

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

Differentiated Accountability - School Quality Review (SQR)

SCHOOL QUALITY REVIEW REPORT

BEDS Code:	28040103000675
District Name:	Westbury Union Free School District
School Name:	Westbury Middle School
School Address:	455 Rockland Street, Westbury, NY 11590
Principal:	David Zimblar
Accountability Phase/Category:	Improvement (year - 1) - Focused
Area of Identification:	English Language Arts – Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners
Dates of On-site Review:	December 12 and 14, 2011

PART 1: MISSION STATEMENT

"The mission of the Westbury Middle School is to create lifelong learners who are prepared to enter and be successful in a diverse and ever changing society. To fulfill this commitment we will provide all students with a safe and nurturing environment, and instill in them a sense of respect, integrity, cooperation and character. We will encourage students to excel in their academic and social pursuits while continuing to stimulate their intellectual curiosity and artistic expression. With the cooperation of students, teachers, staff and parents, we will create a community of learners and achievers who are... Striving/for Success ... Nothing Less!"

PART 2: SCHOOL STRENGTHS

- Interviews indicated that after several changes in school leaders, a new school leader was appointed in April 2011. The new instructional leader has changed the focus and conversation of the school staff regarding teaching and learning.
- A positive environment and a culture of professionalism are evident and reflected in all adult and student interactions.
- The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model is in the early stages of implementation. The model provides teachers with well-articulated and practical standards to facilitate high quality instruction for English language learners (ELLs) in the content areas. Teachers have received training or are scheduled to participate in training sessions.

PART 3: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COLLECTION, ANALYSIS, AND UTILIZATION OF DATA

FINDINGS:

- State assessment data are reviewed by the School Leadership team (SLT), department chairs, and teachers. A common language has developed among professionals regarding student data. The school leaders are working on creating a student data binder to be maintained by each teacher.
- The Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments are administered; they provide detailed information for teachers and school leaders. Teachers are currently participating in professional development (PD) sessions to understand and use the data more effectively to inform instruction and intervention.
- Exams for all three grade levels are uniformly administered and performance analyzed during the first, second, and third quarters. The school leader engages staff in PD activities, sharing sample action plans and intervention plans.
- There is evidence that student progress data is regularly shared and discussed at department meetings. Teachers are analyzing individual and group data and beginning to interpret trends in student performance.
- Results from formative and summative assessments for English as a second language (ESL) student achievement data is beginning to be used to plan standards-based differentiated instruction. In previous years, only the ESL department members received and studied the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT) data. Currently, the NYSESLAT data is shared with content area teachers.
- The special education department did not use data to drive instruction or to develop lesson plans. However, there is evidence that a gap analysis was completed for students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Teachers should update passwords for access to pertinent student data, including Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), New York State Testing and Accountability Reporting Tool (nySTART), Data Warehouse, and NWEA reports.
- PD and collegial discussions on data analysis, progress monitoring, and effective use of data to inform instruction and intervention strategies should be ongoing. Purposeful learning agendas that support teacher acquisition of new knowledge and skills should be developed.
- Teachers should be held accountable for using data from interim, formative, and summative assessments to consistently inform and differentiate instruction in order to support all student needs.
- Teachers should continue to analyze and interpret individual and group data for students with disabilities to determine trends in student performance and highlight specific student needs. The Academic

- Professional developers should be scheduled to work closely with teachers to guide and improve the writing of effective lesson plans using the analysis of student data.
- The schoolwide focus on test construction and lesson development and purpose should be continued.

II. TEACHING AND LEARNING

FINDINGS:

- Academic teachers (except science) loop with students from grades seven to eight. This design supports student learning through building long-term relationships between teachers and students.
- Teachers participated in PD sessions and staff meetings on the implementation of the New York State (NYS) P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- The school leader conducts daily walkthroughs of classrooms and models teaching strategies. The school leader provides an "instructional tip of the week" in his Monday morning memo.
- Observations by the review team showed that teachers communicated lesson goals and objectives to students and checked for understanding of learning expectations.
- Students are provided opportunities to attend before and afterschool instructional sessions. After school and summer ESL programs are offered.
- Teachers are enthusiastic about using the SLOP model to organize lessons and incorporate language and content objectives. It is understood that this model is a framework that can bring together the instructional program by organizing methods and techniques and ensuring that effective practices are implemented. There was evidence of implementation of strategies learned in SLOP PD sessions.
- The Read 180 program is being piloted with students with disabilities who are struggling readers.
- There was evidence of the use of word walls, maps, and sentence strips for vocabulary development in ESL and mainstream classrooms. Reinforcing vocabulary for ELLs across content areas is a schoolwide focus. However, teachers' building upon prior language and knowledge was not evident in all classes observed by the review team.
- Some of the lessons observed by the review team were teacher-directed and lacked rigor. Use of strategies, such as scaffolding and differentiated instruction, was not evident.
- There is lack of native language support materials, particularly bilingual dictionaries and glossaries, in general education classrooms.

