



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Clarion School

Elementary School K205

6701 20th Avenue

Brooklyn

NY 11204

Principal: Beth Grater

Dates of review: March 2-3, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Karina Costantino

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S.205 is a barrier free elementary school with 904 general and special education students from Pre-K through grade 5. The school population comprises 1% Black, 22% Hispanic, 30% White, and 45% Asian students. The student body includes 31% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 95%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The curriculum at the school is exceptionally strong and coherent, connecting across grades and subjects, supporting learning at high levels for all sub groups to improve academic outcomes.
 - The principal sets clear goals and expectations across grades which provide all staff throughout the building with the same focus on key standards. Professional development activities support these expectations in 6 week cycles and during common planning time with the specific purpose of closing the achievement gap for all subgroups, as evidenced by the extra credit the school receives in this area in their progress report.
 - The Independent Investigation Methods (IIM) process increases students' exposure to non-fiction text and teaches research skills parallel with content, using critical thinking skills by gathering, analyzing and synthesizing information to prepare and present products with peers. As a result of this inquiry approach, all students are challenged to think critically.
- Regularly using a wide range of data, leaders and faculty have an ongoing understanding of the progress of individual and group performance which effectively informs instruction.
 - All classroom teachers use DYO, including DRA and Math profile sheets to accelerate learning of all students. Teachers and teacher teams analyze data of all students with particular consideration to higher achieving students and then differentiate instruction to meet their needs. Writing data and grammar checklists are also used to allow for flexible grouping.
 - The school uses the research based ESL Push-In Model where the ESL teacher pushes in to one or two grades during the Literacy Block. After analyzing all pertinent data, this program also allows for co-planning and teaching with the classroom teacher, thereby lowering the teacher to student ratio. The NYSESLAT data of ELL students making progress over the past four years supports that this model has had a successful impact.)
- The principal has allocated a number of resources to facilitate a wide range of rigorous challenging experiences and choice including the arts, during and after school to facilitate students' ownership of learning.
 - Through a number of grants and partnerships, the school enjoys an expansive Arts program which incorporates the visual arts, orchestra, music memory, ballroom dancing, and violin. In addition, the Brooklyn Chinese Council and the YMCA conduct after-school programs that provide students with a project based learning experience, allowing them multiple entry points into the curriculum.
 - School leaders have structured the school so that the ESL teachers work collaboratively, "pushing in" to the classes during the literacy block. Additionally each grade from second through fifth has at least two teachers who are departmentalized according to subject, drawing on the strengths of members of the teaching staff and their area of expertise. As a result, the students are

provided with a rigorous curriculum which engages students in highly rigorous tasks.

- Students demonstrate high levels of engagement in well matched lessons, and enthusiasm for learning to reach their potential.
 - All classes in the school have Smart boards, which is particularly helpful during the IIM program, allowing them to utilize this technology to research using primary sources and allowing them another entry point into the curriculum to enrich their learning experiences. The use of MAC technology throughout the building has increased student performance, particularly for the English Language Learner, as the computer provides students with strong visuals, resulting in an increase is seen in their NYSESLAT scores.
 - Across the school, all teachers use the Workshop Model, allowing students to work independently at their level of achievement which results in high student engagement through learning centers, book choice, strategy choice and peer tutoring. The use of the strategies used in this model result in ownership of learning for all students.
- Individual teachers and teams set goals for all students and student sub groups resulting in improved student outcomes.
 - Goals are set for all students in all subjects and benchmarked on an ongoing basis. There is a formal monitoring process three times a year, where school leadership and the data specialist review trends and adjust groupings after conferencing with teachers and teams, resulting in a fluid tracking of the goals. This system has accelerated learning as evidenced by the increase in student performance.
 - Teachers and teacher teams look at student data on an ongoing basis and lessons are driven by the changes seen in the data. Each class in grades 3, 4 and 5 have Data Walls which track the performance of individual students and empower them to identify their goals and next steps to accelerate their own learning throughout the year, resulting in increased student outcomes.
- The principal has established very effective systems for school self evaluation review and modification of practice with a clear focus on improving student learning.
 - Teachers engage in professional collaboration in six week cycles and on common planning time where their focus is to align and incorporate the new common core standards into their existing curriculum mapping. This results in the entire school moving towards a more rigorous curriculum, using common language, as evidenced by the improvement in student outcomes as is seen in the periodic assessments.
 - Each classroom teacher submits Monitoring for Results three times a year which is viewed by the principal and her cabinet. The data specialist meets with teachers on an on-going basis with teacher teams and individual teachers to review assessment and scholarship data, which results in adjusting teacher practice and improving student performance.
- The school highly engages families to be active partners in their child's education, both academically and socially hosting at least 2 parent workshops each month

- The principal presents data reports to the School Leadership Team (SLT) at monthly meetings, keeping them abreast of areas of concern and/or challenge. This results in the SLTeam reviewing and adjusting the School Comprehensive Education Plan when needed to reflect changes in the goals and objectives, on an ongoing basis.
- Parents express that they feel that the school has an open door policy. In addition, they are in constant touch with their child's teacher as their children's goals are adjusted. Each teacher has a newsletter that is sent home to parents on a scheduled basis. The newsletter not only informs parents of upcoming school and class events, but provides helpful strategies that they may use to assist in their child's learning so that the student can meet the school's high expectations. The principal sends home a monthly newsletter and calendar.

What the school needs to improve

- Further establish a school wide structure to regularly evaluate and benchmark at specified times during the school year the success and progress of teacher teams.
 - Teacher Teams are in existent on all grades and they, meet weekly. There is currently no structure in place to benchmark the teams as to the progress of strategies implemented and discussed. In addition, the schools do not use protocols which would allow each member of the team to build leadership.
- Design a uniform protocol for observations to provide a common lens that evaluates teaching practices and identifies next steps for teachers.
 - Observations do not include the school's overall focus for the year with differentiated reflective comments, allowing teachers to know their next steps so they can improve their practice.
 - Currently the school does not benchmark teacher progress during the year to coincide with the school's professional development plan so as to monitor its effectiveness and provide additional differentiation for teachers which will result in improved practice.
- Enhance consistency of goal implementation across the school so that the rigor across subjects for high performing students is executed with greater consistency across grades.
 - Although the school's focus for the year driven by the data is critical thinking in reading and writing, there is an inconsistency in critical thinking across classrooms for higher performing students. The school expresses the desire to deepen existing programs so that there is an inherent structure throughout grades, resulting in ongoing challenges for the high performing students, when setting their goals.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Clarion	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