



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

School:	Roosevelt High School/Early College High School – Transformation Model	School District:	Yonkers Public Schools
Date of Site-Visit:	October 22, 2010	Members of Site-Visit Team:	Major Capers, LoriAnn Curtin, Sharon Holder, Andrew McGrath

Roosevelt High School was named a Persistently Lowest Achieving (PLA) school during the 2009-2010 school year. The district chose to implement the transformation model at Roosevelt High School; and its School Improvement Grant application was approved in September 2010.

While the school operates under one BEDS code, the PLA site visit team observed that in ways that will be detailed in the following report, there are two separate high schools in place on one campus. The original high school is scheduled to phase out.

The district has retained the former principal at Roosevelt High School, the phase-out school, and hired a new principal to lead Early College High School. Therefore, there are currently two principals in place. Roosevelt High School is being led by the principal who was in place last year, and who has been there for over four school years. Early College High School is being led by a new principal who was hired during the summer of 2010. District staff stated that this decision was made after the State Education Department approved the School Improvement Grant, based on the need to maintain a leader to support phase-out of Roosevelt High School, and is different from what was initially approved.

The site visit team observed classrooms at Roosevelt High School and asked that Roosevelt High School staff be present for focus group interviews, even though Yonkers district staff requested that the PLA site visit team spend the majority of their time observing Early College High School. However, due to the district's request, unless otherwise designated, the findings of this report will apply solely to Early College High School.

STAFFING	
Collective Bargaining	<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>
Teacher Evaluations linked to Student Performance	<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>
Identify and Reward staff or Remediate/Remove Staff	<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>

Implementation of Strategies to Recruit, Place, and Retain Qualified Staff	<i>Activities are funded to recruit, place, and/or retain highly qualified teachers. Name and describe the activities.</i>
---	--

Findings:

- According to staff, no further discussions have taken place between the teachers union and the district regarding revising the collective bargaining agreement.
- Staff report that they have not been included in conversations surrounding teacher evaluations being linked to student growth, and they were not aware of the enactment of education law 3012 (c).
- One teacher interviewed reported that all teachers were interviewed for positions at Early College High School, but teachers that chose to stay at Roosevelt did not get interviewed.

PLANNING	
Implementation of Timeline	<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>
Performance Targets	<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>
Implementation of JIT Recommendations	<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:

- The "School Site Council," as delineated in the school improvement plan, has not yet been created.
- The implementation plan approved by SED stated that the "Site Council would be charged with creating a transparent evaluation system to be implemented during the school year." Teachers stated that thus far, the evaluation system has not changed. Tenured teachers will receive one formal evaluation a year, and non-tenured teachers will receive three. Additionally, every teacher receives one informal walkthrough one time per month.
- The Turnaround Officer is funded (0.5 FTE) at Roosevelt/Early College High School and (0.5 FTE) at Emerson Middle School/Cross Hill Academy. It was stated that she is on-site at the schools 2 to 3 days each week.
- The implementation plan approved by SED stated that staff would receive training on teaching students of poverty, but teachers' stated that nothing new is in place.
- The Performance Plan Template is under development at SED. Therefore, no evidence was requested during this on-site visit.
- The school's implementation plan was found to be aligned with the Joint Intervention Team recommendations at the time the School Improvement Grant Application was approved.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	
Quality, On-going, Job-embedded Professional Development	<i>Implementing job-embedded professional development, as defined by the USED, and as approved by NYSED.</i>

Supportive of Instructional Needs	<i>All professional development is researched based and supportive of the instructional needs of the school.</i>
Monitoring and Analysis	<i>Professional development is monitored and analyzed to ensure staff participation and classroom implementation.</i>

Findings:

- Academic Student Support and Intervention System Team (ASSIST) training has not been given to the staff. It was stated that ASSIST is intended to be used as the school's Response to Intervention (RTI) model.
- Specific data analysis professional development has not yet been given to the staff.
- Teachers spent the first three days of the school year in professional development. November 2, 2010 is their next staff development day.
- Teachers stated that there is not a lot of time for professional development, and that they are paid for any professional development that occurs outside of the school day.
- As additional professional development was not yet planned, there was no specific evidence collected regarding whether or not the professional development would be research-based. No further evidence was gathered regarding monitoring and analysis of the professional development. These areas will be a focus for the next on-site visit.

DATA ANALYSIS	
Data to Inform Instructional Programming	<i>Data is used to identify and implement research-based instructional programs that are aligned with state standards</i>
Data for Instructional Decisions for Student Achievement	<i>A system is being implemented which allows for the continuous use of data to make instructional decisions for students.</i>

Findings:

- The data analysis team has not yet been established. Teachers reported that they conduct data analysis on an individual basis.
- Teachers stated that the data analysis team will be established on November 2, 2010 which is the next staff development day.
- Staff conducted baseline assessments in all core areas.

