

**NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability**

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	62060010025
District Name:	Kingston City School District
School Name:	M. Clifford Miller Middle School
School Address:	65 Fording Place Road, Lake Katrine, NY 12449
Principal:	Jo Burruby
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year - 1) - Focused
Areas of Identification:	English Language Arts – African American Students; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students Mathematics - African American Students; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Review:	February 22 and March 7, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission at M. Clifford Miller Middle School is to support all students within our learning community as they develop essential skills, grow personally and experience academic success. Our vision is that M. Clifford Middle School represents a diverse and nurturing learning community that is committed to the success of all students; we strive to create a supportive environment where students develop skills, grow personally, experience academic success, and are encouraged to become lifelong learners.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The school provides a safe, disciplined environment. Hallways and stairwells are clean and safe.
- The library, with its rich resources and strong staff, provides critical support to teachers and students.
- Teachers have attended professional development (PD) on the P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). School leadership holds the expectation that units of study are aligned to the CCLS in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics.

- The school leadership team actively participated in initial training on Paul Bambrick-Santoyo’s model of *Data-Driven Instruction* and is working to strengthen and deepen the work around data use to inform classroom practice.
- There was evidence of the use of research-based teaching practices such as providing immediate feedback, re-teaching to reinforce student understanding, the use of wait time, and providing motivation for learning.
- There is evidence of community resources used by the school to support the health, social, and emotional well-being of students and families, as needed, including, but not limited to, food resources, the availability of a coordinator for the homeless, mental health services, and other collaborations. Additional community-based organizations support student enrichment and academic success.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- There is no consistent process in place for the timely sharing of available State and local data from the District office to the school level.
- Although there is a mechanism in place that allows for the disaggregation of data by specific subgroups, data is not consistently provided at this level for deep analysis to inform improvement efforts.
- Efficient and effective technology software is not in place to facilitate the sharing and analysis of data.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Mechanisms for consistent and timely sharing of State and local data should be developed.
- English language arts (ELA) and mathematics data should be disaggregated by subgroups, i.e., students with disabilities, African American students, and economically disadvantaged students, to allow for deeper analysis of the data to inform school improvement efforts. Appropriate data staff should provide PD to school leaders and guidance counselors on how to access this level of data.
- School staff should participate in the exploration of technology solutions to support the sharing and analysis of data.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- Practices of effective differentiation of instruction for students with disabilities and at-risk students are not consistently in place. Teachers are not using a wide range of strategies to accommodate the diverse learning needs of students.
- Although some data is available, there is little evidence that teachers use it to inform instruction, specifically for identified subgroups. The use of formative assessments was observed by the review team in some classrooms; however, there was limited evidence that all teachers consistently used formative assessments to monitor student progress. In addition, teachers expressed the desire to have more strategies for daily formative assessment of student learning.
- Although teachers clearly articulate and post behavioral expectations in their classrooms, teachers are not consistently writing daily lesson objectives on the board for ELA and mathematics.
- While the “STARFISH” approach to positive reinforcement has led to overall improvements in the climate and culture of the school, there is a need to extend the program to ensure similar impact on individual classroom climate, culture, and behavior.
- Consistently effective models of co-teaching were not observed. Teaching Assistants (TAs) and other support staff were not effectively used in many settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- PD should be provided to staff on effective practices of differentiated instruction.
- Training should be provided to all staff on the use of data and formative assessments to monitor student progress and inform instruction, specifically for the identified subgroups. Teachers should plan for effective introductions and closures for each lesson objective and use formative assessment to assess the degree to which students mastered the content/skills.
- “Toolboxes” of effective strategies should be developed and disseminated to teachers so they can use them, targeting the areas of differentiated instruction and formative assessment. Internal staff already demonstrating skills in these areas should be used.
- School leaders should regularly monitor classrooms to ensure the use of differentiated instruction and formative assessment through the use of informal walkthroughs. The data collected on the use of these strategies should then be shared with all staff.
- Teachers should ensure that learning goals/objectives are shared with students. Learning objectives should be displayed and discussed with students throughout the lesson. School leaders should expect and monitor the writing and discussion of daily lesson objectives in all classrooms.
- An expectation should be set and a team of teachers convened to develop and disseminate ideas for using the “STARFISH” approach at the classroom level.

- PD should be provided on co-teaching models and strategies. TAs and other support staff should be included in such trainings to help them better understand their role in supporting student achievement.
- Effective practices schoolwide should be built by using internal pockets of expertise (master teachers) through modeling, visitation, feedback, and follow-up support.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDING:

Although the school leader has welcomed the support of the Ulster Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Network Team member assigned to school-based inquiry work in schools across the county, school-based inquiry practices are not fully developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school leader should continue to access the support of internal and external data inquiry resources.
- The school leader should strengthen the role and capacity of the School Leadership Team (SLT) in serving as the foundation of inquiry practice.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- Teachers do not have enough time in the day for additional instruction in ELA and mathematics.
- Support staff member expertise is not being maximized to support student success in the classroom.
- There is currently no mechanism for school level input into resource allocation, e.g., School Improvement Grant (SIG) development.
- Parents are not widely or actively engaged in middle school planning and improvement efforts and do not consistently support efforts taken by school staff to improve individual student performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Options for using the “extra period” (tenth) should be explored for the provision of additional instruction in ELA and mathematics.
- Expectations for the roles and responsibilities of support staff in the classroom should be established, as well as the responsibilities of the classroom teacher to provide appropriate direction

- A mechanism for gaining school level input on processes and decisions regarding resource allocation should be developed.
- Parents should be surveyed annually, beginning with incoming parents as part of grade six orientation, in an effort to gather ideas for how to better engage parents in planning efforts and efforts to improve individual student performance.
- Individual teacher web pages should be developed to augment the school web page as an avenue for increased/improved communication with parents.
- The use of the *eSchoolData* system and the parent portal should be increased.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- The focus on PD and support for differentiated instruction has decreased.
- Teachers do not wish to be pulled out of the classroom any more than necessary.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- PD should be provided in differentiated instruction aligned with the P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- Creative mechanisms should be explored for the provision of PD without taking teachers out of the classroom, e.g., after school, breakfast club or accountability structures for team/department meetings. Effective models for the delivery of job-embedded PD, e.g., action research and study groups, should also be explored.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- Adequate science laboratory facilities are not consistently available to students.
- Students do not have equitable access to technology. There is limited technology in the classroom to support instruction. It was reported that purchased technology has not yet been installed.
- Where technology is available, it is not consistently used to enhance learning opportunities and student engagement.

- Classroom environments do not yet reflect evidence of implementation of the CCLS, e.g., posted student work aligned with CCLS.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A meeting of science department staff and school and district leaders should be convened to develop solutions to ensure access for all students to laboratory facilities.
- With input from the school leader and District, the Technology Planning Committee should be reconvened to update the plan and ensure equitable access to technology.
- The school and District leadership should provide training, resources, and support to staff to ensure they have the necessary strategies for effectively integrating technology into the curriculum.
- The school, with District support, should provide additional PD and support for creating classroom environments that demonstrate implementation of the CCLS.

PART 3: 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.