

# **Quality Review Report 2009-2010**

**The Lucretia Mott School**

**Elementary School 215**

**535 Briar Place  
Queens  
NY 11691**

**Principal: Susan Rippe Hofmann**

**Dates of review: November 19 – 20, 2009**

**Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Lucretia Mott School is an elementary school with 611 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 50% Black, 45% Hispanic, 2% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 90.9%.

### Overall Evaluation

#### **This school is proficient.**

The Lucretia Mott School provides a safe and welcoming environment where students feel supported in their learning. The school's challenging Core Knowledge curriculum enables students to engage in hands-on projects and experiments that promote critical thinking and enhanced social networking. The principal's reflection on the needs of students and teachers, has led to improved organizational decisions where teachers receive regular common planning time and students enjoy extended academic support services to address their specific needs.

The leadership and teachers collaborate during weekly inquiry meetings to carefully analyze a wide range of data and engage in conversations about improving student outcomes. Based on data identified on the school's recent Progress Report, the school has placed enhanced emphasis on improving students' math performance. The leadership and teachers regularly monitor diagnostic math checklists and item skill analysis information to assist them in understanding the progress of each student and guide their planning of customized lessons. Teachers comment how well they work together to support each other as they analyze data, use data tools, and create intervention strategies to ensure that students achieve academic success. Currently the rubrics the school uses do not adequately provide students with diagnostic feedback to effectively inform them of next steps in their learning. The school provides students and their families with subject specific interim progress reports that highlight students' strengths and weaknesses. Based on the analysis of these reports, students receive the additional instruction and time on task that they need to improve academic achievement.

Communication between the home and the school needs to be strengthened in order to involve parents more deeply in decision making to accelerate their children's learning. The appointment of a new parent coordinator has the intention of increased parent participation so that they can better support their children at home. The principal's purposeful goal to develop teacher leaders from among the staff in order to build capacity results in focused and targeted professional development. The school has not embedded the practice of providing new teachers with differentiated professional development to ensure that their pedagogic skills are continually developed and student outcomes are maximized. Primary grade teachers participate in collaborative walkthroughs using an observation protocol as a common lens to help them monitor the effective implementation of the Reading First Program as well as engage in reflective and evaluative dialogue. The school recognizes its need to improve the monitoring of progress towards developing and sharing long-term goals in all subject areas, and their need to set interim checkpoints against which progress can be measured and adjustments made as needed.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Students benefit from a challenging curriculum that extends their learning and meets their diverse needs.
  - The Core Knowledge curriculum is evident in classrooms and reflects the content area focus that motivates students to learn. Students engage in hands-on activities in science to investigate how the angle of a string can affect time and distance. Students participate in discussions that encourage them to question subject matter and think critically about key events in American history, rock formation and reading non-fiction literature.
  - The school's heightened and deliberate focus on math has led to a more enthusiastic delivery of the math core curriculum across the school. Students engage in many lessons that are hands-on, and push their thinking. In a grade 4 class, students assist each other as they use various kinds of math manipulatives for additional support in learning about perimeter. As students collaborate in small groups on multi-step problems, all students, including subgroups, are provided with differentiated instruction as teachers use checklists and item skills analysis data to determine what each student needs in order to succeed.
- The leadership makes effective and knowledgeable organizational decisions that address the learning needs of staff and all students.
  - The principal ensures that through purposeful scheduling, all teachers have extended time to engage in collaborative inquiry at least once a week, with many participating voluntarily on a daily basis. This extension of time ensures that teachers collaborate to plan lessons, engage in meaningful conversation about students and their learning and make appropriate adjustments to the curriculum in order to improve student performance. Students benefit from the close attention that the leadership gives to organizational decisions, as their support services are closely matched to their instructional needs.
  - Struggling students and subgroups are closely monitored and their instruction adjusted by teachers during regular collaborative planning sessions. As a result, students make improvement in their academic performance and teachers hold themselves accountable for their students' progress.
- The emphasis the school places on developing mutual trust and positive attitudes has enhanced the level of accountability that all constituents demonstrate towards students.
  - The principal and her staff carefully analyzed the results of the Learning Environment Survey, and based on its findings, implemented the Responsive Classroom program in order to bring about a shared sense of community and mutual respect among staff and students. The day begins with a morning message and class meeting, which sets a positive

tone for the day. As the school day begins, adults throughout the building welcome students and provide them with words of encouragement and resources to ensure that they are successful in their learning. As a result, teachers feel more connected and accountable to their students. Students feel happy to attend this school, and are motivated to learn.

