

**Hawthorne Avenue Elementary School**  
4-25-2005 to 4-27-2005  
**Introduction**

The New Jersey Department of Education conducted a CAPA (Collaborative Assessment for Planning and Achievement) review of Hawthorne Avenue Elementary School on 4-25 to 4-27-2005. This school is designated as “in need of improvement” for four consecutive years as defined in the *NJ Accountability Workbook. No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) §1117: School Support and Recognition requires that the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) create and maintain a statewide system of intensive and sustained support for those Title I schools designated as “in need of improvement” for four consecutive years. As part of this required support system, the NJDOE developed the CAPA review process, which assigns teams of skillful and experienced individuals to provide schools with practical, applicable, and helpful assistance, increasing the opportunity for all students to meet the state’s Core Curriculum Content Standards. CAPA is required for all Title I schools in corrective action.

This school is categorized as a “low performing school,” meaning 50.0 percent or more of the general education students are not proficient on the 2002 ESPA Language Arts Literacy subtest, adjusted by the Commissioner, as codified herein, based on mean score growth or decline from 1999-2002. Any school so identified will remain in this category for the 2004-2005 school year, even if more than 50 percent of its general education students are proficient or advanced proficient on the 2003 NJ ASK4 Language Arts Literacy subtest. A literacy assessment team reviewed the early literacy program in the fall of 2003, and an Intensive Early Literacy agreement is in place. For Abbott Low Performing Schools, the CAPA visit fulfills the requirements stipulated in the Abbott regulations (N.J.A.C. 6:A10A).

The CAPA review team activities included:

- A review of the documents collected for the school portfolio and data profile;
- 19 classroom observations;
- General observations, such as morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal, lunch in the cafeteria, and student restrooms;
- 23 interviews with teachers;
- 6 interviews with building leadership and administrators;
- 4 interviews with district administrators;
- 36 interviews with students;
- 15 interviews with school and student support staff; and
- 7 interviews with parents.

Following the study of documentation, and the conducting of interviews and observations, the team discussed each standard and its indicators. Based on these findings, the team offered its recommendations

Team members and their affiliation included:

<b>TEAM POSITION</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Team Lead	Leonard Fitts	Consultant
Principal	Leonard Fitts	Consultant
Language Arts Literacy Specialist	Keisha Smith-Carrington	New Jersey Department of Education
Mathematics Specialist	Maurita Bivins	Consultant
Special Education Specialist	Joseph Jakubowski	Consultant
Parent	Yvette Thomas	Parent
Institution of Higher Education	Maurita Bivins	Consultant
District Liaison	May Samuels	Newark Public School District
DOE Liaison	Tisha McKenzie Keith Lockwood	New Jersey Department of Education

### **Academic Performance Standards**

The following Academic Performance Standards address curriculum, classroom evaluation/assessment, and instruction.

**Standard 1:** The school develops and implements a curriculum that is rigorous, intentional and aligned to state and local standards.

**Standard 2:** The school uses multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.

**Standard 3:** The school's instructional program actively engages all students by using effective, varied, and research-based practices to improve student academic performance.

### **Learning Environment Standards**

The following Learning Environment Standards address school culture; student, family and community support, professional growth, development and evaluation.

**Standard 4:** The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.

**Standard 5:** The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career, and developmental needs of students consistent with 6A: 10A-3.6 Supports for Parents and Families and NCLB §11118 Parental Involvement.

**Standard 6:** The school provides research based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.

### **Efficiency Standards**

The following Efficiency Standards address leadership, school culture and resources and comprehensive and effective planning.

**Standard 7:** School instructional decisions focus on support for teaching and learning, organizational direction, high performance expectations, creating a learning culture, developing leadership capacity.

**Standard 8:** There is evidence that the school is organized to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.

**Standard 9:** The School Leadership Council and district planning team develops, implements, and evaluates a three-year operational plan/school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on improving teaching and learning.

**Summary Findings in: ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION)**

**STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The District K-8 curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.**

**1.1b The district initiates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (K-8).**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, curriculum documents and professional development documentation
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

The school partially implements internal discussion to ensure horizontal and vertical articulation. Teacher interviews, the master schedule, and administrator interviews provide evidence of scheduled weekly horizontal and vertical articulation. While the documentation for vertical sessions does include an agenda, there is limited evidence of consistent recording of both minutes and attendance for the sessions. There is no evidence of vertical articulation with feeder/receiver schools.

**Special Education**

There are monthly SLT meetings for special education staff. Literacy and math coaches do provide ongoing training and discussions with all teachers in the building regarding the implementation of the Harcourt Brace Below Level Literacy curriculum (Toggle) and the Everyday math program, including special education staff. However, they have limited knowledge on adapting the curriculum to meet the diverse needs of the special education population. There are district level special education resource teacher coordinators, but this teacher has never seen this person in her building.

**1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the statewide assessments, and provides specific links to life and career options.**

**Evidence for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three year operational plan (2004-2005), curriculum guides, lesson plans, student writing portfolios and student readers note book
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews

**Findings:**

While the curriculum provides limited connections to postsecondary education and career options, these efforts are not intentional. Some materials and resources currently used in the school are not fully aligned to the district curriculum. Interviews and student documentation provide evidence

that there is no career program in the school. Opportunities for the application of learning and preparation to become self-sufficient, productive citizens are not in evidence.

#### Special Education

There is one program, which serves three cognitively impaired children in grades K and one. One student has a personal assistant because of significantly acting out behavior. The teacher teaches all subjects using the Harcourt Brace below level reading series, Toggle, which does offer reading instruction as a component. The math program is Everyday math. The teacher has to further adapt these programs to meet the significant needs of these children and, although she does attend grade level meetings and does collaborate with other teachers, she has not been specifically trained how to do so. The teacher only had a copy of the language component of the NJCCCS, even though she teaches all subjects.

### **1.1f The district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.**

#### **Evidence for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan (2004-2005)
- SLC meeting minutes
- Grade level minutes
- NJASK3 and 4 Assessment Results
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

#### **Findings:**

Documentation is not available that the school leadership has fully developed procedures to address curriculum issues. There is evidence of district-provided professional development in the Harcourt Trophies CRP. The grade level agendas document that the Language Arts Literacy Resource Teacher/Coordinator (LAL RTC) provided several professional development sessions in the CRP, district recommended strategies and techniques, and assessment. Based on interviews and SLC agendas/minutes, there was no evidence that the SLC was involved in curriculum issues.

#### Special Education

There is no evidence that monitoring, evaluating and adjusting the curriculum specific to the special education program. This class is required to offer the general education curriculum at appropriate grade levels. There does not appear to be an option, at this time, to alter that requirement.

### **1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students including, but not limited to, special education and ELL students.**

#### **Evidence for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, curriculum documents, disaggregated student assessment data
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

### **Findings:**

There is evidence that the school's implementation of the district's curriculum provides limited access to a common academic core for all students. The classroom observations and assessment data, interviews, lesson plans, and curriculum guides document that this implementation is not challenging, does not elicit higher order thinking and problem solving skills, and does not differentiate instruction. The NJCCCS are not always identified or communicated to students.

### **Special Education**

There is one special education class in this building. It is self-contained for cognitively impaired children. There are three students in that class. There are no resource room replacement classes in this building. If a child currently has the need for that placement, they are removed from their home school and reassigned to another school that does offer that placement. There is a belief that the children in this special education class could benefit from being placed in a general education for part of the school day in an in class support environment. There are already two special education students who are receiving their education in a general education class with related services and accommodations provided by the general education staff.

