

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

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

DBN:	12X129
District Name:	District 12
School Name:	Twins Park Upper School
School Address:	2055 Mapes Avenue, Bronx, New York 10460
Principal:	Yvette Beasley
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year-1) - Comprehensive
Area of Identification:	English Language Arts - All Students; English Language Learners; Students with Disabilities; Hispanic Students; and Economically; Disadvantaged Students
Dates of On-site Review:	March 20-21, 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“In meeting the needs of our community, the goal of Intermediate School 129 is to provide a quality educational experience for all children and to develop fruitful partnerships with parents. Working together, we - educators, parents and community members - will provide our children with the proper tools to become lifelong learners and productive citizens of society.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- Staff and students have positive relationships, resulting in a nurturing and supportive school climate.
- The teachers have created a collaborative professional learning community that is dedicated to closing the achievement gap.
- Technology is integrated within the classroom to support learning.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDING:

Data are collected from numerous sources, such as Acuity, I-Ready, Independent Reading Level Assessments, McLeod Reading Assessment, Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS) and the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) and is disseminated to all staff. However, classroom observations and a review of teacher data binders conducted by the review team provide limited evidence that the instructional staff uses a clear and cohesive system to monitor trends in student progress and to identify next steps for instruction.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should evaluate the effectiveness of current assessment tools to monitor trends in student progress and to identify next steps for instruction. School leaders should identify and prioritize appropriate assessments to establish improvement targets for student progress over time.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- All students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), receive instruction in literacy across grade levels and content areas. However, based on the review team's classroom observations and document review of lesson plans, there is limited use of effective questioning techniques to promote critical thinking and scaffolding strategies, which results in low levels of student engagement and off-task behavior.
- The school has identified the use of 'Point of Entry' as their English language arts (ELA) instructional model. Based on classroom observations and document review, the review team concluded that teachers are not following the architecture of a mini-lesson and the workshop model with fidelity, which results in most lessons being teacher directed.
- A review of documentation by the review team indicates that the staff has received numerous professional development (PD) offerings from a variety of sources on the effective use of data to plan for differentiated instruction. However, classroom observations conducted by the review team indicate that in many lessons, instruction is not modified to meet the needs of all students. The implementation of differentiated instructional strategies and the allocation of resources are inconsistent across the school. Most observed lessons are based upon a whole class approach, and most lessons do not vary the pace of instruction, provide support, or increase the level of challenge for students who have reached benchmark standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The school leaders should monitor the quality and rigor of teaching through observations, examination of student work samples, review of lesson plans and student data. Additionally, the school leader should establish expectations of best practices for all instructional staff. These practices should be research-based and include the use of higher order questioning techniques to ask open ended questions, collaborative grouping of students, and hands-on activities to support inquiry-based learning.

- School leaders should monitor and hold teachers accountable for the implementation of the chosen instructional model, Point of Entry. Adherence to this model should ensure continuity of instruction for all students in all classrooms.
- School leaders should ensure teachers include differentiation strategies in the planning and delivery of instruction. Based on data, teachers should incorporate instructional strategies to address a range of student learning modalities and interests. Incorporation of differentiated strategies should be monitored through lesson observations, evaluation of student work samples, monitoring the outcomes of teachers' planning sessions and student engagement. Teachers should include provisions for differentiated product and/or process in student assignments.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDING:

The school leader collaborates with teachers to set individualized annual goals and provides feedback to teachers. Some provided feedback is developmental. However, classroom observations, staff interviews and a document review conducted by the review team indicate that the application of newly acquired strategies by teachers is inconsistently monitored by school leaders.

RECOMMENDATION:

As part of classroom observations, school leaders should monitor the effectiveness of the PD program and evaluate its impact on improving student learning. Teachers should reference and apply the skills learned during PD sessions in their daily instructional practice. School leaders should provide feedback regarding the integration of these skills into daily instruction. This feedback should detail next steps for improvement.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDING:

The school has one certified English as a second language (ESL) teacher to support English language learners (ELLs). However, ESL instruction is not maximized due to the high student-to-teacher ratio. Observations and interviews conducted by the review team also indicate that occasionally the ESL instructional program is modified without notification or adherence to the required number of minutes of instruction.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should evaluate the instructional program to ensure that the allocation of human resources and corresponding minutes of instruction meet the basic requirements for ESL education. The school leader should ensure that the ESL program is adhered to and modifications to the schedule are limited. When modifications are necessary, they should be evaluated with the supervising school leader

and shared with all teachers prior to implementation. Changes to the ESL instructional program should be minimized to ensure continuity and coherence of instruction.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDING:

The school has a PD plan that contains an overview of offerings for the school year. The plan includes PD opportunities onsite and offsite in addition to sessions provided by two external consultants. However, based on classroom observations and staff interviews conducted by the review team, the PD activities are not differentiated to address the individual needs of the teachers or aligned to the learning needs of students in ELA.

RECOMMENDATION:

As part of the observation process, school leaders should monitor the effectiveness of the PD plan. Classroom observations should refer to the impact of the strategies learned during PD sessions on student achievement. Teachers should integrate and apply the skills learned during PD sessions into their daily practice. PD should be aligned to both teacher and student needs and the goals of the school.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDING:

There is evidence of instructional resources and technological supports, such as SMARTBoards, textbooks and computers throughout the school. Each class has its own library stocked with fiction and non-fiction texts. However, based on observations conducted by the review team, the school does not currently have functioning science laboratory facilities with mandated safety equipment for hands-on inquiry based science instruction or a school library.

RECOMMENDATION:

School leaders should expedite making the recently constructed school science laboratory functional, ensuring that it is well resourced, and that teachers responsible for science instruction receive appropriate PD. School leaders should explore the feasibility of centralizing the school library resources.

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.

