

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Dyker School

Elementary-Middle School K229

**1400 Benson Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11228**

Principal: Robert Zappulla

Dates of review: March 23 - 24, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Karina Costantino

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S./I.S.229 is a K-8 school with 906 students from Pre-K through grade 7. The school population comprises 9%% Black, 11% Hispanic, 44% White, and 44% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 7% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 96%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The curriculum offers a wide range of challenging experiences and choice including the rigorous art program during and after-school to facilitate students' ownership of learning.
 - The Arts are an integral part of the school's vision and instructional program. Arts and core subject teachers plan collaboratively to design interdisciplinary projects as vehicles for core subject area concepts and skills. This results in thoughtful curricula that leverages student interests and produces high quality student work.
 - The school strengthens students' comprehension skills through differentiated instruction utilizing interdisciplinary non-fiction reading materials during read-a-louds, shared reading, and differentiated leveled reading, challenging a diversity of learners so that they achieve improved student outcomes.
- Students demonstrate a general level of student engagement in well matched lessons, critical thinking skills and enthusiasm for learning to reach their potential.
 - Students have multiple opportunities to demonstrate their individual strengths and talents through differentiated project-based learning activities across grades. These projects have multiple entry and exit points and ask students to undertake research, and solve problems as active learners. Students express high levels of excitement around their learning and participation. Through activities such as the Penny Harvest, students participate in a round table where they use persuasive argument. This, along with the Spelling Bee and Geography Bee, leads to high quality work products and high levels of student engagement across grades.
- The principal makes informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning.
 - Through a School-Based Option (SBO), the principal and staff established Inquiry Wednesday, whereby time is set aside for data review, professional discussion and educational planning. Every other Wednesday, all staff meets in various groupings for one hour after school to discuss student data and target student academic deficiencies in order to address strategies through differentiated instruction. As a result, planning for differentiated instruction is a clear school focus and has been implemented at higher levels across classrooms.
 - The principal, through various funding sources, has installed Smart Board technology in all classrooms serving grades 4-7. A portable hydraulic Smart board is shared by the Visual Arts and Instrumental/Music Upper elementary teachers. In addition, all teachers have access to Document Cameras available for their use. This enables teachers to enhance instruction by interactively engaging students using a multi-modality approach to learning.
- Parents have opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and monitor their progress through regular and open communication with the school administrators and staff.

- Through E-Chalk, the school maintains a webpage which opens lines of communication among the home, school and community enabling parents to see their child's grades at their discretion. In addition, the Parent Coordinator provides ongoing training to parents in the use of ARIS, which allows them to see the most recent assessments and whether or not their child is moving toward meeting their academic targets. These processes and tools allow parents to be fully apprised of their child's progress.
- Teachers work effectively in collaborative teams to share good practice, develop tools and analyze data, and plan curriculum and instruction.
 - Teachers across grades and subjects use assessments, such as Group Reading Assessment and Diagnostic Evaluation, Acuity and teacher-designed. The data from this variety enables the school to monitor student learning and to ensure that instruction is focusing on the key strands of the curriculum that align to student progress, resulting in moving children toward their specific goals, as shown in the periodic assessment data.
 - Analysis of the data from all assessments leads to planning instruction that differentiates strategies to meet the needs of students, supporting improving outcomes for all sub-groups as evidenced by the an increase in performance for these groups in the Progress Report.
- The school has a clear vision for improvement and uses collaborative and data-informed processes for goal setting and benchmarking that is supported by the entire community.
 - The school's theory of action is centered on improvement in writing as a leverage point for success across subject areas. To that end, several pilots were introduced connected to writing in grades K-2. First grade teachers instituted uniform pacing connected to different writing genres for the school year, while second grade teams worked on refining writing rubrics. Both initiatives yielded improved student outcomes for the participating students, as noted by diagnostic assessment data.
 - After a careful examination of data, school goals were formed around structures and instruction that focused on supporting English Language Learners and students with disabilities. As a result, a successful model of differentiated, small group instruction was formed and implemented across the school, yielding higher performance for targeted sub-groups.

What the school needs to improve

- Use the observation tool to develop with teacher's goals and plans that reflect and support attainment of school wide goals for their professional growth and the improved achievement of their students.
 - Although the school has a unified observation template, it currently does not reflect the school's overall focus for the year with differentiated reflective comments to allow teachers to know their next steps to improve practice and achieve greater academic success for their students. In addition, the school does not benchmark teacher progress during the year in alignment with the school's professional development plan in order to monitor effectiveness and

provide additional support as needed. This can hinder focused progress towards improved student outcomes.

- Implement a professional development plan that aligns school and individual teacher goals and ensures that rigorous monitoring procedures are introduced to evaluate the impact of professional development on student achievement. (4.3)
 - Currently, professional development occurs as teachers attend network trainings and request areas of need. What the school does not currently have in place is a professional development plan that is purposeful, driven by the school progress report and the school's Comprehension Educational Plan (CEP) and linked to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). This impedes the school's ability to focus teachers on areas of need and lead to better instructional practice.
 - Teachers attend professional development that is offered by their network on CCLS but are not currently asked to turn-key this information or take the lead in providing workshops to other staff members. This hinders the school's ability to share information connected to areas of instructional need and also hinders the development of teacher leadership.
- Expand the use of data analysis to evaluate and revise as needed processes and programs within the school that lead to effective professional collaborations.
 - Teacher Teams are in existence on all grade levels and they are attended by the members of the school-wide CCLS Inquiry Team, meeting bi-weekly. There is currently no structure in place to benchmark the teams as to the progress of strategies discussed and implemented, holding teams accountable for student progress. In addition, the school does not have a structure in place to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher development structures. The lack of these evaluative systems can hinder the ability to effectively adjust and revise practices.
- Strengthen the school wide structure to share students' strengths, needs and next steps with parents so that parents can support their child's learning.
 - Although parents have access to E-Chalk, the school is beginning to develop an overall structure to notify parents at specific times during the school year to provide them with benchmarks as to their child's progress and next steps so they can be active partners in their child's education.
 - Continue to develop school wide rubrics aligned to the new curriculum core state standards that are shared with parents so they are aware of the expectations the school has and can assist their children in a meaningful way.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Dyker 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