

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Math, Science and Technology Institute

Middle School 267

**800 Gates Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11221**

Principal: Patricia King

Dates of review: May 25-26, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Math, Science and Technology Institute is a middle school with 299 students from 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 78% Black, 18% Hispanic, 02% American Indian, 01% White, and 01% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 18% 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 86.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is a safe and nurturing learning community where all constituents share opportunities to grow and achieve their personal best.
 - In response to concerns resulting from the high number of incidents last year, the school has implemented strategies that promote an environment conducive to learning. These include publication of a student handbook of expectations and holding monthly Town Hall meetings where faculty and students gather to discuss issues, express opinions and provide input for improvement. Additionally, the school conducts school-wide celebrations of student work and achievement to encourage continued growth. Consequently, the school has recorded more than a fifty percent decrease in the number of incidents to date this year.
 - The school's "open door" policy promotes communication and a welcoming environment for students and families to discuss issues and address concerns. Additionally, the principal, guidance personnel and teacher specialists meet with classroom teachers regularly to review data, discuss individual student's needs and identify students who require additional interventions. This practice has resulted in each student being well known by faculty and receiving support for success in school.
- The school emphasizes State standards and aligns the curriculum across grades and subject areas, resulting in instructional coherence.
 - The school has aligned the curriculum with key State standards across the grades and has incorporated Common Core Curriculum Standards in English language arts and math. Additionally, reading comprehension and writing skills are woven into the content area curricula across the school, resulting in higher student achievement levels in these areas.
 - Teachers incorporate higher order questions across the curriculum and emphasize reading, writing and use of subject area vocabulary to generate student centered discussions, promote critical thinking and maximize student engagement. Consequently, students articulate with clarity what they are learning and make connections to new contexts.
- The school makes effective organizational decisions that support improvement initiatives and student learning.
 - Despite budgetary constrictions, the school continues to purchase the services of consultants who work with teachers throughout the year to improve instructional skills in reading and writing. Additionally, the school purchased smart boards and cameras that teachers and students utilize to promote interactive activities during lesson presentations. These strategic initiatives deepen the level of instruction and better prepare students for more rigorous expectations and higher achievement.
 - The school leadership has strategically programmed the school schedule to accommodate common planning time for teachers to meet at least once a week with the flexibility to meet more often. Teachers use this

time to share ideas and plan instruction for groups of students in need of additional academic support. These interactions have resulted in student progress as reflected in skill based assessment outcomes.

- The school uses appropriately aligned tools to organize and analyze student outcomes to improve instruction and learning.
 - Teachers gather periodic and formative assessments aligned to key State standards in data binders and student work folders. This information has led to the development of school-wide protocols that include increased reading of non-fiction text in all classrooms and implementation of the “Challenge Corner” that offers students additional opportunities for in depth study of curricula concepts presented. As a result increases in student achievement have been noted in post assessment outcomes.
 - Teacher teams analyze student work and periodic and classroom level assessments to identify areas of strength and need and plan instructional next steps for target student populations. This has led to increased levels of student achievement in reading and writing as evidenced by improvement in student reading levels and writing products.
- The school has an established instructional focus and monitors practices to improve teaching and learning, resulting in increased student outcomes.
 - The principal conducts frequent classroom walkthroughs and uses the observation tool to provide feedback and support teachers individually in the improvement of instructional practices. Additionally, the principal collects and analyzes students’ reading logs weekly and provides actionable feedback to teachers, resulting in appropriate pacing of students’ independent reading and increased progress in literacy.
 - The school provides teachers with various opportunities for professional growth that include coaching, collaboration, interclass visitation, peer system and training in the use of technology and attendance at workshops in and out of the school. Teachers share information from these experiences, resulting in amplified professional learning and a supportive environment for all teachers.
- Teacher teams participate in professional collaborations that strengthen their instructional practice and leadership capacity to meet students’ needs.
 - All teachers collaborate on curriculum teams to incorporate the Common Core Standards in reading and math. Teachers analyze student work and outcomes to identify areas in need of improvement and instructional implications. This work has led to increased student work products that meet the standards.
 - The principal encourages teacher leadership by facilitating their participation on teacher led teams and assigning teacher leaders in every grade. In addition, teachers engage in collegial classroom walkthroughs and give feedback on their findings. Consequently, teachers have gained more voice in key instructional decisions and professional development.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the use of assessments to differentiate instruction so that lessons reflect purposeful groupings that support improved achievement outcomes.
 - While there is evidence of differentiation of instruction as a school-wide practice, the use of assessments to inform curricula assignments for individual and groups of students is not sufficiently evident in some classrooms. This minimizes the school's ability to provide instruction at appropriate entry points to meet the needs of all students and ensure their progress.
 - Although there are high levels of student participation in all classrooms, some lesson activities did not promote high levels of engagement for English language learners. In a few classrooms, a portion of the time was limited to listening and textbook activities. This diminishes targeted instructional opportunities for increased progress for this student group.
- Extend the communication with parents so that parental capacity in assisting learning at home and tracking student progress is increased.
 - The school communicates attendance and academic expectations to students and families and provides feedback to students on their work. However, feedback to families regarding their children's progress is provided regularly only for students who do not demonstrate academic success. Additionally, there is insufficient evidence that parents know how to use tools such as ARIS Parent Link to access their children's information. This reduces opportunities for all parents to have input and support their children's academic growth and development.
- Enhance the use of periodic and formative assessments to adjust practices to ensure student learning and achievement.
 - Teachers use Acuity and classroom level assessments to develop goals for individual and groups of students. However, in a few classrooms goals developed are broad in nature and do not reflect expected interim outcomes that scaffold the learning. This hampers instructional focus and negatively affects students' progress in mastery of standards.
 - Although there are goals developed for all students and there have been changes in classroom practices that include using higher order questioning, the use of the goals to inform delivery of instruction and modifications in classroom practices are not consistent. This reduces the impact of instructional practices to hasten the learning for all students.
- Expand the systems for collecting data and monitoring student progress to ensure effective use of the information for planning instruction.
 - The school has developed long-range goals that are included in the Comprehensive Education Plan. However, structures for monitoring progress of these goals are not yet fully implemented. This affects timely adjustments of the goals and action plans to ensure achievement of targeted standards.
 - School-wide systems for monitoring progress of individual and groups of students are not yet fully developed and implemented in science and social studies content areas. This impedes timeliness for necessary program and instructional adjustments that affect student performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name:	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