## **STANDARD 1**

### **NEXT STEPS**

1. School leadership should fully develop and monitor the consistent use of a format for recording minutes during meetings for both vertical and horizontal articulation.
2. School leadership should survey its current kindergarten population to ascertain the feeder programs.
3. School leadership should monitor lesson plans and classroom instruction to ensure full alignment to the NJCCCS and daily utilization of centers.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. School leadership should develop a system to ensure vertical articulation with feeder/receiver schools.
2. School leadership should ensure the guidance counselor provides career and college planning for all grade levels.
3. The district should continue its efforts to align all materials and resources currently used for LAL instruction in its revision of the LAL curriculum.
4. School leadership should develop a system of job-embedded training to ensure classroom practices are fully aligned to student performance data.
5. The SLC should be fully implemented as per Abbott rules and regulations to ensure that the implemented curriculum clearly and consistently links all LAL resources (e.g., textbooks, decodable and leveled texts, technology, etc.).
6. School leadership should schedule ongoing professional development for SY05 that includes job-embedded training in differentiated instruction, Bloom's taxonomy, and multiple intelligences.
7. School leadership should monitor and evaluate school climate to ensure that all staff consistently demonstrate high expectations for student learning.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

1. As more special education students are identified, they should gain direct access to the general education curriculum in a manner that allows them to interact with non-disabled peers as academic and behavioral models. More training should be required of staff, particularly in general/special education teams.
2. CST, special education staff and general education staff should be trained together in inclusionary practices so that a full range of program options can be offered to special education students. A resource room replacement class should be offered to the building's program options. The IEP team needs to apply the required Oberti test which presumes a general education placement with supports and only deviates from that assumption within the context of that test.

**STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The district and school use multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.**

**2.1a Assessments created by teachers, school and district are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS, used to gauge student learning and adjust teaching to individual needs.**

### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, NPS curriculum documents, NPS LAL policy
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Grade level meeting and classroom observations
- Review of grade level meeting agendas and master schedule
- Samples of classroom assessments, student work, and writing assessment wall

### **Findings:**

While assessments created by the district are frequent, rigorous, and aligned with the NJCCCS, there is little evidence that teachers use all assessments to gauge student learning or adjust their teaching to address individual needs. There is no documentation of teacher-created assessments. There is no evidence of school policy or procedure to address classroom assessments. Lesson plans document inconsistent monitoring and alignment to the NJCCCS. Observed instruction provides evidence that there is not a consistent link to planning. The district administers the Statewide Proficiency Assessment (SPA) for off-year testing in grades five through seven and DRA for grades K-3. The diagnostic test used in the school is a component of the Harcourt *Trophies*, the district's Comprehensive Reading Program (CRP).

### **Special Education**

Special education classroom assessments are tied to the general education program and follow that model.

## **2.1b Teachers collaborate to design authentic classroom assessments aligned with the CCCS.**

### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, district curriculum documents, grade level agendas
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Professional resource materials
- Grade level agendas
- Student portfolios

### **Findings:**

There is no evidence that teachers collaborate to design authentic assessment tasks. While teacher have weekly opportunities to collaborate, there are no grade level minutes to substantiate the design of authentic assessment tasks. Writing folders document overuse of test prep materials and isolated writing prompts. Observed oral assessments neither required nor developed critical thinking skills.

Interviews and documents do not provide evidence that lesson plans are monitored to ensure planning thereof.

## **2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.**

### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Displayed rubrics
- Classroom displays
- Student portfolios, journals, and notebooks
- Classroom observations
- Grade level agendas
- Grade level meeting observation

### **Findings:**

Some students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are infrequently communicated as observable in the classroom and student work. There is little evidence that teachers collaborate to develop clearly defined rubrics. All posted rubrics are state generated. Not all students interviewed are able to articulate the requirements for proficiency. There is limited evidence of either teacher or student reflection/evaluation.

## **2.1d Test scores are used by the district and school to identify curriculum gaps.**

### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan, SLC meeting agendas and grade level meeting agendas
- NCLB disaggregated data
- Three-year comparative data
- Eight-week and quarterly assessment results

### **Findings:**

Documentation reveals that there is incomplete identification of curriculum gaps or instructional implications by school staff members. There is limited development of data analysis to modify curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. Incomplete and inadequate documentation of quarterly assessments indicate minimal use of multiple evaluation and assessment strategies. While the Intensive Early Literacy (IEL) Report and Plan developed in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Education during SY03 contained a sub cluster analysis of state assessment data for NJASK4 and provided areas of focus, there is no evidence that this analysis and planning is continuing. There is no evidence that these strategies are used for other statewide assessments administered in the school. Although the IEL documents address the school's needs in the areas of process writing and the essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, motivation and background knowledge), there is limited evidence of implementation of said recommendations.

### Special Education

All of the children who are receiving special education services at this point are in K and 1<sup>st</sup> grade and therefore have not been tested with state testing. CST evaluations are necessary and have been used to develop IEPs, which are considered useful.

## **2.1e Multiple assessments are designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs.**

### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Open-response questions
- Review of lesson plans
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Student portfolios

### **Findings:**

Although the district LAL curriculum and policy guide require multiple assessments to be designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs, there is partial implementation of this in the school. There are occasional opportunities for students to choose ways in which they demonstrate learning based on multiple intelligence and preferred learning styles. Feedback observed in oral assessments and in student portfolios is often not meaningful or useful by students for improvement. The use of classroom assessment analysis to modify instruction is only evidenced in the implementation of guided reading in some

classrooms. While the District requires the use of the DRA as a screen for potential reading difficulties, there is no evidence that teachers make a purposeful effort to speed the progress of identified students through frequent guided reading instruction.

### **2.1h Samples of student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy.**

#### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Student, teacher interviews
- Student portfolios
- Samples of classroom assessments for LAL
- Grade level meeting minutes regarding analysis of student work
- Documentation of professional development in analyzing student work

#### **Findings:**

Evidence documents that student assessments are infrequently shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy. While all teachers have received training in protocols for analyzing student writing, the protocols are not fully implemented. There is no documentation that student portfolios are used to measure student growth over time.

#### **Special Education**

All teachers are maintaining student samples in the form of a portfolio. This information is used to measure student progress, but does not impact on curriculum.

## **STANDARD 2**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. School leadership should ensure that opportunities for teacher collaboration include the design of a variety of assessment tasks that require students to provide varied and appropriate demonstrations of knowledge and ability.
2. School leadership should monitor lesson plans and classroom instruction to ensure that academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms, observable in student work, and include opportunities for student reflection.
3. The school and district should collaborate to ensure that training on data analysis for the purpose of modifying curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices be provided for all staff in SY05.
4. School leadership should monitor the full implementation of protocols and of the use of portfolios as a tool to measure student growth.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

Professional development activities should be provided in Alternative Assessment: Performance, Authentic and student portfolio.

**STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: Instruction engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve academic performance.**

**3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan, lesson plans, student portfolios
- School leadership, parent and teacher interviews
- LAL policy
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

There is minimal evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used. The school leadership has limited development of an instructional practices policy, but even that policy is not fully implemented. Lesson plans are not consistently monitored. There is little evidence that they are read to ensure that lessons are aligned to the NJCCCS, differentiate instruction, and incorporate multiple opportunities for student-centered learning. Observed classroom instruction rarely, if ever, accommodates various learning styles, multiple intelligence, and brain research. Observed activities require students to memorize facts and details but use little or no higher-order thinking or problem-solving skills. The majority of the questions, both oral and written, are at the knowledge level. Teachers did not include interdisciplinary connections and did not take advantage of opportunities to be culturally responsive.

**Special Education**

Group and individual instruction are offered to students, and the assistant works with one specific child to control behavior and to offer instructional assistance when necessary.

**3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state goals and assessments.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Instructional strategies and learning activities are primarily aligned to the textbook and are not clearly aligned to the District and state goals. While some activities require students to complete assessment tasks similar to those on the state assessments, unsubstantiated holistic scoring displayed in classrooms and on samples in student work folders reveal inadequate use of rubrics.

The current CRP is Harcourt *Trophies*. This program is used for both the general and the special education programs in the school. There are no English language learners. The current literacy block is ninety minutes; however, the block for Kindergarten is interrupted for lunch. There is no

evidence that the school has developed an implementation plan. Classroom observations reveal a lack of appropriate time management. While the strategies in use in the majority of the classrooms are vertical and teacher-centered, a few classrooms use guided reading, shared reading, and learning centers.

