



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

Progress Review Report — 2011-2012

School:	Murray Hill Academy	School District:	Community School District (CSD) 2
Date of Site Visit:	March 22, 2012	Team Member	Dr. Kathryn A. Ahern

Address: 111 East 33rd Street, New York, NY 10016

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School Principal: Anita Manninen-Felix

Assistant Principal: Esther Shraga,

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SIM /SIL: N/A

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Grade Configuration: 9-10

Total Enrollment: 212

Area of PLA identification: N/A

Identified subgroups—N/A

School intervention model: Turnaround/Phase-in – new school to replace Norman Thomas High School.

School's community-based organization (CBO) partners and major vendors

1. Children First Network (CFN) 106	2. High Schools That Works (HSTW)
3. Good Shepherd Services	4. iLearn
5. Educators for Social Responsibility (ERS)	6. iZone 360
7. Aventa Learning	

STAFFING	
Organization and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school administrative team is comprised of the principal and one assistant principal (AP). The principal was on medical leave at the time of the NYSED team site visit. School operations were managed by the assistant principal during her absence. • The principal was appointed effective September 01, 2010. The assistant principal was appointed as acting principal in November 2011 while the principal was on sick leave. • There are 20 teachers employed at the school including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Four English language arts (ELA) teachers - one dually certified ELA-special education teacher ○ Four math teachers with one dually certified math-special education teacher ○ One dually certified theater arts-special education teacher and one with science and special education certifications • The school has a specialized mission to serve transfer students. The school holds 60-70% of seats open to general education student with 30-40% of seats reserved for ninth grade transfer students under the age of 16 with zero to no more than eight credits toward graduation.
Teacher Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AP has received New York City Department of Education (NYCDoE) training to implement the Teacher Effectiveness Model rubric for teacher observations. The low inference observation model provides a rubric based on the Danielson model. • The AP noted that the school has developed a teacher improvement plan. • The Murray Hill Academy has employed a consultant from Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) rubric. • The AP stated each teacher would receive at least one formal observation per year. Informal observations or “walk-throughs” occur weekly because of the small size of the school. Teachers are provided informal verbal and e-mail feedback within 48 hours.

PLANNING	
Student Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The average daily attendance rate to date was 84 percent. For March 2012, the average attendance rate had dropped to 80 percent. • The school has identified six potential long-term absentees. Good Shepherd is working with 29 students with chronic attendance issues. The group provides counseling services, makes home visits, and mediation between parent and child, services to re-integrate the student back into the school community and works with each student to build individual plans. • New York University social work interns are also available to follow up and check in daily with the identified students. • The school also employs a full time attendance teacher, who makes daily phone calls to the homes of absent students, uses an automated telephone wake-up call system, sends letters home, schedules parent conferences and tutoring services. The school also uses incentives and prizes for improved attendance and recognizes perfect attendance during school assemblies.
Student Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are selected for Good Shepherd services based on low attendance, lateness, poor academic performance and behavioral issues. • Anecdotal and current academic data is gathered using <i>Skedula</i>. Information from transcripts, credit accumulation and results of Regents exams are also gathered. • Each identified student is assigned a mental health advocate. The advocates are with Good Shepherd, the guidance counselors, social worker interns or school counseling social worker. • The school provides after school tutoring services through STARS; a study hall

