



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

<b>School:</b>	Fowler High School – Transformation Model	<b>School District:</b>	Syracuse CSD
<b>Date of Site-Visit:</b>	October 14, 2010	<b>Members of Site-Visit Team:</b>	Major Capers, LoriAnn Curtin, Andrew McGrath, Sharon Holder

<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:**

- According to teachers interviewed, no further discussions/negotiations regarding revision to the teachers' collective bargaining agreement have taken place.
- Staff stated that there is no further information available to them regarding how their evaluations will be linked to student performance.
- School leaders reported that the growth model for teacher evaluations is currently being developed with the Syracuse City School District and the Syracuse Teachers' Association.
- The Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) site visit team observed that all new staff positions planned for in the School Implementation Grant (SIG) application are filled.
- School leaders reported that fifteen staff members are currently registered for the *Take One* program. Additional staff is being recruited to participate in this professional development.
- School leaders reported that contracts are in place for teachers to receive financial incentives based on extended teaching time.
- District leaders stated that the district was approved to receive the State Teacher Incentive Grant (STIG), which requires a great deal of cooperation with the teacher's union. Meetings have already taken place.

<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:**

- School leaders reported that teachers are allowed to work with students for an extra block (6 rather than 5) during the day and receive a one/sixth salary increase.
- School leaders reported that the school has begun using peer coaching and the Collaborative Coaching and Learning (CCL) model.
- The district leaders and the school staff reported that they have not yet received the technology (e.g., net books) ordered. Currently, the technology is being inventoried and labeled at the district office.
- The use of diagnostic and formative assessments to monitor Individual Learning Plan (ILP) progress has not yet been implemented.
- The district/school documents reviewed were found to be aligned with the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) recommendations at the time the school improvement grant application was approved.

<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:**

- School leaders reported that Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) training will start October 20, 2010. They also reported that Response to Intervention (RTI) is in place for the ninth grade and the next phase of training will be provided to specific grade levels.
- School leaders reported that the talent development coaches and building literacy instructional coach are in place and have defined schedules for professional development and observations.
- School leaders reported that the Collaborative Coaching and Learning model are established as well as the peer coaching model.

<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:**

- Teachers and school leaders reported that the data dashboard has not yet been implemented. It has been introduced to teachers, but teachers have not yet received training in how to use the system.
- The school leadership team reported that teacher teams are in place to monitor data regarding attendance, credits accrued, passing rates and behavior. This is in place for grades 9 and 10 as part of the Talent Development program.

<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>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 school leadership team stated that student learning time has been extended from 8:10 – 3:10, however due to funding the school is unable to go to a 4:10 work day.
- The leadership team reported that the new instructional specialist is facilitating the Collaborative Coaching and Learning model sessions for teachers.
- The school leadership team reported that the district has developed a mapped and paced written curriculum that is available for some grades via the district office.
- The PLA site visit team observed that learning objectives were displayed and that instruction was aligned to NYS standards. In most classrooms students were engaged in the teacher directed and self-directed activities observed.
- The school leadership team reported that ILP's have been developed for grade 9 students, but need to be completed for Grade 10 students.
- The schools specific implementation plan stated that the next phase of the district's 4-Tier Framework (RTI) model will be grade level specific, with the senior class.
- The implementation plan stated and the leadership team confirmed that 30 hours of SIOP training will start on October 20, 2010.
- The leadership team reported that prior to the school year all teaching staff participated in a series of formative assessment trainings.

- The school leadership reported that special education teachers have participated in training in specific content areas based on the district's new prioritized curriculum.

<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:**

- Students in need are receiving Academic Intervention Services (AIS) during the school day based on their Regents exam performance.
- Students and parents reported feeling supported by the school leadership team at Fowler.
- Some students reported that they do not have books to take home, however they receive packets of information that does not always provide them with the necessary information needed to complete their assignments.
- Students reported that they are able to take college level courses
- One student reported that she is attempting to pass the global history Regents exam for the eighth time. Teachers have established a special tutorial program for the student.
- Evidence regarding counseling was not requested during this visit. This information will be collected during the next site visit.

<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:**

- Staff reported feeling supported by the new school leaders.
- Parents indicated that the principal is establishing a culture of high expectations for students and staff.
- Students reported that the principal ensures that all individuals are treated with fairness, dignity and respect.
- The school leadership team reported that the school has the opportunity to design their professional development days.
- A school improvement manager was not hired for this school; however, the district established an Office of School Reform. Teachers reported that staff

members from that office are highly visible in the school, and conduct classroom walk-throughs frequently.

<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:**

- Students and parents interviewed reported that the school climate is safe and that school leaders, teachers and guidance are attentive to their academic and career aspirations.
- Parents reported that students do not bring textbooks home, however they have packets of information that are sometimes not clearly readable nor have examples showing how to complete work assignments.
- Parents reported that although they have a Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) there is a need to reactivate the group so that the PTO can be more responsive to the needs of parents.

<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 LEA is using the SIG funding of approximately \$5.8 million to support the transformation model at Fowler High School over three years.
- The approved FS-10 for the Fowler 1003(g) grant shows that approximately \$1.4 million of other Federal or State allocations are committed over the next three years to directly support school improvement efforts at Fowler High School.

<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</b>	<i>In accordance with SIG requirements, the LEA has a plan for hiring and</i>

<b>identify, recruit, place, and retain effective leadership</b>	<i>retaining leadership.</i>
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**Findings:**

- It was observed that the district is providing direct support to the school through the Director of School Reform. According to school and district staff, the Director of School Reform is ensuring fidelity of implementation of the School Improvement Grant through frequent meetings and classroom walkthroughs.

**Summary:**

The PLA team conducted a half-day site visit at the Fowler High School on October 14, 2010. Although the visit was brief, the PLA team was able to ascertain information about the school's efforts to begin the implementation of their reform model for improved student learning.

The next site visit conducted will be a full day review and will focus on findings related to: 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.