

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**The Lady Deborah Moody School**

**K212**

**87 Bay 49<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11214**

**Principal: Josephine Marsella**

**Dates of review: March 1-2, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Isabel DiMola**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Lady Deborah Moody School is an elementary school with 634 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 21% Black, 23% Hispanic, 25% White, and 27% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 93.7%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is well developed.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Teacher pedagogy demonstrates instructional coherence and differentiated practices resulting in accelerated improvement in student performance across the school.
  - Ongoing, meaningful collaboration between teachers and administration results in instructional coherence that is evident in all classrooms. Student centered learning incorporates literacy development and the arts into all subjects resulting in highly engaging instruction that substantially moves all groups of students towards the achievement of learning goals.
  - Instruction across the school provides students with differentiated opportunities to access the curriculum through multiple entry points. By thoroughly analyzing assessment results including Acuity, Reading Streets and running records, teachers use student groupings to scaffold content and skill based tasks. This ensures that all students and student groupings, especially students with special needs and English language learners produce work products such as essays and extended response that demonstrate mastery of standards
- Leaders make highly effective organizational decisions that align with school instructional goals and support efforts toward improving student learning.
  - In response to concerns indicating that students with special needs and English language learners in early childhood grades were not making adequate progress, resources were allocated to train teachers in literacy programs such as Wilson and Orton Gillingham. Targeted students engage in these intervention services resulting in accelerated progress.
  - Strategically scheduling teacher time ensures that teacher teams meet across grades and vertically to collaborate in inquiry and planning meetings. Administrators and a data specialist support the teams resulting in a coherence of purpose and a high level of analysis of teaching strategies, instructional planning and student work. Consequently, student discussions and work products consistently demonstrate critical thinking that leads to higher levels of academic achievement.
- Highly effective alignment of curricula and assessments result in an analysis of data that affects instructional decisions and student outcomes.
  - Teacher teams analyze results from a variety of sources including Acuity, Reading Streets, Envision Math and teacher made assessments to measure the progress individual students and sub-groups of students are making toward mastery of the standards. Synthesis of the data leads to curricula and instructional decisions that meet the needs of all students and that align to school goals. For example, team analysis of student writing across grades led to the implementation of writing strategies, including “4 square” that helped students include details and supporting

facts to explain their point of view. Consequently, student data indicates that students are making progress in all subject areas in writing.

- School leaders share an instructional vision supported by the faculty that creates a culture embracing collegiality and professional learning.
  - The principal is an effective leader that sets forth a clear vision for a comprehensive education for all students incorporating the arts into all subject areas to provide students with the tools they need to be successful throughout their lives. There is a cohesive understanding and appreciation throughout the faculty that rigorous engagement in class work will build a foundation of skills promoting critical thinking and the ability to communicate for future success.
  - School leaders are purposeful in their performance evaluations stating that “data drives conversations around teacher evaluation” and “effective planning is not only on paper but in practice.” Teacher observations and reviews of student work are used to evaluate teacher performance and lead to meaningful feedback to support effective and engaging teachers that affect growth in student performance.
- The principal creates an environment that promotes respect for all resulting in strong character development and high levels of engagement of all students.
  - There is a clear priority on ensuring that the school is a safe place where students achieve academic excellence and build social skills. The “Book of the Month” drives the writing and literacy curriculum as well as its community building structures. Students strive to be “caught doing something nice” and are rewarded for being a good citizen. As a result, all students are cognizant of their behavior and their individual responsibility resulting in improving attendance and a decrease in disciplinary occurrences in the school.
  - Students actively engage in their academic pursuits, with one student stating, “learning is fun, my teacher pushes me, so I push myself to always do better.” Weekly student-teacher conferences allow students to review their progress across subject areas, by talking through class assessment and measuring progress toward goals. Students engage in self-reflections allowing them to articulate their needs. School leaders and faculty strongly support students and regularly meet with student leaders giving them voice in decisions that affect their learning and learning across the school.
- Teachers use data effectively to set goals for students and groups of students resulting in accelerated progress toward achievement of learning targets.
  - Differentiated goals are set for individual and groups of students based upon detailed data analysis. Instruction aligns to learning needs and interim assessments give teachers timely feedback so they can adjust their practice to meet the student needs. Consequently, there is improvement in the outcomes of targeted students groups such as English language learners and students with special needs.

- Effective practices to evaluate assessments and share student data provide clarity and coherence around student performance and next steps toward reaching learning goals.
  - School leaders regularly meet to evaluate assessments in all subjects ensuring alignment to current and evolving State standards. Teams use data and analysis of student work to connect tasks, content strands and rubrics. The use of distractor analysis helps teachers and administrators understand the validity of assessments and areas of the curriculum that need further instruction. As a result, there is coherence between student learning, class grades and outcomes on standards based assessments.
  - The School Leadership Team and Parent Association collaborate with the school to allow parents to understand student progress. School leaders continually expand methods of engaging families including workshops for parents on “How parents can support student learning” and “Using ARIS Parent Link”. As a result, there is an increase in the number of parents consistently using ARIS as a tool to monitor student progress as well as families feeling as though they are partners with the school.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Expand the development of curricula across all subject areas to further embed rigor and opportunities for higher order skills across all subject areas.
  - The school is purposeful in defining key standards and in aligning the curriculum to these standards. The faculty also uses student work as a tool to understand performance. However, the school is only beginning its work in expanding the curriculum to ensure alignment across grades and starting to plan tasks to ensure that all students and sub-groups of students are challenged and engaged resulting in missed opportunities for some students to engage in work at the highest levels.
- Deepen the work of teacher teams to ensure that the analysis of student data promotes accelerated progress and leverages actions that improve performance across the school.
  - Although teacher teams are engaging in inquiry work that examines learning patterns for individual and groups of students, the teams do not yet afford consistent opportunities for adjustments in school-wide instructional practices. Additionally, they lack a formal system in place for distributive leadership to provide teachers a voice in decision making to more directly affect student learning across the school.
- Formalize methods of measuring interim progress toward school-wide goals in order to make meaningful adjustments throughout the school year.
  - The school is thoughtful and data driven in its goal setting process as evidenced in the Comprehensive Education Plan and its use in assessments to understand student strengths and areas of concern. However, methods of articulating the long-term plans and communicating interim benchmarks are not fully transparent resulting in some faculty and community members to be disconnected limiting the full effectiveness of the process.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

|   |           |          |          |           |
|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <b>School name: P.S. 212 The Lady Deborah Moody 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>  |

**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>  | <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>  |

**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>   | <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>  |

**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>   | <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>  |

**Quality Review Scoring Key**

|           |                       |          |                   |          |                   |           |                       |
|-----------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| <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> |
|-----------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|