

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Satellite East Middle School

**Middle School 301
344 Monroe Street
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Kim McPherson

Dates of review: January 25 – February 2, 2011

Lead Reviewer: James Machen

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Satellite East Middle School is a middle school with 242 students from 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 86% Black, 10% Hispanic, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 85.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Administrators and teachers diligently work to align assessments to curriculum to identify student needs and plan instruction to facilitate strategies to address learning issues.
 - o Teacher teams regularly reviews students' in-house assessment results and school report cards. As a result, the school provides timely programming including self-contained classes for sixth grade students, after school academic intervention services, Saturday academies and additional writing support instruction. The school wide item analysis of assessment results are used to highlight the areas of greatest need and to influence instructional efforts.
 - o Using a three-tiered IAPR (Individualized Academic Progress Report) protocol teachers explore ways to offer additional instructional support by developing meaningful interim and long-term goals. A review of the data in Power School helps to inform individual, group and class instruction.
- The school's cabinet and teachers use a broad range of accessible data systems to gather, organize and review student performance trends and to inform planning and choice of resources to meet student learning needs.
 - o The cabinet, teachers and staff use technology and relevant information to meet specific needs of all students. Teams of teachers use information from conference notes, interim assessments, report cards and a three-tiered Individualized Academic Progress Report (IAPR) to highlight student progress and to see trends that will enable them to better align their resources.
 - o Administrators use information derived from many sources including the previous Quality Review, the School Self Evaluation form and the Learning Environment Survey to adjust school decisions regarding the use of resources and personnel. For example, the school uses a new literacy program in writing to raise standards in response to the recent State test results. Other improvements such as their 'Opportunity Room' have led to a significant decline in disciplinary infractions this school year.
- The principal is committed to using her literacy and mathematics coaches and others to provide extensive professional development for teachers to improve instructional practice.
 - o There is a consistent use of formal and informal observations conducted by the school leadership to provide constructive, differentiated and specific feedback for teachers. Consequently, teachers feel supported in their work to improve classroom practices, resulting in the growth of an atmosphere of a professional learning community.
 - o Teachers are offered multiple professional development experiences that encompass a wide range of strategies for growth in honing their best practices. These include teacher team and coach conversations during

common planning time, intervisitations to share and learn from and participation in professional workshops on and off the school site. These interactions have resulted in an increase in best practices in the classrooms and at the school level.

- The school's curriculum emphasizes Common Core State Standards and offers a wide range of rich, integrated learning experiences, to fully engage students and support their learning.
 - o The development and implementation of an integrated, project-based curriculum is supporting the school's vision for improvement. The curriculum is well structured to align with Common Core State Standards. The principal and cabinet ensure that the results of State tests, in conjunction with baseline assessment data, are presented clearly. Students enjoy a wide range of experiences that include dance, visual arts, technology and community service projects. As a result, they demonstrate high levels of engagement, motivation and enthusiasm for their learning leading to increased student learning opportunities.
- The school provides a very safe, nurturing environment in which every student is encouraged to grow both academically and as an individual, and where they feel respected by fellow students and adults alike.
 - o Students and parents express a high degree of satisfaction for their teachers and school leaders and value the safe environment provided for students. They indicated a level of appreciation for having a student government association and peer mediation program.
 - o Students and their parents are provided with information and feel supported in making decisions about high school options resulting in feedback noting that the school cares about the students.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen classroom instruction so that all students consistently are challenged with rigorous instruction and high-level tasks that result in stronger academic achievement.
 - o Currently, all teachers are committed to differentiating their instruction through strategic classroom groupings and tiered assignments. However, at this time, the level of rigor varies from class to class. For example, in one class the teacher selected non-challenging text and activities for higher achieving students. In other classes, there were very limited samples of student work displayed to offer guidance and support for exemplary practice. Because classrooms do not yet offer consistently challenging work, students are not yet being pushed to their highest levels throughout the day.
- Extend and expand communication and collaboration with students and their parents to increase capacity to track progress towards meeting specific interim benchmarks and long-term goals.
 - o The school is currently developing a system that enables parents to use to better understand and track the academic progress of their children based on formative and summative assessments. Neither the ARIS

Parent Link nor Power School have been consistently introduced to parents. Currently, parents rely primarily on progress reports that communicate generic teacher comments and limited measured data. Consequently, parents cannot track their child's progress beyond the report card system. They are requesting more opportunities to improve their ability to understand and use ARIS Parent Link and Power School so that they may better support their children's targeted achievement areas at home. One parent stated, "We would appreciate the opportunity to improve our skills with technology systems we have since it is a school focus."

- o The inconsistent use of rubrics to communicate feedback to students results in limited feedback on progress of interim and long-term goals. As a result, students are not always able to articulate clearly their next learning steps. As one student indicated, "Our teachers will tell us about what we need to study next but I don't always remember so I can tell my mom."
- Further embed the use of formative assessment practices in all classrooms so that ongoing adjustments are made to respond to identified student needs.
 - o Many teachers are effectively utilizing a tiered "Individualized Academic Progress Reports" introduced to the entire staff to monitor student assessment results. However, this practice is inconsistent in classrooms, rendering the lesson plans inflexible and undifferentiated.
 - o Not all students are able to state what book they are reading independently, indicating that there is not sufficient attention being paid to individual levels of literacy and that there is not a uniform expectation of reading for personal growth.
- Use of the inquiry process during teacher team collaborations to develop specific strategies to improve instruction and student outcomes.
 - o School administrators and teachers engage in biweekly teacher team meetings to discuss individual and groups of students; however, the teams do not always look at student work to develop classroom strategies that improve student achievement.
- Promote increased parental involvement and leadership of families in order to increase parents' ability to support students' academic and personal growth.
 - o Parents agree that they do not assume an active role in school-wide decision-making or strategic planning for the Comprehensive Educational Plan and the school has not yet developed sufficient workshops for parents to enable them to support their children at home. As a result, the principal has made plans to engage a core group of parents in an in-depth study of the school's goals, objectives and strategies that will be used guide the planned changes in the school this year. However, current practices limit the engagement of parents in meaningful shared decision-making that promotes high expectations.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Satellite East Middle 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
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