

Quality Review Report

2009-2010

The Roberto Clemente School

Elementary School 015

**333 East 4th Street
New York
NY 10009**

Principal: Thomas Staebell

Dates of review: March 4 – 5, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Linda Trifon

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Roberto Clemente School is an elementary school with 252 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 30% Black, 59% Hispanic, 3% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 27% special education students. Boys account for 59% of the students enrolled and girls account for 41%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 90.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Strong leadership has propelled the school to become a vibrant community focused on accelerating student learning within a positive and nurturing environment. Good internal and external programs further the academic and personal growth of adults and students. Classroom observations and examination of student work drive professional development opportunities for teachers. Consistency and fidelity is the principal's mantra and his nurturing and supportive style engages the school community in his vision for inclusion and student achievement.

Data informs the school's decisions. The wide variety of assessment tools used assists the school in its analysis of student learning outcomes, resulting in revisions to the instructional program that meet the needs of students. The school does not have a system in place to evaluate whether the data collected and organized provides teachers with a complete picture of students' strengths and needs. This lack of evaluation hampers the school's ability to confirm that instruction is consistently effective and fully meeting the needs of students leading to improved performance.

The school's curriculum is aligned to key standards. The extra-curricular activities and support programs firmly established assist students in meeting their goals. Instruction is differentiated but instructional tasks as well as the curriculum do not consistently challenge all students, reducing optimal learning. Teachers' questioning does not always push students' thinking, leading to uneven levels of student engagement.

The school's embedded culture of inquiry fosters teacher collaboration. Teams of teachers gather and collaboratively analyze a wide range of student subgroup data and determine next instructional steps. The principal participates in the core teacher team meetings and evaluates the team's effectiveness, redirecting the teams' efforts according to teacher and student needs.

"There are great people standing behind us," shared a parent and the school consistently conveys high expectations for attendance, behavior and academics to students and families but information about the progress their children are making is not even across the school especially in the aspect of student self-assessment. Although the school provides many workshops for parents to learn how to support their child at home not all avail themselves of the facilities and this reduces the ability of families from fully helping their children.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school that lead to greater student learning outcomes.
 - o Resources have been re-aligned to support the principal's decision to restructure the school's literacy program to ensure that all students receive a rigorous and balanced approach to learning. Hired consultants demonstrate effective teaching strategies and work with teachers to assist them in planning lessons. Revised teaching assignments provide students with more in-class support resulting in accelerated student achievement. Continuous teacher collaboration has strengthened practice. "The teachers' toolbox has gotten bigger," shared the principal.
 - o The school's decision to welcome and include special education students from District 75 has benefited the entire school population. The school integrates students from District 75 into various classrooms. Teachers from both sites co-teach and collaboratively plan effective lessons. As a result, students benefit from instructional and support services enabling them to achieve academic success and teachers learn effective instructional strategies that meet the needs of their students.
- The principal's positive leadership establishes and maintains a scholarly tone, which, together with the school's excellent internal and external programs, supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults.
 - o The school implements the *Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) system*. Professional training in *Emotional Literacy* equips teachers with effective strategies to use in the classroom to help students manage their behavior. The "Mood Meter" displayed everywhere throughout the building, reminds students and adults to self-regulate their behavior to maintain a positive frame of mind and respectful culture. The Roberto Clemente School Charter, developed by teachers, sustains the school's respectful culture. Affiliation with the *Blessings in a Backpack*, program, provides nutritious food and snacks to children ensuring that children are not hungry and are ready to learn. The Boys Club and Project Cool support the social and emotional needs of students resulting in increased personal and academic growth.
- The school uses a process of self-selection, classroom observations and the analysis of student learning outcomes to provide an array of professional learning opportunities that elevate practice and improve student achievement.
 - o The principal follows a comprehensive pre-and post-classroom observation protocol to give teachers a full spectrum of support to improve their practice. The protocol includes meaningful feedback referenced to the six practices of the Santa Cruz professional teaching standards. Teachers identify areas of professional need, and based on the principal's classroom observations, the analysis of student work products and the examination of formative assessments,

the school provides differentiated support to teachers that elevate teaching practice towards meeting the needs of students.

