

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Herbert S. Eisenberg

Intermediate School K303

**501 West Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11224**

Principal: Gary Ingrassia

Dates of review: March 14 - 15, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Ronald Feinstein

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Herbert S. Eisenberg is an intermediate school with 746 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 16% Black, 28% Hispanic, 34% White, and 20% Asian students. The student body includes 15% English language learners and 7% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 93.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Students demonstrate high levels of engagement and enthusiasm for learning that is effectively differentiated to meet students' needs.
 - Teachers differentiate strategies based on reading levels and data from formative assessments, work portfolios, Acuity and Achieve 3000. Across classrooms students are grouped for flexible work with a range of critical thinking tasks, resulting in increased engagement and meaningful work products.
 - Students are highly enthusiastic about the level of attention given to them in spiraled and scaffolded lessons that result in high levels of engagement and higher order thinking across classrooms as evidenced by Level 3 student work products.
- The school is a safe place where students are engaged in learning and they appreciate the support they receive for their personal and academic growth.
 - An assistant principal on each grade and a dean travel with the cohort until graduation and contribute to assure a safe environment conducive to adult and student learning. Teachers travel with students to science, art and other courses and students are respectfully quiet as they pass in halls. Students feel that calm hallways help them concentrate and add to their confidence.
 - Sixth graders remain with the same teacher for all content throughout the day further ensuring that students' needs are known and quickly addressed. These teachers have been identified for their skills in content, pedagogy and understanding of early adolescence. Students appreciate the high level of support this offers, resulting in accelerated progress for this student cohort.
- Through effective data use, leaders and faculty have an ongoing understanding of the performance and progress of individuals and student groups; effectively informing instruction and organizational adjustments.
 - The school acquires a clear portrait of strengths and areas of need through comprehensive analysis of state item skills, attendance and safety data. This data is used to ensure that English language learners, special education and high performing students make continued progress as evidenced by Achieve 3000 assessment results.
 - Harvested data from a detailed organization of the item skills analysis revealed that 8th grade English language learners were struggling with academic vocabulary on the State writing assessments. The team's feedback resulted in instructional changes to curriculum which resulted in a note worthy 20% increase in level 4 writing products as measured by student work products.

- The school has a systemic approach to the gathering, analyzing, disseminating and using data that examines patterns and trends of sub-groups, enabling timely action for increased achievement.
 - The administration has created a unique database that aggregates several existing systems into one accessible portal, facilitating the identification of students based on their instructional needs. This resulted in increased achievement outcomes with students in need of academic intervention as well as students who have fallen short of their goals on state assessments.
 - Teachers make timely use of the school's integrated database to make classroom level decisions to drive instruction, facilitating the identification and placement of struggling and high achieving students for extended day and Saturday instruction. This has resulted in school wide increase of 6% of students scoring Level 4 on ELA state assessment.
- Teachers and coaches use collaborative, data-informed processes for timely planning and goal setting for all students in all subject areas resulting in increased student achievement.
 - Baseline assessments administered to identify strengths and weaknesses are used effectively to set annual and interim goals. For example, analysis of reading levels uncovered that special need students were not making expected mid-year progress literacy. This allowed for implementation of targeted strategies, resulting in improvements for this sub group as evidenced by benchmark reading assessments.
 - Teachers strategically set targeted goals starting from individual students and moving up to groups. As a result, they can articulate a clear and purposeful rationale for changes to classroom practices, and improve student achievement as evidenced by significant increase in reading levels on benchmark assessments.
- The principal and his cabinet work cohesively to review and analyze data to guide the school forward with consistency.
 - The use of Bloom's Taxonomy and Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) as well as the ongoing integration of the Common Core Learning Standards contribute to the coherence between what students know, what teachers are teaching and how learning is assessed, resulting in consistent approach to improvement efforts.
 - "Strategies for Success", is developed and used by the school to regularly gather and communicate performance, attendance and discipline data to students and families. Parents appreciate that their students' success is actively monitored by the school and their input is considered through surveys to assess the success of these tools.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop engaging, standards-based curriculum that includes art and technology that actively engage all learners of high levels of critical thinking.

- The opportunities for critical thinking and exposure to more rigorous tasks presently available to the students in Gifted and Talented programs have not been expanded to other classrooms across grades or subject areas, hindering opportunities for all students to excel.
- Literacy teachers use a school-developed analysis of student work sheet that includes findings and next steps; however this process falls short in systematizing the manner in which teachers track progress to ensure a larger number of students are challenged and engaged.
- Enhance opportunities for professional collaboration to enable faculty grow as individuals and team members in a learning community.
 - Collaborative teacher teams led by coaches and lead teachers meet regularly and use student work to problem solve for individual students, however the inquiry approach has not been expanded to target larger groups of students with similar needs.
 - Teacher teams have been introduced to Bloom's Taxonomy and begun the work of aligning assignments to both State and common core standards at collaborative meetings. However, as yet, there is not a clear plan to track this important work and its impact on student outcomes.
- Develop a cohesive system to ensure that all teachers use their knowledge students' strengths and needs to foster more meaningful task engagement.
 - Teachers use rubrics across grades and content areas that are aligned to chosen standards and then tailored to be task specific. However, feedback from these rubrics have not yet translated into the creation of more rigorous and engaging tasks that will provide a complete and actionable portrait of student mastery.
 - Teachers supplement summative data with information harvested from Periodic Assessments including Performance Series. While teachers are eager to provide evidence of progress in the amount and quality of student work in portfolios, systems to more effectively track progress and adjust curriculum and instruction are not yet optimized and therefore have not contributed to a deeper understanding of how to leverage assessment information
- Formalize a feedback-loop to teachers aligned to professional teaching standards so that there is support for and accountability of teacher growth. .
 - Classroom visits show evidence of support for the school's instructional focus by a majority of the faculty specifically in reading lessons through implementation of the workshop model, using school's lesson planner and fluid groupings, however the feed back to the teachers are still not specific enough to result in actionable change in instructional practices, hindering school's ability to improve student outcomes.
 - While school leaders make frequent formal and informal visits to classrooms and provide low inference feedback, there is currently not a standards-based observation protocol used for all teachers that could elevate instructional practices school-wide.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Herbert S. Eisenberg	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