



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

Progress Review Report — 2011-2012

School:	Poughkeepsie High School (Transformation)	School District:	Poughkeepsie City School District
Date of Site Visit:	October 20, 2011	Team Member(s)	Andrew McGrath, Dr. Sharon Holder, Major Capers

Address: 70 Forbus Street, Poughkeepsie, NY

Principal Telephone: (845) 451-4850 **Fax:** (845) 451-4807

BEDS #: 135100010000

School Principal: Edgar Glascott

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SIM /SAM: Carol Mineo

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Grade Configuration: 9 to 12

Total Enrollment: 1085

Area(s) of PLA identification:
 Graduation, Math and ELA

List all identified subgroups:
 Students With Disabilities (SWD), African American, Hispanic

Intervention model:
 Transformation model – The current principal is in his second year at the school. Prior to joining the high school staff, he led the turnaround efforts at the district’s middle school.

List the school’s community-based organization (CBO) partner(s)

1.	Adelphi Consultants	4.	New York University
2.	Marist College Upward Bound	5.	
3.	Liberty Partnerships	6.	

STAFFING	
Organization and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has hired a school improvement manager who is responsible for coordinating the school turnaround efforts. Teachers have been identified to teach an additional sixth assignment. Compensation comes in the form of a Poughkeepsie Public School Teachers Association (PPSTA) stipend, in the form of an additional hourly wage. This is funded by the School Improvement Grant (SIG). A full-time (1.0 FTE) reading teacher is currently on staff at the high school and

	<p>is funded by the SIG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local funds have been used to hire English Language Arts (ELA) and math instructional coaches who are utilized as department chairs and do not carry a teaching load. • School and district officials stated the new principal was hired at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year. He previously led the reform of Poughkeepsie Middle School as it progressed from restructuring status to a school in Good Standing. • The administrative staff stated all staff positions listed in the grant have been filled. The positions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ School Improvement Manager (1.0 FTE) ○ Reading Teacher (1.0 FTE) ○ Peer Assistance Review Site Coordinator (0.5 FTE) ○ Nine classroom teachers receive extended teaching day pay
Teacher Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenured and non-tenured teachers are evaluated by the principal and each of the assistant principals through formal and informal observations which are aligned with the district's current evaluation format. • The leadership team indicated school-wide behavior issues and school improvement initiatives have prevented them from being in the classrooms to conduct the appropriate number of observations. • According to school leaders and instructional coaches, negative evaluations are not currently linked to corrective professional development on the part of the instructional coaches. • Teachers and leaders stated information gathered during informal observations is recorded on one of several forms, depending on the type and purpose. Feedback is provided to teachers within three to five days. • Formal observations include a pre-lesson meeting and lesson plan review; formal observation of a teaching lesson; and a follow-up meeting to review the results of the observation. • Teachers and school leaders stated lesson plans are collected weekly and feedback is provided. • The administrative leadership reported they are working with the PPSTA and the administrative unit to develop the evaluation that is linked to student performance. This evaluation will include a student performance data component. • The administrators interviewed stated the district has created a committee which has met twice to discuss and recommend plans for implementation of SIG, Peer Assistance and Review (PAR), innovation activities and evaluation processes. • The administration reported staff will attend upcoming week long New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) training for PAR and new evaluation tool.

PLANNING	
Student Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers and school leaders stated student attendance remains an issue. Concerns in this area include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The district relying on public transportation rather than utilizing school district busing ○ Distance traveled by students to and from school ○ Inclement weather and daylight savings time ○ A high transient population ○ Lack of parental and community involvement • During their focus groups session, students suggested attendance might be linked to lack of school spirit. • Teachers make numerous telephone calls to the homes of their students on a weekly basis to address academic and attendance issues. • The alternative learning situation for the district has changed. Recently-incarcerated and socially-challenged students are now mainstreamed in the high school. School leaders and teachers reported this has led to an increase in disruptive behavior throughout the building. • Officers from the Poughkeepsie Police Department are no longer on-site. • Administrative leadership provided an attendance report that shows that

