

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	280300010006
District Name:	Long Beach City School District
School Name:	Long Beach Middle School
School Address:	239 Lido Boulevard, Lido Beach, NY 11561
Principal:	Michelle Natali
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year - 1) - Focused
Areas of Identification:	English Language Arts – African American Students and Students with Disabilities
Dates of On-site Review:	February 13-16 , 2012

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of Long Beach Middle School is to foster independent thinking within a teamed atmosphere while nurturing the creative potential of adolescents. We encourage striving for excellence as individuals in order to become positive members of a greater community. We can achieve this dynamic partnership through:

- Emotional support
- Diverse and challenging learning experiences
- Unity and mutual respect
- Cooperation & compassion
- A safe and healthy environment
- Teaching the whole child
- Individual responsibility
- Open lines of communication
- New opportunities

Students can reach their full and unique potential through a partnership with home, school, and community. Family involvement encourages students to become integral members of society. All students are accountable to more than themselves. Together Everyone Achieves More.”

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- Common assessments have been developed, administered, and analyzed to identify skills and content that students have mastered and the skills and content that require re-teaching.

- Assessments are used to monitor student growth and are used to generate formative, interim and summative data, e.g., Scholastic Reading Inventory and writing benchmarks.
- Profiles for students with disabilities have been developed based on a comprehensive review of individual student performance data. Data on the placement and extended accommodations for English language learners (ELLs) are shared with guidance and core teachers.
- District and school leaders have received training in the Regents' Reform Agenda initiatives and have provided turnkey training to and shared information with staff and the community. Academic terminology is used across the curriculum in preparation for adoption of the New York State (NYS) P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Directors and teaching staff are participating in training on the CCLS.
- ELLs receive 1:1 or 1:3 services of a teaching assistant (TA) in science, social studies and math. ELLs are offered supplemental, targeted, extended day opportunities for instruction in ELA and mathematics.
- The review team noted all written curriculum uses the principles of Understanding by Design (UbD) and then placed on the NY Learns website.
- School leaders are working to develop and support a culture that places emphasis on student achievement and high expectations. Members of the staff embrace shared accountability for the success of all students. Support structures for students at-risk have been implemented, i.e., mathematics strategies, English language arts (ELA) strategies, and Academic Intervention Services (AIS).
- The school has put an emphasis on fostering strong parent-school partnerships. Communication with parents is evident, i.e., a Principal's Newsletter twice in the summer and eight times during the year (every five weeks with report card); weekly email blasts ; and Middle School taskforce.
- There is a commitment to build staff capacity through high quality, job embedded, ongoing, targeted professional development (PD) aligned with District and school goals and teacher needs. PD is aligned with initiatives (including State initiatives regarding Annual Professional Performance Review [APPR] and leadership evaluation). School leaders participate in PD with teachers to ensure teachers and school leaders collaborate on the expectations and outcomes of PD.
- Systems have been put in place to ensure educational community support for students with disabilities during their transition years , i.e., grades five to six, grades eight to nine and when going from one grade to the next within the school. Included in this support are parent transition meetings, programs for incoming grade six students and orientations for families and their students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). There are also articulation meetings among deans and Pupil Personnel Services (PPS) staff that are conducted during the transition years, i.e., grades five to six and from grades eight to nine. Grade five annual reviews are also attended by the middle school coordinator of special education. Grade eight annual reviews are attended by the high school special education coordinator.
- All students with special needs attend their CSE annual review meetings and are encouraged to advocate for themselves.

- The school is structured on a team model for all grades. Structures for common planning time for teachers are in place on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. Collaboration between regular classroom teachers and AIS teachers to support curriculum is evident based on the review team observations. School leaders, Pupil Personnel Services, and deans meet biweekly to support students with IEPs.
- The District has allocated resources to expand the educational program and invest in a new library and media center and the school has acquired science lab carts with hands on manipulatives in support of an inquiry-based curriculum.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- The use of gap reports and Performance Indicators was being introduced to inform instructional decision-making.
- Common assessments in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) were being developed and were in the introductory phase.
- A system of student performance analysis was initiated for students with disabilities to identify trends and patterns, group students, and provide targeted instruction.
- The review team observed that lesson closure was not consistently implemented and summative data for lessons is not always used to inform instruction.
- District and school leaders have participated in training about data inquiry teams and have begun to analyze data independently.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Teachers and school leaders should be trained to access, analyze, and use data to inform instruction regularly .
- The use of common formative, interim and summative assessments as an instructional tool should be expanded to inform on-going instructional decision-making in forming flexible grouping and supported by PD.
- The use of the student performance data analysis system (currently used to generate individual profiles for students with disabilities for use in instructional decision-making and documenting student growth) should be expanded to generate performance profiles for ELLs and at-risk students.
- School leadership should ensure the consistency and use of exit assessment data, i.e. data from exit cards used for monitoring progress and informing instruction.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- In some classes visited by the review team the following was evident:
 - extensive use of teacher-centered or teacher directed whole class instruction;
 - inconsistent use of lesson closure;
 - inconsistent use of essential questions; and
 - down time for students who finished assignments early.
- Not all rooms had SMART Boards. In some instances the technology was used as an overhead projector.
- Curriculum guides were being revised to include specific learning objectives for each grade and each content area.
- A current English as a second language (ESL) curriculum does not exist.
- ELL accommodations were not in evidence across the curriculum. Students did not use testing accommodations and supports, i.e., content specific bilingual glossaries and dictionaries in all subject areas.
- All grade six students had an additional literacy period; however, the literacy curriculum is not aligned with the New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- Some students with disabilities interviewed by the review team expressed a desire to become more independent learners, specifically to be allowed to participate in their general education classes without direct supports unless they need the extra help.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Instructional leaders should increase implementation of instructional models that promote best practices for student engagement, differentiated instruction, and student responsibility for learning. Implemented models should:
 - ensure the consistent use of lesson closure in all classrooms; and
 - expand the consistent use of essential questions in all classrooms.
- The District should ensure equal access to SMART Boards where possible and the effective use of technology through targeted content-area specific PD, including cross-classroom visitation where appropriate.

- Curricular guides for each content area should be aligned with the CCLS and periodically reviewed and revised.
- The District and school should develop and implement an ESL curriculum that is aligned with the CCLS and District-wide goals.
- Native language support materials, including bilingual dictionaries and glossaries as well as study guides and other materials, should be available and used to foster enhanced organization and study skills. ELLs should be allowed to use accommodations on local assessments so that they have equal opportunity to access the curriculum, achieve greater success, and develop a familiarity with the procedures and skills necessary when taking State assessments.
- The literacy curriculum offered to all grade six students should be reviewed, revised, and implemented in alignment with the CCLS.
- Classroom opportunities should be created to increase an individual student's responsibility as a learner while maintaining necessary supports in general education classes for students with disabilities.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Findings

- On-going School Leadership Training is provided to school leaders and team leaders to become effective change agents.
- School leaders received turnkey training in the development and implementation of a data inquiry team. A data inquiry team is being formed.
- Structures are in place to ensure that school leadership efforts are well articulated, focused, and aligned vertically and horizontally toward the common goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The School Leadership Team should focus the application of training to effect changes in school climate and improvement in student results.
- School leaders should turnkey inquiry team training and develop a data inquiry team. The Inquiry Team should use tools and resources from training to help educators assess the schools' current capacity and strategically initiate and/or spiral the work of school-based inquiry.
- School leaders should extend the current leadership model of articulation, focus, and alignment of goals to team leaders.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- Students from identified subgroups were disproportionately represented in non-Honors classes and underrepresented in Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) courses.
- Common planning time was provided for team teachers; however the review team observed push-in TAs were not always available to participate during teacher common planning time.
- A few students reported that pull-out programs were focused on re-teaching lessons but did not afford them a better way to learn the material.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- A grouping model should be employed that will ensure all students are given access to the most rigorous courses of study, i.e., heterogeneous grouping should be implemented.
- Push-in TAs should be provided with time to plan with content area teachers.
- Pull-out programs should teach students strategies and skills to successfully access the curriculum.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- ESL and special education TAs were not included in ELA and mathematics content-specific PD.
- On-going targeted, job-embedded PD is provided by the District and school in accordance with an adopted Professional Development Plan that clearly identifies department and school level goals. The PD has an emphasis on addressing school improvement in mathematics and ELA. Some examples in evidence were Best Practices for Working with English Language Learners in the Mainstream Classroom, as well as building an educational community that supports all stakeholders and promotes institutional growth and school improvement. A comprehensive evaluation of the provided PD was not available during the review.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ESL and special education TAs should receive content-specific PD, preferably with general education staff.
- PD offerings should be adjusted to meet needs of the educational community. PD provided should be evaluated for effectiveness in achieving school improvement goals and the results reflected in future plans. PD should be aligned to CCLS and school and District goals.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDING:

Some classrooms were small and space limitations impacted instruction. New construction to address this situation is anticipated.

RECOMMENDATION:

New construction should be designed to best meet the instructional needs of students.

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.