**3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Vice Principal interview
- Disaggregated state assessment data
- Disaggregated student enrollment
- Student portfolios
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Instructional strategies and activities are infrequently monitored and aligned with individual student needs. There is partial implementation of school policy to monitor classroom instruction via teacher management books, plan books, and classroom observation. The documentation shows feedback that does not always provide teachers with assistance to modify instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learning styles of the student population. Instructional strategies and activities are not always planned to accommodate the learning needs and learning styles of students. Instruction is explicit and systematic in phonological awareness.

**3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of teacher assignments, master schedule, number of staff vacancies
- Number of substitutes
- Review of lesson plans
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Grade level meeting observation

**Findings:**

Teachers infrequently demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning. While the majority of the teachers are appropriately certificated, less than half meet the NJ NCLB standard. The principal indicates that possible confusion over HOUSE accounted for the low number; however, there is no evidence that efforts to appropriately assess staff are underway. Although teachers participate in the required hours of professional development, there is little evidence that they update their professional practices. Based on the reliance on the textbook and the infrequent documentation of efforts to develop

interdisciplinary units of study, many teachers do not have the necessary content knowledge consistent with the NJCCCS. Teachers have participated in professional development in literacy skills but do not include them as a regular part of their classroom instruction.

### **3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.**

#### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Student portfolios
- Professional development sessions for teachers
- Use of technology by students
- Classroom observations

#### **Findings:**

There is some evidence that teachers incorporate the use of technology in their classrooms. The school technology plan is linked to the NJCCCS; however, it is generic in nature and lacks specific connections to the district curriculum. Word processing is evident in all classrooms; however, student use of the computers center during the LAL block is infrequent. Lesson plans document that instructional use is neither monitored nor supported. Some opportunities for collaboration between the technology coordinator and classroom teachers occur informally.

#### **Special Education**

The classroom has six computers. There is an array of software programs, but none in reading. There is no Internet capability.

### **3.1f The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum.**

#### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Textbooks and instructional resources
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

#### **Findings:**

The district ensures that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum. However, the school has a limited variety of instructional resources to supplement instruction in some of the classrooms. Classroom libraries, while they do provide connections to home and culture, do not meet the quantity necessary to satisfy Abbott rules and regulations in all classrooms. There are sufficient quantities of decodable books and leveled texts; however, use thereof is not observed for guided reading in the majority of the classrooms.

#### **Special Education**

There are ample materials to implement the required school wide curriculum. In terms of human resources, however, the CST provides assistance upon request and does not provide counseling

experiences on a consistent basis to their students. There are OT and speech and language services being offered as well. Literacy and math coaches do provide instruction on the general education program implementation, but not specific to the special education population.

**3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Grade level meeting minutes
- Grade level meeting observation
- School leadership and teacher interviews
- Review of lesson plans
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

While teachers have the opportunity to meet collaboratively to analyze student work to inform their practices, evidence supports the basis of this analysis is on test scores as opposed to actual student work product. All teachers have received training in protocols for correct analysis of student work; however, protocols are not fully implemented. Individual teachers infrequently analyze the work of their students but do not always use the results to inform instructional practice.

**3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, evaluated and tied to instructional practice.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- Samples of homework
- School leadership, student and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- District homework policy

**Findings:**

There is limited evidence that homework is frequent, monitored, and consistently tied to instructional practice. Few students and parents can articulate the relationship between class work and homework. Dittos are the primary source of homework assignments and do not extend student learning but offer reinforcement. The district and school have a homework policy; however, instructional follow-up for homework is not implemented at the school.

**Special Education**

Homework is completed on a daily basis.

### **STANDARD 3**

#### **NEXT STEPS**

- School leadership should develop a schedule of LAL instruction that adheres to the IEL Plan for all grade levels.
- School leadership should document staff credentials that meet the requirements of HOUSE.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. School leadership should fully develop and monitor the implementation of policy on the use of effective and varied instructional strategies in all classrooms.
2. School leadership should review student assessment samples to ensure the consistent use of rubrics.
3. School leadership should ensure that feedback to management books, lesson plan books, and classroom observations provide teachers with assistance in the modification of instruction to meet the needs of the diverse learning styles of the student population.
4. School leadership should develop incentives to motivate teachers to continually update LAL practice.
5. School leadership should review the SY05 budget to ensure the allocation of funds for the purchase of leveled texts and trade books to achieve the quantity of classroom library materials in all classrooms as per Abbott rules and regulations.
6. School leadership should review and revise the homework policy to ensure that assignments extend classroom instruction.
7. The school and district should collaborate to implement a school-wide initiative to ensure that training on data analysis for the purpose of modifying curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices in SY05.

#### **Special Education**

Special education teachers need professional development programs that would allow them to better meet the needs of special education students.

**STANDARD 4 -SCHOOL CULTURE: The school functions as an effective learning community and supports a climate conducive to performance excellence.**

**4.1a The principal and school leadership are responsible for and support a safe, orderly, and equitable learning environment.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher and non-instructional interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of violence/vandalism report
- Review of 2003/04 suspension report
- Review of teacher end of the year reports
- School opinion surveys

**Findings:**

After completing observations, the school has developed the necessary organizational pieces to provide for a safe instructional climate within the school structure. School leadership has accepted and taken on the necessary parts of providing for student instruction, teacher professional development and administrative support to advance the needs of the school organization. The CST, teachers, and Social work personnel demonstrated an essential understanding of NJAC 6A: 14 and the requirements for instructional and procedural safeguards. Behavioral standards have been established by teachers and students within the individual classroom environments.

**Special Education**

School leadership establishes a quality tone in the school, and there is evidence that this school provides a safe and orderly environment, which is equitable to special education students in terms of facilities (location, size, etc.).

**4.1b The principal and school community (e.g., teachers and parents) foster the belief that all children can learn at high levels.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher and support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports

**Findings:**

Staff members demonstrate the necessary support and basic training to help children in their effort to learn. Staff has been scheduled in common planning periods to help and promote collegial interaction relative to instruction. Grade level meetings are arranged for in the master schedule. Although a school mission policy has been established staff and students had difficulty in reciting its core meaning.

### **Special Education**

Staff members do not believe that the needs of their children can be met through the implementation of this general education curriculum alone. There needs to be a full range of program options provided to the special education students in this school, including resource ICS and replacement opportunities.

**4.1c Teachers hold high expectations for all students academically and behaviorally, and this is evidenced in their practices. There is evidence that teachers care about students and inspire their best efforts.**

#### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher and support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports
- School opinion surveys

#### **Findings:**

All staff indicated that students are capable of achieving the highest of standards. However, after observation and interview, the evidence of this belief in instruction and student achievement does not indicate this is occurring. Student work is not on grade level and is not differentiated according to individual learning styles. Student work is geared towards seat-work and is not consistent with their needs in developing analytical and reflective learning. Rubrics and portfolios were non-existent or not readily available. Students were cooperative with teachers throughout the observations.

**4.1e Teachers accept responsibility for student success/failure.**

#### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher and student support staff member interviews
- SLC member interviews
- Classroom observations

#### **Findings:**

Although teachers advance the notion that they believe in the best of instructional practice there is little evidence that suggests this is occurring. The district has established an instructional paradigm which promotes differentiated instruction for students there is no long term evidence that supports collegial interaction whereby teaching practice and student achievement is influenced. Students do not offer students opportunity to evaluate or reflect on their own work.

**4.1f The school matches teacher strengths and experience with the needs of students. The school assigns staff to maximize opportunities for all students to have access to the staff's instructional strengths.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher and support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Staff members are assigned according to what the prior administration's designations. The school leadership is planning on reorganizing staff according to strengths in the upcoming school year. There is some support for teachers through grade level meetings and common preparation periods to discuss and cultivate their instructional expertise. Teaching staff indicate there is not nearly enough time for this activity, and there exists very little flexibility in the schedule to work on their practice.

**Special Education**

There are currently seven children who have been classified, but are awaiting placement. Two are due to a lack of parental cooperation and five are awaiting replacement classes to be assigned by district office. These children have been waiting at least two months for placement and therefore are not being serviced as is required by code. There also some students who have not had their evaluations completed within 90 day timelines, thus delaying the implementation of needed services.

