

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Anne Sullivan School

K238

**1633 East 8th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11223**

Principal: Harla Joy Musoff-Weiss

Dates of review: April 5-6, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Isabel DiMola

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Anne Sullivan School is an elementary-intermediate school with 565 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 7% Black, 49% Hispanic, 25% White, and 19% Asian students. The student body includes 26% English language learners and 25% 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 93.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions that align with school goals and support efforts toward improving student learning.
 - Resources that invest in programs to support all students, with a focus on those most at risk, expand opportunities for performance gains. The purchasing of Achieve 3000 provides targeted intervention in reading. The program challenges high-level students while individual and groups of students that are below grade level can engage in content that accelerates their progress. As a result, there is a substantial decrease in the number of students in all sub-groupings scoring at the lowest levels, while the number of students at or approaching grade level is growing.
 - Strategic programming allows targeted groups of students to engage in instruction that supports accelerated progress. The current 5th grade performance scores in English language arts fell below expectations last year with large numbers of students performing below grade level. In response, school leaders redesigned 5th grade programming, departmentalizing content areas similar to how its middle school grades are structured. This provides students content driven instruction that aligns to standards, resulting in predictive assessments indicating increasing performance for most students and all sub-groups across the grade.
- The principal creates an environment that promotes respect for everyone resulting in strong character development and high levels of engagement for all students.
 - The school environment is supportive of students, faculty and parents. Students report “teachers inspire and encourage us and are there for us to make sure we do well.” Guidance counselors and support staff work with families, especially those new to the country, to ensure that structures are in place to help students acclimate to the school’s culture. As a result, there is an increase in engagement and participation in school events and enrichment and intervention programs resulting in accelerating progress for participating students.
- Communication and collaboration builds effective partnerships that result in increasing parent participation and improving student outcomes.
 - Monthly newsletters and curriculum bulletins are examples of how the school disseminates information. Families of at risk students participate in action planning to develop strategies to assist students in achieving goals. Progress reports provide specific details on student performance. Structures to share information result in an ongoing dialogue with parents resulting in a school-family partnership toward advancing student outcomes. ARIS parent link workshops and individual training assist families in knowing how students are performing on assessments throughout the school year. After-school, evening and weekend activities

support parents of English language learners to build their capacity in English and to develop strategies that can assist their children's learning. As a result, parent participation in the school community is increasing and students are making progress toward reaching learning targets.

- School leaders and faculty have high expectations for students and actively engage parents to be partners in their children's education.
 - Parent workshops and grade level meetings inform families of grade curricula and standards and the high expectations of the school. The school prepares families for articulation to high school by detailing how each grade is a step toward higher learning. The parent coordinator disseminates several surveys throughout the year to gauge understanding of expectations and the support parents need to assist in their children's educational pursuits. As a result, parents understand their roles in ensuring the highest levels of student success.
 - Parents are involved in school decision making through participation on the School Leadership Team, Parent-Teacher Association and by surveys throughout the year voicing opinions on school operations. For example, in response to parent concerns, the school collaborates with Cornell Extension to strengthen nutrition. Students meet with the school dietician to ensure healthy choices on the cafeteria menu. Student-eating habits are improving, attendance is increasing and parents say, "The school values our point of view and they do what they can to respect parent ideas."
- School leaders create a culture that supports teacher growth and embraces collegiality and professional learning.
 - The principal is highly effective in supporting teacher development and uses a comprehensive framework in making performance evaluations and tenure recommendations. Probationary teachers collaborate with the principal on a tenure plan that aligns to the Professional Teaching Standards. Through observation, review of student work and analysis of student data, leaders work with teachers on improving pedagogy. Newer teachers receive a minimum of two years of mentoring, and work with coaches on an individual professional development plan. Weekly meetings with the principal ensure that untenured teachers understand expectations and the impact instruction is having on their students. As a result, teachers receive feedback on their performance that strengthens instruction and accelerates student learning.
- School leaders support teacher growth through professional development to build instructional coherence that meets the needs of students.
 - Professional development is data driven and responsive to student needs. To meet the needs of the growing English language learner population, all teachers participate in workshops that support infusion of strategies that engage and support these students. Inter-class visitations and dissemination of resources through an English language learner lab-site allow faculty to build pedagogic skills. Through teacher surveys and student data, the school creates a menu of professional development opportunities. For example, many teachers in the school participate in a professional academy, where they study researched based strategies

toward improving their practice and impact student learning. There is growing consistency in instruction, and students are advancing toward reaching their goals.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen assessments to ensure that they consistently align to standards and accurately measure performance and progress of intended learning.
 - Teacher teams meet regularly to plan instruction and create assessments to measure learning. However, there are inconsistencies in ensuring that each assessment and rubric accurately aligns to the standard that it intends to measure. As a result, the data generated by these assessments are not accurate in the information they are providing to determine levels of student progress for individual and student sub-groups, creating an unclear picture of achievement.
- Extend curricula to ensure that instruction is consistently rigorous and emphasizes key standards across all grades and subject areas.
 - Curricula align to standards and the school is working on infusing the evolving State standards with a lens of writing in the content areas. Currently, much of the curriculum is skill based and is not consistently rigorous to initiate tasks to support the building of critical thinking skills. As a result, the curricula does not yet provide a comprehensive framework toward rigorous engagement for all students and subject areas leading to missed opportunities for higher level learning.
- Deepen classroom practice to elevate rigor and increase opportunities for students to participate in instruction that develops higher order thinking skills.
 - Differentiating instruction through flexible grouping and scaffolding assignments using graphic organizers and thinking maps gives all students access to the curriculum and supports the advancement of student writing. However, most lessons are not strategic in the manner of framing content to ensure that all learners have specific entry points to advance learning. There are inconsistencies in the rigor of instruction denying students opportunities for cognitively challenging tasks that develop higher order thinking skills.
- Develop formal structures to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher teams and expand instructional coherence throughout the school.
 - School leaders regularly engage and monitor teacher teams by ensuring that protocols are in place to maximize time to review student work. Grade and content leaders act as a liaison between administrators and teams to develop cohesion around the work done by all teams. However, there is not a formal structure to review the work of teams and its relationship to instructional practice across the school. As a result, it is unclear the impact this work is having on building coherence and school-wide decision-making.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: P.S. 238 The Anne Sullivan 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