	<p>is built into each student’s schedule with a teacher monitoring the room and is available for remediation assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Courses such as physical education and ceramics are available. • The school created a special program for troubled students called “T-zone.” It is a long-term in-school intervention program where students work one-on-one with a teacher and mental health advocate to catch up on late and missing academic work. Students stay in T-zone until they catch back up academically to the rest of the class, and to the extent that the student believes he/she is re-introduced back into the regular classroom.
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who had fallen behind in academic work have been able to get the personal assistance they needed, improve their behavior and social interactions with teachers and peers. • Students have shown improvement in reducing their lateness to school, with eight students able to return to regular classes to date.
Teacher Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teacher attendance rate is 95% to date.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)	
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The professional development (PD) topics are selected by assessing the needs of the teachers and students with the intent to better support the teachers. • Teachers request some topics and school leaders work with staff to understand the mission and vision of the school. • Based on the assessment of needs, a PD calendar is developed and updated. It is shared and reviewed during morning roll call if any PD events or sessions are scheduled for the day. • Each morning the school leader conducts “Morning Roll-call” and during that brief time (about 10 minutes) before classes start, information is shared to keep the faculty informed of student updates, program changes, parent conferences and school related events and activities. • Copies of the PD calendar, session agendas and attendance records were available for inspection at the time of the NYSED team site visit. • Teachers and school leaders reported they plan collaboratively to develop lesson plans and units to best meet the needs of students. Teachers work collaboratively with others on their subject area teams with the support of a lead teacher. • Data inquiry teams use student data to evaluate assessments and to make decisions about ways to improve instruction. • Common planning time (CPT) is built into teachers’ schedules.
Instructional and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school consults <i>High Schools That Work</i> (HSTW) and participates in the NYCDOE <i>iLearn</i> program. Workshops assist teachers with instructional strategies and other classroom supports. • The Educators for Social Responsibility (ESR) works with teachers to hone their classroom management skills. • Math teachers receive support through the Petrie Foundation through a City University of New York (CUNY) consultant. • Teams of subject area teachers work collaboratively with teacher team leaders to share best practices. • School leaders observe classroom instruction and activities to assist teachers in making adjustments in practices, strategies and activities to adapt continually to meet student academic and social-emotional needs. • Administrators, collaborating with HSTW, ESR and team leaders, conduct frequent informal observations to provide a variety of supports for teachers and instruction.
Monitoring and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development is monitored by session attendance records and through both formal and informal classroom observations. • Teachers who receive PD outside of the school building are given the

	<p>opportunity to turnkey the information with all teachers and staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are given resources and allowed time to implement the lessons learned and to revise practices.
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DATA ANALYSIS	
Data that Informs Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school uses <i>Datacation</i> and <i>Skedula</i> to record student grades, anecdotal behavioral and attendance information. The school has used baseline assessments from Ed Performance and McGraw Hill <i>ITA</i> for math; in English language arts (ELA), it uses <i>Expert 21</i> and Ed Performance. For social studies, the school the school administers a multiple choice and essay exam based on the Regents assessment. The school has determined that fully 70% of students arrive at the school between Level 1 and Level 2 using the baseline assessment data. The school also collects formative data during case conferencing and classroom observation. Based on the social-emotional needs of the transfer and over-age ninth-grade students, which is determined by noting suspensions, case conferences and student attendance in the T-Zone data, the school determined it needed a stronger mental health component for all. Summative data is used to provide more individualized instruction in literacy using <i>Achieve 3000</i>, opportunities for credit recovery, direct teacher intervention in class, more focused tutoring in STARS, and during independent studies.
Data & Student Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data is collected through baseline assessment, pre- and post-testing to measure growth, standardized tests, and pass/fail rates of classes compared to results from the Regents exams. Inquiry teams in each academic department to gauge progress throughout the year for groups of students. These results are shared with all teachers in the content areas during scheduled weekly content area meetings. Teachers then plan lessons together and prepare differentiations based on individual student needs. Different instructional styles are used in differentiation for students too, from traditional face-to-face instruction t blended and on-line learning using on-line programs to address learners at all levels. All teachers are expected to participate in data analysis during content team meetings, as part of IEP teams, in data inquiry teams and case conferencing for specific students and in parent conferences. The data analysis takes place in weekly meetings of the various types of teams. Data is collected throughout the year and analyzed on a regular basis to inform instruction. Key data collection and analysis points occur at the end of each marking period and after each Regents exam. These key periods are then used to prepare future programs, plan credit recovery options and used for self-reflection among teachers, with a special focus on pedagogy.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Learning Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has an eight period schedule, which begins at 8:00 am and ends at 2:40 pm daily. Teachers gather for morning roll call at 7:50 am. Each class meets for 48 minutes, with a two-minute passing period before lunch, during period 1 through period 5. Lunch for students is 37 minutes long each day during sixth period. Teachers have CPT during the same period. The school shares the building with four other schools, and runs a breakfast program daily. The school provides after school services until approximately 5:00 pm daily. Occasional Saturday programs run from 9:00 am - 1:00 pm. Teachers meet weekly after student early dismissal on Wednesday. The time from 12:45 pm to 2:40 pm is used for PD and various team meetings.

Mapped & Paced Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for math and ELA have been incorporated into the school's curriculum. • The CFN consultant has been working with teachers to complete the mapping and revision of the curriculum to include the CCLS in both ELA and math courses.
Instructional Programming Linked to Student Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's curriculum has been revised to incorporate the CCLS. • Lessons are differentiated to meet the individual needs of students. • Based on last year's results, the teachers have reorganized units and topics of the curriculum. • Technology has been incorporated through blending it with lecture and other classroom activities. • The entire teaching staff and administrative team are involved in programming decisions.
Effective Teaching Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were observed during several classes and many subjects by a NYSED Site Visit Team member. The use of interactive white boards was noted as a regular part of the daily routine. • Classrooms observed appeared to have teachers skilled in using the technology and online resources effectively to motivate students to be engaged actively with the course content. • Teachers were observed employing a variety of creative strategies and materials to engage students. • The teachers made effective use of collaborative activities to engage students and to encourage them to remain on-task. • Many levels of effective questioning were observed during some of the classroom visits. • Significant differentiation was observed. The level of differentiation was distinctive and notable, but occasionally appeared uneven in practice between the classrooms. The levels of challenge and remediation appeared to be appropriately engaging and stimulating for students. • Every classroom visited had copies of both daily and weekly lesson plans available for visitors, with student work groups listed, differentiated assignments and differentiation in strategies outlined. • Teachers showed samples of previous weeks' lesson plans that showed the same level of detail for student work groups, assignments and strategies. • Teachers have adopted a common lesson plan template. It has been posted online and teachers regularly contribute lesson plans to online file for collaboration and peer feedback.
ELL/SWD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for English language learners (ELL) includes <i>Achieve 3000</i>. • Teachers include interdisciplinary topics, which focus on document analysis, writing essays and grammar activities. • To support students with disabilities (SWD) the school has 16 interactive co-teaching (ICT) classrooms. Because the school employs six special education teachers and eight teachers with dual special education with subject area licenses, the school has significant support for SWD and dually identified ELL and SWD.

STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Social/Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the extra academic and developmental social-emotional support programs at the school include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Big Brothers, Big Sisters Program ○ Good Shepherd Services ○ ICT classes ○ T-Zone—the school's alternative education program for students with in-school suspensions, where students receive one-on-one tutoring and counseling until behavior, attendance and grades improve.

<p>Counseling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some of the counseling programs at the school include <i>Career Choices</i>, a freshman curriculum used in Success 101 classes taught by guidance counselors to motivate high school students to develop a 10-year plan for their futures; • Partnerships with Good Shepherd and social work interns allow each student in the school to meet with a counselor regularly. • The attendance teacher conducts home visits and parent conferences to ensure improvement in attendance for all students. • In ELA, class students received and reviewed the NYC Chancellor’s Code of Discipline. • Credit recovery is completed in one of two ways; students complete assignments with a teacher after school or through weekend or school holiday breaks; or, using online credit recovery courses offered through <i>iLearn</i> and <i>Aventa Learning</i>.
<p>Enrichment Opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is currently offering three Advanced Placement courses through <i>Aventa Learning</i>—world history, U.S. history and environmental science. • Students also have opportunities for independent study options through working with individual teachers. • Students to participate in academic and social enrichment activities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student government is run with volunteers in cooperation with PENCIL and the Tischman Corporation. PENCIL, a partnership program that matches business volunteers with public school principals based on backgrounds, interests and goals. Partners are then empowered and supported to develop solutions that transform their schools. ○ Big Brothers and Big Sisters Program; ○ Yearbook club; ○ Mouse Squad; ○ Dance club; ○ Fashion club; ○ Game club; ○ Community leaders and school beautification clubs; ○ Murray Hill Paw Print, the school newspaper; ○ Sports clubs, including basketball, volleyball and bowling.