**4.1g Teachers communicate regularly with families by meetings, phone calls, notes and e-mail about their children's progress.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher and support staff member interviews
- Review of teacher end of the year reports

**Findings:**

Teachers have the opportunity to communicate regularly with parents when there are concerns with behavior or achievement. Teachers have the opportunity to meet with parents four times each year on report card nights and whenever necessary. Progress reports are sent regularly, and in some cases, teachers add specific comments for each student. The school leadership follows the district's policy regarding school/home communication about student progress.

**Special Education**

Currently there are no IEP progress report sent to parents that would indicate the progress that students are making on their IEP goals and objectives. Also general education staff does not participate in IEP meetings and therefore has no vehicle to communicate with the parents of special education children or even to participate in a meeting designed to develop an appropriate educational program.

**4.1j Student achievement is highly valued and publicly celebrated (for example, displays of exemplary student work, assemblies).**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Classroom and hallway observations
- Local curriculum documents and units of study
- Teacher interviews
- Support staff interviews

**Findings:**

Student work displayed in hallways and classrooms is shared with parents during parent teacher conferences. Recognition of student achievement occurs at the end of the marking periods and the year, during auditorium assemblies. There is some evidence that rubrics are used to evaluate student work and that some students are aware of the scoring rubrics.

**4.1k The school supports the physical, cultural and intellectual needs of all students, which reflects a commitment to equity and an appreciation of diversity.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Staff members exhibit sensitivity to the cultural needs of the students and community. The guidance and support staff members conduct a process to support the various health and social needs of the students. The process and procedures for determining referrals and/or actions to be taken for disruptive behavior are not clearly understood by staff members. Teachers are unaware of the necessary nature of the PRC and their obligations in documenting appropriate interventions for students. Moreover, there needs to be a protocol for all levels of disruptions that includes peer mediation, in school suspension, out of school suspension and zero tolerance procedures. An established procedure needs to be in place for mental and physical crisis situations.

**Special Education**

There is little opportunity for special education students to interact with non-disabled peers. Some school staff members advocate an in-class support program for, at least part of the school day.

## STANDARD 4

### NEXT STEP

Begin the development of a program in the upper grades that provides an adult advocate (teacher or other professional educator) for each child with frequently scheduled, informal gatherings and at least a semiannual family meeting.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A plan should be designed and implemented to provide all teachers with common and collaborative planning time that allows for review of student work and reflection on instructional practices to improve student performance.
2. A review of staff capacity should be made to determine if a sixth prep period is possible to allow for collaboration, horizontally and vertically on student performance and classroom instruction.
3. Parents and staff should be surveyed regarding access and use of technology as a resource for communicating student progress and accomplishments, and other pertinent information. Continue to investigate strategies to inform the community on student progress.
4. Schedules should be developed to allow for teachers and their students to have equitable access to the computer resources available in existing computer labs to conduct Internet research related to classroom studies.
5. Instructional staff should display quality student work. The District should provide information to all instructional staff on consistent use of rubrics in the display and rating of student work and complete notation of the CCCS rather than a display of only the number.
6. Expand the methods of communication between teachers and parents. Teachers should communicate with parents on a regular basis, using all communication modes available, including phone, notes, home visits, letters, etc. Communication should include student accomplishments and praise for appropriate behavior and demonstrations of good character.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

1. CST, special education staff and general education staff should be further trained together in inclusionary practices so that a full range of program options can be offered to special education students. Students should only be separated from general education students when they require a totally different program to meet the same standards, as opposed to a modified program.
2. General education teachers should attend IEP meetings and quarterly IEP progress reports be given to parents as is required by code.

3. IEP progress reports should be sent to parents as is required (speech and specialist is sending such reports)
4. All special education students should be placed so that their required FAPE program can be implemented as planned. Administrative convenience is not an acceptable reason not to offer a program to a special education student. How often does a general education student have to wait for their program to be implemented?
5. More time is LDT/C time is needed in the building. If secretarial services could be provided to this CST on a part time basis, it would have the same effect as increasing CST time or staff.

## **STANDARD 5: STUDENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**The school works with families and community groups to remove barriers to learning in an effort to meet the intellectual, social, career and developmental needs of students.**

**5.1a Families and the community are active partners with the school and district in the promotion of programs and services for all students.**

### **Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports

### **Findings:**

There are very few parents involved in the school. Through interviews parents relay disappointment and disillusionment with the leadership. There is no evidence to support the existence of on going School-to-home communications. There are Spanish speaking parents however, communications lacked translation into primary language of the parent. The school has a parent liaison, however, meetings are planned and executed during the school day. There is no evidence of modification or accommodation of scheduling for working parents. Although there is a parent center in the school, there is no evidence of encouragement for frequent parental usage.

Most parents expressed they felt a lack of active recruitment by the school and did not feel welcome in the school building or as active partners in the educational processes of their children. Further, there is no evidence of non-district or non-school resources to enhance the educational development of the parents. Although there is a school policy related to staff and parents working together, this policy does not appear to be operational.

There is an SLC in the school with policies and procedures for sub-committees and recruitment. Currently the parents who are on the SLC committee are also employees of the school, which is inconsistent with the current by-laws and Abbott regulations. The election documentation

validating the process is not available. Parents representatives interviewed had limited knowledge of the SLC and the three-year operational plan.

There is little or no collaboration among school staff members, families and community members. The school has an SLC, but their roles and responsibilities are vaguely defined.

**5.1b The school ensures that that ALL students are taught what they are expected to learn and are tested on, with specific attention to special education and English Language Learner students.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Teacher interviews
- Support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of teacher end of the year reports

**Findings:**

Student participation data is not used as the entrance criteria for extended day and school year programs. Enrollment is on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no evidence of a program evaluation.

Special education students are provided with resource replacement and ICS classes, but are offered minimal counseling and consultation services that are necessary to meet their needs, due to insufficient staff professional development. The district Comprehensive Equity Plan outlines procedures to ensure that all students have equal access to the common academic core.

**5.1d Students receive necessary additional assistance to support their learning in and beyond the classroom.**

1. The school jointly developed with, and distributes to, parents of Title I students a written parental involvement policy that describes the means for carrying out NCLB parental involvement requirements. §1118(b)
2. The school convenes an annual meeting of parents of Title I children to inform them of the NCLB parental involvement requirements. §1118(c)
3. The school has a school-parent compact that outlines how parents, staff and student share responsibility for student achievement. §1118(d)
4. The school builds capacity for parental involvement through use of the 14 mechanisms outlined in the NCLB legislation. §1118(e)
5. The school and district provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities and parents of migratory children. §1118(f)
6. The school and district inform parents of the existence of statewide parental resource and information centers. §1118(g)

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan and teacher end of year reports
- Teacher and support staff member interviews
- Classroom observations

### **Findings:**

Title 1 program and support services are integrated and support the learning needs of all students. There is a specific criteria for access to supplemental services (SES)\*. Students are assigned to the SES programs\*. However, the student support services program collaboration focuses mainly on behavior and discipline issues. There is some collaboration between classroom teachers and providers of extended school services. However, the collaboration does not fully address closing achievement gaps across subpopulations. Documentation, observation and interviews indicate that services beyond the classroom are available. A review of the documentation and interviews did not identify a selection process for students to participate in these programs. Further, teachers in these programs have little communication with the instructors in the regular classrooms. There is no documentation to support the effectiveness of these after school programs.

The school does not do adequate outreach to community agencies nor does it make an effort to provide professional development activities on the impact of cultural differences on learning.

