



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

School:	Long Island City High School Transformation Model	School District:	New York City Department of Education District # 30
Date of Site-Visit:	April 13, 2011 (Second Visit)	Members of Site-Visit Team:	LoriAnn Curtin, Sharon Holder, Mary Sapp, Jennifer Span

STAFFING	
Collective Bargaining	<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>
Teacher Evaluations linked to Student Performance	<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>
Identify and Reward staff or Remediate/Remove Staff	<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>
Implementation of Strategies to Recruit, Place, and Retain Qualified Staff	<i>Activities are funded to recruit, place, and/or retain highly qualified teachers.</i>

Findings:

- School leaders and teachers stated that the teacher effectiveness rubric is based loosely on the Danielson model and was developed by the New York City Department of Education (NYCDoE), United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the teacher effectiveness committee. The fourth domain - Professional Responsibilities – was still under negotiation with the teachers’ union at the time of the site visit.
- According to school leaders and the school improvement liaison, the eleven NYCDoE transformation schools of the 2010-11 school year were piloting the teacher effectiveness rubric at the time of the site visit.
- School leaders stated every teacher in the building would be observed at least once by June, using the new system. Teachers were only being rated on pedagogy during the 2010-11 school year. The school plans to use student growth and student performance in teacher evaluations starting in September, 2011.
- School leaders stated that currently, there are no contractually agreed upon systems in place to reward or remediate staff based on teacher evaluations.

- School leaders indicated they will be included in the hiring process for staff funded through the School Improvement Grant (SIG), but currently there is a freeze on hiring except in the high needs areas of special education and bi-lingual education.

PLANNING	
Implementation of Timeline	<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>
Performance Targets	<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>
Implementation of JIT Recommendations	<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 school submitted an amendment to its SIG 1003(g) that has been approved by the network and by the New York City Department of Education.
- According to the amendment submitted, and according to school leaders and the network leader, the "Transformation Mentor Principal" position, originally delineated in the SIG, is now being paid for through NYCDoE local funds due to the late arrival of SIG funds at the school. According to the school leaders, funds arrived from SED to NYCDoE in December 2010, but the school did not receive funding from NYCDoE until February 2011.
- The school improvement manager (SIM) position has been assumed by a current NYCDoE school improvement liaison that is filling dual roles. He assumed the SIM position in the first week of March 2011. The SIM reported the following.
 - Currently, he does not have a set schedule for visiting Long Island City High School. However, he has been on site several times in the past two weeks to help the school prepare for the SED site visit.
 - He stated that he also fulfills the position of SIM for Queens Vocational and Technical High School and for Flushing High School.
 - His role as a SIM is to ensure that the school improvement grant (SIG) is implemented with fidelity.
 - In his role as a school improvement liaison (SIL) for the district, he also participates in Joint Intervention Team (JIT) visits.
 - He communicates with the administrative team at Long Island City High School often via phone and email.
- 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.
- As stated in the monitoring report from the first site visit, 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.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Quality, On-going, Job-embedded Professional Development	<i>Implementing job-embedded professional development, as defined by the USED, and as approved by NYSED.</i>
Supportive of	<i>All professional development is researched based and supportive of the instructional needs of the school.</i>

Instructional Needs	
Monitoring and Analysis	<i>Professional development is monitored and analyzed to ensure staff participation and classroom implementation.</i>

Findings:

