

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

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	580512030015
District Name:	Brentwood Union Free School District
School Name:	West Middle School
School Address:	2050 Udall Road, Bay Shore, NY 11730
Principal:	Matthew G. Gengler
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year-1) - Comprehensive English Language Arts - All Students; Hispanic Students; Students with Disabilities; English Language Learners and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Area of Identification:	
Dates of On-site Review:	January 19, 24 and 25, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“The Mission of West Middle School is to take responsibility, demonstrate respect and produce results.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- The school is well-maintained, with a welcoming atmosphere. The school environment is orderly and provides a nurturing, safe learning environment for students. It was evident that high expectations for student behavior are uniformly set, monitored by the staff, and adhered to by students.
- The commitment and passion of the school leaders and staff for teaching all students, and the concern for students’ well being, are noteworthy.
- The District and the school provide staff with numerous professional development (PD) opportunities to improve practice; several initiatives are specific to the education of English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Teachers are receptive to the school’s PD initiatives and are making efforts to implement them in their classrooms.
- Parents feel welcomed in the school and are comfortable approaching the school leaders. All constituent groups have a sense of belonging in the school.
- The school is student centered, with recognitions and student work displayed throughout the building. The team observed that the school focuses on teaching and student learning so that all students become successful adults.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- The District has access to New York State (NYS) student achievement data from the BOCES as well as data from District programs, such as Read 180, SRI Lexiles, Expert 21, System 44, Individualized Education Program (IEP) information, and the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT). A number of teachers and school leaders are able to access and analyze data, create reports, and use the results to target instruction to specific subgroups of students and/or individual students. A few of the programs have been implemented, and PD for the use of the data specific to those programs has not been completed.
- Although the school uses several types of summative data, few formative assessments are being used regularly by teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The District should implement procedures for the regular collection, reporting, distribution, and review of data. PD should focus on disaggregating data and presenting it so that it can be analyzed by building staff and used to drive instruction.
- The school should create systems to develop, implement, collect, and review formative assessments so that teachers can collaboratively review the formative assessments, compare results with the summative assessments, and analyze the data to drive instruction to improve student achievement. The school should develop the expertise of self selected staff members who can become in-house experts. The school staff should analyze the correlations across student scores on the NYSESLAT, SRI Lexile levels, class grades, the English language arts (ELA) proficiency scores, and the Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.
- A focus of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) process for students with disabilities should be the development and use of formative assessment strategies.
- Teachers should develop and use formative and interim assessments as a regular part of their instructional practice, and the District and school should provide PD and assistance to the teachers in developing effective strategies for using those assessments.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- District and school efforts have been and continue to be devoted to establishing a coherent, literacy-rich curriculum.

- In addition to implementing READ 180 several years ago, the District during the past three years has piloted several research-based reading and writing intervention programs that are available in Spanish, contain data collection and reporting systems, and have alternate formats and materials for students with disabilities. The District-selected programs have been proven to be successful with general education students as well as ELLs and students with disabilities.
- School leaders have monitored the implementation of the intervention programs to assess whether implementation is consistent across classrooms and if implementation retains fidelity with the core principles and design of the program. The review team found that while teachers are implementing the programs, implementation is inconsistent across the school.
- Teachers have had basic training in various lesson design and lesson implementation methods as well as unit and lesson design. However, lesson design, planning and implementation differ from teacher to teacher within the school.
- Essential questions and lesson objectives were displayed in many classrooms, indicating that teachers are working to implement what they learn during PD. However, opportunities for teachers to check for student understanding or ascertain if students understood the lesson objective were not readily observable by the review team.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- To ensure consistency of curriculum and instruction within and across grade levels and subgroups, the school leadership should align curriculum across the grade levels and all intervention programs, i.e., Academic Intervention Services (AIS) and programs for ELLs and students with disabilities.
- The District should focus on developing curriculum maps, pacing guides, scope and sequence charts, essential questions and assessments for the ELA curricula based on the NYS P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- One aspect of the District initiative to provide PD about the CCLS should focus on training in developing well-designed and executed lessons and units. This, combined with an increase in data-driven instruction, should provide opportunities for instruction targeted directly to the individual needs of ELLs and students with disabilities.
- School and District leadership should allocate time and resources for teachers from the four middle schools to work together to create curriculum maps, pacing guides, and scope and sequences for ELA, mathematics and other core content areas. The group should focus on the CCLS and explore the implications for ELLs and students with disabilities. Literacy team membership should be expanded to include teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities.
- The school should establish for all to teachers to use a single consistent, research-based lesson design and implementation format, e.g., use of essential question(s), clearly stated lesson objective(s), formative and interim assessments to determine if students achieved the lesson's objective(s).

