

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Roberto Clemente School

Elementary School 019

**325 South 3 Street
Brooklyn
NY 11211**

Principal: Maria Witherspoon

Dates of review: October 18-19, 2010

Lead Reviewer: James Quail

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Roberto Clemente is an elementary school with 427 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 3% Black, 93% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% Asian students and 2% mixed race. The student body includes 30% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 94.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is Developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school offers rich and varied curricula, during and after school, emphasizing State standards to engage and challenge diverse learners.
 - The school strategically uses scope and sequence guides, pacing calendars, units of study, and skill sheets in all subjects, including the arts and exposes the staff to the new evolving standards. As a result, this supports teachers in aligning their curricula within and across grades as they plan for instruction and increase opportunities to highlight key standards to close the achievement gap.
 - Classroom visits reflect that teachers, on and across grades, focus on comprehension, vocabulary and common themes in all subject areas. For example, students are introduced to new words at the start of lessons, define them and use them again in assignments and other subjects. Thus, the school aligns its instructional tasks both vertically and horizontally to promote and increase student learning and outcomes.
- School leaders make informed, purposeful and timely organizational decisions to meet student needs that result in improved student outcomes.
 - In a response to address a prior Quality Review recommendation related to the low performance of its boys, the school has purchased a variety of non-fictional texts along with laptop computers, and judiciously assigned former coaches into classrooms to support targeted students. These strategic decisions align instructional goals to student needs while supporting the development of a coherent strategy to improve outcomes.
 - In order to meet the identified needs of its English language learners and special needs students, the school uses technology, videos, and special computer programs to engage and challenge them. For example, lower class size and the assignment of assist teachers in managing specific cohorts of students increase their opportunities to succeed and encourage teams to accept and share responsibility for pupil progress.
- The school has established useful systems to provide feedback to teachers to improve instructional practices. This results in improved student outcomes.
 - The principal, due to budget restrictions, has assigned seven veteran teachers to classroom assignments. For example, this group receives professional development in the area of grade specific writing tasks along with common expectations for student learning. These supports maximize efforts and strategies to promote professional growth that results in improvement in pedagogy and positive student outcomes. .
 - Teachers receive professional development in an effort to meet their needs and improve student performance. For example, teacher leaders work with each grade, targeted staff members purposefully visit other schools and classrooms. Collaborative teams exist on all grades to provide additional support. This promotes professional growth, which has added opportunities to elevate school-wide instructional practices.

- School leaders wisely use data systems to evaluate teacher effectiveness, placement decisions and professional development offerings, which have improved instructional practices.
 - In an effort to match teachers to student needs, the principal regularly utilizes a vast array of student data sources, including observations to evaluate teaching practices. As a result, two coaches now service upper grade classes while two other teachers, based on their strengths, work with specific targeted students. Thus, these proactive strategies and smart use of data increase opportunities for student success.
 - In response to a vast variety of staff changes in assignments, the school utilizes a meaningful and continuous professional development plan with a focus on teacher empowerment. A teacher leader supports each grade and opportunities exist for staff to have voice in the selection of materials, programs and their own learning. Thus, these leadership opportunities for teachers foster a positive culture and climate within the school.
- The school works closely with families and students by continuously sharing relevant information to promote clear expectations for learning.
 - The school sends home progress reports, in all subjects, over six week intervals, offers purposeful workshops for caregivers, and encourages parents to speak with teachers on a regular basis to enrich open communication with families about student learning. Thus, these efforts support the school in sharing clear expectations about student learning and progress and promote a positive home and school relationship.
 - In an effort to increase communication with parents about student outcomes, the school offers continuous assistance with ARIS Parent Link and the use of the Learning Environment Survey. As a result, a recent survey reflects that 97% of the parents feel satisfied with the school sharing student progress information, and parents, in general, hold a high regard for the school. One parent stated, "I love this school since the teachers let me know how my child is doing."

What the school needs to improve

- Develop a cohesive system for individual teachers and teams to know and track the specific needs, strengths and progress of their students and to use data to adjust their instructional decisions.
 - The science cluster teacher maintains timely assessments, logs, data and reports to track individual and class progress. However, this is not consistent in all classrooms. Thus, this limits teachers and teams in using informative data to track pupil progress at the class and grade levels to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction on learning outcomes.
 - At the two teacher team meetings, teachers have elaborated about their focus with their targeted group of students, but have yet to incorporate benchmark results from student assessments to denote pupil progress. This limits teachers in analyzing the effectiveness of their instructional decisions to improve learning and student outcomes.

- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction by aligning teacher strategies and practices to improve student work and learning.
 - The new technology classroom affords added opportunities to meet the precise needs of students in a differentiated manner. However, this model of differentiated instruction is not evident in all classrooms, thus minimizing efforts to support students in meeting their academic needs.
 - The use of clear and purposeful rubrics in writing, along with teacher comments on student work and the alignment of instructional efforts are evident in some, but not all classrooms. Thus, this limits the use of effective practices to improve student work products and engagement.
- Extend the goal setting and reflection process for individual teachers and teams to meet the differentiated needs of students.
 - Presently, teacher teams meet and set student goals but they do not connect this to leverage change in their instructional process. Thus, this limits their efforts to accelerate learning and improve student outcomes.
 - Currently, not all teachers and teams use data to identify and set differentiated learning goals for individual students and subgroups. As a result, there is an uneven setting of annual and interim goals to measure student progress and improve student and school outcomes.
- Expand the present data system for collecting and monitoring data around student achievement and policies and practices in the school in order to improve student outcomes.
 - Some, but not all teachers use common assessments, rubrics or benchmarks to measure individual, class, grade progress. This uneven monitoring however, limits the setting of clear and high learning expectations. As a result, this restricts the school's collaborative efforts to help students reach their potential and achieve higher outcomes.
 - In the area of student writing, the school does not have a system in place to monitor the effectiveness of instruction within and across grades. As a result, student work in this area varies widely from class to class. The lack of a transparent and structured system for monitoring this effort results in differing expectations for learning and meeting standards.
- Expand opportunities for teacher teams to engage in collaborative inquiry to influence school decision making and changes in practice.
 - At this time, the principal provides additional time for teams to meet and study data. However, these teams do not measure student progress to denote their needs with adjustments in practices. Consequently, efforts to improve student outcomes are limited.
 - Inquiry teams meet on each grade level but they show a wide variance in their practices as to the use of data, denoting student needs and next steps. As a result, this restricts the teams in effectively analyzing data to improve individual, class and school wide student learning..

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Roberto Clemente School	UD	D	P	WD
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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	
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?		X		
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, 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	

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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
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>	UD	D	P	WD			
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				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed