

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Parkside School

Elementary School K130

**70 Ocean Parkway
Brooklyn
NY 11218**

Principal: Maria Nunziata

Dates of review: January 25-26, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Anita Skop

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Parkside School is an elementary school with 598 students from Pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 16% Black, 31% Hispanic, 27% White, and 23% Asian students. The student body includes 10% 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 well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- A rich, interdisciplinary curriculum that includes artistic opportunities and well integrated explorations engages all students in rigorous learning.
 - Writing across the curriculum is evidenced in all grades and classrooms. Reflecting on student data, in alignment with the Common Core Standards, the literacy curriculum has been revised so that non-fiction reading and non-fiction writing units are taught simultaneously. This change in structure enhanced coherence in instruction exponentially, deepening interdisciplinary learning schoolwide. Moreover, student content knowledge and rubric based writing achievement increased.
 - Responding to a need to enhance oral and written language, the school creatively incorporated puppetry into the arts curriculum on all grades. Students wrote scripts and created puppets, presenting shows in line with the social studies curriculum. This unique opportunity has enabled all students, including English language learners, to comfortably express themselves orally and expanded the used of academic vocabulary.
- Instruction consistently enables every student to participate in meaningful learning through differentiated entry points and multiple modalities.
 - The use of student inquiry, supported by Socratic questioning, is infused in all aspects of the curriculum. During mathematics, students in third grade were given ratio tables and worked in small groups, determining the appropriate relationships. They then shared methods and rationales with the class. Teachers supported students by questioning, but did not provide answers. Consequently, students worked at different levels developing critical thinking skills.
 - Differentiation is evidenced across all classrooms. Students read independently at their “just right” level and respond to focus questions in their Reader’s Notebook with high quality reflections. In one fifth grade class, students were asked to note the “social commentary” the author made as they read. Hence, students have a deep understanding of what they read and carry concepts into their own writing.
- School leadership focuses all budgetary, operational and academic decisions on meeting student needs and improving student achievement.
 - To support the roll-out of the Common Core Standards, the school has hired a social studies cluster teacher and developed interdisciplinary units of study that align all content areas. In addition, the school has hired two staff developers who provide support for teachers and students. Accordingly, this has deepened the level of differentiation, increased student reading levels and begun aligning instruction with evolving State standards school wide.
 - All teachers are programmed for with two common planning periods each week, enabling teacher teams to meet weekly as well as address grade

specific concerns. Teachers plan collaboratively and seek the support of staff developers as needed. Therefore, instructional practices are consistently of high quality and students engage in challenging learning.

- The school's unique population is nurtured by a compassionate and caring culture that honors diversity, is welcoming of all constituents and exemplifies a safe and inclusive school community
 - A culture of diversity, respect and kindness defines the school. Students serve as "peacemakers," in the conflict resolution program, wearing blue shirts. Each classroom has a "peace corner." When early childhood students asked to serve as well, the school created the position of "peace helper" with pink shirts. The result is a nurturing community where parents state their child has asked, "Please, mom, don't move until I graduate."
 - Students take real ownership of their learning and work to enhance their levels of success. Student work on classroom bulletin boards uniformly contains post it's with peer comments. The comments are deeply reflective. One child wrote, "I like your use of internal thinking." Another commented, "Great use of dialogue." Thus, students feel they are supported by their school and have an integral part in their education.
- Teachers and teacher teams use carefully created and aligned assessments to measure student progress, reflect on student needs and target instructional adjustments, resulting in increased student outcomes.
 - Teacher teams, individual teachers, and school leadership routinely analyze a wide range of curriculum aligned assessments. Students are benchmarked five times a year to assess interim and long term growth. Design Your Own mathematics assessments, Teachers College literacy assessments, content area, rubric defined writing, running records, and an early childhood mathematics assessment (ECAM), supplement the New York State Summative item skills analysis, providing a detailed picture of student needs and trends. These are addressed through targeted instructional supports at classroom and programmatic levels. For this reason, student scale scores have demonstrated growth on State assessments, and student writing levels have increased.
- The school proudly communicates high expectations for students in all areas and provides numerous opportunities for parents to participate as leaders and decision-makers, which increases parental involvement.
 - Parents are active participants in the school community and in decision making structures. Parents from the School Leadership Team commented on the subcommittees spearheaded by parents and the school's own yearly parent survey. Therefore, parents endorse the school's high expectations and praise this unique community.
 - Learning Leaders, parents trained as volunteers, are an integral part of all school functions, and serve as another conduit to decision making at the school. Likewise, the school offers many parent workshops in all content areas, with several translators, so that access is available to all for increased parental involvement.

- The principal uses observational data, aligned to intense professional support to develop a culture where instructional excellence is a consistent goal and has positively impacted student improvement.
 - All members of the school community share a passionate belief in the potential of children and the use of student inquiry to empower learning. Consistent instructional protocols within the building provide students with problem solving and project based learning opportunities that are developed by the intensely collaborative leadership and staff. As a result, all energies are directed at improving instruction and achievement.
 - Formative and summative student assessment data, teacher observations, evaluation of student work and teacher requested areas of study define the individualized professional development support plans that target next steps for teacher growth. Reflective systems enable the principal to assess growth within specific time frames and use this information to evaluate teacher success. Consequently, teachers feel supported and classroom instruction is consistently strong.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance the capacity of teachers to utilize technology to disaggregate and evaluate data school wide, to support all learners.
 - While the school staff and teacher teams consistently disaggregate a vast range of formative and summative data, and individual teachers have developed their own analysis systems and protocols, much of the school utilizes hard copy information that is supplied to teachers. Hence, not all teachers have honed their skills at using technology to access, record and monitor progress, thus limiting the degree of independence in using data to analyze individual student strengths and areas of need.
- Expand parental outreach to include a more uniform school wide protocol for sharing student goals in a timely and ongoing basis to support student performance.
 - Parents proudly share their knowledge of their child's progress and applaud the school's outreach in providing curriculum and instructional information, and in the timeliness of response by all staff members to parental concerns. In addition, the school conducts workshops on ARIS parent link and other curriculum initiatives. However, a more uniform means of sharing next steps for achieving student goals as part of these outreach protocols has not yet been incorporated. This reduces the ability to reach all parents and empower them to support students.
- Refine current systems to more uniformly assess the effectiveness of teacher teams and professional growth opportunities.
 - Collaborative teams work reflectively and consistently throughout the school and protocols have been put in place that enable the school leadership to assess this work as it relates to instructional practices and student success. However, systems to monitor the professional development needs of teacher teams and the enhancement of leadership potential in team members are limited. Accordingly, teacher leadership potential is not fully developed.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Parkside 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