

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT (SQR)

BEDS Code:	06-17-00-01-0010
District Name:	Jamestown Public School District
School Name:	Thomas Jefferson Middle School [grades 5 through 8]
School Address:	197 Martin Road, Jamestown, NY 14701
Principal:	Carm Proctor
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year 1) - Focused
Areas of Identification:	English Language Arts – Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students Mathematics - Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Review:	December 12 and 13, 2011

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of the Jamestown Public Schools, in partnership with the community, is to graduate all our students intellectually and personally prepared to envision, pursue, and achieve productive, fulfilling lives.”

“We will accomplish this by providing a diverse, well-trained nurturing staff implementing a challenging, flexible curriculum in an inviting and accepting environment.”

“We, at Thomas Jefferson Middle School, strive to provide an environment that encourages a combination of positive character and best effort by all. “

“We believe that this combination will promote life-long learning for all to become productive and successful citizens in our community.”

“Pride and Respect.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The school uses Performance Plus for tracking student achievement.
- Facilities are modern and well-kept.
- Teachers are welcoming and the environment is safe, orderly and conducive to learning.

- Students like the school and are courteous and compliant.
- The school has a diverse culture.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- There is evidence that school leaders and teachers are using data, e.g., New York State (NYS) Report Cards, progress reports, benchmark assessments, and other interim assessments, to monitor student progress. The District has implemented Performance Plus software to track student progress and has maintained this database for a number of years.
- Progress monitoring instruments and software appear to be plentiful for English language arts (ELA).
- The school leader meets regularly with teacher leaders and/or the whole group Professional Learning Community (PLC.).
- PLC process data is being used as the basis for the District improvement plan; however, there appears to be concern among teachers concerning the timeline for plan implementation and the plan's focus on "quantity rather than quality."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school should ensure continued and improved use of data to inform student instruction.
- School leaders should investigate tools and software for progress monitoring in mathematics.
- The range of the progress monitoring tools in ELA should be extended to matters other than fluency and decoding, i.e., reading comprehension skills and strategies.
- PLCs should focus more time on each of the tasks in the improvement plan, going more in-depth and allowing more dialogue on the process.
- The school leader and staff should identify what can be done to allow the PLC to move forward with clearly defined roles to accomplish the vision/mission of the PLC initiative.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- There is a safe and orderly learning environment in classrooms.
- There is some evidence that teachers post daily lesson instructions for students..
- Instructional strategies were primarily “whole group” and “individual/one-to-one.” Few flexible groups were observed.
- Some classes had rigorous and aligned academic activities in the whole group setting.
- The daily schedule maximizes the use of students' and teachers' time to include extended day activities in an effort to minimize loss of instructional time for the non-core subjects, e.g., music.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Teachers should post the lesson objective each day and discuss the expectation for the learning that will occur.
- Teachers should increase the use of differentiated instruction, e.g., small group, paired, one-to-one. Instruction should include multiple modalities, such as manipulatives and pictures.
- Students should be actively engaged in demonstrating their learning during class so that teachers can monitor and adjust instruction based on what they observe.
- Students should be engaged in academic tasks that are rigorous and aligned with State standards and students’ current level of functioning. Teachers should maximize the use of instructional time during classroom lessons by ensuring all activities match rigorous expectations for a grade level/subject area.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- The PLC teams appear to be struggling to link mission/vision to student outcomes.
- PLC roles seem to lack clear definition. Inconsistent messages/expectations/roles as well as scheduling constraints appear to be roadblocks to PLC progress.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- District and school leaders should work together to clarify roles, mission and expectations for the PLC.

- The school leader should serve as an integral part of the PLC and as the main resource and instructional leader.
- Department coordinators should provide support within content areas to the school leader and teacher leaders where needed.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- The school has several school-based initiatives that involve the community/parents in the students' educational program. Several community based programs are available for homework assistance and tutoring; however, several valuable programs that were in existence previously have been discontinued as the grant funding has become unavailable.
- There are events scheduled annually to assist students/families with transition into and out of middle school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should monitor the effect on student achievement specific organizations/partnerships have. This data should be used to support appropriate resource allocation.
- School leaders should continue to develop and implement a positive transitional plan.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- It appears that the District is using the PLCs as the Building Inquiry Teams and the PD and training that go with PLCs has been built into this initiative.
- The District offers onsite "traditional" PD workshops to support best practices in mathematics.
- PD in the P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) through the exploration of the six shifts is being delivered to teachers via faculty meetings.
- The school leader and lead teachers meet regularly to clarify and define roles and expected outcomes of the PLC by revisiting the initial training and District mission.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should increase opportunities for special education, English as a Second Language (ESL) and general education instructors to participate in learning opportunities that promote best practices in

literacy, instruction, and assessment and provide cohesion and continuity throughout all instructional programs.

- School leaders should survey teachers as to their PD needs/priorities outside of required PD for State and District driven initiatives.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- Textbooks and resource materials were plentiful and appropriate.
- Some use of white boards in classrooms was observed.
- Use of overheads in classrooms was frequently observed, coupled with worksheets provided to students.
- Grade 8 mathematics students were using scientific calculators during classroom instruction.
- Library/multi media center is well equipped with state of the art technology and materials.
- There was limited use of current technology, e.g., ELMO, clickers, ipad, Ipod.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A building audit of available technology and usage should be conducted.
- School leaders should encourage the use of more current technology and provide updated training if necessary. Teachers/teams who are experimenting with technology and finding student success should present their results during staff days/faculty meetings/tech committee meetings.

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 Comprehensive Educational Plan (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.