



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

***Progress Review Report — 2011-2012***

<b>School:</b>	Christopher Columbus High School	<b>School District:</b>	Community School District (CSD) 11
<b>Date of Site Visit:</b>	February 15, 2012	<b>Team Member(s)</b>	Andrew McGrath

**Address:** 925 Astor Avenue, Bronx, NY 10469

**Principal Telephone:** (718) 944-3400

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**BEDS #:** 331500011415

**School Principal:** Lisa Fuentes

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**SIM /SAM:** N/A

**E-mail address:** N/A

**Grade Configuration:** 10 to 12

**Total Enrollment:** 747

**Area(s) of PLA identification:**

Graduation

**List all identified subgroups:**

English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD)

**Intervention model:**

Phase Out

**List the school's community-based organization (CBO) partner(s):**

1.	New York Police Department (NYPD) Explorers Program	4.	
2.	Future of America Learning Center	5.	
3.	Hebrew Home for the Aged	6.	

<b>STAFFING</b>	
<b>Organization and Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the 2011-12 school year, the grade configuration for the school is 10 through 12. The school is in the process of being phased out.</li> <li>• During their focus group sessions, teachers, students and school leaders reported staffing has been negatively impacted in the following ways:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Many teachers and students transferred out after the school was named a Phase Out school</li> <li>○ Advance Placement (AP) course opportunities decreased as a result of staffing reductions and budget restrictions</li> <li>○ Uncertainty surrounding the future of the school has impacted staff buy-in</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to school leaders, a new walk-through tool has been implemented using the Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Observation 360 and PD 360</i> have been introduced and will assist teachers and administrators in the school's evaluation and observation plan.</li> <li>• Walk-through evaluations occur on a regular basis for all staff members. Verbal and written feedback is given within two days of the walk-through evaluation.</li> <li>• Tenured and non-tenured teachers are formally observed according to contractual regulations.</li> </ul>
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PLANNING	
<b>Student Enrollment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the time of the NYSED site visit, daily student attendance was approximately 78 percent. The number of long-term absentees was sixty students.</li> <li>• School aides provide regular outreach for students who are persistently late and/or absent.</li> <li>• The attendance teacher conducts home visits and maintains comprehensive attendance reports. <i>Phone Master</i> as well as <i>Wake-Up New York</i> have been implemented.</li> <li>• Comprehensive Attendance Administration Security System (CAASS) is used to alert staff to students who have attendance issues.</li> </ul>
<b>Student Performance/ Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are selected to participate in intervention programs (i.e. Tutoring, counseling, NYPD Explorers, Renaissance Program) based on individual need. Need is determined based on recommendations made by staff members as well as report card and transcript evaluation.</li> <li>• Students who have been attending tutoring, or their designated intervention, are monitored by the staff member providing the intervention. On-going parent meetings are scheduled for students who have not complied with the scheduled intervention to date.</li> </ul>
<b>Teacher Attendance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the time of the NYSED site visit, teacher attendance was 90 percent.</li> <li>• Teacher attendance is not perceived to be an issue that affects the implementation of the School Improvement Plan.</li> </ul>

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)	
<b>Professional Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School leaders reported professional development addressing the Danielson Framework began in September, 2011 and is being implemented throughout the school year during scheduled Conference Days.</li> <li>• Professional development (PD) for <i>PD360</i>, an on-line PD platform for teachers, was provided to teachers and administrators in January 2012 and will continue throughout the school year.</li> <li>• The school leadership cabinet met with a learning development facilitator from the Transitional Support Group and the head of the Teacher Center to create a PD plan.</li> <li>• The PD plan for both for teachers and leaders includes:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)</li> <li>○ Bridging the Learning Gap</li> <li>○ Teaching Strategies for English language learners (ELL)</li> <li>○ Instructional technology</li> </ul> </li> <li>• School leaders reported text-based questioning techniques will be imbedded into the English language arts (ELA) curriculum during the spring semester. The leadership cabinet was trained as facilitators by the Teacher Center.</li> </ul>

<b>Instruction and Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and school leaders reported PD resources are limited. As a result, PD opportunities are primarily offered by way of turnkey experiences.</li> <li>• Professional training regarding the use of instructional technology and the analysis of student data has been limited due to budget restrictions.</li> </ul>
<b>Monitoring and Analysis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to school leaders, <i>PD 360</i> enables administrative staff to monitor and analyze staff participation. Ongoing walk-through evaluations and formal observations will evidence classroom implementation.</li> </ul>

