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Leadership and Systems

Curriculum

Instruction

Social-Emotional Learning

Family Engagement

Diagnostic Tool for School and District Effectiveness

On-Site Needs Assessment
Final Report

BEDS Code	331300010287
School Name	P.S. 287 Bailey K. Ashford
School Address	50 Navy Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201
District Name	NYCDOE CSD 13
Principal	Michele Rawlins-Brown
Dates of Visit	January 7-9, 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.

Information About The Visit

- P. S. 287 Bailey K. Ashford serves 143 students in kindergarten to grade five.
- The visit was led by an Outside Educational Expert (OEE) and a representative from NYSED. The team also included a district representative and a district representative shadow.
- The team visited a total of 22 classrooms during the visit.
- The OEE visited five classrooms with the principal during the visit.
- Team members conducted several interviews with school leaders, students, staff, and parents.
- Team members examined documents provided by the school, including curriculum maps, lesson plans, schoolwide data, and student work.
- In advance of the visit, one staff member (seven percent) completed a DTSDE pre-visit survey conducted by NYSED.

Successes Within The School That The School Should Build Upon:

1. The IIT found that the school continues work to encourage parents to engage with the school as partners in their child's learning and development. In discussions with parents and the principal, the IIT learned that the school provides a range of workshops and activities for students and their families. These include workshops such as Dads are Super, an activities-based session for fathers and their children, Men Talk in the Morning, a parent discussion forum, a Fun with Feelings workshop, and a book class in which parents read with their children. The school also provides childcare for parent date nights and partners with a variety of outside organizations and agencies to provide a range of supports for parents and families. School leaders and the parent coordinator have created a dedicated room for parents that is attractive and well-resourced. The parent room includes a variety of displays and photographs showing parents and students recently engaged in some of these activities and workshops.

2. The IIT learned that parents view the school's Pre-K program positively, particularly the support that Pre-K staff provide for students and families when concerns about a child's well-being and personal development arise. For example, parents shared that the Pre-K staff are responsive and supportive when parents raise concerns regarding their children's progress.

3. During interviews, parents and students described the range of learning activities and experiences the school's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program provides to students. Several students told the IIT that STEM classes were a favorite part of their school day. A parent reported that two of her children participated in the STEM curriculum as former students at the school and are currently enrolled in STEM programs at New York University.

Areas Of Need To Be Addressed For Long-Term Success

Systems for Improvement

- **School leaders should develop school improvement plans that identify priorities that reflect current needs and include detailed action plans.** In a review of the 2017-18 and 2018-19 SCEPs, the IIT noted that the specific, measurable, ambitious, results-orients, and timely (SMART) improvement goals and percentage targets for 2017-18 and 2018-19 were similar. The principal acknowledged this and explained that because the school had not achieved the 2017-18 improvement goals, the goals had been carried over to the 2018-19 SCEP. The IIT found that the improvement goals and percentage targets were not regularly reviewed and revised, and as a result, they did not clearly reflect current issues and priorities. The IIT also observed that the 2018-19 SCEP included broad time frames for each goal but did not include interim benchmarks. For example, the listed time frames for goals were typically "September – March 2019" with no indication of additional mid-year checkpoints. In the future, school leaders will need to make sure that school improvement plans focus on clearly identified priorities, include detailed step-by-step action plans, and identify checkpoints that leaders are able to use to monitor progress toward targets.

Leadership and Organization at the School

- **School leaders need to complete all required formal and informal evaluative classroom visits.** The team learned that only a few of the required evaluative classroom observations had been conducted and documented in the Advance Teacher Evaluation and Development system. Some teachers told the team that while their teaching practices had been observed during the fall and winter 2018 semesters, at the time of the review, they had not yet received any of the associated feedback or observation data, and at least one teacher stated that their classroom had not yet been visited at all. Several teachers confirmed that they were not receiving individualized feedback or that feedback was significantly delayed. As a result, the IIT found that the school lacks aa routine system for monitoring teachers' practice and, as a result, instructional feedback for teachers is not always detailed or immediate enough to help teachers improve their practices.
- **School leaders need to establish clear expectations that specify the methods, quality, and frequency of communications between teachers and parents.** Parents told the IIT that some teachers communicate regularly with parents, while others do not. For example, one parent said that her child's teachers only communicate with her when they happen to meet each other. Another parent with children in more than one grade level stated that in one grade the teacher sends out newsletters, while in another grade the teacher typically uses telephone calls. Parents said that not all teachers use the online ClassDojo live communication system effectively or regularly and that some teachers do not use ClassDojo at all. Parents with experience using ClassDojo in other schools reported a more positive and valuable use of the communication system in these other schools. In the future, school leaders should establish clear expectations and schoolwide methods for how teachers should communicate with parents and what information they should provide, so that all parents receive high-quality and frequent information about the school and their children's progress.
- **School leaders should develop expectations and protocols for teachers' data analysis sessions.** During interviews with teachers and the principal, the team learned that teachers do not typically participate in collaborative inquiry and data analysis. Some teachers suggested that they did not always spend enough time analyzing student performance data because they were often busy with curriculum and lesson planning. As a