<p>SCHOOL LEADERSHIP</p>	
<p>Effective Leadership and Principal Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The formal evaluation for the principal will occur at the end of the school year in accordance to union negotiations concerning the Principal’s Performance Review (PPR) goals and the instructional objectives of the school’s Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). • The principal and AP are mentored by a retired principal from the Leadership Academy.
<p>Leadership Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development provided for administrators, which is separate and/or different from teachers is listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monthly CFN 106 principal’s meetings ○ <i>High Schools That Work</i> (HSTW) ○ <i>iLearn</i> ○ <i>iZone 360</i>
<p>School Improvement Manager/External Providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal meets weekly with CFN 106 liaison to discuss the school’s progress in its development plan. • The CFN 106 liaison indicated that she has been a partner with the school since its inception and on site regularly with teachers since the beginning of the school year. Agendas minutes from inquiry team meetings and PD sessions bear this up.
<p>Building Level Leadership Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AP indicated that she meets with the other principals in the building monthly to discuss building issues and security. This information was also verified by the principal of Norman Thomas High School, which shares the

	building with the school.
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SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
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Environment is Conducive to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teachers and parents reported the safe, supportive family advisory organizational structure ensured each student had both academic and social support. • Parents and guardians available for interview on the day of the NYSED team site visit indicated the school has a safe, inviting and respectful academic atmosphere. • Social workers who offer student and family support were available to interview and reported that they had frequent contact with parents, especially those with struggling students. • The activities in the hall during passing time showed that students view their school with pride and conduct themselves in a pleasant and business-like manner. • Teachers step outside their classrooms to supervise during passing time and greet students by name as they enter the room. • The AP reported she regularly stations herself at the intersection the busiest hall for the school. • It was observed that she greeted students by name and in turn, the students responded to her inquiries eagerly and with respect.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and the AP reported respectful communications and opportunities for informal conversation as being a key part of the school's culture. • Observations during the CPT upheld the collaborative and supportive mission of the school.
Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school's parent involvement plans include an active Parent Association, school leadership team, a school messaging system to notify families of school-related alerts through telephone, e-mail and text options; the school's newspaper, Paw Print, a school attendance awareness program and parent-teacher conferences held at the end of the marking period. • The Parent Association members indicated it is involved in fundraising activities and assisting the school in creating a community where parent involvement is encouraged and respected.
External/Community-Based Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school indicated it has an excellent working relationship with all of its school partners. Interviews with those partners verified a mutual respect and enthusiasm for the ongoing collaborations.

BUDGET AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	
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Budget Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has a NYCDoE approved plan for the SIG funds.
Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to the NYSED document entitled "New York State Improvement Grant (1003g) Cohort 1 and 2 Awarded Amounts," the school was awarded received \$300,000 for the 2011-12 school year. • As a phase-in school in the Turnaround model, Murray Hill Academy received the SIG funds in early October.
Use of Other Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school receives full NYCDoE support. • The school is also eligible this year to Title I funds.

DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT	
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District Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The AP indicated the NYCDOE provides ongoing support to the school through its collaboration with CFN 106.
JIT/SIG Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A

SUMMARY

The NYSED Site Visit Team member conducted a one-day visit at Murray Hill Academy. The principal was out on medical leave at the time of the site visit, and the assistant principal was the designated leader in her absence. Multiple conversations with the principal and supporting documentation resulted in a wealth of information on the Turnaround Model phase-in, school's program and mission. The school currently serves students in the ninth grade and tenth grades, and plans to add one new grade over the next two years until it serves students in grades 9-12. The NYSED site visit team member was able to ascertain information about the school's efforts to implement its mission through following its NYCDoE start-up proposal, direct observation and extensive document review. According to the school mission, it has been designed to work with under-credited students 16 years and younger that have not yet completed the ninth grade.

The assistant principal and teachers were observed interacting with each other and with students in a respectful and business-like manner, and students appear to respond in kind. The school has a parent organization. Parents and guardians were available on the day of the site visit for interview. They indicated the school was supportive of both their student and themselves. Students perceive the school as a safe and supportive environment that is conducive to learning. There appears to be ample academic support for students and the school has clear-cut action plans for academic achievement for each student. Social workers and other counselors and students confer regularly to assist students in making adequate academic and social-emotional progress.

The school has network support from CFN 106. Good Shepherd Services is an active participant in supporting students. With the solid support provided by school support partners, the assistant principal and teachers are actively engaged in the strenuous process of building a school that is responsive to students' academic needs and faithful to its stated mission.