Instructional practices lean on traditional methods. A limited number of teachers use differentiated strategies. Instructional support staff including special education paraprofessionals and in-class support resource program teachers; do not demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

## **STANDARD 5**

### **NEXT STEPS**

1. Develop a written parental involvement policy and include all stakeholders in the process.
2. Review and modify community outreach programs to meet the needs of the diverse student population.
3. Pursue local merchants to serve as guest speakers and to contribute motivational incentives.
4. Develop and implement a career day, sponsored by the guidance staff, to begin promoting various career options and to emphasize the importance of both vocational and higher education.
5. Implement a mechanism for all instructional staff to sign off and confirm the review student IEPs.
6. Establish a parent advisory committee for the school which is representative of the various cultures and racial makeup of the students. Recruit parent representatives to the SLC and hold schedule some of the meetings so that parents can participate.
7. Use the SLC to conduct task-oriented team development among the staff, using the CAPA report as the catalyst to identify strengths and opportunities, and brainstorm strategies for implementing its recommendations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Leadership and staff should develop clearly defined procedures to increase parental and community involvement in order to enhance student learning and performance. The school leadership should review its current structure and organizational focus regarding the

involvement of parents in the school. A parent committee of the SLC should be formed to consider strategies and meetings that meet the needs of the parents. After a survey of parental needs, programs should be developed to provide literacy, mathematics and technology training before, during and after school.

2. Leadership should develop, implement and monitor continuous and formalized collaboration among teachers. Title I SES programs, after school programs\* to ensure coordination of the delivery of services that promote student achievement. Student referral procedures should be developed, implemented and monitored consistently. Building leadership should reach out to the Title I advisory board for assistance in expanding the parent involvement program.
3. Establish frequent and regularly scheduled meetings of the SLC and school leadership team and begin to adapt and strengthen long-range planning.
4. Build upon next steps with efforts focusing on reaching the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades in preparation for their arrival to the middle school and by establishing direct community and family relationships.

**STANDARD 6 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: The school provides research based, results driven professional development opportunities for staff and implements performance evaluation procedures in order to improve teaching and learning.**

**6.1a There is evidence of support for the long-term professional growth needs of the individual staff members. This includes both instructional and leadership growth.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Interviews with school leadership, specialists, regular education teachers and SLC
- Review of district 2004-2005 Professional Development Plan
- Review of School 2003-2004 Staff Development Calendar
- Review of 2004-2005 Professional Development Roster
- Review of sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIPS)
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

The district has shown a commitment to substantial and sustained professional development that can assist in supporting the long-term growth needs of the staff in literacy, mathematics, and science. The district has a professional development plan that is current and comprehensive. All teachers are eligible to participate in the district-wide professional development offerings. However, efforts at the building level are not clearly delineated. The district conducts an annual needs assessment to determine the professional development offerings for instructional, non-instructional and administrative staff. Most of the professional development in the last year

focused on the areas of language arts and mathematics as presented in its model, *Reaching for the Brass Ring*. The principal attends a monthly meeting sponsored by the District School Leadership Team 3. Leadership, disaggregated assessment data, safety, employee evaluation and new programs are some of the agenda items for these meetings. Staff may request specific outside professional development to enhance skills as stated in the employee's PIP.

**6.1c Staff development priorities are set in alignment with goals for student performance and the Professional Improvement Plans (PIP) of staff.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Interviews with school leadership, specialists, regular education teachers and SLC
- Review of district 2004-2005 Professional Development Plan, 2003-2004 Staff Development Calendar, 2004-2005 Professional Development Roster, sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIPS) and three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

The professional development opportunities offered by the District are determined based on results of analysis of student achievement data. Staff professional development is on going at the district level, but there is very little evidence that onsite professional development is rigorous or intentional. There is very little connection between the professional development opportunities, PIPs of staff members and the three-year operational plan. Numerous folders of professional development and staff meeting attendance records are provided in the school portfolio. Because of how the information was organized\*, it was difficult to follow the connection between the PIP and the school's teaching and learning goals.

**6.1e Professional development is ongoing and job-embedded.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Interviews with school leadership, specialists, regular education teachers and SLC
- Review of district 2004-2005 Professional Development Plan, 2003-2004 Staff Development Calendar, 2004-2005 Professional Development Roster, sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIPS) and three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Professional development emphasizes a process for sustained and continuous growth through job-embedded opportunities. Scaffolded professional development experiences consisting of onsite modeling and coaching are available to teachers from the district. However, follow-up to professional development sponsored by the district does not appear to be intentional or a priority. Teachers participate in professional development, but there is little accountability to insure the transfer of professional development into research-based pedagogical practices in the classrooms. Professional development for the special education, regular education staff and paraprofessionals

have not been systematically offered within the building to foster the improvement of instructional practices.

**6.1f Professional development planning shows a direct connection to an analysis of student achievement data.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Interviews with school leadership, specialists, regular education teachers and SLC
- Review of district 2004-2005 Professional Development Plan, 2003-2004 Staff Development Calendar, 2004-2005 Professional Development Roster, sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIPS) and three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Evidence provided shows that the district analyzes assessment data and student work to determine the on-going professional development needs. \* Multiple sources of data are used for professional development planning on the district level. Deeper analysis is conducted on the district level to determine the needs of NCLB subpopulations with a demonstrated achievement gap; however this analysis does not appear to translate to the school level. It is not clear how much of the analysis is communicated to members in the school and how much is understood. Data analysis (sub cluster) appears to be minimal, despite a wealth of data residing at the school and district level.

**Professional Growth and Evaluation**

**6.2c The school effectively uses the employee evaluation and the professional improvement plan (PIP) to improve staff proficiency.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Interviews with school leadership, specialists, regular education teachers and SLC
- Review of district 2004-2005 Professional Development Plan, 2003-2004 Staff Development Calendar, 2004-2005 Professional Development Roster, sample Professional Improvement Plans (PIPS) and three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

This process is used to identify strengths and weakness in the staff with the goal for improving student achievement. The process of creating the PIPs is supposed to be a collaborative one. Staff stated that there is discussion before completing the PIP. Although, many staff members are not aware of what is contained within their PIPs and could not delineate the concomitant professional development in which they participated. Sample PIPs did not directly correlate to instructional needs of students.

## **STANDARD 6**

### **NEXT STEPS**

1. Offer more content area training for new and established teachers in language arts and mathematics, including a greater focus on classroom modeling. Language arts, writing and mathematics professional development should be provided to tutors and paraprofessionals..
2. Special Education staff should be provided with the same training and collaboration from the math resource coordinator and literacy coach as the general education staff.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The district should continue their ongoing, intensive and job-embedded professional development effort in literacy and mathematics. Emphasis should now include the careful analysis of achievement data and collaborative review of student work. District professional development providers should also extend their focus to assist teachers in varying their style of instruction, particularly in the upper grades. Professional development is needed for support staff (teaching assistants/personal aides) to maximize their effectiveness. District and school leadership should extend coaching to include differentiated instruction and other instructional practices based on student needs. The literacy coach's job functions and responsibilities should reflect the district approved job functions and responsibilities of the literacy coach.
2. Collect and analyze the data to avoid redundancy of training and ensure the training is relevant and high quality. Evaluation is a critical component of the school program. It is recommended that the model be adjusted to include all staff – certificated and non certificated.
3. Instructional leadership needs should be specifically addressed in the district and school three-year operational plan.
4. General education teachers, special education staff, paraprofessionals and CST members should receive training in inclusive practices and strategies.
5. Special Education staff should participate in the following training:
  - a. alternative reading programs
  - b. multiple intelligences
  - c. brain-based learning
  - d. authentic assessment
  - e. inclusive practices and strategies

**Summary Findings in: EFFICIENCY (QUALITY OF LEADERSHIP, IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL REFORM MODEL, EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL)**

**7.1a There is a shared vision that is understood and ingrained in the school's culture.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of student code of conduct, lesson plans, SLC agenda and notes
- Teacher and student interviews
- Student pledge recited each morning
- Classroom observations – hallways and classrooms

**Findings:**

There is a school vision statement and posted in some areas of the school. Some interviewees are able to articulate their understanding of what this statement meant. During interviews, staff indicated that the present vision statement had not been updated. It is not evident how all the stakeholders are involved in the development of these statements.

