

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**The Suydam School**

**Elementary School K123**

**100 Irving Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11237**

**Principal: Veronica Greene**

**Dates of review: January 11- 12, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Debra Spivak**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

P.S. 123 Suydam serves students at the Elementary (General Academic) level. The school has 895 students enrolled in grades K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, SE. The school population comprises 2% white students, 6% black students, 3% Asian students, 89% Hispanic students, 52% boys, and 48% girls. Currently, 29% of the student body are English language learners. The school enrolls 13% students with Individual Education Plans. The average attendance rate for the 2009 school year was 93.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school provides consistent feedback to parents and students regarding student progress, individual strengths and weaknesses to improve student outcomes.
  - The school complements the standard report card process with interim progress reports and individualized student goal sheets which are shared with families. Teachers, parents, and students reflected on the positive impact of this consistent communication which has resulted in increased attendance at the early morning extended day program, positive behavior patterns, focused home support and enhanced student work.
  - In the last year, workshops have been delivered to parents on accessing and interpreting the data presented in ARIS Parent Link and Acuity. As a result of this training and the configuration of a small computer center within the school that is dedicated for use by families, more than 75% of families have logged into their ARIS Parent Link accounts and affirm they are better able to academically support their child.
- School leaders sustain strong external partnerships that extend student learning opportunities resulting in students' academic and personal growth.
  - The school provides workshops on varying topics such as health and behavior management to help staff better understand and address the social-emotional needs of students and families. As an outgrowth, students exercise on G.U.M. (get up and move) Fridays, and the Studio-in-the-School program works with students to create anti-bullying and positive behavior posters that populate the school corridors and result in maintaining a calm and respectful environment.
  - Partnerships with the Coalition for Hispanic Families and other community based organizations have provided several support services including psychological services, dramatic arts and literacy after school program, and martial arts program. The school has also pioneered its own yoga mommy and me class for kindergarten families. Each of these programs impacts the personal growth of students.
- The principal makes strategic decisions regarding staffing and instructional programming to support students and accelerate their academic achievement.
  - The Principal values the arts and uses the school's limited funding to sponsor programs in the arts for students including music, literary arts, dance and a Studio-in-the-School program. This exposure to the arts provides a valuable introduction to various art forms and creative structures for students to develop their talents as evidenced by the students' success at the ballroom dancing competition.
  - The school is committed to advancing students' proficiency in English as demonstrated on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test and grade level English language arts exams. In order

to attain this goal, school leaders coordinate the schedules of several service providers so that each works daily with a small group of English language learners within a fifth grade classroom. As a result, these students receive targeted interventions in English that enhance their language acquisition skills as evidenced by improved achievement in their communication and literacy skills.

- Teachers use assessments that are aligned to the curricula and analyze student level data to inform their instructional practices resulting in improved interim assessment data.
  - Teachers use assessments across grades that are aligned to the schools curricula and provide valuable information regarding student achievement. Consequently, the instructional programs have been refined to include components of Treasures as a supplementary English language arts program and EnVisions as a supplementary math program. Teachers stated that these purchases have resulted in improved skill acquisition.
  - Teachers use interim assessment data to identify the instructional strengths and weaknesses of individual students and meet regularly to discuss the targeted needs of specific students resulting in improvements on subsequent English language arts and math interim assessments.
- Teacher teams regularly engage in collaborative inquiry to review student work and set interim goals for targeted students in order to determine appropriate supports to positively impact on student achievement.
  - Teachers are engaged in structured professional collaboration and inquiry multiple times throughout the week as scheduled on the school's color coded planning calendar. Teachers facilitate these sessions autonomously and appreciate that they are empowered to make key decisions regarding student learning and instructional programs which are shared with all staff via the monthly inquiry team newsletter. This communication allows other staff to use similar strategies with their struggling students.
- School leaders and faculty consistently communicate high expectations to parents and engage parents in decision making which has led to the incorporation of several programs and initiatives.
  - Parents praised the consistent notifications sent home regarding what each grade is learning in school, their child's personalized learning goals and progress. As a result, parents feel better suited to address their child's needs in order to meet the expectations set forth within these documents.
  - Parent participation is valued and facilitated in practical ways by school staff. Parent meetings are held twice; both in the morning and evening to accommodate all families and encourage participation. The school also consistently opens its doors to parents. It hosts several classes for parents on a variety of topics including a computer skills class and beginners English; both of which have high registers and enable parents to confidently partner with school staff in their child's education.

## What the school needs to improve

- Improve differentiated instructional practice and student engagement so that a wider variety of individual learning needs are met to increase student achievement.
  - Teachers often work individually or in small groups with students which gives them confidence to be successful. However, in several of the classrooms visited, lessons were teacher directed. At points, when instructed to work in differentiated small groups, students either completed activities very quickly, leaving them with nothing to do, or needed additional direction and support to complete the required tasks. Consequently, the ability to maximize student talk time, student engagement and individual student learning are limited.
- Use information gathered through the observation process to develop teacher instructional practices to better improve student achievement.
  - While teachers are provided with the opportunity to visit classrooms within this school and other schools citywide, these opportunities, coupled with the assortment of school based professional development sessions, have not provided the necessary traction to improve classroom instruction school-wide limiting the rigor of the tasks students are involved in.
- Deepen academic rigor by increasing the use of learning tasks that emphasize higher order thinking skills, and align with key standards so that all students are fully engaged and challenged.
  - While the school curriculum units include elements of the Common Core Standards and reflect lessons learned from a review of student work, the school does not implement the units at a consistently rigorous level. As a result, not all students within the school receive the consistent exposure to instruction that generates higher order thinking and enhances student performance.
- Extend the analysis of disaggregated academic performance trends and patterns to provide a more comprehensive view of the progress made by student subgroups to impact future progress.
  - Teachers assess students and all academic, social and personal data is then gathered and computerized by the data specialist for use by teachers and administrators. Aggregate school, grade and class level data are available in the data specialist's or individual teacher's binder and teachers use this information when planning. However, the absence of disaggregated subgroup data in teacher binders and at planning sessions leaves a gap in the ability to credibly evaluate the effectiveness of school level instructional decisions for subgroups of students.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: The Suydam School</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</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>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</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>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>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</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 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, 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>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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?				<b>X</b>			
<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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?		<b>X</b>					
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?				<b>X</b>			
<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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			<b>X</b>				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>