

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

George Washington Carver School

Elementary School K040

**265 Ralph Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11233**

Principal: Leonie Hibbert

Dates of review: January 10-11, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Olga Maluf

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

George Washington Carver is an elementary school with 377 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 86% Black, 8% Hispanic, 2% White, 1% American Indian, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal and staff work collegially and collaboratively as a unified team to create a calm, welcoming and nurturing environment for learning to take place.
 - Based on data, the school has identified increased attendance as a prime goal and provides a sports and arts after-school program accessible even during holidays and school vacations. This program has directly increased student motivation by linking student interest to varied school activities.
 - The child-centered focus of the school creates an environment where students express an excitement for their own individual growth and engage in their own learning leading to an increase in their academic achievement.
- The school makes effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support school improvement initiatives and students' outcomes leading to improved student achievement.
 - Building on an analysis of the school's data, administrators inserted a research-based supplemental writing component to the English language arts curriculum that is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. This approach has helped students become better writers through skill development and exposure to anchor student texts.
 - Based on an extensive needs analysis, the school hired a science and an arts cluster, rescheduled the early morning intervention program, and the push-in academic intervention service program, enabling the school to consistently support students' improvement goals leading to increased student achievement.
- School administrators and teacher teams use a wide range of data to assess and monitor student progress so that a coherent instructional plan can be developed and implemented leading to student success.
 - School staff and personnel track an assortment of contextual data on attendance, behavior, and Title I eligibility. This analysis drives school-wide goals and leads to cohesive intervention plans in the academic and socio-emotional realms leading to increased student motivation and achievement.
 - Teachers use a variety of data tools, protocols, and processes to track student progress and mastery of content and skills. This allows for adjustments in instruction and support for subgroups leading to increased student achievement.
- The combination of the school's instructional belief and the various forms of professional development have increased pedagogy skills so that teachers reach students' needs using different forums.
 - The school strongly believes that all children can learn when provided clear expectations, an effort based education and staff collaboration. In support of this belief, teachers consistently visit each other's classes to learn and refine new instructional techniques. Second grade teachers visit their

colleagues' classrooms to observe vocabulary extension lessons that are then replicated as a best practice in their own lesson planning, resulting in students using more descriptive vocabulary in their writing. Tenured teachers' planning and development of research projects for students is used effectively as a tool to review staff performance. On-grade level teaching buddies, coaching by the math specialist, and targeted professional development in project based learning and higher order thinking, provides all teachers with suitable support. Teachers are incorporating more differentiation in their instruction, using writing protocols and samples to build the level of student writing, and incorporating technology to support instruction.

- Teams of teachers and consultants provide professional development opportunities that are aligned with identified school goals and support continuous learning.
 - The school's professional development plan provides specific supports on the Common Core State Standards, writing, and infusing technology into instructional practices through the use of SMART boards, Google Earth, laptops, and document cameras. These are aligned with the school's goals and lead to students being engaged in project-based learning opportunities.
 - School leaders support distributive leadership practices through the structure of grade leaders and inquiry team leaders. Elected teacher leaders are members of the instructional cabinet and effectively impact school-wide instructional decisions and practices such as the focus on writing across all content areas. This has led to the development of multiple teacher leaders who promote the school's articulated instructional and pedagogical goals.
- The school's systems and partnerships support students in continual learning and promote students' personal growth and development.
 - Faculty and staff have a great sense of ownership for the school and participate in multiple professional opportunities on the socio-emotional development of the elementary child, effective inquiry teams, and on developing a culturally proficient school. This has led to increased teacher engagement and student achievement.
 - The school partners with community based organizations that are a vital component of the school's academic program. The Sports and Arts Program, which uses a project based approach to arts learning, encourages students to make connections across subject matter and has led to the school placing first and second in numerous chess competitions, participating in a dance competition, and engaging in numerous arts enrichment activities that are available to all students. As a result, students are excited about their own learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Promote consistent student engagement through differentiated instructional strategies across grades and content areas in order to maximize student learning.

- While some teachers use student learning style inventories to create lessons that cater to different learning modalities, lessons are not amply differentiated across all grades and content areas to address individual learning needs. Some lessons provide whole group instruction and others struggle to demonstrate rigorous thinking through engaging and meaningful work products. Consequently, all students are not sufficiently engaged and challenged to meet and exceed the standards.
- Promote the use of higher order thinking skills through high level academic tasks so that all lessons are rigorous and engage students at their level to challenge their thinking.
 - Although most classroom lessons demonstrate curriculum alignment, rigorous instruction or open-ended higher order questions that lead to increased levels of classroom discussions and challenge students' thinking, these practices are not evident across all classes. This results in a lack of rigor to challenge and engage all students for higher achievement levels.
 - While the school has curriculum maps in areas of instruction, some lessons, especially in the lower grades and for special education students, do not consistently extend high order thinking to maximize student learning. As a result, students are not highly connected in their own learning through academic tasks.
- Expand on the alignment of assessment data to identify students' areas of need, track their progress, and adjust instructional practices to strengthen instructional coherence.
 - Most classrooms use formative assessments to inform instruction and are aligned with key curriculum standards. However, in a few classrooms, assessments consist mainly of textbook unit tests, while in others, assessments are program based. This lessens the capacity to adequately measure the learning of curriculum standards and plan next steps.
 - The staff sets and aligns student goals using multiple sources of summative data. However, minimal tracking of student progress is evident in some classes. This decreases opportunities to adjust curricular and instructional practices based on tracking results to ensure student achievement.
- Extend systems for evaluating school-wide assessment and evaluative practices in order to accelerate student learning.
 - School-wide data is carefully reviewed to identify school and student goals, and identify major trends and barriers to achievement. However, a system to monitor evaluative systems for data collection and interpretation are not evident leading to inaccurate assumptions.
 - Administrators and staff develop effective data systems to identify and implement school and student goals. However, few systems exist for the analysis of these school-wide structures, programs, and interventions thereby delaying timely revisions that would foster more rapid student mastery of instructional content.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: George Washington Carver Elementary 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