



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Division of Performance and Accountability
2010-2011**

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Abraham Lincoln Intermediate School

Middle School 171

**528 Ridgewood Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11208**

Principal: Yolanda Fustanio

Dates of review: March 10 - 11, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Rose-marie Mills

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Abraham Lincoln is a middle school with 866 students from grade 5 through grade 8. The school population comprises 14% Black, 76% Hispanic, 1% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 23% English language learners and 12% 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 90%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The review of a wide array of data by administrators and teachers guide the successful identification of both strengths and areas for growth, resulting in the development of school improvement plans.
 - The planning team, which includes teachers and administrators, analyze data from Progress Reports, New York Start, and the Quality Review to understand the schools' strengths and areas for growth. Data reveals that students in the lowest-third do not perform as well as their peers in both literacy and mathematics on New York State assessments; hence the school targets these students for interventions and mandates them to attend the extended day program in an effort to advance school growth.
 - Teachers constantly review student performance data and team meetings involve discussions on trends and areas in need of improvement. All classrooms have a data wall where the most current assessment data is posted. Additionally, all teachers have a Teachers' Assessment Notebook (TAN) that details the performance of students on summative and formative assessments. As a result, teachers clearly articulate the strengths and weaknesses of students and their correct placement in differentiated instructional groups.
- Administrators and teachers choose school-wide assessments that are aligned to the curriculum, and regularly analyze summative and formative assessment data in order to monitor student performance.
 - The instructional cabinet chooses school-wide assessments in English language arts and mathematics. Presently, prior New York State assessments, Reading Assessment Inventory (RAI), and Mathematics Assessment Inventory (RAI) are administered to assess student' progress. Data analysis is conducted with needed curricular and instructional adjustments, to ensure that the performance of students is known and appropriate interventions are implemented.
 - Teacher teams focus on looking at students' work in an effort to gain an in-depth understanding of instructional needs. Mid-term assessment analysis reflects that in mathematics students struggled with ratio and proportion; hence the decision was made to re-teach this topic, thereby addressing the needs of the students.
- Teachers effectively work in collaborative teams, using an inquiry approach, to share pedagogical practices, plan instruction, and examine student work products in an effort to improve student outcomes.
 - All teachers belong to one of the nine teacher teams that exist within the school. The teams utilize the inquiry approach to evaluate data and student work products, and as a result there is a focus on understanding student performance and improving pedagogical practices.
 - Through the creative use of the School Based Option (SBO), teachers meet on Thursdays and during two weekly common planning periods to discuss instructional strategies, review student data, and make curricula adjustments. Groups are facilitated by two teacher leaders, who guide the meetings, document

accomplishments, and attend the school-wide team leaders meetings. This collaboration results in teachers having a voice in instructional decisions.

- The school provides professional development guidance for staff, with targeted support for teachers new to the building, to improve pedagogical practices and improve student performance.
 - Presently, the school provides feedback to teachers via formal and informal classroom observations. Some targeted informal teacher inter-visitations are conducted and verbal feedback is provided to guide pedagogical growth.
 - New staff members receive professional development that focus on their needs. For example, they are assigned an experienced buddy teacher and at the beginning of the year receive professional development which focuses on understanding the school culture and structures. Consequently, new teachers receive support to guide their success in the school.
- School leaders are developing structures to monitor progress towards goal attainment, resulting in an annual reflection process that guides the development of school goals to facilitate improvement.
 - End of year routines involved staff and administrators reflecting on school success. Additionally, when the results of assessments are available the instructional cabinet reviews data trends and determine requisite changes, thereby monitoring the schools' progress towards goal attainment.
 - Teacher teams set goals for the targeted students and utilize classroom performance and the analysis of student work products as a means of measuring progress after assessment data is available. Teams are now beginning to create common assignments for identified students in order to ensure that progress is evaluated through a common lens.

What the school needs to improve

- Engage students in reflective practices and strengthen teachers' response to student work, to include comments that clearly convey next learning steps, in order to engage students and families in the teaching-learning process.
 - Students and families receive information regarding academic achievements at mandated report card conferences held twice yearly. The report cards are generic and do not detail specific accomplishments for individual students. This limited feedback inhibits family engagement in reciprocal, ongoing discussions that foster high levels of engagement in the education process.
 - The practice of engaging students in reflective practices is not yet addressed by the school. Students indicate that conferencing that guides them in understanding their performance and learning needs is minimally done and opportunities to peer or self assess using rubrics is a rarity. Consequently, students are not guided to evaluate their own learning and cannot clearly articulate their next learning steps.
- Bolster communication with students and families so as to raise the level of expectations and involvement in school decision-making thereby creating shared commitment to school success.

- The school inconsistently communicates high expectations regarding academic performance and student behavior. Feedback to students as evidenced in work products, do not guide next learning steps or is nonexistent. Additionally, students, parents, and staff voice concerns regarding inconsistency in addressing inappropriate behavior. The absence of clear structures to facilitate high levels of expectations negatively impacts school performance.
- Whereas the school has a newly formed School Leadership team, members articulate their limited inclusion in school decision making. This lack of engagement stifles parents' ability to work in tandem with administrators to foster school improvement.
- Create a strong curriculum to include the arts and technology and rigorous tasks that meet the needs of students, in an effort to propel outcomes in all content areas.
 - Whereas the school offers instruction, guided by curriculum maps aligned to State standards, in content area subjects, elective offering for most students is limited to visual arts and physical education. Technology instruction is not offered. As aptly stated by one student, "it is very hard to have only hard core subjects almost every day and we cannot always stay focused".
 - Despite the fact that teachers work collaboratively on teams, the practice of creating common differentiated tasks that support the academic needs of students is not yet a practice. As a result, academic tasks inconsistently challenge students, thereby hindering academic growth.
- Deepen differentiated instruction to include a wide range of entry points and modalities for all students so as to maximize student learning.
 - Classroom observations reveal inconsistency with the delivery of differentiated learning opportunities. While a few teachers show a strong understanding of tailoring instruction to meet the needs of students, most teachers observed struggled with delivering this targeted instruction. Therefore, students are not adequately supported to maximize their learning potentials.
 - Students work products that adorn bulletin boards and evident in folders reflect that students are inconsistently engaged in completing differentiated tasks. Additionally, although students are grouped in classrooms, student to student interaction is not encouraged, hence high levels of engagement that accelerates student learning is not an embedded practice.
- Align instructional and human resource decisions with students' learning needs thus ensuring the development of higher-order thinking skills and school goal attainment.
 - The school has two full time non-teaching teacher coaches. Given the learning needs of students and the variations in the pedagogical skills of staff, this support structures does not adequately meet all needs. Additionally, the high number of repeating grade eight students are homogeneously grouped, thereby creating low student and teacher morale, along with classroom management challenges. Consequently, instructional time is not sufficiently used to support the learning needs of students.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Abraham Lincoln Intermediate 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