

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	280201030010
District Name:	Hempstead School District
School Name:	Alverta B. Gray Schultz Middle School
School Address:	70 Greenwich Street, Hempstead, NY 11550
Principal:	Hank Williams
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year 1) - Comprehensive
Areas of Identification:	English Language Arts - All Students; African American Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students Mathematics - All Students; African American Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Review:	December 12, 2011 and January 9, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“A Long Island model suburban-urban culturally-diverse public school system that ensures that students achieve personal growth and academic success and become productive citizens in a global society, by engaging students, staff, family and community in a comprehensive, challenging curriculum and effective instructional programs which respond to each student's needs and aspirations in a safe and nurturing environment.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The staff was welcoming and demonstrated good rapport with students.
- There are student support programs during the school day, afterschool, and on Saturdays.
- The students were well-behaved; hallways were orderly during passing between classes.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- There is evidence of improved monitoring of suspensions, detentions, and behavioral problems through programs such as *CHAMPS* and Saturday Academy.
- There are multiple sources of data analysis for academic performance available; however, there is no evidence that data is used to inform instructional decision-making.
- There was no evidence that teachers of students with disabilities collect data regarding student performance throughout the lessons. Additionally, the review team did not observe teachers of students with disabilities checking that their students accurately understood the lesson objective.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Professional development (PD) should be designed and implemented for teachers regarding accessing and interpreting student data relevant to improving student achievement in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics.
- Data teams should be established to facilitate the development of formative and interim assessments that are aligned with the new P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- A calendar should be developed indicating when the formative and interim assessments will be administered, graded, and returned to teachers for interpretation.
- A schoolwide procedure should be developed to determine whether or not student grades on formative and interim assessments will be used as part of their grade average for the year.
- PD should include modeling for special education teachers on how to monitor for student understanding throughout lessons.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- There is evidence that the school has begun to develop and implement pacing charts for subject areas that are aligned with the new CCLS.
- There is evidence that the school has appropriate extended school day/year activities.
- The English language learners (ELLs) and their teachers have been relocated from a separate wing of the school and are better integrated into the school. The bilingual education teachers now teach monolingual students and are now looked upon as "part of the school" by the students and staff.

- There are limited native language support materials, particularly bilingual dictionaries and glossaries, in mainstream English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual classes.
- There was limited interaction observed by the review team between teaching assistants (TAs) and students with disabilities, general education and ELLs.
- Instruction lacks rigor, and teachers were not observed by the review team encouraging higher-order thinking skills with ELL and students with disabilities.
- Although there are schoolwide collaborative teams, there is limited evidence of ample opportunities for all members of the staff and parents to participate in teaching and learning activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- An explicit job description should be developed for the TAs. A rubric should be used to measure the quality of their work, and their job performance should be monitored.
- Schoolwide collaboration among staff, parents and the community should be strengthened.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- In addition to the school leaders, students are supported by three guidance counselors, school psychologists, two social workers and one dean of students.
- There is an automated phone system used to notify parents of upcoming events. Additionally, newsletters and the school website provide parents with information.
- There is little evidence of strategies for supporting new teachers or other teachers who need additional support or mentoring.
- Monitoring, supervision and the support of instruction are priorities of the school leadership that is comprised of the Principal and two Assistant Principals (APs). However, there is no clear delineation of how their time is allocated each day for formal and informal classroom visits.
- The two APs are responsible for observing teachers using the new Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) guidelines; the school leader performs informal observations and walkthroughs.
- There is no evidence of an Academic Intervention Services (AIS) Plan or a Suspension Policy.
- The last available Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) is for the 2008-09 school year; and the last available District Plan for Special Education is for the 2007-08 school year.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should investigate why the "Parent Education Portal" is not working; and, if at all possible, it should be reinstated so that parents can have access to their children's grades and attendance records. The school should use the automated phone calling machine to notify parents when it becomes available.
- Although there is a District developed "New Teacher Mentoring Plan," the school should monitor implementation. Additionally, it is recommended that the school encourage veteran staff to support new staff who are teaching in their subject areas.
- PD opportunities should be developed and implemented for all teachers to discuss the new APPR guidelines.
- The District should provide support for the school leader in his completion of the required training to become knowledgeable regarding the new APPR guidelines.
- The AIS Plan, Suspension Policy, CEP and District Plan for Special Education should be developed and/or updated.
- Professional growth plans should be developed for individual teachers.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- There is evidence of a Parent Involvement Policy.
- There is evidence that community resources are used by the school to support the health, social, and emotional well-being of students and families.
- Scheduling and programming is provided to enhance teaching and learning. However, there is limited evidence that all teachers are effectively using the instructional time allotted for double periods (80 minutes).
- The availability of Spanish-speaking individuals to translate for Spanish speaking parents throughout the day is limited.
- There is little evidence of a well-articulated pathway for students to achieve high standards.
- There are no inclusion classes available for students in grade six.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- There should be a strategic plan for the allocation of resources, i.e., fiscal, material and technological resources should be identified to support instruction to improve student achievement.

- A plan should be developed to provide translators for Spanish-speaking parents throughout the school day.
- PD should be developed and implemented that addresses the effective use of instructional time.
- Clear articulation of expectations should be established for student success and supportive pathways for students to achieve high standards, e.g., provide opportunities for students to take credit-bearing courses in grades seven and eight.
- A summer enrichment program that allows students to transition into advanced classes before the start of school should continue to be provided.
- Home/school partnerships should continue to be strengthened by offering parent grade assemblies, parent informational classes for State tests, family fun nights, etc.
- Inclusion classes for students in grade six should be established.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- There is evidence of common planning time by grade and department. There is no evidence, however, that this time is being used constructively by teachers to improve student achievement.
- Although there is evidence of a District-developed PD Plan, insufficient emphasis has been placed on training teachers on the proper acquisition and interpretation of data to inform their daily instruction.
- Instruction observed was not always in alignment with current second language acquisition research in ESL, bilingual, and mainstream classes.
- Currently there are professional developers employed by the District who conduct PD in the areas of literacy and mathematics. Persons Interviewed by the review team indicated that they work throughout the entire District and are not available to the school as often as is needed or requested.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school should create and implement a PD program that addresses:
 - the acquisition and interpretation of data to inform instruction;
 - the needs of ELLs in the bilingual, ESL, and mainstream classes, including classroom management techniques;
 - understanding the CCLS;
 - creating and administering formative and interim assessments aligned with the new standards;
 - differentiated instruction and the effective use of the inclusion model; and
 - the effective use of common planning time.
- Job-embedded PD should be explored to effectively support academic programs.

- ESL instruction should be aligned with second language acquisition research.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- There is evidence of a School Safety Plan.
- Most classrooms have three computers and students in grade six have access to laptops.
- Student work is displayed in classrooms.
- There are insufficient textbooks and instructional and resource materials in English and Spanish.
- Technology to assist students with disabilities is used minimally; only some ESL classrooms have software technology.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- All computers and other equipment, printers and science labs should be upgraded.
- The purchase of laptop carts for grades seven and eight should be researched.
- Emphasis should be placed on displaying student work with rubrics aligned to the CCLS.
- Adequate textbooks at various reading levels should be purchased.
- Texts in English and Spanish with online supports should be made available.
- Students should be provided with bilingual glossaries for content area classes. In addition, standard bilingual dictionaries and native language support materials should be provided for the content areas.

PART 4: CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The findings and recommendations noted in the report are intended to guide the school's inquiry, planning, and the development of the CEP for school year 2012-13. The school should also continue its efforts in the implementation of the following Regents Reform Agenda initiatives: P-12 CCLS, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.