



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

Progress Review Report — 2011-2012

School:	Monroe Academy for Business & Law (Phase Out)	School District:	New York City Department of Education – District #12
Date of Site Visit:	November 29, 2011	Team Member(s)	Andrew McGrath

Address: 1300 Boynton Avenue, Bronx, NY 10472

Principal Telephone: (718) 860-8148

Fax: (718) 893-3262

BEDS #: 321200011690

School Principal: Charles Ogundimu

E-mail address: cogundi@schools.nyc.gov

SIM /SAM: N/A

E-mail address: N/A

Grade Configuration: 10 to 12

Total Enrollment: 254

Area(s) of PLA identification:
 High School Graduation

Identified subgroups:

Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, English Language Learners (ELL) and Students with Disabilities (SWD)

Intervention model:

Turnaround Model – The principal is new to the school as of the 2011-12 school year.

School's community-based organization (CBO) partner(s):

1.	Entertainers for Education	4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	

STAFFING	
Organization and Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the 2011-12 school year, the grade configuration for the school is Grades 10 through 12. The school is in the process of being phased out. • 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"> ○ Many teachers and students transferred out after the school was named a phase out school ○ Advance Placement (AP) course opportunities decreased as a result of staffing reductions and budget restrictions ○ Uncertainty surrounding the future of the school has eroded staff buy-in
Teacher Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Charlotte Danielson framework for teaching has been used as the foundation for formal and informal observations. • Teachers receive weekly informal observations that are followed by written feedback. • 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.
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PLANNING

Student Enrollment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the NYSED site team visit, the average daily attendance for students was 72%. During their focus group sessions, teachers and school leaders reported student attendance has been negatively impacted by the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school's status as a phase out school Over-aged and under-credited students Limited parental involvement Undocumented dropouts Teachers and school leaders identified the following as interventions to improve student attendance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calls and visits to the homes of students After school credit recovery opportunities Periodic progress reports
Student Performance/ Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on analysis of student data, students are selected for support such as outreach and counseling. According to school leaders, the results of these interventions are mixed.
Teacher Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to school leaders, teacher attendance has been an issue. The following steps have been taken to improve this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking teacher attendance data Letters of counsel in teachers' permanent files Making volunteer transfers available to those with attendance issues

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)

Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leaders and teachers stated professional development (PD) has focused primarily on Charlotte Danielson's framework for teaching. Specifically, PD in this regard has included the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding around the use of the four domains as a framework for teaching Using the Danielson framework to effectively plan and instruct NYCDoE teacher evaluations using the Danielson model School leaders provided teachers with the opportunity to suggest professional learning topics for the 2011-12 school year. Additional PD topics for the 2011-12 school year include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening student work and teacher practice Using item analysis to strengthen instructional practice Classroom management Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS)
Instruction and Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and school leaders reported PD resources are limited. As a result, PD opportunities are primarily offered by way of turnkey experiences. Professional training regarding the use of instructional technology and the analysis of student data has been limited due to budget restrictions.
Monitoring and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to teachers and school leaders, monitoring and analysis of professional development efforts are conducted by way of informal and formal classroom observations.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data that Informs Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During common planning time (CPT), teachers and school leaders track individual student achievement data to inform and adjust instruction. Credit accrual and student achievement data is used to inform students and parents of the necessary coursework required in order to graduate.
Data & Student Achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students are selected to participate in intervention programs based on individual need. Need is determined based on recommendations made by staff members as well as report card and transcript evaluation. Students have been attending tutoring, or other specifically designated interventions. Interventions are monitored by the staff member providing the

	intervention. Parent meetings are scheduled for students who have not complied with the scheduled intervention to date.
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CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Learning Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teaching day begins at 8:30am and ends at 2:51pm. There are eight teaching periods, each lasting forty-five minutes. There is an additional period at the end of the day for students to receive additional academic support. Students are encouraged to use this time to complete missing work and/or receive more individualized instruction.
Mapped & Paced Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curriculum maps and pacing calendars are posted in classrooms. They are visible to anyone entering the room.
Instructional Programming Linked to Student Needs Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School leadership reported that limited resources have led to staff reductions in certain key areas, such as Advanced Placement (AP) courses. This has limited the school in its ability to serve students scoring well on NYS assessments. Teachers and school leaders reported teacher teams have formed in all of the core areas to examine student and peer work in an effort to better meet the needs of all students.
Effective Teaching Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the time of the NYSED team site 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. The NYSED site visit representative observed limited examples of interactive instructional technology. Most lessons observed by the NYSED representative were teacher-directed. Active student engagement was limited.

STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Social/Emotional Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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 are discussed on a regular basis.
Counseling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students reported the 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.
Enrichment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and school leaders reported opportunities for AP coursework have been limited for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff reductions Student/teacher transfers Limited resources Classrooms/labs given over to other schools in the building. Students reported they are frustrated by the lack of AP/honors classes available to them. Students in the Monroe Academy for Business & Law (MABL) have access to athletic teams comprised of students from each of the schools in the building.

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP	
Effective Leadership and Principal Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The principal is in his second year as principal of MABL. He accepted the position prior to the school being named a Phase-out school. Teachers stated the leadership team led the school in a respectful, transparent and pro-active manner. Additionally, the leadership team has made a positive impact on student behavior and instructional consistency throughout the building. The principal is evaluated by NYCDoE personnel on a yearly basis. The assistant principal is evaluated by the principal of the school. There is no formal mentoring program for principals with one or more years of principal experience. The principal has incorporated feedback from observations of support and supervisory staff into consideration for implementation of school’s improvement

	efforts.
Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to school leaders, an atmosphere of uncertainty is pervasive throughout the building. Teachers understand that they will be transferred or removed in the next year or two. As a result, leadership development in the building is limited.
Building Level Leadership Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and school leaders stated they collaboratively make day-to-day school-level decisions.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Environment is Conducive to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monroe Academy for Business and Law (MABL) is one of five schools in the same building. At the time of the NYSED team 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. The school building, as a whole, is well-supervised and there appears to be ample security. Teachers, students and school leaders reported student behavior has improved significantly since the new principal joined the school.
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have increased their commitment to collaborative planning, lesson development, and student data analysis. School leaders and teachers stated that all members of the staff have developed a cooperative and proactive atmosphere that is solely focused on improved student achievement and increased graduation rates.
Parent Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents reported that they are very supportive of the teaching staff and school leaders. 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.
External/Community-Based Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is supported by Children First Network (CFN) representatives. There is one common Network for all Phase-out schools. The Network provides an achievement coach for the school who meets with staff on a regular basis.

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

DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT	
District Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school receives technical assistance from a Transition Support Network 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.
JIT/SIG Alignment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SIG application and the implementation of the school's phase out plan are aligned to recommendations noted in the Joint Intervention Team (JIT) report.

Summary

The NYSED Site Visit Team conducted a full-day site visit at Monroe Academy of Business and Law on November 29, 2011, 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 during 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 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.