

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

DBN:	07X385
District Name:	District 7
School Name:	Performance School
School Address:	750 Concourse Village West, Bronx, NY 10451
Principal:	Lourdes Estrella
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year-1) – Comprehensive
Areas of Identification:	English Language Arts - All Students; Hispanic Students; African American Students; English Language Learners; Students with Disabilities and Economically Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Review:	May 1 – 2, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“Our mission is to engage staff, students, families, and community partners to make a difference in the life of each child in our learning community. We will provide all students with an exceptional education to develop their mind and nurture their spirit, empowering them to pursue dreams and change the world.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- There is a spirit of collaboration and cooperation among teachers that creates a collegial working environment.
- The school provides effective support for new teachers with a strong mentoring program that enables them to integrate well into the school.
- The move to grade level inquiry teams has enabled teachers to focus on student work and to identify task-specific goals. This shift has increased the professional dialogue and sharing of effective practices to improve student learning.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDING:

School leaders collect and analyze data on student performance. However, review of data documentation and interviews conducted by the review team show limited evidence that the school systematically shares data trends, including the analysis of subgroup performance, with staff to establish goals and set schoolwide priorities.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should disaggregate data for all subgroups to share with staff to plan specific improvement and intervention strategies to raise the achievement of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs). Throughout the school year, school leaders should use the aggregated school and grade level data to help establish schoolwide goals and priorities.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING**FINDINGS:**

- Teachers collect and analyze a range of assessment data to evaluate student progress. However, in most of the classrooms observed by the review team, there was limited evidence that teachers are consistently using assessment data to differentiate instruction to match students' individual learning needs.
- Interviews with staff and review of documentation conducted by the review team indicated that the school has a structured academic and behavioral Response to Intervention plan (RTI). However, classroom observations by the review team showed inconsistent implementation of support, reducing the impact of RTI plans.
- Based on observations, the review team found that student work displayed in hallways provides effective support for learning by showing high quality work, with teacher annotations and assessment rubrics that exemplify the standards. However, the quality of student work displayed in classrooms was inconsistent and did not match the standard seen in hallways.
- Based on classroom observations, the review team concluded that the school has sufficient technology equipment to support teaching and learning. However, use of the equipment to enrich learning is inconsistent across the school. Although there are SMARTBoards available in most classrooms, most were used as a projection device and were not observed being used interactively.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should review classroom practice and provide differentiated professional development (PD) based on individual teacher needs. The school leaders should monitor planning and classroom practice to ensure that all teachers are consistently using data to make appropriate accommodations and instructional modifications to meet the differentiated academic needs of all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners.

- School leaders should monitor implementation of RTI through review of teachers' plans and classroom observations to ensure support is consistent across all classrooms. Additional resources should be identified to supplement and support RTI as needed.
- Exemplary student work should be prominently displayed in both classrooms and hallways. Model tasks should be posted alongside rubrics expressed in student-friendly language to reinforce students' understanding of the standards required for high quality work.
- School leaders should monitor the integration of instructional technology and provide further training to teachers who need additional support. School leaders should ensure that teachers infuse technology to improve academic achievement through increased student engagement.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- Interviews conducted by the review team indicated that school leaders regularly carry out formal and informal classroom visits to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. There is limited evidence, however, that these informal visits provide sufficient specific, actionable written feedback detailing next steps needed for teachers to improve their practice.
- Interviews, observations and document reviews conducted by the review team indicate that the school has placed a strong emphasis on building community to improve student behavior and attitude. However, this has led to a limited focus on the development and improvement of specific student learning goals. There is limited evidence that progress targets for identified subgroups have been a part of the schoolwide strategic plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- When conducting informal monitoring, school leaders should utilize agreed-upon, researched-based criteria. Written developmental feedback with next steps should be used to help teachers improve their instructional practice. Pedagogical practices that have proven effective in other similar schools should be investigated and integrated into the instructional program.
- The Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) should serve as the schoolwide strategic plan. School leaders should set challenging, yet achievable goals that are based on prior performance data. The plan should include interim benchmarks to measure student progress towards meeting these goals. The plan should be implemented and regularly monitored so that adjustments can be made to the instructional program.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- Although the school has a high proportion of students needing social and emotional support, interviews with staff and document review conducted by the review team indicate that, due to budget constraints, the school does not have a full-time guidance counselor. The functions of the counselor have to be performed by the social workers, the school psychologist and other staff members in addition to their other duties.
- Based on document review and observations by the review team, the school has an extended day program to provide support for at-risk students. However, there is limited evidence the school has a comprehensive Academic Intervention Services (AIS) program during the regular school day to support these students beyond the provision of RTI services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should seek additional funding to procure a guidance counselor to better meet the social and emotional needs of the students. School leaders should consider hiring a part-time or shared guidance counselor. School leaders should ensure that all responsibilities of the guidance counselor are equitably distributed to staff members, with clear roles and expectations.
- School leaders should develop and implement a comprehensive AIS program during the regular school day to provide academic support for all at-risk students.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- Document reviews conducted by the review team revealed that the school uses data and teacher surveys to identify PD needs. However, there is limited evidence that training consistently targets specific strategies and areas in which teachers need additional support. There was limited evidence that the PD offerings are part of a school-wide strategic plan linked to AYP goals.
- Interviews conducted by the review team revealed that teachers have access to a wide variety of PD opportunities. However, there is limited evidence that the school systematically monitors or evaluates the impact that PD has on improving teaching and learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School leaders should develop a comprehensive PD plan and calendar. The plan should contain targeted training to support specific improvement strategies and should be based on student performance data. The plan should be differentiated to meet the individualized needs of teachers. The PD offerings and plan should be aligned to AYP goals.
- School leaders should use classroom observation, data analysis and teacher surveys to monitor the impact of PD on improving teaching, learning and student achievement.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDING:

Based on interviews conducted by the review team with teachers and students, staff has access to computers and other technology hardware. However, software programs to target reading and writing development are not widely available.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should research effective software programs that support reading and writing development and students' varied learning modalities.

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 Common Core Learning Standards, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.