<b>DATA ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>Data that Informs Instruction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and school leaders stated student data that informs instruction is collected throughout the school year from the following sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Charlotte Danielson Data Tool</li> <li>○ Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS)</li> <li>○ Student class work</li> <li>○ Acuity testing</li> <li>○ Progress reports and scholarship reports</li> <li>○ Report card and transcript data</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Students identified as being in the lowest third of the academic population and students with interrupted formal educations (SIFE) are recipients of academic intervention services (AIS).</li> <li>• Students performing below standard based on report card and/or transcript data are also recipients of AIS.</li> </ul>
<b>Data &amp; Student Achievement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and leaders analyze student data and differentiate lessons according to the specific needs of the students. Student work is analyzed during department meetings to determine the strengths and weaknesses of students. Teachers discuss next steps for instruction or strategies to re-teach concepts that were not grasped initially by the students.</li> <li>• Department leaders and content area teachers analyze data as teams on a monthly basis to discuss strategies and progress toward their instructional goals. Per-session compensation is offered to all teachers to continue the inquiry process after the teaching day.</li> </ul>

<b>CURRICULUM AND TEACHING</b>	
<b>Learning Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Currently, the teaching day spans from 7:35a.m. to 3:55p.m. There are ten class periods, each lasting forty-six minutes.</li> <li>• Teachers are assigned one of three overlapping schedules (Periods 1-8, Periods 2-9 or Periods 3-10) to provide students with an extended academic day.</li> <li>• As a result of the changes to the school and master schedule which provides students with an extended academic day, consistent common planning times (CPT) for teachers are no longer possible to arrange.</li> </ul>
<b>Mapped &amp; Paced Curriculum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and leaders stated all CCLS have been introduced to the teaching staff. Teachers and department leaders meet on a regular basis to implement them into all content areas, with an immediate emphasis on mathematics and ELA classes.</li> </ul>
<b>Effective Teaching Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the time of the NYSED visit, the quality and effectiveness of instruction appeared to be uneven. Most lessons were teacher-directed; and questioning techniques probed lower levels of understanding in most cases.</li> <li>• The NYSED representative observed limited examples of interactive instructional technology.</li> <li>• Teachers reported they have received ample amounts of training in instructional technology, yet the school does not have access to the technology itself.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents and students reported teachers work very hard to promote the educational opportunities available at the school, and focus their efforts on preparing students for examinations and graduation.</li> </ul>
<b>ELL/SWD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English language learner (ELL) students are scheduled for programming according to the score they received on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).</li> <li>According to teachers and school leaders, SIFE students receive additional support in the form of tutoring. Students with disabilities (SWD) are scheduled in programming according to needs based on their individual education plans (IEP).</li> </ul>

**STUDENT SUPPORT**

<b>Additional Social/Emotional Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students reported teachers, school leaders and guidance counselors actively support their efforts toward graduation and higher education by monitoring credit accrual and academic performance. Counselors regularly “chase down” students for college application essays and scholarship information.</li> <li>Parents stated teachers, leaders and support staff “go above and beyond” to provide students and families with academic and emotional support. Additionally, they reported individual pathways to graduation for each student is discussed on a regular basis.</li> </ul>
<b>Counseling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counselors in the school track down each student on an on-going basis to discuss coursework and requirements for graduation. Additionally, counselors assist students with college applications and scholarship opportunities.</li> <li>Students, parents, teachers and leaders stated there are opportunities and resources available to students such as:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College application support and application fee waivers</li> <li>Organized college campus visits and scholarship information</li> <li>Counselors, social workers and health providers</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Enrichment Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers and school leaders reported opportunities for advanced coursework have been limited for the following reasons:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff reductions</li> <li>Student/teacher transfers</li> <li>Limited resources</li> <li>Classrooms/labs given over to other schools in the building.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Students are frustrated by the lack of advanced placement (AP) and honors classes available to them.</li> <li>Students at Christopher Columbus High School have access to athletic teams comprised of students from each of the schools in the building.</li> <li>School leaders stated the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Program offers the following:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business through Fashion &amp; Photography</li> <li>Fitness Club, Drama Club, Singing Club</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

