

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The McKinley Park School

Elementary School K127

**7805 7th Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11228**

Principal: Agatha Alicandro

Dates of review: December 6 – 7, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Karina Costantino

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S.127 is an elementary school with 488 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 1% Black, 21% Hispanic, 64% White, and 13% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 94.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning.
 - The use of teacher time is clearly aligned to the school's instructional goals, allowing teachers to collaborate, meet, discuss and plan together. Teachers across all subjects have a 6th preparation period which allows them to work collaboratively with the Literacy Coach/Mentor and results in having ongoing discussions regarding student progress, reflecting on their practice, and developing tools to enable them to organize data and plan for instruction.
 - A graduate student in technology and education is assigned to assist teachers develop technology skills and design activities that link their curriculum to the Reach the World (RTW) online resources. The RTW program uses an interactive website to connect students and educators to online global journeys. This results in aligning to the school's goal of infusing technology in all grades to support student learning.
- The school has established effective systems for monitoring teaching practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practice to increase academic outcomes for all subgroups.
 - The principal and assistant principal conduct formal and informal observations. To this end, for all informal observations, the school has developed a form which is given to all teachers, listing the areas of instruction and engagement, noting not only strengths, but areas of improvement as well. This has resulted in an additional tool with which to drive professional development based on each teacher's individual needs.
 - A common instructional focus and coherent school culture are supported by a school based option, which allows staff to meet weekly. During this time, teachers review feedback from informal observations from supervisors that has been captured on a unified tool. Teachers work collaboratively to address feedback, which results in the adjustment of both teaching practice and curricula.
- The principal and staff work as a unified team to create a calm, respectful and orderly environment for learning to take place.
 - The school has a program called "Competent Kids, Caring Classrooms" which provides social-emotional educational activities for all students in grades kindergarten through 5. This provides children with a forum to discuss personal problems and is linked to the Book of the Month, which is shared with parents, allowing them to partner in their child's education by having them discuss the book with their child at home. In addition to helping parents becoming active partners in their child's education, this program also results in a calm and respectful school environment that is conducive to learning.
 - Students in grades 4 and 5 participate in Student Council, which engages them in service projects in the community, such as Penny Harvest. The effect of this program results in students taking responsibility for their community and becoming decision makers for the student body.
- Through use of a wide range of data, leaders and faculty have an ongoing understanding of the performance and progress of individuals by group which informs instruction and organizational adjustments.

- School leaders collect and review “Monitoring for Success” folders from each class on each grade at four specific intervals during the school year. The folders track student progress with each assessment and teachers analyze this information to target instruction to assure that all student sub-groups make progress. This results in allowing the school to measure progress towards June goals and revise practice in a cohesive way with which to drive professional development and improve student outcomes.
- All teachers are provided with entry data sheets which are completed and kept with the administration. Teachers uniformly use Fountas and Pinnell assessments, in addition to instructionally targeted assessments and predictives, running records, student work, teacher made tests and Everyday Math assessments, resulting in a comprehensive overview of each student’s strengths and areas of concern. This information allows teachers to differentiate for all sub-groups by working collaboratively with support personnel.
- Professional collaboration is a priority and faculty profit from varied opportunities to share and develop strengths as individuals and members of the teaching community, which results in improving teaching practice.
 - In addition to the network professional development opportunities, teachers through the observation process are provided with differentiated professional development based on their need. During the Wednesday common afterschool time, teachers also explore and obtain the knowledge of the common core standards documents and how they align with their own curricula. This allows teachers to be involved in vertical planning opportunities which results in a better understanding of the expectations in multiple grades.
 - Every teacher that attends trainings and professional development sessions is expected to turn- key to the rest of the staff. In addition, teachers co-facilitate workshop sessions in their areas of expertise. In June of each year, teachers participate in a Share Fair which highlights best practices throughout the school. All of these expectations and opportunities result in building teacher leadership capacity within the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop coherence and alignment in the school’s curriculum with state standards to ensure that all students make progress in their learning.
 - Although the school is offering a wide range of academic choice for students, including the arts, and has begun to provide professional development in Bloom’s Taxonomy, there is a lack of rigor in most classrooms, preventing higher performing students from improved student outcomes in all grades. Focusing on the new standards assures that academic rigor is present in each classroom as each grade delves deeper into similar skills from kindergarten to grade 5.
 - Teachers are first beginning to design curriculum mapping to engage a variety of learners and sub-groups, including support personnel in all planning. The use, however, of looking at student work as a way to differentiate instruction is absent.
- Through teacher teams develop a cohesive system to ensure that all teachers know their individual students, needs, strengths, and learning styles across the curriculum on an ongoing basis to support targeted instruction and foster rigorous task engagement.
 - Teacher team planning is inconsistent across grades and in many cases; there are no targeted students in the lower grades. Currently, there is no school wide system in place

to benchmark goals for teacher teams and hold them accountable for progress which impedes student progress for all subgroups.

Across teams, there is inconsistent practice in terms of gathering and analyzing data to specifically tailor classroom instruction to support and track progress for all students. For example, there are not consistent choices being made on teams about how to supplement summative data so that a consistently clear picture of strengths and needs can emerge and instruction differentiated accordingly.

- Develop teachers' ability to collaborate effectively in examining student work, share best practices and use data to develop effective strategies to meet the needs of all students.
 - Teacher practices are currently inconsistent regarding the review and use of student work to make adjustments to instruction and resources. While some teachers and teams consistently analyze student work effectively to improve learning outcomes, others are less consistent and less effective in this practice.
 - Teacher Teams are inconsistent across grades and teachers are just beginning to turnkey areas of expertise and offer suggestions for key decision making based on best practice.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction based on data so that lesson planning reflects purposeful groupings, students are challenged, tasks accommodate different learning styles and questioning extends thinking to maximize student learning.
 - Teachers have assessment binders in every room and the school leaders are beginning to collect "Monitoring for Progress" folders, but there is currently no system in classrooms to benchmark progress during the year based on these assessment results. Because this system is absent, the school does not yet consistently convey current progress and develop next steps with families and students.
 - Encourage teachers to supplement standardized assessments with additional tools to specifically focus on looking at student work. Currently, there is nothing in place to identify the needs of subgroups resulting in identifying strategies that target the specific needs of Ell's, special need students and high performing students. This would include, but not be limited to, learning styles, purposeful groupings and strengthening critical thinking skills.
- Refine action planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks for all professional plans so that progress can be measured, readjustments made and success evaluated as it pertains to teacher performance.
 - The school is developing a school wide system to hold teachers accountable for progress towards their professional goals, benchmarking their progress four times a year and using this valuable information to adjust teaching practice.
 - School leaders are beginning to align Professional Development to school goals, but there is a lack of differentiation when training teachers, particularly new teachers. Teachers are not benchmarked throughout the year as to their progress towards improved practice, as well as their implementation of any training that takes place or suggestions from observations.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

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|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| School name: The McKinley Park 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 | |

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|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| 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 | | |
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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 |