	<p>Poughkeepsie High School has an attendance rate of 87.8% for the period ending 9/30/11.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters are sent to students and parents after students are absent over five days. Attendance teachers and the attendance office staff contact parents. • A full-time (1.0 FTE) attendance teacher is on-staff at the high school.
Student Performance/ Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not currently have an effective academic intervention services (AIS) program in place for the core areas. • As part of the school's improvement plan, an additional teaching period has been added to the day for intensive instruction. It is designed to satisfy AIS needs throughout the building. • Information regarding the effectiveness of the additional teaching period was not available at the time of the NYSED Team site visit. • The Instructional Support Team (IST) analyzes student data and recommends interventions such as NovaNet, Extended periods/day, Saturday programs and social worker interventions. • The English Department chair reviews student data and recommends ninth graders for remedial reading services. • The school leadership reported staff reviews assessment, attendance, and incidents to determine the impact of interventions.
Teacher Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to school leaders, teacher attendance is not an issue that specifically affects the implementation of the school improvement plan. • The district uses Dutchess BOCES educational resources automated substitute placement and absence management system to track teacher absences and position vacancies. • Teacher evaluations (e.g., informal/formal) are conducted and attendance is discussed as part of the feedback process. • The leadership completed an annual summary of employee attendance which included recommendations for improvement.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)	
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional development (PD) for both teachers and administrators is just beginning. The professional development plan for the school was developed to promote rapid and sustainable improvements in student achievement. • To date, the principal has not participated in professional development sessions for school turnaround. • The leadership team attended School Administrators Association of New York State (SAANYS) Network training sessions. • Teachers participated in New York University (NYU) training in the disproportionate assignment of students with disabilities. • Math and English language arts (ELA) coaches attend content specific conferences and then turnkey relevant material during common planning time. • Teachers stated further discussions are needed regarding development of a comprehensive professional development plan. • The leadership team reported net book training is to occur after teachers receive hardware on site. • Professional learning communities are also in the process of being conducted in math and ELA departments. However, it is not clear this is occurring for other content areas.
Instructional and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has both ELA and Math coaches who provide instructional support to teachers in these content areas. • Teachers from other content areas reported they do not feel as supported as the ELA and math departments.
Monitoring and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School administrators conduct informal and formal evaluations to determine if teachers incorporate professional development for teaching and planning into classroom practice.

DATA ANALYSIS	
Data that Informs Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common planning time is currently in its second year of implementation. Instructional coaches and teachers work collaboratively to plan lessons, share best practices, analyze student data, and align curriculum/pacing guides. • Each ELA and math department has one full-time (1.0 FTE) person acting as both instructional coach and department chairperson. They do not have a teaching load. Staff indicated data analyses conducted during common planning sessions are more developed in these content areas as a result. • The school is using BOCES Account Reports System (BARS) and Datacation to review data at the school. • The district has developed an annual summary of employee attendance and school incidents to review data trends in these areas. • Teachers review benchmark assessment data several times a year to determine needed student interventions. • Teachers use Regents examination data and common assessment item analysis to review student progress. The school intends to move to a five-week interim review process.
Data & Student Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Item analysis of Regents exams occurs in each of the core areas. This occurs on a timely basis, given the availability of Regents exam results. • The school has a data review team and a transformation team. Both groups analyze data that address student achievement, graduation rates and attendance. • Adelphi University was recently contracted to conduct a comprehensive analysis of district attendance as it relates to geographic and demographic situations within the City of Poughkeepsie. • Development and analysis of formative assessments are not consistent throughout the building, from department to department. • At the time of the NYSED Team site visit, efforts to implement <i>Datacation</i> throughout the building were being planned. It was anticipated the school would be capable of utilizing the data system within five weeks. • Net books are currently on order for all members of the teaching staff. These small and highly-portable computers are to be used to assist in data analysis and school-wide communication. • Teachers stated the district has multiple data sources however, this information has not been evenly disseminated throughout the building at the classroom level.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Learning Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In September, 2011, learning time was extended to a tenth period and some students are now taking classes for ten periods. The school day runs from 7:45am-3:26pm Monday through Friday. • The instructional schedule has been adjusted to allow teachers in the core areas to participate in common planning time on a daily basis.
Mapped & Paced Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff has started to review their curriculum to determine how it will be aligned with the new Common Core Standards. This year ELA and math will be the focus. • Both formative and normative assessments are being used to review and adjust curriculum maps. • District administrators, school leaders and classroom teachers are involved in making revisions to the curriculum.
Effective Teaching Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adelphi and NYU are partners that are working with school staff to focus on changes in classroom practice. • The NYSED Site Visit Team observed few examples of displays of student work, rubrics and banners promoting educational and behavioral expectations. • The NYSED Site Visit Team observed uneven instruction throughout the building, with strong teaching and classroom management techniques offset by several instances of ineffective teaching and poor classroom management.