**7.1b All instructional staff has access to curriculum-related materials and the training necessary to use curricular and data resources that enable students to master the CCCS.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of student code of conduct, lesson plans, SLC agenda and notes
- Teacher interviews
- Student pledge recited each morning
- Student interviews
- Classroom observations – hallways and classrooms

**Findings:**

The school leadership receives assistance from the district office to analyze state assessment data. School leaders distribute the data to the school staff for their review. Teachers and other staff members review data generated through the school report card. It is not evident that the analysis of data is used to guide academic decisions.

**7.1d The leadership team analyzes disaggregated data that are used to assist teachers to adjust their instruction and to develop PIPs.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of SLC meeting agendas and notes
- Review of three-year operational plan
- SLC member interviews

**Findings:**

The disaggregated data provided by the district is distributed to staff members for review. Documentation did not indicate how the administrator, vice-principal and the SLC reviewed the data to help teachers adjust their instruction or how data is used in developing PIP's.

**7.1f Leadership ensures that time is protected to focus on curricular and instructional issues.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, student code of conduct, district calendar and information guide, teacher handbook
- Administrator and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations and entry of students, restrooms and lunch

**Findings:**

The principal has a schedule in place to protect instructional time using the block schedule for Language arts and mathematics. The 90-minuted reading block in the early grades did not consistently start on time. Many of the classes continued until the end of the period. Students were observed entering and exiting the classroom during instruction. Announcements were made during instruction. Documentation is not available in the form of policies and procedures to further protect instructional time.

**7.1g Leadership plans and allocates resources, monitors progress, provides organizational support and removes barriers to continuous school improvement.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Administrator, teacher and SLC interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

The school leadership uses the resources provided by the school district. The public address system is being replaced with a new system. Clocks were inoperative. Teachers are without a communication system in the classroom. There are leaks in the gymnasium. Documentation is not available to show that there is a systematic process to monitor instructional programs and organizational practices to sustain continued academic and behavioral improvements.

**7.1k the principal gives highest priority to academic performance.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Administrator, teacher, student and SLC interviews
- Teacher interviews
- Review of lesson plans, student code of conduct, district calendar and information guide, teacher handbook
- Professional development documentation
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Classroom observations of principal on a daily basis

**Findings:**

The school principal is attempting to establish a professional persona, hopefully, to be embraced by the staff. The school leadership has partially implemented the SLC as outlined in the Abbott regulations. Walk-throughs are regularly conducted, but there is no documentation to show how

feedback is provided to improve and sustain academic performance. The principal is committed to the mission of the school. The principal does ensure that teachers do receive information regarding testing data and availability of professional development training. .

## **STANDARD 7**

### **NEXT STEPS**

The school leadership should complete the followings:

- The home room phone system
- The public address system
- Repairing the leak in the gymnasium.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The mission, vision, and belief statements should be reviewed and developed with maximum input from the stakeholders.
2. .The SLC should become fully operational in accordance with the Abbott regulations.
3. Formal training of the school leadership team to be proficient in data analysis and how to use the data for decision making.

**STANDARD 8: The school maximizes use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance.**

**8.1c The instructional and non-instructional staff members are assigned to serve the learning needs of all students.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of master schedule
- Data analysis records used for classroom assignments
- School staff member interviews
- SLC interviews
- Classroom observation of team teaching
- Administrator interviews

**Findings:**

While the majority of the teachers are appropriately certificated, less than half meet the NJ NCLB standard. The principal indicated that possible confusion over HOUSE accounted for the low number; however, there is no evidence that efforts to appropriately assess staff are underway. The teachers have not started the process of completing the requirements for national board certification. Some paraprofessionals have completed the requirements for the 60 hours of college credits. Within the special education area, the school district has provided the personnel to service students as identified in the individual IEP's.

**8.1d There is evidence that the staff makes efficient use of time to maximize learning and that the school schedule reflects instructional priorities (e.g., uninterrupted 90 minute block of literacy instruction in primary grades, classes begin on time, and classes continue until the end of the time period).**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of master schedule, SLC records
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Classroom observations of student work

**Findings:**

The principal has a schedule in place to protect instructional time using the block schedule for Language arts and mathematics with the exception of kindergarten. The 90-minuted reading block in the early grades did not consistently start on time. Many of the classes continued until the end of the period. Students were observed entering and exiting the classroom during instruction. Announcements were made during instruction. Documentation is not available in the form of policies and procedures to further protect instructional time. The school leadership has not developed classroom management and organizational practices to ensure that the instructional use of classroom time is maximized. Documentation did not provide guidance for classroom teachers on policies and procedures to further support high student and staff performance in academic areas.

**8.1e Staff promotes team planning vertically and horizontally across content areas and grades that is focused on the goals, objectives and strategies in the report on instructional priorities (e.g., common planning time for content area teachers; emphasis on time on task, and integrated units).**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of master schedule
- Review of school-based budget
- Review of faculty meeting agendas and minutes
- School staff member interviews
- Cross-subject teacher interviews

**Findings:**

Grade level and team meetings are used to collaborate. Documentation did not indicate how systematic horizontal and vertical articulations take place. Documentation is not available to indicate how the school focused on goals, objectives and strategies in the three-year operational plan.

## **RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND INTEGRATION**

**8.2d State and federal program resources are integrated (Safe Schools, NCLB, IDEA) to address student needs.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of school-based budget
- Review of three-year operational plan
- Review of technology plan
- Administration interviews

**Findings:**

There is a budget for the designated use of funds provided by the State and Federal Programs. The expenditure of funds is accountable through the District Business Office. Program strategies for the use of funds had not been revised based on the examination of data pertaining to the specific needs of the students.

## STANDARD 8

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Establish a fully functioning SLC in accordance with Abbott regulations.
2. The administration should put into operation all the necessary measures to ensure that instructional time is maximized. Avoid breakfast cutting into instructional time. Help staff to increase time on task with students.
3. The school district should provide maximum assistance to the school leadership and staff to have a comprehensive understanding of data analysis to drive achievements and differentiation of instruction.

### STANDARD 9 – COMPREHENSIVE AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING:

**The School Leadership Council/NCLB Planning Committee develops, implements, evaluates and adjusts its Report on Instructional Priorities/School Improvement Plan to communicate a clear purpose, direction, and limited goals focused on improving teaching and learning.**

#### DEFINING THE SCHOOL'S VISION, MISSION, BELIEFS

**9.1a There is evidence that a collaborative process that engaged the school community was used to develop the vision, beliefs, mission, and goals.**

#### Findings for this indicator based on:

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Observation of student pledge each morning

#### Findings:

There is a school vision statement. The present vision statement is to be revised. Documentation is not available to indicate that it is collaborative process. Many teachers, parents, and students had difficulty articulating the school's overall vision and future direction.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROFILE

**9.2a There is evidence that the School Leadership Council (SLC) or NCLB Planning Committee planning process involves collecting, managing and analyzing data to annually update the comprehensive needs assessment and to develop the Three-Year Operational Plan or School Improvement Plan.**

#### Findings for this indicator based on:

- Administrator interviews
- Teacher interviews
- SLC interviews
- Review of SLC documents

**Findings:**

The school has a volunteer School Leadership Committee. The SLC is not functioning according to then Abbott regulations. Documentation did not indicate that there is a process for collecting, managing, and analyzing data that enables the school leadership to make decisions based on data.

**ANALYZING INSTRUCTIONAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS**

**9.4b Data from multiple assessments are used to identify student and school goals and document strengths and limitations of instructional and organizational effectiveness.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan
- SLC interviews
- Teacher interviews
- School and Community Perception Survey

**Findings:**

The school has a three-year operational plan. The school improvement goals are not clear and not stated in concise measurable terms. They do not focus on the school's capacity for organizational and instructional effectiveness.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE THREE-YEAR OPERATIONAL/IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

**9.5a Strategies in the Report on Instructional Priorities or School Improvement Plan are aligned with student and school goals; identifies resources, timelines and persons responsible; and contains an evaluation plan that evaluates the degree to which it achieves the goals and objectives for student learning.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews

**Findings:**

The school has on file a three-year operational plan including a description of the current level of implementation and a schedule for full implementation. Documentation is not available to demonstrate that activities outlined in the plan are implemented an organized and systematic process with an accountability plan focus on closing the achievement gap.