- All teachers utilize an inquiry approach to examine student work, plan together, and share effective instructional ideas resulting in greater student outcomes.
 - All teachers are engaged in structured collaborative teams where the analysis of student learning outcomes and formative assessments drives the academic discourse and the planning of professional learning opportunities. Teachers assign themselves roles during these meetings to ensure effectiveness and efficiency. They discuss the learning outcomes of targeted students and plan the next instructional steps. Each teacher takes responsibility for student achievement. One teacher shared, “We have changed the way we are looking at kids. No more is the “I think, I feel,” terminology used but rather, “This is what it is.”
- The school and teams of teachers use a wide range of data and make informed decisions that lead to greater student achievement.
 - School leaders and staff analyze a wide range of formative, summative, attendance and referral data to identify: trends, strengths and areas of need across the school.
 - Analysis of student subgroup data confirmed that second language learners in the upper grades were not making significant progress in literacy. This data prompted the school to evaluate its program and make strategic adjustments to the school’s practices and instructional program that has resulted in greater student achievement.
- The school evaluates the effectiveness of structured professional collaborations to support the development of teacher leaders to build capacity.
 - Agendas and protocols used during teacher team meetings provide a history of the team’s discussions and instructional decision-making. Probing and guided questions around student learning outcomes enable the principal and faculty to evaluate the team’s effectiveness and to implement additional supports to accelerate student progress.
 - The core teacher team is comprised of one teacher leader from each of the school’s teacher teams, together with the reading specialists, literacy coaches and principal. This team meets twice a month to discuss student subgroup performance and plan instructional strategies. The principal regularly meets with the facilitators, to evaluate progress and determine supports needed, and this work results in stronger facilitation skills and better capacity among teacher leaders.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop coherence and alignment in the school’s curriculum across the grades and all subject areas, to ensure that the instructional needs of students are met.
 - The rigorous instructional program in the early childhood classrooms as well as strategic teacher assignments has greatly improved student achievement in the lower grades. The school has not fully embedded

this practice in the upper grade classrooms. Teachers use data to establish groups based on performance and skill. However, instructional practice and routines do not consistently emphasize higher order thinking skills across all upper grade classrooms and subject areas. The lack of instructional rigor hampers the acceleration of the lowest and highest achieving students and other student subgroups.

- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction to ensure that learning activities lead to high levels of student engagement and thinking.
 - Although assessment drives instruction, tasks are not always differentiated and challenging for all students, leading to uneven levels of student engagement. Teaching strategies and questions do not always push students' thinking and questions generated by teachers, often were of a literal nature preventing some students from making consistent progress.
- Extend data monitoring systems to regularly evaluate assessment practices and the tools created, to ensure that there is coherence and alignment between what students need to know and what they have learned.
 - The school does not yet regularly evaluate whether there is alignment between instruction and all common assessments. The lack of this on-going evaluation reduces the school's ability to make timely revisions to the curriculum to establish greater student progress. In addition, the school's ability to ensure that assessment information is used effectively in collaborative inquiry is hampered, limiting the school's efforts towards instructional cohesion.
- Extend and expand communication and collaboration with parents to increase their capacity to assist in their child's learning and to enable them to track progress toward attaining set goals.
 - The school's communication to families regarding the progress of student learning outcomes is inconsistent across the grades and subject areas. The lack of precise feedback with specific ways to achieve next learning steps limits student self-assessment and hinders the ability of parents to assist their children in achieving their learning goals. In spite of the school's efforts, not all families take advantage of being trained to use ARIS as a way to keep abreast of their child's progress thus reducing their ability to effectively support their child's learning at home.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: The Roberto Clemente School	△	▶	✓	+
Overall QR Score			X	
Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	△	▶	✓	+
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			X	
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?			X	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			X	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1			X	
Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	▶	✓	+
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?				X
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?				X
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?				X
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X

Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?			X				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			X				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 3			X				
Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?				X			
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?				X			
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?			X				
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?				X			
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				X			
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?		X					
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?			X				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?				X			
Overall score for Quality Statement 5			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed