

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

Incensio Casanova

Elementary School 062

**660 Fox Street
Bronx
NY 10455**

Principal: Lisa Manfredonia

Dates of review: January 12 - 13, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Timothy Behr

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Inocensio Casanova is an elementary school with 731 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 19 % Black, 79% Hispanic, less than 1% each of White, Asian, and American Indian students. The student body includes 15% English language learners and 19% 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 91.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

The administration has created a positive learning environment that reflects its commitment to the social, academic, and personal development of its learning community. The principal has a very clear vision for the future development of the school and over the past year has worked hard to ensure that all students can learn in a calm, organized, and collaborative educational setting, by incorporating the 4R program (Reading, Writing, Responsibility, and Respect) which promotes mutual trust and support. The school community shares high expectations on a regular basis through newsletters, weekly reviews, and workshops. Parents feel welcome in the school, and know that their opinions are valued.

The principal is dedicated to continual school improvement. However, currently, school improvement planning does not identify specific interim and long-term goals with measurable outcomes. This limits the school's ability to measure progress, make adjustments where progress is not as expected, and determine what is working well and the reasons for the success.

The school collects and uses a wide range of data to understand the needs of students. School leaders and teachers make good use of the data to improve the performance of its high need populations. As a result, it has established effective systems to support and guide students and families. The principal has established effective systems for self-evaluation, review and modification of instructional and organizational practices to improve student outcomes. However, some collaborative teacher teams do not interact with the students to understand the impact of their intervention strategies and the school has yet to extend curriculum mapping and the tracking of assessment results to math to ensure that student goals are comprehensive and measurable.

Opportunities for professional development are good and many initiatives focus effectively on improving teaching and learning, such as the use of inter-visitations to enhance teacher collaboration and raise the quality of classroom instruction where most lessons have a clear focus. However, teachers do not consistently differentiate instruction well enough to meet students' needs. As a result, some lessons lack clarity and purpose, and do not maximize students' learning potential.

The school utilizes its partnership and internal supports to provide students with a wide range of opportunities to enhance their academic and social growth. It works effectively with a number of external organizations to offers a wide array of after school opportunities that align with school goals and enable students to expand their educational opportunities that .

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is a calm and well-ordered community, which is providing the students with a respectful and supportive learning environment.
 - Students are well supported in their learning. For example, the principal and assistant principal are readily available to listen and offer practical advice to colleagues and students. This creates a safe and supportive learning environment where all succeed and make progress.
 - Students talk with great enthusiasm about the school, what it helps them to achieve and about their aspirations. They are able to self assess and articulate personal strengths and areas for development.
- School leaders and staff gather a range of relevant data across subject areas to understand student performance well and regularly collaborate to identify trends and make purposeful modifications to practice.
 - School leaders and faculty consistently collect and analyze a wide range of data, including formative and summative assessments, to provide a clear picture of students' learning needs and track their progress as they move through the school. The school uses this information effectively to inform instructional and organizational decisions, such as providing extra support to students that improve academic, social, or emotional skills.
 - The school identifies the needs of various subgroups from the data and, as a result, these students are making better progress in their learning. The implementation of the Imagine Learning program for English language learners supports effective, individualized instruction that meets student needs and increases students' ability to reach their full potential.
- The administration, faculty, students, and parents share high expectations for improving students' achievement.
 - The school regularly communicates its high expectations of attendance, behavior, and performance through organized meetings and the Parents are Partners newsletters. The school provides parents with details of their child's goals so they can support their children effectively at home. This consistent practice creates a positive rapport between the school and families so that all constituents are working toward the same end.
 - Parents are consistently invited to the school to attend literacy, math, science, social studies, and health informational sessions. These activities result in parents feeling valued and true partners in the education of their children. This coupled with effective school leadership team-planning meetings to develop and share the school's goals and objectives promotes involvement and parental support for the school's vision.
- Teachers have good opportunities to develop their leadership qualities and skills within this reflective school where all constituents have a voice.

