initiatives are shared with them regularly.
  - The school has a PTO which meets monthly to discuss issues related to the needs of the parents and students. Parents also indicated workshops are provided to parents on various topics.
  - The majority of parents are not involved for various reasons, none of which have to do with the school not welcoming their input.
- The Co- Director of GEAR- UP reported the organization provides workshops to parents on various topics including stress management, bullying, and preventing and identifying teen substance abuse. In addition, GED and ESL classes are offered to parents on Saturday mornings.

<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:**

- According to school leaders, the school has not yet received the full amount of its SIG 1003 (g) funds. They have only received 10% of their allocated budget. This 10% is available only to pay the salary of the mentor principal, master and teachers. NYCDoE indicated the Office of Business Management for the City is holding the funds because they have been tied to ARRA funds. Schools that do not have other funding to front the money for plan implementation have not been able to enter into the envisioned agreements with intervention partners. This has had a negative impact on Long Island City High School in such activities as professional development and student support services.
- One day after the SED site visit, a NYCDoE representative presented the SED site visit team with revised copies of the school's School Improvement Grant (SIG) budget. The budget had different line items and a different total amount than the budget the team was using.
- School leaders stated the school is using resources from its Small Learning Communities Grant to implement the SLC, and other local funds to work with community partners.

<b>DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>District Support</b>	<i>The LEA provides or is planning to provide the school operational flexibility</i>



<b>Provides Operational Flexibility to the School</b>	<i>(such as matters 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:**

- School leaders expressed feeling as though they were given a say in how to utilize the transformation funding. They worked with a network leader to formulate the transformation implementation plan.
- As previously stated, Long Island City High School did not undergo a Joint Intervention Team visit; therefore, they did not have JIT recommendations to incorporate into their SIG application.
- The district made the decision to hire Long Island City High School's former principal as the transformation mentor principal, and to hire a new principal.

**Summary:**

The State Education Department five member site visit team conducted a full-day visit at Long Island City High School on January 4, 2011. Although the visit was brief, the team was able to ascertain information about the schools efforts to begin the implementation of their reform model for improving student learning.

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.