result, teachers spend little time collaboratively analyzing student performance data using a data analysis protocol, examining student work, or discussing grade to grade curriculum continuity and progression. The principal explained that time was available for teachers to collaborate, but she was not able to mandate how teachers use the time. In the future, the principal should explore ways to establish expectations and protocols so that teachers participate in collaborative inquiry.

- **School leaders need to develop and maintain a consistent daily master schedule.** Teachers told the IIT that leaders often alter the daily schedule, which frequently changes the timing of their preparation periods and causes some teachers to be unsure of what they will be teaching and when. The principal explained that the changing schedule was often due to staff absences and unexpected staff vacancies.

Learning at the School

- **The school needs to create a more blended approach to learning at the school.** The IIT found that efforts to implement a textbook-free classroom learning environment model have not resulted in high-quality Tier 1 instruction across the school. For example, in many lessons the IIT observed few instances in which student understanding of their learning was checked and students provided with timely learning feedback. In addition, lessons were often teacher-led and directed, and the IIT observed several instances in which students were not engaged in their learning because they were talking to each other or ignoring the teacher's explanations. The IIT rarely heard teachers or students asking questions, and the few teacher questions heard typically only required students to provide brief, factual recall answers. The IIT noted that teachers sometimes asked and answered their own questions rather than expecting students to think about the answer or discuss responses with other students. The IIT found that, although often seated in groups, students frequently worked individually and were not provided with many opportunities to engage in structured group work or discussions. While the principal is committed to an instructional strategy based on the use of technology and the development of textbook-free classrooms, she acknowledged the need to develop a blended learning approach that includes technology and high-quality Tier 1 instruction.

- **School leaders should relaunch the schoolwide Guiding Principles of Peace and Unity (GPPU) student social and emotional support strategy and ensure that it is regularly implemented by all teachers.** In interviews, some teachers, students, and parents were not able to explain how the GPPU social and emotional support strategy worked. Some teachers and students new to the school said they were not familiar with the GPPU program or how it is used to support students' social and emotional needs. Teachers and students told the IIT that GPPU student and teacher schoolwide "family" group meetings used to take place every Friday but had not yet taken place during the 2018-19 school year.

- **Teachers need to have additional access to instructional supports and resources that address the priority standards in the EngageNY curriculum.** In interviews, teachers told the IIT that they have not always given sufficient emphasis to key curricular standards included in the New York State assessments when planning and delivering their lessons. Some teachers explained that they were not sure what the priority standards were or how they might use them to plan instruction that would support student learning in these key curriculum areas. In the future, the principal should make sure that teachers have access to and use resources that take the standards into account when planning their instruction.

- **School leaders need to clarify the protocol that teachers should use to supplement the curriculum to address the learning needs of students**. Teachers typically use curriculum materials from Pearson online resources as written, making few adaptations to meet various student learning needs. As a result, the IIT found few

instances in which standards-based tasks were scaffolded to meet the learning needs of different student groups. Some teachers told the IIT that school leaders rarely allowed them to use curriculum resources other than Pearson. When questioned, the principal explained that this was not the case, as teachers could supplement the curriculum using additional resources if they were school leader approved and clearly targeted identified student learning needs. In the future, the principal should make sure that teachers clearly understand how they are able to supplement existing curriculum resources to better meet student learning needs.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Areas of Need and Ideas for Improvement

- **Teachers and parents would like to increase opportunities for students to experience the arts in the curriculum through activities such as dance, music, and art.** The principal told the IIT that issues such as staffing shortages and teachers on leave have limited opportunities for students to participate in subject areas such as music, art, and dance. For example, the school is currently operating without a dance teacher and a librarian. Interviewed students confirmed this and said they would like more opportunities to participate in subjects such as arts and crafts during the school day.
- **Teachers and the principal strongly expressed a need for more district and external provider professional development (PD) support for school leaders and instructional staff.** The principal told the IIT that she would like district personnel to deliver more in-school PD support targeted at the school's specific needs. The principal expressed a view that some of the PD that teachers attend is generic and does not always meet teachers' needs or further the improvement efforts of the school. The principal also expressed the need for support from district personnel and external PD providers with ongoing monitoring of PD implementation.