- Students engage in meaningful activities that promote academic and personal growth during the day and after school. A partnership with the Queens District Attorney's Office provides students with conflict resolution skills, while the 21<sup>st</sup> Century afterschool program offers students homework support and recreational activities. These programs, coupled with the time students spend with the guidance counselor and adults they trust, support their emotional and learning needs.
- The leadership and teachers regularly gather a wide range of data and collaborate to analyze and monitor student progress, determining patterns and trends in order to support their learning needs.
  - The close monitoring of data revealed a need for the school to focus more on Black males and the progress that all subgroups need to make in math. The school's use of data tools such as ARIS, Acuity, ED Performance and State assessment test data enables them to plan lessons that are individualized and address the needs of all learners. Additionally, the school uses its own data tools to organize and analyze student performance trends by creating tracking systems to pinpoint each subgroup's strengths and weaknesses.
  - School leaders and faculty ensure that students' progress is steady and consistent as they gather data from sources such as MCLAS, unit tests and the Ticket to Read self-monitoring literacy program in order to accelerate and sustain learning.
- Teachers work effectively in collaborative inquiry teams to analyze data, share promising practices, develop tools and create intervention strategies when needed.
  - All teachers engage in collaborative inquiry to ensure that students learn. Teachers in kindergarten through grade 3 engage in Reading First learning walks. The walkthrough has a clear and specific protocol that enables them to focus on practice without judgment. The shared interaction allows teacher teams to observe literacy instruction and analyze student work through a common lens in order to evaluate teaching practices for consistency.
  - The school's coaches and academic service providers are a committed group of specialists who use the inquiry approach in the analysis of student assessment data on a regular basis. The team provides ongoing support to teachers and students. They model lessons, assist in data gathering, analysis and evaluation in order to develop intervention strategies to promote student achievement. As a result, students receive academic support that is tailored to their individual needs.
- The principal ensures that professional development for teachers is purposeful, and provides opportunities to foster shared reflection, as well as developing related skills to address students' academic and social needs.

- Teachers serve as grade leaders, coaches and more recently, one of the teachers transitioned to the role of assistant principal. These leaders support teachers and help ensure that the goals in the Comprehensive Educational Plan drive instruction. The school uses ARIS and periodic assessment training to ensure that teacher teams receive the data that they need so that the progress of individuals and groups can be monitored.
- All teachers extend their professional development through the use of the Professional Teaching Standards with accompanying resources. The knowledge teachers gain by using this on-line program, results in a deepened awareness of their own pedagogic practice as well as their ability to identify and share intervention strategies to promote adult learning and improve student outcomes.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Establish a clear and congruent approach to grading work that provides students with diagnostic feedback derived from carefully crafted rubrics that are closely aligned to State standards.
  - Teachers use rubric assessment data across curriculum areas to determine student mastery of content materials. However, the school does not have a formal structure to ensure that rubrics are used in a consistent manner. Some teachers make comments directly on students' work, and others use a rubric score based on a set of criteria. Many students are unable to articulate how either the comment or the score guides them in making improvements in their work. Consequently, students are not always fully informed of their next steps for future growth.
  - School leaders and teachers engage students and their families in discussions regarding student growth by sharing data derived from sources such as ECLAS, DIEBELS, running records, and multiple sources of additional assessments. However, at present, they have not yet helped families understand tools such as the ARIS Parent Link so that they can participate in timely reciprocal dialogue about the progress of their children.
- Engage parents in open communication to promote opportunities for them to be more involved in decision making and their children's learning.
  - The school utilizes student progress reports and teacher conferences as a means to share progress information with students and their families. However, some parents would like to be more involved in the decision making aspects of the school. As an outcome of their limited engagement, they do not view themselves as true partners in their children's learning.
  - The school's leadership team and parent association meetings are either inactive or sporadic and, as a result, there is a lack of communication and shared commitment between home and school.

- Expand professional development opportunities for new teachers that are differentiated, based on their individual professional development growth needs, in order to improve student outcomes.
  - School leaders provide a range of support for all teachers that include coaching, teacher teaming, intervisitations and mentoring. However, a differentiated plan is not in place for new teachers that clearly addresses their developmental and content knowledge needs. As a result, professional training is not sufficiently matched to their individual learning requirements.
  - The leadership provides all teachers with informal and formal observation opportunities and the individualized conferences serve as professional development. However, there is no structure in place that provides targeted professional development specifically for new teachers, with timeframes to indicate pedagogic mastery of skills.
- Create measurable long-term outcomes with interim checkpoints and timeframes in all subject areas, to consistently and collectively monitor student progress and growth.
  - Teacher teams and individual teachers evaluate students' progress during team meetings. However, there are no systems in place to indicate how grades track interim goals to monitor the effectiveness of instructional strategies. As a result, there is no clear indication to show whether or not a specific strategy has been effective in improving students' performance over time.
  - The school uses formal and informal assessments to develop long-term goals, and individual teachers create interim benchmarks. However, clearly defined interim monitoring checkpoints with timeframes that are transparent, inclusive and lead to ownership of goals by the faculty is not embedded practice. As a result, students are not always fully aware of their next steps in learning.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

<b>School name: The Lucretia Mott School</b>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?				<b>X</b>
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 1</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>Δ</b>	<b>➤</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>+</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?		<b>X</b>		
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 2</b>			<b>X</b>	

<b>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.</b>							
<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					
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 3</b>			X				
<b>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.</b>							
<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				
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 4</b>			X				
<b>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.</b>							
<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				
<b>Overall score for Quality Statement 5</b>			X				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
△	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	➤	<b>Underdeveloped with Proficient Features</b>	✓	<b>Proficient</b>	+	<b>Well Developed</b>