



**Department of  
Education**

*Joel I. Klein, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**Curtis Estabrook School**

**K272**

**101-24 Seaview Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11236**

**Principal: Dakota Keyes**

**Dates of review: April 11 - 12, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Beverly A. Wilkins**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Curtis Estabrook School is an elementary school with 730 students from prekindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 82% Black, 13% Hispanic, .5% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 90%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- School leaders and faculty collaboratively gather, analyze and effectively organize a wide variety of data to identify trends and to improve student outcomes.
  - School leaders, coaches, and the data specialist analyze a plethora of relevant data resulting in strategic provisions for whole school areas of need. This deliberate work generates baseline assessments designed to evaluate skill sets of students as they enter new grades. For example, a laser focus on the development of student writing results in improved application of writing conventions in upper grade students.
  - Intense examination of interim data leverages tracking and adjustments to school practices that address areas of concern in social-emotional development. Progress in behavior and work ethics are the outgrowth of such strategic analysis. For example, the school matches students with repetitive discipline demands and students previously retained to teachers of ACE classes, an accelerated program. These adjustments to class assignments extinguish disruptive behavior in some students and have led to an incremental decline in recidivist behavior as measured by Online Occurrence Reporting System data.
- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive, and inclusive of parents, which result in high levels of pride and engagement.
  - A high priority on maintaining an environment that is positive and supportive fosters school-wide engagement. For example, at the start of each day the entire school community celebrates their one word theme “believe” through a morning affirmation that includes high-energy rhythmic expressions inspired by an inspirational song. This promotes core values of acceptance and confidence in every member's potential to succeed.
  - Students express high levels of excitement around their learning and participation in school events such as “Dad Take Your Child to School” and an established monthly Family Night. Students also convey contentment with the principal's open door policy and the accessibility of teachers and support staff who addresses their academic and social needs. As one student reported, “the school teaches you to believe in yourself, they help you out”. Unanimously, students responded positively to having a voice in peer mediation decisions that make the school a safe and caring place in which to learn.
- School leaders and faculty collaborate with families resulting in improved student outcomes.
  - The principal is highly respected by students and parents for her commitment to maintaining high expectations. Regular progress reports, notebook communications, school messenger, text messages and email promote parent involvement in student achievement efforts. Parents expressed great satisfaction with school leaders and teachers because they provide clearly articulated strategies that assist their ability to help improve academic performance.

- Collaboration between the Parent-Teacher-Association and parent coordinator ensure parent engagement and keep families informed of expectations for learning. Family Day, Lunch with a Loved One, Single Parent Workshops, and the Mini Camp program connect parents to the education process. A parent interviewed described the school as "accommodating because of nurturing and nourishing relationships" that invite parents into the school. As a result, parents regularly participate in the education process.
- The school presents a coherent system for monitoring and supporting effective pedagogy across the school in order to improve instructional practices.
  - The induction of the Professional Practice Framework is the bedrock for determining teacher effectiveness. Performance evaluations closely link student data trends, observed teacher practice, and attainment of professional growth. Because teachers receive evidentiary feedback with detailed advice on how to improve their practice, administrators report improved teacher performance in scaffolding student writing.
  - Administrators, the literacy coach, data specialist, and teacher leaders focus on school priorities as the basis for the development of a whole school professional development plan. As such, teachers receive professional development to foster deep understanding of the Common Core Standards, Capturing Kid's Heart program, and on the workshop model to enhance the teaching of writing. This professional learning helps to structure collaborative opportunities whereby, coaching, common planning, and Lunch and Learns extend individual teacher strengths and address learning needs of experienced and novice teachers.
- School leaders make effective organizational decisions in support of school level instructional goals that bolster efforts toward increased student outcomes.
  - Allocations of resources align to school goals, which lead to instructional programs that promote student progress. Despite budgetary constraints, the school sustains targeted support for students who perform below grade level. For example, in response to a preponderance of students performing at level two on the state exam in English Language arts last year, the school offers an Extended Day program, Saturday Academy, and an English language learner tutorial program in order to close learning gaps. Consequently, Acuity results reveal improvement in application of a literacy skills not mastered on baseline assessments.
  - Teachers assigned to collaborative team teaching classes, teachers of ACE classes, student groupings, time of day particular students receive services, and non-readers assigned to teachers trained in the Wilson Program are organizational decisions that create optimal learning conditions and adult accountability for diverse groups of students across the school.

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

- Enrich the curriculum to increase instructional emphasis in the Arts, social studies and science providing greater opportunities for students to engage in rigorous habits and higher order skills in order to progress mastery of the standards in all content areas and across all grades.

- The school is beginning to create curricula that align to the evolving State standards. As such, curriculum maps and rubrics emphasize key learning strands, which reflect student needs. However, lesson planning, delivery of instruction, and instructional engagements that promote higher order thinking and rigor are a work in progress. Consequently, inconsistencies in purposeful alignment of lessons with written curriculums thwart opportunities for all learners.
- Expand existing practices of collaborative inquiry across all grades in order to provide teacher teams with valuable opportunities to share best practices focused on improving instruction and student outcomes.
  - Teams of teachers meet regularly in grade and team meetings to examine student work to ensure alignment between rubrics and curricula in English language arts. Nonetheless, there is no evidence of inherent systems for sharing inquiry findings and useful instructional strategies across the school. This slows the potential impact on strategic decision-making, use of resources, and adoption of best practices across the school community to improve student performance.
- Build on evaluative structures to ensure that all teachers engage in effective pedagogic practices that maximize their use of resources with an eye toward meeting current instructional and evolving state standards.
  - School leaders regularly evaluate the alignment between instruction and student performance. This ongoing evaluation enhances the ability to make necessary revisions to the curriculum, at the school level. However, at the classroom level, a majority of teachers do not use assessment data effectively in order to make curricular adjustments in response to student learning strengths and needs. As such, a lack of cohesion between the school-wide goal of "development of teacher expertise in the effective utilization of data" and ongoing evaluation of teachers' capacity to use data effectively exists affecting student engagement.
- Deepen differentiation of instruction so that all lessons, across content areas, reflect purposeful groupings, include suitable challenge, and elicits effective questioning in order to extend and support learning.
  - Instruction in some classes provides students with opportunities for rigorous engagement and development of higher order thinking skills. Nevertheless, in most instances, current practices illustrate a need for continuous professional development to ensure consistent use of data to drive effective differentiated instruction. Consequently, there are missed opportunities for students to engage in the curriculum through multiple entry points toward reaching and exceeding learning targets.
- Strengthen efforts that support teacher analysis of assessment data to further the implementation of differentiated teaching strategies to support student achievement.
  - All teachers compile summative, formative, periodic, and formal assessment data and provide feedback to administrators regarding the strengths and needs of classes and subgroups of students. In addition, all teachers form tiered groups for students and create work packets to reinforce learning. However, not all teachers adjust instruction with the same precision for individual students based on their learning styles leading to varied impact on student progress across classrooms and the school.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Curtis Estabrook 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>	

<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.</b>							
<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?			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				
<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.</b>							
<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?			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				
<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.</b>							
<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?		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				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<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>