

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

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	58051303-0008
District Name:	Central Islip UFSD
School Name:	Reed G. Middle School
School Address:	200 Half Mile Road, Central Islip 11722
Principal:	Edgard A. Paez (Interim)
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:	January 9,11,12,19, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of the Central Islip Public Schools is to enable all its students to fulfill their potential and become responsible, contributing adults able to thrive in a culturally diverse, changing world.

In partnership with the entire community, we will provide a quality educational experience that offers equitable learning opportunities in a safe environment. We will link home, school and community to ensure a positive supportive education that fosters student excellence and success.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

The Reed Middle School is filled with caring adults devoted to accomplishing the District’s mission. Its students are well behaved and actively engaged in the learning process. During the last two years, Central Islip School District has faced severe cuts to its teaching and administrative staffs in order to present a realistic budget to its citizens during difficult financial times. Nonetheless, the staff at Reed remains optimistic and works hard to overcome obstacles so that its students can achieve.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- Although a newly appointed Chief Information Officer (CIO) provided the team with requested data, teachers did not have either access to or opportunity to discuss the data. There is little evidence that data are used in the building to set data-driven goals or to inform instruction.
- The team did not find a formal system for identifying students in need of Academic Intervention Services (AIS). Neither teachers nor students were able to discuss or present a formal schoolwide system to monitor growth over time for each student. There was no evidence of student portfolios or data folios.
- The school is devoid of a benchmarking system to record growth toward the goals. The formative assessments used in the classrooms have not been aligned to the summative State tests.
- No one at the building level appears to be in charge of the collection, analysis, or utilization of data. There are no designated administrators, coaches or lead teachers who could provide the required information for students below proficiency.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Although the District has taken immediate action to provide all teachers with access to the BOCES Assessment Reporting System (BARS), the District should provide professional development (PD) hours to demonstrate the power of BARS.
- The School Improvement Team should begin work immediately to create the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP). The Plan should include data-driven goals agreed upon and shared with teachers, students and parents.
- All students should be cognizant of their previous year's scores in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. They should also know what needs to be accomplished in order to become proficient, and such information should be communicated to all constituents.
- The shared data expert from BOCES who works in the Central Office, should provide assistance to the teachers as they begin their work with BARS.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- The school does not have a coherent instructional, programmatic road map. Teachers in the same department on the same grade level were working on different skills with little or no knowledge of the (AIS) curriculum. Neither students nor parents appear to own their educational plans. The predominant

method for the delivery of instruction is whole class, with students being queried by the teacher to determine student understanding and progress toward mastery.

- Although teachers use plans and work diligently to help all students reach mastery, the curricula lack both rigor and relevance. Additionally, the work of the classroom teachers is not formally connected to the work of their colleagues in bilingual, English as a Second Language (ESL), AIS or special education.
- The language of the classroom instruction does not match the language of the assessments. Although teacher language is elaborate, the student responses are halting at best. Short phrases and clauses with inflections indicating a lack of surety are accepted. The student answers are repeated then elaborated by the teachers. Few opportunities for deep dialogue between and among students exist.
- Class sizes make small group work difficult. Nonetheless, little evidence of the use of differentiated materials was found. Instruction appeared to be connected to a textbook, workbook pages or dittoes. Although most classes were heterogeneous in nature, all students were working on the same assignment from the same classroom materials. There was no evidence that the students who were proficient were challenged or that Level 1 and Level 2 students were being supported differently. In many classes, texts were being read out loud, and no evidence was found that students had been building their reading skills with independent, leveled expository texts. Even in the classes where the curriculum is differentiated through the program, i.e., READ 180, Systems 44, the student goals were unclear and the system monitoring progress missing.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school should provide PD for teachers regarding differentiation, and teachers should be held accountable by the administrative team for implementation.
- Teachers should meet weekly during their PD periods to create curricular road maps. The taught curricula should be aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and provide students with periodic formative and interim assessments which match the summative assessments. The weekly meetings must be scheduled so that all colleagues, including teachers of ESL, special education, AIS, and bilingual can be included. The meetings should be led by knowledgeable individuals with up to date information regarding both the CCLS and formative and interim assessments.
- In order to develop students' abilities to read text at a deep level, they should be provided opportunities to independently read expository text matched to their reading lexiles. PD time should be devoted to filling the teachers' tool kits with alternate strategies to help build student reading skills.
- The "department meetings" should include all colleagues from ESL, bilingual, AIS, special education and school leadership. The District should provide support since the building is without department heads or coaches.
- The School Improvement Team should consider in its plan the use of the School Improvement funding to help fill the void created when coaches were eliminated.
- Since no current AIS plan exists in the District, an instructional delivery system should be developed to support students who are not proficient in ELA and/or mathematics. There should be an identification