<b>Effective Leadership and Principal Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The principal has been in her position for nine years. The other six principals are new to their jobs or have limited leadership experience.</li> <li>Building leadership is collaborative and addresses issues common to all students building-wide.</li> <li>Teachers stated the leadership team leads the school in a respectful, transparent and pro-active manner. Additionally, teachers stated the leadership team has a positive impact on student behavior and the consistency of student conduct throughout the building.</li> <li>The principal is evaluated by NYCDoE personnel on a yearly basis. The</li> </ul>
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	<p>assistant principal is evaluated by the principal of the school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no formal mentoring program for principals with one or more years of principal experience.</li> <li>• The principal has incorporated feedback from observations of support and supervisory staff into the implementation of the school's improvement efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to school leaders, an atmosphere of uncertainty is pervasive throughout the building. Teachers understand they will be transferred or removed in the next year or two. As a result, leadership development in the building is limited.</li> <li>• The Network achievement coach participates in cabinet meetings and assists the assistant principal and coordinators in walk-through observations regarding the Danielson Framework and CCLS.</li> <li>• The Network provides leadership PD to all administrators.</li> </ul>
<b>Building Level Leadership Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers and school leaders stated they collaboratively make day-to-day school-level decisions. School leaders meet regularly.</li> </ul>

<b>SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</b>	
<b>Environment is Conducive to Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Christopher Columbus High School is one of seven schools in the same building.</li> <li>• At the time of the NYSED site visit, the school appeared to be clean, safe and conducive to learning. Teachers were visible in hallways and common areas. Classrooms were managed appropriately to promote a positive learning environment.</li> <li>• The school building is well-supervised and appears to have ample security.</li> </ul>
<b>Collaboration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principal works cooperatively with the six other principals in the building to consider programs, scheduling, use of classrooms, student learning opportunities, building security and building-wide student events.</li> </ul>
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During their focus group session, parents reported they are very supportive of the teaching staff and school leaders.</li> <li>• Parents stated they have open channels of communication with teachers and school leaders. They additionally reported teachers go to great lengths to promote the school and engage the students.</li> <li>• According to school leaders and parents, the parent association is active. Opportunities exist for parents to be involved, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ School Leadership Team</li> <li>○ Parent workshops and Adult English as a second language (ESL) Classes</li> <li>○ Parent chaperones</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Parents are involved through daily telephone communication, the school's open door policy and parent-teacher conferences which are scheduled twice each year.</li> </ul>
<b>External/Community-Based Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is supported by Children First Network (CFN) representatives. There is one common Network for all Phase-out schools.</li> <li>• The Network provides an achievement coach for the school who meets with staff on a regular basis.</li> <li>• The school has developed partnerships with the Hebrew Home for the Aged, Future of America Learning Center and the NYPD Explorers Program to promote community-based internships.</li> </ul>

<b>BUDGET AND OTHER FUNDING SOURCES</b>	
<b>Budget Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Improvement Grant (SIG) modifications are not necessary as the school is not receiving SIG funds during the 2011-12 school year.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of 1003(g) or</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to school leaders, no 1003(g) funds are being given to the Phase-out schools. NYCDoe is providing funding through other</li> </ul>

<b>1003(a) grant funding</b>	sources.
<b>Use of Other Funding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is using NYCDoE funds, in coordination with other school resources, including Fair Student Funding and applicable federal or State grants for the school (eg., Title III LEP, Title I SWP School Success Grant, etc) to carry out the school-wide strategies.</li> </ul>

<b>DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT</b>	
<b>District Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school receives technical assistance from the Transition Support Group to carry out its activities and address instructional and operational issues that are unique to a school that is in the process of phasing out.</li> <li>NYCDoE is collecting data on key aspects of the Turnaround model between the phase-out and replacement school, including teacher turnover data, academic performance, and NYCDoE Progress Report (PR) and Quality Review(QR). This analysis occurs at various points throughout the school year as data becomes available (eg, enrollment and school staff audit, release of PR and QR scores, State performance data, etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>JIT/SIG Alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The SIG application and the implementation of the school's phase out plan are aligned to recommendations noted in Joint Intervention Team (JIT) report.</li> </ul>

## SUMMARY

The New York State Education Department conducted a full-day site visit at Christopher Columbus High School on February 15, 2012, and was able to ascertain information about the school's efforts to begin the implementation of their Phase Out plan.

The NYSED site visit representative met with various stakeholders and reviewed initiatives that have been put into place to provide the students and families of the school with the supports necessary to achieve graduation and career-readiness. The school leadership team is visible and supportive, and teachers meet regularly 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 the school climate and ensure that the needs of all students were being met. However, members of the school community made clear their concerns regarding the future of the school. In particular, staff and families are concerned about the school's ability to provide comprehensive support and enrichment opportunities as its resources and staff are reduced during the phasing out period.