**9.6b The principal and SLC regularly evaluate the degree to which it achieves the goals and benchmarks for student learning set by the plan.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of three-year operational plan
- Review of documentation of evidence of achievement of goals and benchmarks
- SLC or NCLB school improvement team minutes and agenda
- Teacher interviews
- Administrator interviews

**Findings:**

School leadership reviews assessment summaries provided by the district. There is some evidence that the school evaluates the specific strategies in the plan as it related to classroom practices. There is a district evaluation process used by the school. There is no documentation to determine the impact that evaluation is having on classroom practices and student achievement.

**STANDARD 9**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Convene the stakeholders to revise the mission and vision statement.
2. Participate in professional development activities in the areas of data analysis as it relate to student achievement, building instructional and organizational capacity and improving classroom practices.
3. Provide training for the SLC to become fully operational in accordance with Abbott regulations.
4. School leadership, at grade level meetings, should ensure that all staff members are aware of and able to implement the goals and objectives in the Three-year operational plan as it pertains to their grade level assignments.

## MATHEMATICS REVIEW

### Summary Findings in: **ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE (QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION)**

**STANDARD 1-CURRICULUM: The district K-8 curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.**

**1.1b The district initiates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all levels (K – 8).**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, local curriculum documents, units of study, grade level meeting agendas and lesson plans
- District and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

The district initiates and facilitates discussions among schools regarding curriculum standards and frameworks to ensure they are clearly articulated across all grade levels. However, there is inconsistent evidence that school leadership initiates internal discussion for horizontal and vertical articulation among grade levels. Mathematics is not routinely listed on agendas, and minutes from grade level meetings were not available.

**1.1e The curriculum requires all students to take courses with sufficient academic rigor to prepare for college preparatory courses and pass the GEPA and provides specific links to life and career options.**

**Evidence for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, local curriculum documents, units of study, grade level meeting agendas and lesson plans
- District and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Although the district curriculum provides intentional connections and integrates opportunities for application of skills, knowledge, processes and life skills, there is uneven implementation of the career programs on the school level consistent with the NJ CCCS. Documentation of curriculum guide usage is not evidenced in lesson plans, units of study or interviews. On the whole, staff did not include this component in lesson presentations. Usage of curriculum guides and NJ CCCS for instruction is not monitored by school leadership.

**1.If the district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum based on the evidence of student achievement.**

**Evidence for this indicator based on:**

- Review of the SLC interviews, NJASK3 and 4 Assessment Results and three-year operational plan
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Although the district works with supervisors and faculty to systematically monitor, evaluate and adjust the curriculum, there is little evidence that this action is carried out at the school level. Disaggregation of assessments and analysis were not available for review. Staff members are not able to substantiate the use of student achievement as a guide to instruction. The SLC meetings are not documented to reflect that this kind of articulation occurs as a routine action.

**1.1g The curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students including, but not limited to, special education and ELL students.**

**Evidence for this indicator based on:**

- Curriculum documents
- LAL and math local curriculum documents, units of study and lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Disaggregated student assessment data (for all sub-groups)

**Findings:**

Although the district curriculum provides access to a common academic core for all students (subgroups), a challenging, implemented curriculum that addresses a common academic core is not offered to all students at the school level. Some faculty members incorporate higher order thinking and problem-solving opportunities in their lesson presentations. The implemented curriculum accommodates the learning needs of some students. As a result an expectation for high academic performance is not maintained. Special education staff carries out instruction without the benefit of curriculum guides.

## **STANDARD 1 – MATHEMATICS**

### **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended that school leadership determines an annual schedule for grade level meetings that includes a connection to identified needs based on data analysis. Discussions and determinations should be reflected in minutes that are distributed to all stakeholders.
2. School leadership should monitor instructional presentations through lesson plans that have NJ CCS listed. Accountability for lesson presentations should be a part of the observation/evaluation process.
3. School leadership should establish definitive opportunities to review data regarding student achievement. Disaggregated data should be analyzed and provided to staff to assist in guiding instruction.
4. School leadership should monitor to ensure that effective instruction is aligned to NJ CCCS and district approved curriculum. Staff members need to utilize strategies, such as cooperative learning and differentiated instruction. All classroom teachers should address the learning needs of all students. Interdisciplinary instruction that maintains expectations for high academic performance and addresses a variety of modalities should be included in delivery. This action should be a part of the observation/evaluation process.

**STANDARD 2 -CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT/EVALUATION: The district and school use multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to continuously monitor and modify instruction to meet student needs and support proficient student work.**

**2.1a Assessments created by teachers, school and district are frequent, rigorous, aligned with NJ CCCS, used to gauge student learning and adjust teaching to individual needs.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- Units of study
- Staff Member interviews
- Walk-through observations

**Findings:**

District assessments created for the school and teachers are designed to be frequent, rigorous, and aligned with NJ CCCS. They should be used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to individual needs. However, the procedure for using assessment for guiding instruction is not evidenced in the delivery of classroom instruction or in the lesson plans. There is a lack of teacher designed assessments.

**2.1b Teachers collaborate to design authentic classroom assessments aligned with the CCCS.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- SLC interviews

**Findings:**

Documentation does not support a collaborative teacher effort to design authentic assessment tasks aligned with NJ CCCS. Interviews indicate that meetings occur; however, agendas or minutes are not available. Assessments do not reflect what students should know or be able to do. District assessments are shared with school leadership and teachers. However, implementation is not monitored by school leadership.

**2.1c Students can articulate the academic expectations in each class and know what is required to be proficient. Academic expectations are clearly communicated, evident in classrooms and observable in student work.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Rubrics prominently displayed for mathematics
- Classroom displays
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

A district committee collaborates to develop clearly defined rubrics. These rubrics clarify the level of achievement of skills and processes that are taught throughout the district. They also solidify student understanding of content expectations. Academic expectations are not clearly communicated to all students and are not evident in classrooms and observable in student work. Some students reflect upon their work, but do not and are not able to formally evaluate their own performance.

**2.1d Test scores are used by the district and school to identify curriculum gaps.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- Review of 2004 three-year operational plan and meeting minutes
- Document review of management binders

**Findings:**

Test scores and related data are not consistently used by building staff to identify curriculum gaps as guides for instruction. There is little evidence that test results are put to meaningful use by all but a few school staff members. The school developed Binder Management System designed for this purpose is void of data in all but a few staff binders. Appropriate test reports of total disaggregated data, including all subgroups, were not presented for review.

**2.1e Multiple assessments are designed and used to gauge student learning and to adjust teaching to meet individual student needs.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of lesson plans, management binder and three-year operational plan

**Findings:**

Multiple assessment tools are not used on a consistent basis by faculty. There is little evidence that a variety of assessment tools are used as deemed appropriate to address individual learning styles and/or needs of the student. Documentation does not support analysis of assessment data to measure student growth. It is unclear if school leadership directs this action as is required by district protocol.

**2.1h Samples of student assessments are shared among teachers and analyzed to inform instruction and to revise curriculum and pedagogy.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Administrative and teacher interviews
- Samples of classroom assessments for Mathematics
- Faculty meeting agendas and minutes regarding analysis of student work
- Documentation of professional development in analyzing student work and assessment to guide instruction

**Findings:**

School level management binders designed to house records of homework, tests and mid-year assessments are inconsistently maintained. There is no record of collaboration among staff to analyze data, revise curriculum and/or pedagogy based on the use of assessment results. Although district professional development opportunities exist for training in protocol use for analyzing data, there is little evidence that such training produces the desired actions by staff. There is no evidence of staff requirement to use analysis of assessment results to guide or change instruction . Documentation does not support school leadership's guidance or monitoring of these actions. These actions should be a part of the observation/evaluation process (PIP's).

