



**Department of  
Education**

*Joel I. Klein, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**Clara Cardwell**

**Elementary-Middle School K308**

**616 Quincy St.  
Brooklyn  
NY 11221**

**Principal: Renata Clement**

**Dates of review: March 28-29, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Clara Cardwell School is an elementary-middle school with 652 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 82% Black, 12% Hispanic, 03% Asian, and 03% multi-racial students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 90.0%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school community works collaboratively to promote a nurturing and caring environment conducive to learning and student growth.
  - The school has instituted the ‘Brotherhood and Sisterhood Clubs’ headed by the guidance counselor to support character development and promote leadership and respect. The “Suspension Prevention Activity” or “SPA” focuses on promoting conflict resolution and peer mediation strategies. Consequently, the school has noted a significant decrease in the number of incidents school-wide over last school year.
  - Guidance personnel meets regularly to address concerns regarding student progress and behavior and to plan appropriate academic interventions to support students’ success. The school’s “open door” policy and easy access to teachers and faculty ensure that every student is well known to the community. This has resulted in students expressing that the school cares about them and comment that their teachers “keep teaching until you learn.”
- The school makes strategic organizational decisions to support student academic needs and achievement.
  - In response to student academic needs in English language arts and math, the school has implemented the “Early Birds and Late Birds” before and after-school programs and the Saturday Academy. To raise the level of instruction in science, the school maintains a science lab and science cluster teacher and offers additional science instruction twice a week after school. The extended time and additional resources allocated are promoting higher student achievement in these areas.
  - The principal has allocated time for teachers to meet at least once a week to collaborate at grade level meetings and on inquiry teams. These interactions deepen professional dialogue to improve instructional practice and maximize learning as evidenced by the progress of the target population students in English language arts.
- Teachers gather a range of relevant data to assess student performance, instructional practices and identify student needs.
  - Teachers gather student test results that include summative and formative assessments aligned to key State standards in data binders to measure progress and impact of classroom practices. This has generated the implementation school-wide protocols such as higher order questioning that promotes critical thinking and student achievement.
  - Teachers analyze Acuity periodic assessments and classroom level data regularly. Areas of strength and need are examined to plan instructional next steps to meet the academic needs of the focus group

students. These targeted interventions have led to increased student progress of skills identified in need of improvement.

- Teachers work in collaborative teams using an inquiry approach that promotes leadership and focuses on improving student learning.
  - Over ninety percent of teachers actively engage in departmental and core inquiry teams that reflectively assess student work across classrooms and develop strategic instructional practices specifically aligned to defined needs. These interactions have led to increases in teachers' instructional repertoire resulting in higher levels of student success in English language arts and math as noted by classroom formative assessments and student work products.
  - Teacher teams led by teacher leaders, work as autonomous units and have developed strong leadership skills. They have increased confidence in their capacity to support each other's professional development and growth and to affect positively student achievement.
- The school shares relevant information with parents and students to encourage parent involvement and student academic achievement.
  - Teachers and school leaders reach out to parents on a continuous basis via telephone and one on one conversations regarding student academic progress and areas of concern to ensure students maintain focus on learning. The school also provides quarterly academic progress reports to all parents and daily student reports for selected students upon request to strengthen the home and school partnership. In addition, parents state that the school responds to their inquiries "at any time, even at night." As a result, parents express that they are aware of the school's expectations and their children's progress.
  - Across all classrooms, teachers provide written feedback on student work products with comments for next steps. Students use this universal protocol to note their achievement levels, improve their skills and extend their learning for continued growth.
- The school is supportive and inclusive of parents who are key partners in the school community's efforts to promote student progress.
  - Parents influence school policy through their membership and participation on the School Leadership Team. This has resulted in parent collaboration in the development of school-wide goals and the development and dissemination of the school calendar and newsletters to enhance parent involvement and student achievement.
  - The school offers parent workshops weekly on curriculum, student assessments and topics of interest ranging from health and nutrition to parenting skills. The information gathered at these workshops supports parents' efforts to influence their children's achievement in school. Additionally, the Parent Teacher Association sponsors activities such as Parent Appreciation Dinner Night to strengthen the home school connection and maximize student progress.

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

- Increase the use of the observation process to provide a common lens that evaluates instructional practices and identifies next steps.
  - School administrators visit classrooms and conduct observations. However, the frequency, focus and feedback to teachers vary among leaders. In addition, observations of new and non-tenured staff are minimal. This reduces opportunities for reflection on instructional skills and practices to enhance student understanding and progress. (b)
  - Although the school provides professional learning opportunities for teachers, the workshops and activities offered do not differentiate consistently by need. This lessens opportunities for staff members to strengthen identified skills that improve teaching and learning.
- Expand systems for collecting and monitoring data relative to student progress to ensure the effective use of the results for instruction.
  - School leaders use Periodic Assessments to determine student learning. However, there is no protocol yet in place that provides for the frequency or structure of school-wide data analysis for timely and effective evaluation of progress. This decreases opportunities to adjust curricular and instructional practices to ensure student achievement.
  - The school adopted the Core Knowledge Program for selected lower grade classes this year. However, the school has not yet fully developed structures to evaluate the program's impact on student performance, limiting adjustments to maximize learning.
- Enhance curricula coherence and instructional demands to ensure that students are learning at high levels in all subject areas.
  - Standards based instruction and higher order skills strategies are visible in many classrooms. However, in a few classrooms, student lesson assignments included coloring, cutting and pasting resulting in rudimentary discussions and low-level student work products. This limits creativity and student achievement.
  - While the school has computer labs and computers in the classrooms, their use as a resource or learning tool was limited in some classrooms and not evident in others. This diminishes opportunities for challenging modalities and rigorous instruction for a wide range of students.
- Promote consistency in differentiated instruction based on data so that lessons reflect purposeful groupings with extensions into the curricula.
  - One of the school's focus areas is in differentiated instruction and most classrooms apply differentiated instructional strategies to address individual needs of students. In a few instances, student activities did not reflect the use of data to plan appropriate instruction for students performing at different levels. This affects the planning of multiple entry points and extensions for learning and achievement for all students.
  - Although there is evidence of student participation in all classrooms, high levels of engagement are not evident in all lesson activities. In a

few classrooms, students worked on textbook exercises or on worksheet assignments. This hampers students' abilities to see learning as a purposeful activity for maximum progress.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Clara Cardwell</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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?			<b>X</b>				
<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?		<b>X</b>					
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
<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?		<b>X</b>					
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			<b>X</b>				
<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>