- The Institute for Student Achievement has provided embedded professional development for 24 staff members on the development of smaller learning communities. They are also contracted for school year 2011-2012.
- High Schools that Work is providing technical assistance to teachers on small learning communities and support for the Arts program.
- School leadership reports ongoing professional development for Differentiated Instruction.
- A master teacher provided a work log to demonstrate the ongoing professional development with teachers and staff. This log encompasses the time period of October 1, 2010 to April 1, 2011.
- Administration reported that professional development on the Charlotte Danielson domains has taken place. Administration reported that Domain 4 of the teacher evaluation rubric is under consideration.
- The principal reported data enrichment professional development will take place September 2011.
- The principal and the transformation mentor principal reported teachers have received professional development on how to effectively use common planning time and on strategies to improve student achievement.
- The principal and the transformation mentor principal has received professional development from the Teacher Effectiveness Program.
- The administration reported the assistant principals and network support specialists conduct instructional walk-throughs of their content specific classrooms and provide the teachers with immediate feedback of classroom instruction.
- Master teachers work with teachers during common planning time to provide teaching strategies based on the needs determined during the walk-throughs. Topics covered include: differentiated instruction, lesson plan format, hands-on curriculum, class management, teacher evaluation forms, portfolios, and infusing English as a second language strategies.
- The leadership team reported the assistant principals of instruction work with master teachers and the transformation mentor principal meets with the master teachers regularly.
- School leaders reported the effectiveness of PD is evidenced through demonstration lessons, observation of master teachers and master teachers observations of other teachers' lessons.
- The principal reported NYCDoE has held five professional development opportunities regarding implementation of the transformation model.
- The principal reported receiving professional development on teacher effectiveness, instructional rounds, response to intervention, time management, walkthroughs, and feedback to teachers.

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

Achievement	
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Findings:

- According to school leaders, the following data is used to identify and implement research-based instructional programs that are aligned with state standards.
 - Acuity assessments are being used at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.
 - Scantron performance exams are given to grades 9 and 10.
 - All core content area teachers administer midterms that are written by core content area departments. The midterms are aligned to Regents exams.
- The school leaders and teachers offered the following examples of how data is used to identify and implement research-based instructional programs.
 - Students are encouraged to participate in Castle Learning credit recovery programs.
 - Homework assignments are targeted and are coupled with extra tutoring.
 - Teachers meet weekly in data inquiry groups to identify how best to help particular students.
 - Data is used to identify students who could benefit from peer tutoring.
 - Data is being used by a team of English as a second language teachers and special education teachers to create goals to get a minimum of 10 students to pass the goals set.
 - Data is used to identify student needs in the Response to Intervention system.
 - Data is used to place students in the Saturday academy (set to begin on April 30, 2011) which provides tutoring in all core subject areas.
 - A Saturday academy for students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) began in March 2011.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Increased Learning Time	<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>
Mapped and Paced Curriculum	<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>
Instructional Programming is Linked to Needs Assessment	<i>Curricular decisions have been made to meet the needs of all students.</i>
Effective Teaching	<i>There is evidence of rigor, relevance, pacing, and alignment of curriculum to State Standards, and student engagement from Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT).</i>
ELL/SWD	<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:

- LICHS has no formalized AIS program during the school day for this current 2010-2011 school year.
- LICHS has a grade 9 advisory program, which is a component of the SLC 9th grade cohort.
- LICHS has an extended day AIS program. Student data or grades were not presented to determine the effectiveness of this program.
- Teachers reported the curriculum is aligned with the NYS standards.

- The instructional program used for English language learner students is the Milestones program.
- Teachers reported the master/turnaround teachers provide monthly training on differentiated instruction and lesson plan writing. This information is then turn-keyed to other instructional staff.
- The teachers reported that master/turnaround teachers model classroom lessons upon request and provide coaching to struggling teachers.
- Social studies teachers use data to analyze student responses and provide credit recovery program options to students.
- LICHS curriculum is aligned with the NYS regent's exam in science, social studies, and English language arts. Teachers reported they are just beginning to align with the Common Core Standards.
- Student learning is assessed via Acuity (beginning, middle and end) as well as mid-term exams.
- The Castle Learning Program is used for credit recovery and to inform instruction for struggling students.
- Teachers reported a shared practice of interdisciplinary modeling that works for all content areas. Outcome and student information is shared during common planning times.
- The SED site visit team visited multiple classrooms and noted varying levels of rigor in classroom instructional practices.

STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Support	<i>Students are receiving extra academic and developmental support based on student need (AIS, character development, PBIS).</i>
Counseling	<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>
Enrichment Opportunities	<i>Students have opportunities to participate in academic and social enrichment activities during and after the school day and during the summer.</i>

Findings:

- Students reported that LICHS is safe.
- Students reported that freshman class teachers are passionate and helpful and explain lessons to students.
- Students reported the advanced placement (AP) classes are challenging and the teachers of those courses prescribe more homework and independent studies than the teachers of other classes.
- Students reported they have opportunities to work in groups and these groups are formed based on skill level.
- Students reported they receive college information in their advisory classes.
- Student reported there is a student leadership group that is only available to AP students and those students are presented with many opportunities toward extra-curricular activities and college prep. Some students stated that they feel they are “scheduled out” of this type of course because they cannot fit it into their schedule.
- Leadership students offer tutoring after school to struggling students, as well as, Regents prep.
- Students reported suspensions were “out of control”, as students are being suspended for “attendance” issues.

TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
Effective Leadership	<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>
Leadership Development	<i>School leaders receive appropriate and timely professional development. Mentoring or coaching programs are in place and effective.</i>
School Improvement Manager/External Providers	<i>The school is being guided and informed by its partnership with its School Improvement Manager or external provider.</i>
Building Level Leadership Team	<i>The school is utilizing its Building Leadership Team to implement the intervention model.</i>

Findings:

- The former principal, who was new at the beginning of this school year, resigned from the position at the end of January 2011. He returned to his position as assistant principal of organization, and the former assistant principal for mathematics has assumed the role of interim acting principal until the application process is completed.
- The principal and assistant principals stated they conduct daily classroom walk-throughs, and they provide verbal feedback to teachers. Occasionally, teachers also get written feedback from informal walk-throughs.
- The school leaders stated that they have attended several professional development sessions offered by the NYCDoE related to the transformation model and the progress they have made since implementing the model.
- The transformation mentor principal stated he has attended Cahn Fellows, a program for outstanding principals.
- The transformation mentor principal stated that he meets with the principal on a daily basis, and provides her with the tools to think through long and short term goals. He maintains a running log of their meetings.
- Both the transformation mentor principal and the principal stated they work towards meeting goals with the assistant principals and work with the union chapter leader to ensure that there is no strife. Currently, the transformation mentor principal runs the professional development meetings with the new assistant principals. They meet at least once a week, often twice per week. The focus of meetings is on a variety of needs, sometimes the topics are decided upon at the moment, sometimes they plan to discuss specific needs.
- The interim acting principal stated that a NYCDoE leadership academy mentor principal comes to visit twice a month. He provides her with feedback regarding time management, provides a global view of instruction, has provided information on how to give feedback, and is supporting the interim acting principal in interviewing potential candidates for hiring.
- The interim acting principal stated she is involved in professional development regarding teacher effectiveness, and she also participates in monthly principal meetings that the network provides, and which are conducted as instructional rounds. Last month they focused on differentiated instruction. Following her training, she provides turn-key training to the assistant principals.
- School leaders stated they have a building level leadership team which includes parents, teachers, and students. They also have a school leadership team and a small learning communities planning committee.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Environment is Conducive to Learning	<i>The school is safe, orderly and academically-oriented. Supervision is sufficient, respectful and consistent.</i>
Shared Vision	<i>School staff understands the focus/ vision of the school's improvement efforts and supports them in a consistent and effective manner.</i>
Collaboration	<i>Administrators, teachers and staff communicate openly, positively and effectively. Professional learning communities exist and affect improvement efforts.</i>
Parent Involvement	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of parents.</i>
External/Community-Based Partners	<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 and parents reported the school is safe.
- The Code of Conduct is posted on the walls of the school.
- Teachers plan and communicate collaboratively within their PLCs.
- Teachers and administrators are involved in ongoing professional development about smaller learning communities as a tool to increase academic achievement.
- The administrators reported various strategies to get parents involved in the school.
- Professional development for parents has included the following topics: technology, bullying, community-based organizations, and yoga (offered by one of the CBOs, The Leadership Program).
- Teachers stated the last SED site visit report was shared with staff.
- The parent focus group was attended by three parents: mothers of a freshman, a junior and a junior special education student and a graduate. All are active with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and reported the following:
 - The small learning communities were more organized with this year's incoming class.
 - There is more communication to parents this year (i.e. phone message system).
 - The advisory period for students is more structured.
 - PD on Small Learning Communities has been conducted at SLT meetings and had been turn-keyed at PTA meetings.
 - Orientation and explanation about the transformation model has taken place at school leadership team meetings, and the school leadership team has shared the school's transformation plans with the staff and with the parent association.
 - Parents are able to log in to the schools new data program used by the school to view absenteeism, tardiness, missed classes, and student transcripts.
 - There is a positive and safe school climate in the building and excitement about the transformation of the school.
 - Parents are pleased with the supplemental education services and online academic supports.
 - Notices sent home and phone messages are available in English and Spanish.
- The student focus group also felt the school was a safe environment. They felt the school was well monitored with staff and their "walkie-talkies."
- Students also expressed there was "open" communication in the school, however, not all students were aware of the Leadership program that exists.
- There is a student government in the school and they have shared ideas for improvement with school leaders.
- The GEAR-UP organization is providing students support with college applications and financial aid applications. The organization begins their

