



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Dr. Betty Shabazz

Elementary-Middle School 298

**85 Watkins Street
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Antoinette Martin

Dates of review: May 24 - 25, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Ainslie Cumberbatch

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Dr. Betty Shabazz School is an elementary-middle school with 544 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 81% Black, 17% Hispanic, 1% Asian students and less than 1% White and American Indian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 24% 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 88.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders make informed organizational, staffing, and budgetary decisions that align with instructional goals and support efforts toward improved student learning.
 - The principal's use of the budget addresses student learning and allows scholars to have opportunities to acquire core skills. An extended school day and the use of the academic intervention program's thirty-seven and a half minutes, facilitate additional time that extends the curriculum and provides students with both enrichment and targeted intervention programs helping to close the achievement gap.
 - Based on a review of sixth grade math scores, the principal assigned a licensed math teacher to provide content area instruction to sixth grade students. With a strong focus on developing skill sets and stamina in math, benchmark data indicates that students are making consistent progress towards competency.
- The school's communication systems keeps parents and students informed of students' progress towards meeting their achievement goals.
 - The school issues progress reports two to three times a semester between report cards depending on grade level and provides school updates through an automated telephone system to provide parents with ongoing information about student progress. As a result, parents receive frequent updates about student performance data and are encouraged to reach out to the school to discuss student growth.
 - School staff work with parents to ensure that they are familiar with ARIS, assessment practices and promotion criteria so that they feel comfortable reviewing student progress towards meeting State standards and assessment data. As a result, parents appear knowledgeable in their discussion about the needs of their children and strongly advocate on their behalf to ensure they receive appropriate services.
- Teachers and coaches use collaborative, data-driven processes to set school-level goals that focus on accelerating student learning.
 - The school analyzes performance assessments and progress indicators sharing its findings with parents and students to engage them in developing academic skill and college preparedness. To that end, school priorities and planning documents focus on five key goals noted in the Comprehensive Educational Plan that support student outcomes. Consequently, the school focuses on improvement through action plans developed for targeted grades and populations identified by the inquiry team.
 - School leaders use ARIS, as well as parent and teacher team meetings, to include all constituents in school planning. Student work products that evidence levels of proficiency in learning outcomes provide teacher teams with key information regarding student growth and help parents gauge student progress. As a result, teacher teams set goals, create action plans and identify strategic supports to address student needs.
- Staff convey high expectations to students and parents, which has positive effects on student outcomes.

- School structures such as the honor roll, student of the month and talent performances reveal an emphasis on excellence. Staff use varied criteria to recognize student growth and performance to encourage consistent efforts toward success. As a result, families receive a clear message about school expectations and students strive towards positive outcomes.
- Staff encourage parent involvement by recruiting individuals for volunteer programs that provide training to adults in using their talents within the venue of the Department of Education. In addition, the school welcomes parents to school performances, workshops on bullying, ARIS and nutrition, as well as monthly meetings of the parents' association and school leadership team. Consequently, parents feel strongly about helping the school to succeed.
- Teachers across the school participate in collaborative inquiry and use this work to reflect and strengthen instructional techniques.
 - All teachers participate in the inquiry process. They meet in grade teams to look at student work and evaluate their practice and in focus groups to dig deeper into the link between theory and application of teaching and learning for students in the lowest third. Therefore, teachers reveal students' areas of strength and need and provide targeted intervention. Students share, "If I need help I ask for a one on one".
 - Potential leaders emerge as group facilitators as teams work to improve student learning. Within the team structure, teachers take ownership of their learning and share practices, provide resources for discussion and channel ideas to fruition that they share with their supervisors. Teachers also surface ideas and contribute to school decision-making as part of the school leadership team.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop greater coherence and alignment between curricula and State standards to ensure that all students make progress in their learning.
 - The school designs curriculum maps that align to State standards in the core content areas and embeds the school's literacy and performance standards. These maps include strategies for flexible grouping and differentiated instruction. However, alignment of these curricula to critical standards does not always lead to lessons and academic tasks that incorporate rigorous habits and critical thinking skills to challenge and engage all students. As a result, all students do not have their needs met which varies the level of scholarship across the school.
 - Teachers engage in planning to align curricula to the evolving State standards to address the needs of their diverse groups of learners. However, currently the primary focus of the curricula is skill development, which limits opportunities for students to engage in academic tasks that promote higher order thinking. Consequently, students experience fewer platforms upon which to demonstrate deep understanding of content material or develop competency on given standards.
- Deepen differentiation of instruction based on data so that all lessons provide appropriate challenge and maximize student learning.
 - Teachers use flexible grouping, leveled assignments and a variety of intervention strategies based on student performance to provide students differentiated access to

the curriculum. However, the level of differentiation varies across the school and is insufficiently developed to address the range of levels in some larger classrooms. As a result, not every student has their needs met.

- Teachers work in grade level teams to analyze data, develop instructional strategies and monitor student progress. However, this work has not yet translated into high levels of engagement and rigor in every classroom. For example, in one science class students engaged in an assignment on invertebrates that required them to simply copy information from the board or the internet. This unchallenging activity and the pacing of the lesson spawned minor classroom management issues. Therefore, student performance is inconsistent across the school.
- Revise the process of data analysis to establish a systematic and disaggregated review of classroom level work and student outcomes.
 - The school uses benchmark assessments, unit exams, progress reports and report cards to determine student performance and progress towards meeting State standards. However, data linked to subgroups by ethnicity or age is not systematically gathered and disaggregated. Therefore, teachers do not pay sufficient attention to subgroup needs and adjust classroom practice as needed.
 - Teachers collaborate within teams to affect coherence between instruction and assessment and alignment to State standards. However, not all teachers examine student work with the same precision, reflecting on their teaching practice and its impact on student learning. Therefore, early detection of patterns for over age students and prescriptive responses to these trends are not always rapid.
- Develop a clearer instructional focus to guide the observation process and professional development plan to improve teaching practice and student growth.
 - Classroom observations lack a common instructional focus and reflect little evidence of consistent feedback to support coherency and alignment of classroom instruction across the school. Consequently, key practices are not monitored regularly and the quality of instruction varies widely across classrooms.
 - The school has a formal professional development plan created to develop teaching skills and drive practice to improve instruction. However, the majority of staff development activities are generic and opportunities are limited to infrequent sessions for selected staff. As a result, the school does not offer a range of support to improve content knowledge and teacher practice to affect student learning.
- Refine the structures in place to regularly evaluate and adjust curricular and instructional practices in response to student learning needs.
 - The administrative cabinet and the school leadership team serve as the primary agents for decisions related to curricula and instructional practices. A lack of cohesiveness among school leaders serves to confine the enthusiasm of staff. Consequently, a large cross-section of faculty members do not provide input thereby stifling buy-in and efforts to build alignment and coherence across the school.
 - School leaders are attune to the information that emerges from team meetings and use the knowledge to adjust resources to support student needs. However, systems that allow for regular adjustments throughout the year are not yet in place. As a result, coherence between policies and practice is a work in progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Dr. Betty Shabazz	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
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