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- Persons interviewed by the review team indicated that all constituent groups were comfortable with school leaders. The school leaders have established open lines of communication with all constituents, and the school operates efficiently. There is consensus that the school's primary purpose is to educate its students, and this is known throughout this school community.
- The school leaders are a cohesive team and are developing productive, trusting partnerships with teachers. The spirit of collegiality is evidenced throughout the school. The school leader shares leadership with Assistant Principals (APs), members of the School Improvement Team (SIT) and teachers who are leaders within the staff. School leaders work collaboratively with District content area specialists and the special education school improvement specialist (SEIS).
- The school leaders review lesson plans and spend considerable time conducting both informal and formal teacher observations. The formal observations include a pre- and post-observation conference. These teacher conferences provide opportunities to review teaching strategies and the effectiveness of school and District PD initiatives.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The existing collaboration among the District's four middle school leadership teams should continue. The District should support a collaborative, consistent approach to curriculum across the four middle schools.
- School leaders should continue to attend PD sessions with teachers and receive instruction in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP).
- In order to sustain the capacity for school leaders to visit classrooms and work with teachers to improve student achievement, there is a need for an adequate level of staffing.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- Traditional department structures exist within the school. Teachers work collaboratively within departments and grade levels and with the District and school content area specialists.
- The school leader is evaluating the master schedule to see if additional opportunities can be made available for teachers to have common planning time.
- The current articulation from the elementary school to the middle school for incoming grade six students does not adequately inform the middle school staff of the individual needs of the students, especially students in the identified subgroups.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- To meet the needs of the identified subgroups, collaboration among teachers needs to reach across departments. Collaboration should continue and expand to include staff members who provide AIS, school specialists, general education teachers, teachers of ELLs, and teachers of students with disabilities.
- Articulation procedures should be revised.
- Entrance and exit criteria should be established for placement in the Student with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE) program, and the grade six orientation for SIFE students should be reviewed.
- A goal of the central office and the school leaders should be to design all PD activities in ways that facilitate collaboration across all groups of teachers, i.e., general education, teachers of ELLs, teachers of student with disabilities and school leaders. Every effort should be made to ensure that members of each group are scheduled together in each PD session.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**FINDINGS:**

- The District has a long-term, ongoing and comprehensive PD plan in place.
- Both the District and the school have PD plans based on staff and leadership needs and focused on improving the achievement of ELLs and students with disabilities, the two groups that data indicate are in the greatest need of improvement. PD programs are high quality, develop content knowledge, enhance proficiency, and address the CCLS. Calendars and schedules are prepared annually to ensure that all teachers are able to participate. Sessions are mandatory and offered during the school day to ensure that all teachers attend.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The District should consider making PD opportunities available to a wider range of teachers. For example, the District could encourage general education teachers to participate in additional PD in best practices for teaching ELLs and students with disabilities to enable them to work more effectively with those students in the general education classroom.
- To ensure that the same curriculum is taught to all students, teachers of ELLs and students with disabilities should be included in ELA and content area PD programs. Opportunities for collaboration among general education and AIS teachers, teachers of ELLs, teachers of students with disabilities, and school leaders should be implemented.
- It should be a goal of the District and school leaders to create PD opportunities for teacher assistants to further familiarize them with the District and school initiatives.

VI FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- The school has an adequate number of textbooks and instructional and resource materials available to students. The District continues to increase the number of textbooks and materials available in Spanish. Leveled libraries in Spanish are, and will continue to be, purchased for use in classrooms with ELLs. Students with disabilities receive instructional materials in alternate formats as indicated on their IEPs. In addition, new programs adopted by the District come with materials in alternate formats.
- There is a sufficient number of working computers with Internet access and SMART Boards with LCD projectors in all classrooms, not just classrooms in which the identified subgroup students are educated. For the most part, the technology is in working order, and there is a technology teacher in the school to address problems with hardware, software, and access to technology. With the addition of technology during the past few years, the technology infrastructure is strong.
- The library multimedia center is appropriate for the students and the size of the school.
- There is a garden by the front entrance that is supported and maintained by students, parents, staff, and community members who work in the garden and contribute plants and materials as needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school should continue to build leveled libraries in classrooms serving all ELA, Native Language Arts (NLA), English as a Second Language (ESL), and students with disabilities.
- School leaders should collaborate with District leaders to prepare needs assessment for the technology infrastructure.

PART 4: CONCLUDING STATEMENT

The findings and recommendations noted in this 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.