interaction with students at freshman orientation (when they collect their e-mail and mailing addresses for future communication.) They also advertise trips to various colleges, provide college material, and conduct workshops on preparing for college. Members of the organization visit classes weekly and give lessons on college, tuition, financial aid, etc.

- A partnership with a museum has been established and students have had an opportunity to create their own sculptures.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	
Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding	<i>The LEA is using School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding to support the implementation of or planning for school intervention models.</i>
Use of Other Funding Sources besides 1003 (g)	<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:

- During their focus group session, school leaders stated general school funds were used to begin school improvement initiatives. SIG funding was not released to the school until February, 2011.
- School leaders provided the site visit team with a draft version of the school’s amended fiscal statement. A corresponding budget narrative was supplied as well. Together, these documents confirm funds are being used to support the implementation of the school’s transformation model.
- As previously mentioned, school and network representatives were not aware of the current approval status of the amended budget.
- Other funding sources which are supporting the transformation of the school include the small learning communities’ grant, which is for \$400,000 per year for 5 years, totaling 2.2 million dollars.

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

Findings:

- School leaders reported a collaborative relationship with network staff and that network representatives are on-site on a regular basis.
- During their focus group session, school leaders stated that the network leader is the school’s “conduit” for district support from NYCDoE. The network leader assists school leaders and coordinates school partnership efforts.
- School leaders were given a say in how to utilize the transformation funding. They worked with a network leader to formulate the transformation implementation plan.
- Network and district representatives have also been working with staff from the eleven NYCDoE transformation schools, providing professional development for

- teacher effectiveness evaluations. The schools have been meeting together for mutual support, school improvement planning, and student assessment training.
- The Office of Portfolio Planning assigned a liaison to the school. In addition to work being done at this school, the school improvement liaison represents numerous NYCDoE schools in accountability as a school improvement manager. According to school leaders, the school improvement liaison had not yet worked with the school on site.
 - 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.
 - As stated above, the district is undergoing an application process to identify a permanent principal for Long Island City High School.

Summary:

The State Education Department four-member site visit team conducted a full-day site visit at Long Island City High School on April 13, 2011. Although the visit was brief, the team was able to acquire information about the school's efforts to implement their reform model for improving student learning.

The site visit team met with various stakeholders and reviewed initiatives that appear to provide the school with the opportunity to make progress towards improved student achievement. The school leadership team is visible and supportive, and the network is actively involved in the school improvement efforts. Numerous external partners are working collaboratively with the school, and the teaching staff is proactive and student-centered.

Staff, students, parents and educational partners all spoke positively of the school's efforts to improve student achievement. District and school representatives were candid with their comments and highly cooperative throughout the PLA monitoring process. The school and the district appear to be working together to coordinate their efforts and implement as much of their Transformation Model as possible.

The next site visit to Long Island City High School may take place during the fall of 2011.