ELL/SWD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The leadership team indicated there are sufficient numbers of highly qualified staff to support ELL and SWD students. • NYU is working to provide training on disproportionate placement of students with disabilities. • According to school administrators, the ESL coach is working to provide support to English language learners. • The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) program will be continued at the high school. This program provides a concrete structure to plan and implement sheltered instruction in the content areas. • The Cohort Instructional Support Team is also available to provide extra support to students.
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STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Social/Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leadership, counselors and students reported there are several programs that provide support to students (e.g., PBIS, Career choices, Peer Mediation, Cohort IST and Career Academies). • Guidance Counselors reported there is an overall guidance plan (grades 9-12) that is in the process of being finalized. • The leadership team reported there is an Upward Bound summer program. • Students would like to have more student internships. • There is an active student government. • Students reported the new administration is very supportive to their needs.
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are receiving education and career counseling, social work and school psychologist services, and attendance counseling. • Counselors are very supportive. High school seniors indicated information is made available to them to assist their college application efforts.
Enrichment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are several enrichment opportunities for students including clubs such as Brother to Brother, Sister to Sister, and the mock trial club. The school also offers an Upward Bound program for students. • Students stated they can register for advanced placement (AP) classes, and college credit courses. • The administrative team has proposed a plan to increase the number of advanced placement courses in the near future.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
Effective Leadership and Principal Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principal reported he has a good record of accomplishment of turning around low performing schools. As a school leader at a restructuring middle school, he changed the culture of the school, focused attention on targeted professional development and instruction, increased student performance on state assessments, and changed the accountability status from a school in restructuring to a school in good standing. • The principal stated the superintendent requested he provide school leadership to the high school to implement the school's reform model for increased student learning. This is his first year as principal of the school. • The principal does not have a mentor; however, his superintendent provides ongoing technical assistance related to the attributes of an effective school leader. He is evaluated annually. • School leaders are currently being trained on an assessment tool that will be used to evaluate teacher and principal effectiveness. • School leaders have not identified or developed a principal improvement plan; however, plans to do so is scheduled for December 2011. • During their focus group session, teachers stated they believe the school leadership team is overwhelmed by student behavior issues.

Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the NYSED Team site visit, school leaders had not participated in any formal professional development related to effective leadership for improved student learning.
School Improvement Manager/External Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to the school principal, the School Improvement Manager (SIM) came on board on September 26, 2011 and has begun sharing information with Poughkeepsie High School staff and is developing a Turnaround Officers model. The school will monitor the implementation of the reform model based on the recommendations in the Joint Intervention Team report. The Turnaround Officers will conduct site visits to the school four times during the 2011-12 school year to provide base line data and feedback on the effects of school improvement activities.
Building Level Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building leadership team meets each day to discuss the implementation of the school improvement plan for improved student learning.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Environment is Conducive to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school has a designated teacher to work on behavior issues in the building. The school is working on implementing a building-wide positive behavioral supports and interventions (PBIS) program to address student expectations regarding behavior. PBIS is not yet fully implemented to provide incentives to students. The school appeared safe, orderly and most students were engaged in learning. The administrators, students and teachers mentioned there are several students who have recently entered the school from alternative learning sites who are contributing to negative behavior issues in the building. District and school leaders stated Poughkeepsie City Police Department personnel are not on-site this year due to school district budget constraints. It was further reported police department response time has slowed considerably, and the lack of full-time police presence on the campus has led to increased violence and negative behavior. Parents reported there are many exits in the building where students can enter and leave. They believe this is an issue that needs to be addressed.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The administration stated there are several opportunities where the leadership team and teachers meet to discuss issues. The school leadership team meetings are just one example of a venue where professional discussions take place.
Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During their focus group session, parents stated they would like to see improved communication, especially regarding student performance. Parents would like to see the code of conduct consistently enforced. Parents expressed importance of having increased internships, Job Corps and summer programs for students in the school. Parents expressed a desire for newsletters and a website that is updated to provide information to parents regarding school activities. Several parents noted the importance of students learning interviewing skills, resume writing, cursive writing skills and other computer related software skills that will help students transition to college and careers. Parents were not aware of academies. Nor were they aware of the academy literature that was provided to NYSED Site Visit Team. The administrative leadership noted that due to illness they do not have a parent representative at the school. They are in the process of identifying a parent representative.
External/Community-Based Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school leadership reported Marist College, Vassar College, Dutchess Community are colleges that have partnerships with the school.

BUDGET AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Budget Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the NYSED Team site visit, modifications to the School Improvement Grant (SIG) budget had not been made. District and school leaders indicated program changes may dictate a budget amendment.
Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approximately \$1.9 million dollars in 1003(g) funding is allocated to Poughkeepsie High School for the 2011-12 school year.
Use of Other Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As indicated in the budget narrative of the SIG application, the district has allocated approximately \$2.9 million dollars in non-SIG resources to support and sustain the school improvement efforts over three years.

DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT	
District Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The district has assigned the school improvement manager as the lead person responsible for providing support to the school to ensure that the transformation model is being implemented. The district liaison reported the transformation model will be evaluated periodically to ensure that the grant is implemented as outlined in the SIG application.
JIT/SIG Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SIG application and the implementation of the school's improvement plan are aligned to recommendations noted in Joint Intervention Team (JIT) report.

Summary:

The NYSED Site Visit Team conducted a full-day site visit at Poughkeepsie High School on October 20, 2011. Although the visit was brief, the team was able to ascertain information about the school's efforts to begin the implementation of their reform model for improving student learning.

The NYSED 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 responsive and eager to promote rapid improvements in student performance. Teachers meet regularly in common planning time to analyze student data, plan instructional strategies, and develop common assessments. Staff, students, and parents 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 review 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. However, during the NYSED Team site visit student behavior was seen to be adversely affecting the school's improvement efforts, as were inconsistent classroom management techniques, instructional practices and behavioral expectations.