- There was limited evidence of the use of technology, and it appears that technology integration is in the beginning stages. The laptops designated for classroom use are being used for NWEA assessments.
- Some classrooms have only one computer and no capacity for the electronic display of work. The school staff is not familiar with the District's technology plan.
- Accommodations for students with disabilities to manage their instruction and participation were not observed by the Special Education School Improvement Specialist (SEIS) member of the review team.
- Interviews conducted by the review team indicated that research-based programs are needed and teachers require PD to differentiate instruction for the students with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Instruction that is more rigorous should be implemented, including use by teachers of a variety of questioning techniques to activate student higher order thinking skills. Additionally, scaffolding of skills will allow for increased student success. The uniform use of a program to develop students' higher order thinking skills and for semantic mapping activities across content areas should be considered.
- Formal and informal walkthroughs should be conducted to ensure that academic rigor and expectations for student outcomes are being implemented.
- Teachers should continue to align the current curriculum to the CCLS and develop curriculum maps for guiding literacy instruction and addressing the six major shifts in literacy.
- The collection of informational texts to be aligned with CCLS should be expanded. A diverse combination of non-fiction instructional resources for both native and second language instruction should be developed.
- Bilingual glossaries should be used in the content area classes.
- If it is effective, the READ 180 program should be expanded to additional self-contained and inclusion classes. Additional research and evidence-based programs should be explored for students who score below the introductory level of READ 180 to accelerate progress.
- The job-embedded interdisciplinary SIOP PD that is provided through interdisciplinary department meetings should be continued.
- All teachers should be provided support to address the needs of students with disabilities.
- A bank of lesson plans that include modified activities supporting ELLs and students with disabilities should be created.
- PD regarding technology should be scheduled to include opportunities for creating lessons that integrate technology and promote student thinking and learning. The school leader should monitor teacher incorporation of PD activities into instruction through walkthroughs and observations.

- Online resources for students and teachers should be improved and increased.
- A plan to purchase SMART Boards and laptop carts for use in classrooms should be developed.

III. SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FINDINGS:

- The school leader facilitates collaboration among teachers and departments and challenges school staff to raise instruction to a higher level.
- The school leaders participated in the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) training sessions.
- The District ESL/Bilingual Coordinator is knowledgeable about best practices and works closely with the middle school ESL Chairperson to promote instructional improvement.
- The school leader schedules weekly interdisciplinary department cabinet meetings to share student data, best practices, and department events.

RECOMMENDATION:

The school leader, with the assistance of District leaders, should ensure that all service providers thoroughly understand and implement a data-driven approach to school improvement. The approach should include data-driven, collaborative instructional planning and continuous monitoring of progress for all students and subgroups.

IV. INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

FINDINGS:

- A nurturing school culture exists.
- The review team observed that ESL resources were not used consistently in mainstream classrooms.
- There is limited technology equipment available to students and teachers.
- Student use of technology was not observed by the review team during classroom visits.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- School information in the main hallway should be posted in Spanish and English to facilitate parent and student involvement.
- Bilingual glossaries should be provided for student use in content area classes. In addition, standard

- School leaders should consider developing a linkage with groups such as the charity Comp for Kids (<http://comp4kids.org>) that donates computers for students who do not have them at home.
- The school should develop program articulation and collaboration with the two feeder schools and the high school.
- Special education teachers should make visits to other schools to observe exemplary programs and best practice models.

V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

FINDINGS:

- Teachers participate in a variety of out-of-District workshops and conferences.
- A significant portion of time at staff meetings is set aside for collegial conversation and PD activities.
- There is evidence of grade level and department planning time and interdisciplinary conversations.
- There is evidence of SLOP training and implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- SLOP PD should be continued and use of SLOP strategies and techniques should be monitored through lesson plan review and formal and informal observations.
- An annual PD calendar should be developed and implemented. PD should be ongoing, meaningful, targeted, and continually changing and adapting to meet the needs of students and staff. There is a need for additional PD on differentiating instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- Individual teacher professional growth plans should be designed and include at least one technology goal.

VI. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

FINDINGS:

- The school is clean and orderly. Safety personnel are visible and friendly.
- There is limited evidence of the use of instructional technology. The lessons observed could have been enhanced if technology were available to address and challenge the various learning styles of students.

RECOMMENDATION:

Additional technology equipment such as desktops, laptops, SMART Boards, SMART tables, iPods and eReaders, as well as PD opportunities, should be configured into a multi- year purchase/implementation plan. Resources should be increased to support instruction, such as research databases and District links.

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 2012-2013. 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.