system and a monitoring system to determine if the AIS students are making effective progress in their mathematics and ELA classes.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- The school is filled with well-meaning adults who expect the students to behave appropriately at all times, and students are polite and for the most part engaged in the learning process. However, it is not clear that the school goal is to become a school *In Good Standing*. Since there is little, if any, use of data to inform instruction, since the curricula lack rigor and relevance and since there is little congruence between and among all the support systems, i.e., AIS, special education, ESL, bilingual, social workers, guidance, nurses and administration, the path to the goal is unclear.
- Teachers and staff are highly qualified and seem genuinely interested in the success of their students, but there is no clearly marked path to the goal.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- When the School Improvement Team develops the CEP, it should design a system of feedback loops. The communication loops once closed will ensure that all constituents know not only the vision but how it will become a reality.
- The CEP should also include a way to connect all of the school's integral parts, including parents, students, teachers and colleagues from feeder schools. At the present time, it appears as though each works alone.
- In addition, the School Improvement Team should spend time on a public relations campaign to improve the school's image to all those unfamiliar with the school strengths and accomplishments.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- The District has four transitions points (k→1-4→5-6→7-8→9-12), but lacks a system to share data between and among schools. Opportunities to meet with the staff from the sending/receiving schools do not exist.
- The current perception is that when the students arrive in the middle school they lack the fundamentals in both ELA and mathematics.
- Teachers who were interviewed spoke about the helpfulness of the guidance department. Any needed student information is readily available. On the other hand, parents interviewed were negative, citing lack of communication as a major problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The District should reexamine its present structure. If the present structure is reaffirmed as the best design for student success, the School Improvement Team needs to undertake a public information campaign to change the school's image outside the building.
- The School Improvement Team should study the data regarding attendance and discipline. These data were not available for the SQR Team, but will be important for the School Improvement Team's consideration of the root causes that are preventing student success. Visits should be made to neighboring districts with similar demographics.
- According to information offered by District employees, there is a successful elementary parent-teacher model called "Dine and Discuss." The school should review the model as a means for open dialogue. District personnel, the building administrators and the members of the School Improvement Team should publish its communication plan so that all constituents have information in accordance with State and Federal requirements.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**FINDINGS:**

- Although the teacher schedules include a PD period and there is a small Literacy Team, which publishes news of its work and is responsible for decorating the building with evidence of its goals, there was no evidence of a calendar to show the series of PD opportunities for the staff. In addition, the team did not find evidence of the District's updated PD, AIS or guidance plans. The District's technology plan is on the District's website. However, there was little evidence that technology is an integral part of the curricula. In rooms where the SMART boards were being used, their use was limited to an expensive chalk board.
- During the visits to the classrooms, there was some evidence of Thinking Maps, which is one of the District's initiatives.
- Although an outside consultant meets periodically with a small group of staff members, there are not multiple opportunities for all members of the ELA and mathematics departments to meet together.
- The school does not have department heads, mentors or literacy and mathematics coaches. School leaders are not assigned specific departmental responsibilities to oversee the AIS, curricular, instructional and PD plans.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The present PD design should be reviewed and revised so that all members of both the ELA and mathematics departments (AIS, ESL, bilingual, and special education) have multiple opportunities on a monthly basis to meet as grade level teams to:
 - analyze pertinent data;

- create instructional units aligned to the new CCLS;
 - determine the benchmarking system to be used to show student growth over time; and
 - design an AIS plan to include a system for shared data among the support groups and a formal system for important information from guidance and social workers to be shared with classroom teachers.
- The School Improvement Team should complete the CEP and focus on PD, including time to work on the Student Learning Objectives (SLO) and the building's system for monitoring growth toward them. In addition, time should be spent increasing teacher understanding of how to differentiate instruction with different resources.
 - The District should explore third party assessments already approved by the State Education Department.
 - The school should fill the empty coaching positions.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- In some sections of the building, the lights should be replaced. There is a marked difference between the "old" sections and the "new" sections of the building. Perhaps because of the building's layout or because of its diminished staff, it takes visitors some time before feeling welcomed and a part of a culture proud of its environment. The team found that restrooms needed cleaning; hallways needed sweeping and many rooms needed organization.
- The classrooms have SMART Boards, although few were used as anything more than expensive chalkboards. Few if any students were working on computers.
- There was little evidence of rich, rigorous, relevant resources. The teachers rely on one textbook and/or a myriad of worksheets. No evidence (except in READ 180) was found where instruction was dedicated to students reading independently at their lexile levels.
- In the English classes where novels were being used, the class was assigned one novel. It was unclear whether the teachers needed materials, PD devoted to differentiation or perhaps both.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The School Improvement Team should create a series of recommendations to improve the school's image. The School Improvement Team should prioritize its list of improvements that are needed.
- The District's or building technology plan should become an integral part of all the other plans so that students and parents will understand the importance of technology and its incorporation into all ELA and mathematics classrooms, including the AIS labs.