**STANDARD 2 – MATHEMATICS**

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. School leadership should implement this district procedure and policy by assuring that staff has the appropriate training and time to analyze data so that adjustments to instruction can be made.
2. School leadership should ensure that appropriate assessments are utilized in the classroom and appropriate feedback should occur between staff, administration and students. Staff should have opportunity to collaborate in the creation of standards based assessment.
3. School leadership should provide direction to staff in regard to the requirement that students be able to articulate academic expectations of the school and district.
4. School leadership should direct the appropriate planning and implementation of grade level and SLC meetings, and provide guidance for appropriate actions needed to analyze test scores so that curriculum gaps can be identified and needs assessed for all subgroups, in keeping with the three year operational plan (2004-2005).
5. School leadership should identify these set district processes, establish guidelines for implementation and monitor faculty performance. Staff should respond to the assessment findings by providing meaningful feedback to individual students to strengthen future performance. These actions should be monitored through the observation/evaluation process.
6. School leadership should ensure that all staff is proficient in the use of district protocols used to analyze test results. They should monitor the use of stated analysis to modify instruction to meet the student needs and support proficient student work. Rubrics, including performance level descriptions, should guide teaching, learning and assessment.

**STANDARD 3 -INSTRUCTION: Instruction engages all students by using effective, varied and research-based practices to improve academic performance.**

**3.1a There is evidence that effective and varied instructional strategies are used in all classrooms.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Administrative and teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Review of lesson plans and 2004 three-year operational plan

**Findings:**

There is inconsistent evidence that effective and varied instructional practices are considered, determined and then implemented in all classrooms. In many cases, instruction is teacher-centered with whole group instruction utilizing worksheets, rather than cooperative learning groups and discovery-based activities. The use of differentiated instruction is not observable or reflected in document reviews. A match in student needs and the use of particular instructional techniques is not consistently observable.

**3.1b Instructional strategies and learning activities are aligned with the district, school and state goals and assessments.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Leadership records of classroom walk-throughs

**Findings:**

Instructional strategies are sometimes aligned to the District curriculum, but not formed by analyses of the results of ongoing assessment and alignment to the District curriculum. Learning activities are provided by the District, but evidence suggests that students are not routinely required to complete assessment tasks similar to those on the statewide assessment.

**3.1c Instructional strategies and activities are continuously monitored and aligned with individual student needs.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans
- Teacher interviews
- District school administrator interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

There is little evidence that instructional activities are continuously monitored by school leadership. The expectation of optimal instructional strategies to align with individual student needs is not communicated to staff. Training, support and direction do not exist in a plan of action to improve instructional practices. Optimal learning opportunities are not made available to students because of the inconsistent manner in which lesson plans are written.

**3.1d Teachers demonstrate the content knowledge necessary to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Walk-through observations
- Educator assignments
- Teacher interviews

**Findings:**

Teachers are appropriately certified. A diverse staff is maintained to teach in their assigned areas or grade levels. Although staff participates in the necessary hours of professional development, the level of expertise desired is not realized. Professional development does not always update the current content knowledge and professional practices required for successful instructional experiences by the students.

**3.1e There is evidence that teachers incorporate technology in their classrooms.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- Technology coordinator interviews
- Classroom observations
- 2004 Three Year Technology Plan
- Lesson plans
- Master schedule of computer lab

**Findings:**

There is little evidence that staff uses technology to expand the classroom into the community. Although technology units are accessible to students, technological instructional impact has not been addressed in a thorough manner. Most curricular uses of technology are not organized or systematic, and software does not reflect a formal integration of technology into existing approved curriculum. A few teachers utilize technology as a part of instruction to further student understanding of content matter.

**3.1f The district and school ensure that instructional resources are sufficient and that all instructional materials are aligned to the curriculum.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- District interviews
- Classroom observations
- Textbooks/instructional resources purchasing plan/curriculum documents

**Findings:**

There is evidence that the district and school provide suitable instructional resources and materials which are aligned to the approved curriculum. There are supplements to instruction and learning in the classroom. Instructional materials are selected and purchased based on consideration of student diversity. District policies and procedures for the use of instructional materials and resources are not followed.

**3.1g Teachers examine and discuss student work collaboratively and use this information to inform their practice.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Teacher interviews
- Classroom observations
- Grade level meeting minutes

**Findings:**

There is evidence that teachers have received training in District protocols for analyzing student work. However, there is little evidence that this training has been utilized. Meetings have been reported, but there is no documentation that results of analyses have been used to shape instructional practices. Some teachers have critically examined their students' work and modified instruction.

**3.1h There is evidence that homework is frequent, evaluated and tied to instructional practice.**

**Findings for this indicator based on:**

- Review of lesson plans, SLC notes and homework management binder
- Teacher and SLC interviews
- Classroom observations

**Findings:**

Homework in some classrooms is monitored for the purpose of extending student learning, and it connects to the real world. Students can sometimes articulate the relationship between homework and class work. Instructional follow-up or teacher feedback is sometimes provided for homework assignments for individual students. There is a District and school homework policy, although it is not fully implemented by all staff.

## STANDARD 3 – MATHEMATICS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School leadership should ensure that sound research-based instructional practices are utilized in all classrooms. A variety of instructional techniques and modalities should be a part of routine instructional practices. Interactive and hands-on techniques to engage students productively should be incorporated into daily lesson planning. The understanding of multiple intelligences and varied learning styles should become part of the staff's professional development plan. Training and implementation should be followed with resources and monitoring of the programs by school leadership. These learning activities should be cross-referenced to tasks similar to those on state assessments. Teachers should have the opportunity to collaborate to create culturally responsive lessons with interdisciplinary connections.
2. School leadership should assure that professional development is put into practice and appropriate monitoring occurs.
3. School leadership should take an active role in assuring that teachers are aware of performance expectations in regard to the delivery of services to students. Staff should be required to determine appropriate instructional programs for students and to deliver the services according to the students' needs.
4. School leadership should map out a plan of professional development that allows for coaching, mentoring and the participation of staff in higher education opportunities. This would update content knowledge consistent with NJ CCCS, classroom best practices in instruction and staff practices to challenge and motivate students to high levels of learning.
5. The 2004-2005 Three Year Technology Plan should spell out the match of curriculum aligned to NJ CCCS, instruction and assessment. Although a plan exists, staff and administration have not collaborated on the effective use of technology to extend and enrich learning. The school and District offer professional development to staff. However, a plan of action should reflect a performance based evaluation of student and staff proficiency of technology. Graduated technological goals for staff and students should be determined with a plan for exposure to the skills and monitoring by school leadership as a part of the evaluation/PIP process.
6. School leadership should assure that only appropriate resources, aligned to the approved District curriculum are used in the classroom.
7. School leadership should monitor the use of student work analysis to inform their decision-making and to improve their instructional practices. School leadership should provide assistance through mentoring, coaching and conferencing opportunities.
8. School leadership should ensure that all staff members implement district and school homework policies. Monitoring of staff's implementation can be completed through review of lesson plans and management binder.

## **IN CONCLUSION**

Members of the CAPA review team express their appreciation to the staff and community of Hawthorne Avenue Elementary School for their gracious welcome and for their open interaction with us during our visit. We encourage the school community to review this report in depth, asking themselves deep reflective questions about the findings of fact and recommendations for action.

We also encourage school leadership to lead long-term reflections on the following:

1. How can we get all individuals connected to the school (teachers, parents and guardians, non-instructional staff, administrators, community, church leaders, district and the state) to take personal responsibility for the academic, social and economic success of the students who attend Hawthorne Avenue Elementary School? How can the school have productive relationships with parents and the community?
2. How can the school take ownership of the results of the CAPA review to lead our school to proficiency?
3. What are the obstacles that should be overcome to create a culture of effective shared leadership in the school? How do we address each of them? How can leadership be redefined to be inclusive of all stakeholders?
4. What will assist teachers in moving from teacher directed, whole-class instruction to other models of teaching more suitable for meeting the needs of all students? How can the school help teachers set high expectations for academic and behavior?
5. How can the school analyze all student data including standardized and school developed assessments, student work and student demographics horizontally and vertically across grades so that student behavior is predictable?