CURRICULUM AND TEACHING	
Increased Learning Time	<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>
Mapped and Paced Curriculum	<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>
Instructional Programming is Linked to Needs Assessment	<i>Curricular decisions have been made to meet the needs of all students.</i>
Effective Teaching	<i>There is evidence of rigor, relevance, pacing, and alignment of curriculum to State Standards, and student engagement from Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT).</i>
ELL/SWD	<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:

- An extended teaching day has been established. This allows for a 9th period, during which students receive additional academic support in all four core areas. Teachers stated that they are receiving an additional stipend to teach during this extra period.
- No evidence was collected regarding the existence of a mapped and paced curriculum or about curricular decisions being made to meet the needs of all students. This will be a focus area of the next visit.
- Varying degrees of engagement were observed in classrooms; however, the majority of classrooms observed were teacher-led lessons.
- Specific evidence regarding instructional programming for English language learners and students with disabilities was not gathered during this on-site visit. This will be an area of focus during the next visit.
- In contrast to what was approved on the School Improvement Grant application, a full-time (1.0 FTE) school improvement manager (SIM) has not yet been hired. Currently, the SIM assigned to work with Emerson/Cross Hill Academy is dividing her time with Roosevelt/Early College High School. The SIM has created an action plan for student achievement at Roosevelt High School, which is separate from the plan for Early College High School.

STUDENT SUPPORT	
Additional Support	<i>Students are receiving extra academic and developmental support based on student need (AIS, character development, PBIS).</i>
Counseling	<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>
Enrichment Opportunities	<i>Students have opportunities to participate in academic and social enrichment activities during and after the school day and during the summer.</i>

Findings:

- No evidence was gathered regarding AIS, other academic support, or counseling services during this on-site visit. These will be areas of focus for the next site visit.
- It was stated that Early College HS students are not eligible to participate in certain after school programs. Gateway was referred to as an example of an after school program from which they are excluded.
- Teachers reported that Early College High School students were not allowed to attend the Roosevelt High School pep rally, even though some Early College High School students play on Roosevelt High School sports teams.
- District leaders, school leaders, and staff reported that the extended teaching day allows students to receive additional academic support. The schedule for this extended period allows for students to attend every core course for one additional period per week.
- It was stated that many students began the school year with a misunderstanding of which school they would be attending, and what type of program was offered.
- Teachers stated that a student government is being established, but that elections for student representatives have not yet been held.

TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Effective Leadership	<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>
Leadership Development	<i>School leaders receive appropriate and timely professional development. Mentoring or coaching programs are in place and effective.</i>
School Improvement Manager/External Providers	<i>The school is being guided and informed by its partnership with its School Improvement Manager or external provider.</i>
Building Level Leadership Team	<i>The school is utilizing its Building Leadership Team to implement the intervention model.</i>

Findings:

- The School Improvement Grant plan, regarding the school governance structure, has been altered. There is a new principal and a new assistant principal for the Early College High School. However, the district retained the same principal for Roosevelt High School. Roosevelt High School also has three assistant principals.
- No evidence was gathered regarding leadership development. This will be an area of focus for the next on-site visit.
- The school improvement manager stated that she helped the school to create an action plan for the implementation of the initiatives approved in the School Improvement Grant. She provided a copy of the action plan to the site visit team. She stated that the action plan will be “rolled out” to the school staff on November 2, 2010.
- The school improvement manager reported that she spends 1.5 days per week at Roosevelt/Early College High School.
- According to interviews with school and district staff, the school’s new leader is effectively leading the school in its improvement efforts.

SCHOOL CLIMATE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT	
Environment is Conducive to Learning	<i>The school is safe, orderly and academically-oriented. Supervision is sufficient, respectful and consistent.</i>
Shared Vision	<i>School staff understands the focus/ vision of the school’s improvement efforts and supports them in a consistent and effective manner.</i>
Collaboration	<i>Administrators, teachers and staff communicate openly, positively and effectively. Professional learning communities exist and affect improvement efforts.</i>
Parent Involvement	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of parents.</i>
External/Community-Based Partners	<i>Strategies are being implemented to increase the involvement and contributions of community partners.</i>

Findings:

- At the time of the visit, the school appeared to be safe, orderly and conducive to learning.
- The parent organization has been established. It was stated that the organization needs to meet with the principal to develop a database of current members.
- Parents reported that they were not included in the development of the school improvement plan.
- A student government has been established. Students meet in advisory groups, discuss issues related to graduation, and have attended two college fairs.
- No specific evidence was collected regarding strategies to increase involvement of community partners. This will be a focus area during the next on-site visit.

OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	
Use of 1003(g) or 1003(a) grant funding	<i>The LEA is using School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding to support the implementation of or planning for school intervention models.</i>
Use of Other Funding Sources besides 1003 (g)	<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 budget narrative submitted and approved for Roosevelt High School/Early College High School states that use of “other Federal or State allocations will be determined by the LEA once allocations have been finalized.”
- No additional evidence regarding other funding sources was collected during this site visit.

DISTRICT SUPPORT AND PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT	
District Support Provides Operational Flexibility to the School	<i>The LEA provides or is planning to provide the school operational flexibility (such as regarding staffing, calendars/time, and budgeting).</i>
District has a systemic plan for intervention and improvement	<i>The LEA has incorporated all JIT recommendations and requirements of the SIG Application into the improvement plan for the school.</i>
District has a plan to identify, recruit, place, and retain effective leadership	<i>In accordance with SIG requirements, the LEA has a plan for hiring and retaining leadership.</i>

Findings:

- School leaders reported that they have received appropriate and timely support from district staff.
- As noted, the school governance structure has changed since submission of the application. A new principal and assistant principal were hired for the Early College HS, while the incumbent leadership team at Roosevelt has remained in place.

Summary:

The PLA team conducted a half-day site visit at the Early college High School at Roosevelt High School on October 22, 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.