

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

Hillside

Elementary School 054

**86-02 127th Street
Queens
NY 11418**

Principal: Anita Prashad

Dates of review: January 12 - 13, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Jeannette Reed

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Hillside is an elementary school with 572 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 10% Black, 47% Hispanic, 2% White, 39% Asian, and 1% American Indian students. The student body includes 21% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 93.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The newly assigned principal of Hillside has an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school as evidenced by the school's self-evaluation, the formation of school-wide goals, and the organizational decisions that further support these efforts. However, systems are not yet fully embedded to allow for comprehensive monitoring of progress towards articulated goals. One of the school's focus areas this year through the establishment of a professional community of learners is to provide a quality education for all students. To that end, effective teamwork and targeted professional development engage staff in relevant activities to identify student needs and developing long- and short-term goals to raise achievement. Teachers work together to plan and implement intervention services for students identified as in need of additional support. The school does a good job of monitor the impact of this work.

Data from a multitude of sources is gathered on an ongoing basis, including the school's periodic assessments, portfolios, classroom observations, and homework samples. The principal and core team analyze all data in order to track trends and provide teachers with data and strategies for their analyzing data to inform instruction. However, at this time, differentiation of instruction is a work in progress and is not yet sufficiently embedded across all subject areas.

Parents have high praise for the school, its high level of expectations, and feel they are a welcomed presence in the school. Parents are appreciative of the level on concern demonstrated on behalf of their children and state they feel the children in the school are safe and nurtured. All parents express that the principal's and teachers' open door policy allows them to share problems leading to a quick resolve. However, the majority of the parents were not familiar with their child's goals in each subject and the areas they need to focus on for development and improvement.

Although the school's student support system includes a guidance counselor and school psychologist who assist students with social and emotional development, the lack of partnerships with community organizations limits parents having adequate resources for their children to provide services for families in need.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school makes strategic organizational decisions that support its goals to maximize student learning.
 - The strategic use of the budget to hire math and literacy coaches provides support for teachers in setting specific goals for improving student learning. Their collaboration extends to using data to plan instruction addressing classroom goals and individual student learning needs.
 - The school sets aside time weekly for instructional teacher teams to meet to share goals applicable to their classrooms around improving student learning. This time is also used for grade specific “data days” to review data and monitor progress relative to interim instructional goals. This process has resulted in increased collaboration and alignment of instruction across the grades.
- The principal has established effective protocols for teachers to routinely analyze relevant formative and summative information to identify trends in student progress and performance in order to modify curriculum and instructional practices.
 - The principal reviews the school’s practices on an on-going basis in order to measure the impact of curricular decisions. This year the principal revamped the administrative periods into enrichment classes that are geared toward working on individual student needs based on set benchmarks as evidenced by interim assessments and classroom assessments. Core team members update student background information and share the identified learning gaps with each teacher team.
 - The principal has increased direct instruction to students by increasing instructional teaching periods of all out of classroom teachers in order to provide additional instruction for struggling students. This has resulted in increased student performance as evidenced in interim assessments and classroom teacher data. Feedback logs were developed and all information is shared with classroom teachers in order to better monitor progress of students.
- Teachers effectively work in teams to share good practices, analyze data, and provide instructional strategies to address individual learning needs.
 - A majority of teachers are engaged in teacher teams that meet weekly using the inquiry approach. Teacher teams meet by grade and within subject departments to share lessons, identify best practices, and focus on improving their teaching by developing curriculum maps and pacing calendars.
 - A majority of teacher teams are studying the analysis of data and its use to drive instruction. Their analysis of formative

assessments has helped them to identify targeted students. The work of the teacher teams has also produced school-wide tracking protocol systems and student tracking forms to monitor classroom and school-wide progress; consequently, there is now on-going tracking of student and school progress.

- The principal provides opportunities for staff to engage in targeted professional development to enhance teaching strategies that support school-wide initiatives.
 - The principal offers multiple opportunities for staff to improve practice through inter-visitations within and outside the school, including workshops that focus on differentiation, flexible grouping, setting benchmarks, and use of conferring logs. A newly implemented “grade data days” activity is designed to help teachers collaboratively review data, plan strategies and set goals.
 - The school’s academic intervention team, in collaboration with the inquiry team, has developed school-wide student profile sheets, 3x5 goal cards for math and language arts, and provides continuous updates for grade data binders. This enables specialists in English language learners, special education, math, and English language arts, to provide on-going support for at-risk students and those who are scoring near grade level.
- The principal and staff communicate high expectations to students and families, and actively engage parents in school decision-making, which results in a shared commitment to the school.
 - Parents are actively engaged in the school leadership team, Title I parent committee, learning leaders, and the parent teacher association. This participation enables them to be part of the decision making process at the school.
 - The principal, staff, and parent coordinator, have engaged parents in various workshops on nutrition, art, health, as well as academics. Parents state they are encouraged to come to school to learn about themselves as well as their children and they are better prepared to support their children’s education.
- The principal and the core team use a wide range of data to evaluate and the effectiveness of organizational decisions, interventions, and professional development supports based on school needs.
 - The principal provides focused professional development plans based on observations, daily learning walks, and a review of formative assessments. As a result, instructional methodologies and techniques are developed and refined to address targeted learning outcomes.
 - The school’s commitment to the development of establishing and monitoring benchmarks was implemented through school-wide professional development for MONDO, a program that

contains internal benchmarks. The reintroduction to the program enabled all teachers to participate and monitor student progress. Classroom libraries were leveled as a direct result of the guided professional development.

What the school needs to improve

- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction based on data so that assigned tasks accommodate different learning styles and offer multiple entry points into lessons.
 - Evidence of differentiated instructional strategies that address a wide range of ability levels is apparent in many of the classrooms where teachers are targeting the needs of students based on their strengths and weaknesses. However, because differentiation of instruction does not occur consistently across the school, and is not a focus across all subject areas, many students' needs are not being met.
 - There is little evidence of the utilization of flexible grouping and differentiation other than in English language arts and math. The addition of monitoring data in science and social studies has not yet been used sufficiently to differentiate instruction thus limiting student learning and progress.
- Improve the consistency of communication and collaboration with students and their parents to help them track progress toward meeting specific interim benchmarks and long-term goals.
 - There is feedback on student work products in the form of checks and one-word statements. However, the feedback is not does not provide relevant comments to assist students with their next learning steps.
 - The school has not yet developed a school-wide plan to help families to fully utilize tools such as ARIS Parent Link in order to better understand student performance and provide relevant steps to help understand what is needed to attain next learning steps.
- Develop relationships with external organizations and community-based organizations to support child and youth development services for students and families to support personal and academic growth.
 - The school does not yet provide opportunities to engage children in areas of interest as well as academic activities that link to classroom enrichment in math and literacy in extended day activities to help enhance student motivation and help them in meeting performance goals.
 - The lack of community-based partnerships limits support in building parents' skills in extending student personal growth and for forging a total support system that leads to academic success.
- Ensure that all improvement plans have responsibilities identified, suitable timeframes, and specific success criteria linked to time-specific goals based on data.

- The school has not developed a system for all targeted initiatives that enables the school to monitor and revise school improvement plans or that includes interim benchmarks for the Comprehensive Educational Plan or a teacher development plan for the improvement of student outcomes.
- The school has in place a system for evaluating the curricular and instructional decisions in English language arts and math, but systems for monitoring all content areas is not yet consistent.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Hillside	Δ	➤	✓	+
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>	Δ	➤	✓	+
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>	Δ	➤	✓	+
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
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