

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Gateway Intermediate School

Middle School 364

**1426 Freeport Loop
Brooklyn
NY 11239**

Principal: Dale Kelly

Dates of review: November 17 – 18, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Michael L. Schurek

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Gateway Intermediate School is a middle school with 399 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 73% Black, 20% Hispanic, 4% White, 1% Asian and 2% other students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 91.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers work effectively in collaborative teams to share good practice, create common assessments, and develop tools to successfully analyze data and plan curriculum and instruction.
 - Teachers meet weekly in department teams. Each team creates a uniform coherent set of content-specific unit assessments in each subject area that are combined with student work samples to item analyze, identify problem areas and measure the effectiveness of their practices. As a result, differentiated instructional strategies such as flexible grouping and tiered assignments are utilized across all grades and subjects to meet student needs, enabling the school to achieve gradually increasing scale scores in all subject areas.
 - Teachers are trained in the use of ARIS and regularly examine Periodic Assessment outcomes and teacher-developed common assessments, including scantron-based item analyses. This school-wide practice enables staff to regularly adjust curriculum maps and pacing calendars while providing frequent and pertinent feedback regarding these instructional decisions.
- Administrators and teachers meticulously use a wide range of assessment data to monitor school-level needs and make strategic adjustments to achieve desired goals.
 - School leaders and faculty, individually and in teams, rigorously examine a broad range of summative data that is supplemented by staff-designed common assessments and student work products in all subject areas. This ongoing process enables teachers to have an excellent understanding of the achievement and progress of every student and unites staff in its quest to use data to inform effective instruction. Recent attendance data triggered a change in extended day practices from a before-school activity to an after-school one, resulting in dramatic increases in extended day student attendance.
 - Administrators and teachers regularly analyze Periodic Assessment and copious common assessment tools to identify areas of need, track student subgroup performance and adjust school practices to increase student outcomes. This focus has enabled staff to unite by approving a school-based option to alter extended day scheduling to dramatically increase the frequency of teacher collaborative team meetings. As a result, all teachers now participate on teams that are accelerating student outcomes as indicated in numerous formative assessment tools in all subject areas.
- School leaders and faculty develop tools to identify trends that are accessible and useful for making school and classroom level decisions.
 - Teams of teachers design beginning-of-year assessments as well as ongoing unit assessments that are disaggregated to identify subgroup trends. This system has enabled the school to identify the fact that males underperform in all facets of English language arts. As a result, classroom activities have

been modified and materials have been selected that motivate more male learners on a school wide basis.

- All teachers share in-house googledocs data with each other utilizing a school-designed spreadsheet that enables teachers to see how their students are progressing in all subject areas, thereby enabling teachers to find commonalities in terms of need and adjust practices accordingly.
- Students benefit from teacher pedagogy that demonstrates coherence regarding effective learning strategies and regularly utilizes differentiation to engage a variety of learners.
 - Teaching practices across all grades and subjects reflect instructional coherence as evidenced by the student-centered learning opportunities taking place in all classes such as the use of the workshop model and flexible student grouping strategies, thereby enabling all students to participate and produce relevant work products.
 - All classes group students according to need and utilize leveled materials, hands-on resources and graphic structures to ensure multiple entry points into curricula.
- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning.
 - The principal and his cabinet carefully analyze school needs and allocate resources to improve outcomes aligned to school goals, such as the wireless technology upgrade that enabled the purchase of a web-based computer program to improve reading comprehension. This software allows teachers to customize content and monitor student progress in a strategic and purposeful manner. In addition, a new writing fundamentals program is being utilized to begin aligning writing units of study to the evolving State Standards.
 - School leaders carefully connect student outcomes to teacher data reports to design effective assignments and student programs that meet student needs. This practice has enabled the school to offer special education, small holdover, heterogeneous and Regents honors classes on each grade level, contributing to the school's overall upward trends.
- The school has established effective systems for monitoring teaching practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practices.
 - Administrators regularly observe all teachers and conduct walkthroughs involving all staff with an emphasis on the school's instructional practice of using data to differentiate instruction so that students on all levels are engaged and challenged. This ongoing focus has enabled the school to establish instructional coherence.
 - School leaders provide support to teachers through intervisitations, teaming, coaching, targeted professional development and mentoring and provide ongoing feedback to sustain their success, allowing the school to maintain a very low teacher turnover rate.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen academic rigor by increasing the use of academic tasks that emphasize higher order skills allowing students to refine their work and align with key standards.
 - Each department teacher team examines data and uses this information to emphasize key standards for groups of students that are compiled and tracked in an online data management system; however, rigorous academic tasks are inconsistently utilized in classrooms across the school, including some of the classes containing lower achieving students.
- Extend the use of rubrics across subjects and grades to enable students and their families to assess their progress and understand their next learning steps.
 - The school has recently decided to practice portfolio assessment; however, rubrics and genre exemplars are inconsistently utilized to rate student projects and suggest next steps to improve the quality of submitted student products. It is not an established practice for students to use rubrics to reflect and self-assess the quality of their work, thereby missing opportunities for students to monitor and refine their work.
- Expand goal setting practices to include using data to set differentiated learning goals in all subjects for students in need of additional support to specifically target their needs, track their progress and raise outcomes.
 - Individual teachers and teacher teams set subject learning goals for the entire class or respective cohorts based on a careful analysis of student assessment data. These classroom and team level goals bring about changes in classroom practice such as the use of spiraling, additional re-teaching methods and the use of regrouping strategies to accelerate student learning.
 - Differentiated learning goals are not set for individual students or groups of students in need of additional support thereby missing opportunities to focus on their specific needs and involve them in recognizing their progress.
- Refine action planning by linking interim goals to targeted benchmarks at specific intervals so that school, team and teacher action plans can be monitored to expedite revisions and maximize impact.
 - School action plans generally use percentage-based targets as the annual goal in the identified areas of improvement. Benchmarks measuring progress towards these goals at specific intervals during the school year are not indicated. Teacher team and class action plans also do not contain interim benchmarks for targeted students. The lack of these structures hampers the school's ability to determine the effectiveness of their actions along the way to allow for contingencies and make timely adjustments that improve outcomes. It also limits the school's ability to align planning from one year to the next.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Gateway Intermediate 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