- The School Improvement Team should study and understand the limits of the District Title I and School Improvement Grants. Regardless of the limitations, teachers and administrators should be part of the process regarding decisions dedicated to improving student success.

PART 4: CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The administration and staff of the Reed Middle School and the Central Islip School District are to be commended for their assistance with and cooperation during the School Quality Review. Individuals who served on the School Quality Review Team stated that the process was a valuable one, the results of which should provide Reed with a blueprint for change. The Team reached consensus regarding its findings and recommendations after a thorough review of the Quality Indicator document, classroom visits and interviews with staff, students and parents.

There are major recommendations in six areas:

I. Collection, Analysis and Utilization of Data:

The School Improvement Team should be empowered to begin its critical work immediately. Once completed, the CEP will provide direction for the use of data to inform instruction and improve student success.

All members of the mathematics and ELA departments including their bilingual, ESL, AIS and special education colleagues should have multiple opportunities to analyze pertinent data. These sessions should be led by individuals who are not only facile with data but also familiar with instructional strategies to ensure that the students learning objectives can be met. Following the initial analyses, class lists and building lists should identify all students in need of AIS. Teachers of English and mathematics should be able to show progress toward the goal for each student.

II. Teaching and Learning

Teachers should be provided with multiple opportunities to meet and/or create a curricular map that identifies the student learning objectives for ELA and mathematics in grade 7 and grade 8. Using the High School's exit examinations (grade 11 ELA Regents and grade 9 Algebra Regents) in addition to the new CCLS, teachers should create a backward design showing what students need to know, understand and be able to do by the end of grade 7 and subsequently by the end of grade 8.

Once teachers have had multiple opportunities to analyze the data, a PD calendar should be created to show how teachers will use the data to inform instruction. The works of Robert Marzano, Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe and Carol Ann Tomlinson could be the basis for helping teachers deepen their understanding of how to differentiate instruction and improve the language of classroom instruction.

III. School Leadership

The School Improvement Team as part of its challenge, must improve the school image. At the present time, the school appears to be filled with hard working individuals working in isolation. Neither mission nor vision appears to be understood.

The District and school administrative teams should devote their energies to changing the current school realities. Each group (parents, students and teachers) needs to be harnessed and become a driving force toward a clearly defined goal line. The boys' basketball team on game days exudes pride. They should become the model for Reed, helping to uncover and "show-off" *all* that is impressive.

IV. Infrastructure for Student Success

If the District after due consideration reaffirms the present 7-8 design, new (and formal) systems must be added to ensure that communication loops between and among all constituents are effective. Systems for communicating both student learning objectives from Charles A. Mulligan School (grades 5-6) and the results of the monitoring system need to be in place.

Parents should be included in the communication loops. Even after the District's parent portal is opened, there should be additional time devoted to listening to parent concerns. In addition, Reed's many success stories should be shared on a regular basis with Reed's and Charles A. Mulligan School parents.

V. Professional Development

In order to achieve different results, instruction must be delivered differently. At the present time, classroom instruction lacks both rigor and relevance chiefly because it is devoid of differentiation.

The teachers are well-planned; the students for the most part engaged. Nonetheless, a PD plan should be developed, published and focused on instruction for all members of the departments (administration, AIS, ESL, bilingual, special education). Teachers and school leaders should meet together to deepen their understanding of differentiation. The PD calendar should also highlight times for all colleagues to create and publish the student learning objectives for all subjects in grades 7 and 8.

A leadership arm must be added to the present PD design. The District must set clear expectations that once the PD series for each initiative (data analyses, curricular road maps, technology integration, differentiation) are complete, teachers must implement. School leaders on their daily walkthroughs should monitor the implementation of each initiative. The implementation stage should continue to be done in risk free environments where teachers are rewarded for their initial attempts at new learning.

IV. Facilities and Resources

Although the building needs a "make-over" that will take both time and money, there are things that can be tried that will help Reed present a new image. These include donated shrubs for the entrance way; a new routing system for visitors and late arrivals; student painted murals; prominently displayed student work and awards.

The cleanliness of the bathrooms and the safety issues (holes in the library floor) should be addressed immediately. The other needed changes should be prioritized by the School Improvement Team.

Finally, teachers need additional resources to help them differentiate instruction. Leveled texts, especially expository text, should be purchased.

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 findings and recommendations in the report

are intended to help guide the school's discussion regarding its journey to becoming a school *In Good Standing*. The critically important work of the School Improvement Team must begin immediately. The CEP should be presented to the Board of Education for approval as soon as possible. The school should also continue its efforts in the implementation of the following Regents Reform Agenda initiatives: P-12 Common Core Learning Standards, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.