

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
Office of Accountability

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

<b>BEDS Code:</b>	261600010006
<b>District Name:</b>	Rochester City School District
<b>School Name:</b>	Dag Hammarskjold School No. 6
<b>School Address:</b>	595 Upper Falls Blvd., Rochester, NY 14605
<b>Principal:</b>	Donna Gattelaro-Andersen
<b>Accountability Phase/Category:</b>	Improvement (year 1) - Focused
<b>Area of Identification:</b>	English Language Arts - All Students, African American Students and Economically Disadvantaged Students
<b>Dates of On-site Review:</b>	October 17-19, 2011

**PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT**

“The mission of Dag Hammarskjold School #6 is to develop the habits of mind that allow all students to successfully meet or exceed NYS academic standards”.

**PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS**

- The new school leadership has emphasized a renewed emphasis on increasing student achievement.
- The students were well- behaved, courteous and welcoming during the review.

**PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**I. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA**

**FINDINGS:**

- The data that the school collects is not being analyzed in a rigorous manner to identify precisely what aspects of ELA need to be the specific focus for improvement. The analysis of data is not focused sharply enough to identify the key changes required in programs and delivery to bring about urgent improvement in student performance. The school does not have structured team meetings that focus on instructional data review.

- The instructional coaches do not have sufficient training on implementing data review with teachers. This is especially true in English language arts (ELA).
- Currently, there is no system in place to analyze ELA data and transform the results into an action plan.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The school leaders with District support should provide professional development (PD) support in developing the essential teacher skills needed to implement a more rigorous and systematic analysis of data. The school should hone these skills to identify precisely the aspects of ELA that are causing greatest concern. Plans should then be put in place to address these issues on either a school, grade or class level and to ensure that these areas are a focus for teaching and learning. The school leadership should monitor the analysis down to classroom practice and hold staff accountable to ensure that improvements are made. The school leadership should create a regular schedule of data review meetings with each grade level and the instructional coaches that has an established agenda with actionable goals for each session.
- The instructional coaches should receive additional PD that focuses on data review, analysis and communication of the results with the school staff. School leadership should regularly evaluate and support the coaches for enhanced professional growth.
- Teachers are encouraged to conduct and complete an interim assessment analysis worksheet and develop, implement, and monitor action plans to instructionally address learning deficits as indicated by the analysis of the assessment data.

## **II. TEACHING AND LEARNING**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- Most classes reviewed by the team lessons did not follow the Rochester Curriculum, Rochester Instructional Framework (RIF) or the readers/writers model.
- In classes visited by the review team, most lessons in ELA did not contain the expected level of rigor or higher order thinking for the class level reviewed. There was a lack of rigor in questioning strategies, higher order thinking and problem solving absent from the school. Students were asked to recall facts and details. Students were not challenged to analyze, evaluate or synthesize information.
- The review team noted a lack of meaningful application of vocabulary building strategies during classroom instruction.
- There was little evidence in classes that were reviewed by the team that students were aware of their learning goals. Goals were not posted, and teachers did not verbally review goals with students.
- Few classrooms contained exemplar student work with rubrics.

- Instructional time was not maximized in most classes that were visited by the review team. Transitions were not smooth between lesson segments. Significant time was spent on classroom management related activities. This did not allow the teacher to complete the objectives for the entire lesson.
- Technology was not used to the fullest extent possible in many classrooms visited by the review team.
- In classes visited by the review team, much of the instruction was teacher-directed, with little variety of instructional strategies. Students had few opportunities to engage in conversations about topics by working in pairs or talking with different groups of students.
- A number of teachers use a punitive tone in classes and hallways, and this does little to promote a welcoming atmosphere for students and visitors.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The District should ensure that curriculum is aligned with the New York State (NYS) P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). All teachers and administrators should participate in professional development (PD) on how to plan and implement a curriculum with rigor, as well as on delivery methods that are student-centered. The curriculum should be relied upon as the basis for assessing individual student mastery and progress. Walkthroughs and formal evaluations should include how well the teacher knows and implements the curriculum for the subject being taught.
- Instruction should move from teacher posed questions that require one-word answers or are recall and comprehension based to questions that require students to support answers by citing text, by elaborating on the answers of other students, and by summarizing and rephrasing new information. Teacher lesson plans should include pre-created questions that require critical thinking and discussion. Teachers should use wait time and not allow students to opt-out of class discussions. Teachers should use random selection and/or avoid calling exclusively on willing student volunteers and require students to answer in complete sentences.
- Teachers should develop lessons designed to focus on vocabulary development within context.
- Teachers should ensure that lesson objectives are shared with students so that they have an understanding of what it is they are learning. Lessons should include explicit teaching points and provide practice sessions for independent work to assess student learning before teachers proceed to the next teaching point. Teachers should make sure that teaching points are related within the same lesson and should be standards-based. School leaders should ensure through the observation process that this practice is uniform.
- Rubrics should be used as an integral tool in planning and assessing assignments. Teachers should participate in PD activities that model the use of rubrics to provide teacher feedback, peer feedback and student self assessment. School leaders should monitor student work in books and on display and evaluate the quality of feedback that is provided to ensure that it helps students improve and move to the next level.
- PD in best practices in pacing, including questioning techniques and responding to the learning styles of students in order to maximize and improve instructional time should be provided with District support.

- The school leader with District support should provide teachers with additional PD on the use of technology.
- School leaders should provide PD to introduce teachers to a wider range of instructional strategies that can be used in the classroom to promote greater student participation in the learning process. Teachers should be expected to implement these strategies, and school leaders should monitor the effectiveness and provide additional PD for teachers when necessary.
- The school leader should seek the assistance of the District in order to provide PD on schoolwide behavior management, including how adults should de-escalate conflict. The PD should focus on building and extending a more trusting relationship among stakeholders.

### **III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- The leadership is new to the school. They are in the process of forming relationships with staff, students, parents and the community.
- Although the school leaders do conduct walkthroughs of classrooms, they are insufficient in number and focus.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The zone leadership and District central office, in conjunction with the Race to the Top Network team, should provide the school leadership additional support.
- School leadership should increase the number and intensity of classroom walkthroughs. Timely feedback should be provided for all formal, informal and walkthrough observations, including clear targets for improvement. Follow-up observations should be included in the schedule to check on progress. The outcomes of lesson observations should provide a focus for the school PD plan.

### **IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS**

#### **FINDINGS:**

- The Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program is in the beginnings of its implementation. Classroom and hallway management did not always follow the tenants of PBIS.
- The last 30-minute period of the day is scheduled to prepare children to travel home. Academic instruction does not take place during this period.
- The self-contained special education classroom does not adequately meet the needs of the students assigned. There is little curriculum based instruction but frequent disciplinary issues.

- Some parents expressed a concern to the review team that teachers do not always effectively communicate expectations for students within their classrooms.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- Teachers and school leaders with the support of the District should focus on the consistent implementation of PBIS.
- Intermediate level teacher schedules should be revised to reflect more on-task instructional time. The school master schedule should reflect the urgency of improvement and increased use of instructional time.
- The self-contained classroom staff should receive additional professional support. The District should consider conducting an audit of all self-contained classrooms to ensure there is curriculum alignment, instructional implementation and training to reduce disruptions of instruction.
- The school leadership team, in conjunction with the parent group and liaison, should develop a common set of communication expectations for all teachers within the school and parent responsibilities for reciprocal involvement.

**V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**FINDINGS:**

The school does not have a PD plan that addresses teacher and student needs; therefore, there is no coordinated PD that focuses on the areas of identification with support to implement instructional practices

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The school leadership team should create and implement a PD plan to address teacher/student needs and the findings of the review. Staff should engage in professional learning circles that focus on student work. This time should be structured with planned agendas and expected outcomes. The District Director of Professional Development and the school leaders should examine the data in conjunction with the school based planning team and focus on areas that are hindering the ELA improvement process.

**VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

**FINDINGS:**

- The school’s physical condition needs renovation. This is especially relevant in the cafeteria, in many of the stairwells, the bathrooms and the hallways.
- The school lacks adequate technology, especially compared to similar schools in the District.

- Visitors can enter the building from at least three entrances.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The District should conduct a thorough audit of the building's condition to prepare for use as a "swing space" during the District's renovation cycle.
- The Director of Technology and the school leader should pursue additional grant funds to ensure the building has sufficient technology.
- The school leaders, school security guard and main office staff should develop a plan to should ensure that one entrance is designated as the main entrance for all staff, parents and visitors.

**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 CCLS, Data Driven Instruction and the Annual Professional Performance Reviews for teacher effectiveness.

**Note:**

Rochester City School District, upon recommendation of the Interim Superintendent and the Board of Education, will be closing School 6 at the conclusion of the current school year.