- School leaders plan many opportunities for teachers to work together and reflect on their practice. They are encouraged to visit each other's classrooms and share elements of good practice with colleagues. Common planning enables teachers to develop a unified approach to instruction and to communicate high expectations to students and families in a consistent way. As a result, instructional methodologies and techniques have been refined to set targeted learning outcomes that support accelerated learning.
- Professional development is planned around individual need and areas related to school improvement. The administration successfully works alongside staff to help improve practice and to encourage teachers to be reflective and evaluative about their craft. The administration and faculty regularly utilizing learning walks to review the correlation of the curriculum and lesson planning to State standards as a means to further improving instruction and increasing student outcomes.
- Professional development and extension activities create a wide range of opportunities that promote individual and shared reflection enabling teachers to enhance their practice in assisting students' academic and social growth.
 - The school has built strong partnerships within the community to enhance students' learning experiences. Student athletes have the opportunity, if their grades, behavior, and attendance meet school qualifications, to participate in the citywide Colgate Women's Track Games to test their running skills against age appropriate competition. As one student stated, "This school is all about doing and being your best."
 - Structured professional development opportunities such as the Reading, Writing, Responsibility, and Respect program sponsored by the Morningside Center align with school goals. Teachers conduct lessons on the importance of reading every day, bullying, and respect for one another. This enables teachers to evaluate and revise their practice to improve student-learning outcomes. As a result, the school is meeting its students' social and academic needs.
- School leaders and teachers have established effective systems for the evaluation, review, and adjustments of professional structures and instructional practices that improve student outcomes.
 - The administration and teacher teams effectively analyze student data, and consistently collaborate to design lesson plans, units of study, and curriculum that have a positive impact on student learning. This has led to the sharing of best practices. As a result of this work, the school has embedded writing rubrics into its curriculum to track the progress of each student. This has allowed teachers to take on the leadership role of data specialist, to evaluate the effectiveness of this intervention.
 - The administration and staff effectively use the Progress Report, Quality Review, and Learning Environment Survey to evaluate organizational effectiveness and modify practices as required. Consequently, the school has an accurate representation of its performance and areas to strengthen. For example, as a result of concerns over math performance, teacher teams are currently examining the math curriculum and instructional strategies to determine their effectiveness in enhancing student performance.

What the school needs to improve

- Revise curricula in order to emphasize rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills for a variety of learners with different needs.
 - Although the curriculum is well organized and aligned with mandated requirements, math lessons do not consistently challenge and engage students. Therefore, opportunities to maximize learning potential are lost. Some students are not challenged enough and make limited progress while others struggle with content that teachers have not sufficiently matched to their need or based on the student's prior knowledge.
- At the consistency with which teachers plan for the different needs of their students, so that, each one makes the best possible progress.
 - Differentiation is not embedded instructional practice. In some classes, some students still complete the same work as their classmates even though they are ready to move on to more challenging work, resulting in them losing interest. Teachers use data to plan lessons but not always effectively. Too often, the lesson objective focuses on the task students will complete rather than what the students are expected to learn. Student groupings are not consistently based on performance or skill, nor does questioning always extend thinking to maximize student learning.
- Ensure that all collaborative teacher teams consistently utilize an inquiry approach in analyzing assessment data and student work, share key elements of best practice and monitor student progress towards benchmarks effectively.
 - Teacher teams meet on a regular basis to analyze formative and summative data. They usually share practices across grade and content level. Teachers are beginning to take on significant leadership roles such as team leader. However, some teacher teams have not met with their targeted students, which make it extremely difficult for them to determine the direct impact of the targeted interventions or changes in instructional practices intended to improve student achievement.
- Enhance school improvement planning by identifying specific interim and measured, readjustments made and success evaluated.
 - Improvement plans include developing curriculum maps for math. Currently the math curriculum does not have clear timelines to evaluate success and areas in need of development. Presently teacher teams do not use a tracking tool to identify those students making or not making progress over time. Therefore, they cannot assess the impact of decisions concerning curriculum, instruction, or interventions regarding student performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: Inocensio Casanova	△	▷	✓	+
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