New York State EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge ⟩ Skill ⟩ Opportunity

Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment
Final Report

Leadership and Systems

Curriculum

Instruction

Social-Emotional Learning

Family Engagement

BEDS Code	321200010047
School Name	PS 47 John Randolph
School Address	1794 East 172 Street, Bronx, NY 10472
District Name	New York City Department of Education City School District 12
Principal	Thomas Guarnieri
Dates of Visit	May 28-30, 2019

Purpose Of The Visit

This school was identified as needing additional support by the New York State Education Department (NYSED). Because of this identification, NYSED arranged for an Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) to visit the school. The visit is intended to help the school identify areas of need that are making long-term success a challenge and provide several visible Quick Wins that can be accomplished and demonstrate the school's commitment to improvement.

The report provides a critical lens to help the school best focus its efforts.

School Performance

New York State uses multiple indicators to determine the identification status of schools across the state. For each of these indicators, schools receive a number of 1 (lowest), 2, 3, or 4 (highest) that corresponds with how the school performed in relation to either other schools and/or performance targets. More information about how these levels are determined can be found at: http://www.nysed.gov/accountability/essa-accountability-designation-materials.

The most recent results for the "All Students" group at the school are as follows:

Composite Performance Achievement Level	Student Growth Level	Combined Composite and Student Growth Level	English Language Proficiency Level	Average ELA and Math Academic Progress Level	Chronic Absenteeism Level
2	1	1	2	2	1

PS 47 John Randolph School serves 1069 students in grades kindergarten to five.

Information About The Visit

- The visit was led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from NYSED. The team also included a district representative and a representative from the Regional Bilingual Education Resource Network (RBERN).
- The team visited a total of 57 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited eight classrooms with the principal during the visit.
- Team members conducted interviews with students, staff, and parents.
- Team members examined documents provided by the school, including, lesson plans, schoolwide data, teacher feedback, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, 76 staff members (84 percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. In interviews with school staff, the Integrated Intervention Team (IIT) learned that in September, the principal introduced the Five Practices of Mathematical Discourse and required teachers to use the method during the "Problem of the Day" portion of every mathematics class. For 20 to 30 minutes each day, teachers are beginning to modify their practice to engage students in cognitively challenging tasks and facilitate more student discussions in mathematics based on student thinking. In classes the IIT visited, students were beginning to use academic language to communicate their understanding of mathematical concepts and engage in reasoning and debate with their table partners and classmates. Students interviewed reported that this is one of their favorite activities and stated that it makes mathematics easier to understand and helps them learn different ways to solve problems.

2. The principal and staff have created a positive school culture and environment that fosters trust, respect, and collaboration. Parents shared that families trust the principal and teachers and believe that they are providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for their children. During observed lessons, teachers emphasized the importance of students being respectful to and supportive of classmates. The IIT observed student collaboration and cooperation in most classrooms where students regularly offered to help and support classmates who were struggling. The school has a well-established Positive Behavioral Intervention Support (PBIS) framework. All school staff members participate in recognizing student's positive behavior by awarding "Hoots" tickets. Students reported that Hoots tickets are regularly distributed in classrooms, corridors, and the lunchroom. Team interviews and observations confirmed that most students understand the school's behavioral expectations and conduct themselves accordingly.

3. The principal made a strategic decision to utilize resources to fully support the school's new literacy curriculum. When Teachers College Writing Program (TCWP) was introduced in 2017-18, a few teachers attended sporadic workshops at the university, but the support the principal provided for all teachers implementing the program was limited. In 2018-19, the school leaders adopted the Teachers College Reading Program (TCRP). To support its implementation, the principal hired consultants from Teachers College (TC) to provide in-house professional development (PD) to teachers in every grade team. Several times each month, consultants conduct grade specific PD, then model strategies in classrooms so that teachers can observe effective implementation practices. Teachers reported that the PD has been very helpful because every teacher using the program has been able to participate and observe implementation of grade-specific best practices. Elements of the TC program, such as mini-lessons, anchor charts, and strategy groups, were evident in most classrooms the team visited. In addition, the principal purchased new classroom libraries for every teacher. As a result, levelled materials were available to support all of the TC units of study to ensure students have appropriate texts for independent practice.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **To promote sustainable school improvement, the principal should develop systems to strategically assess the impact of initiatives and use collected data to make informed adjustments.** Teachers and staff adopted the Teachers College Reading program this year and the principal purchased i-Ready to support both reading

and mathematics instruction. The principal and teachers are implementing the Five Practices of Mathematical Discourse and the "Problem of the Day" in every math class to supplement the Go Math curriculum. While the IIT saw evidence of teachers implementing each program, it was unclear how school leaders periodically assess their impact on student performance. During school leader interviews, the IIT learned that two teachers used the Reading Recovery process to support a small group of first graders. However, there is no system to consistently review data to track the sustained progress of these students. While leaders reported that the first-grade students were doing well, more data was needed to demonstrate growth. Although the principal has access to several different student, class, and grade data sources such as i-Ready reports, Fountas & Pinnell levels, TC unit assessments, and New York State(NYS) assessment results, structures to systematically collect and analyze data to assess the impact of each program on the achievement of all students and subgroups, and to inform improvement decisions, have yet to be established.

- **Goals established by the principal need to be linked to rigorous benchmarks that strategically and clearly measure progress.** A review of the 2018-19 School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) revealed that action plans and benchmarks do not strategically align to the stated goals**.** For example, while one goal stated that work with community-based organizations (CBO) would result in increased mathematics scores, the action plan made no reference to work done by the CBO. Rather, there was a list of activities such as staff development for teachers from the Generation Ready Math consultant, and strategies that would be used in classrooms such as math journals, word walls, and mathematics maps, as steps that would support the attainment of the goal. Likewise, the key personnel responsible for implementation and oversight did not reference any CBO staff. While "improving mathematics scores" was the expected outcome, there were a lack of benchmarks that incrementally monitored student mathematics performance throughout the year. Action plans typically did not articulate specific timelines, but rather indicated start dates in September and end dates in June.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **The principal should routinely monitor, evaluate, and adjust at-risk intervention opportunities to ensure all students are provided with services that will effectively reduce achievement gaps**. The principal has used resources to reduce the student-teacher ratios for all classes during the literacy block. The addition of a second teacher in every room has limited the school's capacity to provide additional tier two intervention services for at-risk students, although two teachers do provide reading recovery support to a small group of grade one students. While the IIT saw teachers working with small groups of students in most classrooms, during staff interviews the team learned that all teacher teams do not have common planning time and are not consistently using individual student data to inform instruction. As a result, strategically crafted interventions that target specific students' gaps is an area of pedagogy that needs to be strengthened. Interviews with teachers and coaches confirmed that although teachers are implementing Fundations, i-Ready, and following the TC reading model, additional at-risk interventions are needed to support the lowest struggling readers. In the future, the principal will need to meet with those teachers providing push-in supports to establish goals for individual students and subgroups. He should then consider developing quarterly meetings to review student data and evaluate the impact of services.

- **The school leaders should develop a plan to proactively identify and address student's social emotional needs**. Staff stated that the school needs additional personnel to address the social emotional needs of all students. For example, while the school has an enrollment of over one thousand students, there is only one

social worker on staff who provides counselling solely to mandated students. The school has worked to provide services for other students, but additional supports are still needed to meet their needs. For example, the school partnered with I' RAISE Girls and Boys, who provided two additional counselors to work with fifteen at-risk students. However, there was a turnover of staff in the program, which hindered its success. To reward positive behaviors, the principal and teachers implement a well-established PBIS Framework. However, teachers and students stated that more needs to be done beyond the rewards system to address students with continued behavioral challenges. Thirty teachers attended Restorative Justice training last summer, but the program has not been adopted school wide. While some teachers use elements of the program, the impact on students exposed to this process has not been monitored. In the future, the principal should create a team, which includes a district liaison, to assess the effectiveness of current resources and explore additional community partnerships, determine how resources a can be used to address student needs, and develop an action plan to address social emotional learning.

Learning at the School

- **All teachers should make effective use of on-going, formative checks for understanding to monitor student learning during instruction.** During classroom visits, there was little evidence of student understanding being checked through formative assessments. While some lesson plans indicated that students would submit an exit ticket, the IIT did not see exit tickets being used at the end of lessons in most of those classrooms. Students in several classes had red, yellow, and green cards to flash to signal their level of understanding, but the IIT saw limited use of the strategy in the classes observed. Although teachers are implementing the Teachers College model, which includes conferring with students as they work and recording conference notes to assess student understanding, the team did not observe these practices in most classrooms. Teachers typically worked with students in small groups and some teachers recorded notes about those students in the group they worked with. However, students outside of the small groups were typically not able to explain what they were working on or how to complete the required tasks. In the future, the principal should make "in-the-moment" monitoring a primary focus for a cycle of instructional rounds and observations and should concentrate feedback on improving the professional practice of the teachers in this skill.

- **Teachers should provide students with multiple entry points in their lesson plans to ensure they are addressing the learning needs of all individual students and sub-groups in their classes**. While some teachers grouped students by ability and provided students with scaffolds, such as levelled reading material in literacy, this practice did not extend across all content areas. There is a need for all classroom teachers to receive New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT) data and to use it to inform tasks and groupings. English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities did not typically receive scaffolds, specialized instructional strategies, adjusted wait time, or stated language objectives to support their needs. Further, worksheets and rubrics used in many classrooms were not modified to include visual clues or adapted vocabulary to make them more accessible to all students. As a result, not all students could respond to teacher questions, participate in class discussions, or engage in rigorous activities. For example, in one classroom, while all students were engaged in mathematical discourse, an English as a new language (ENL) student was assigned to trace the number one on a worksheet.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Students would like the principal to find rooms other than the library where meetings can be held.** The school has a beautiful, well-stocked library that every class is scheduled to visit once a week. Students reported that they enjoy spending time in the library. However, because the library is frequently used as a venue for meetings, classes are often moved to classrooms and students do not have access to books.

- **Parent stated that workshops held at the school are not convenient to working parents**. Both the parent coordinator and Parent Teachers Association (PTA) schedule parent meetings during the school day, typically starting around 9:00 am. Parents stated if meetings were conducted earlier in the day before they had to report to work or at 6:00 pm when the workday was over, more parents could participate.

- **Teachers would like the first round of benchmark assessments to be administered in September and at clearly specified intervals throughout the year**. Staff shared that this school year**,** Reach, a new benchmark assessment was adopted. However, teachers stated they did not administer the first assessment until sometime in the Spring semester, shortly before the NYS English language arts (ELA) assessment. Teachers shared that in order for this tool to be more useful to them in creating goals and monitoring and evaluating learning, this assessment should be administered earlier in the year and then at scheduled intervals.