

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Ronald Edmonds Learning Center II

Middle School K484

**430 Howard Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11233**

Principal: Herbert Daughtry

Dates of review: May 25 - 26, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Rhonda Hurdle-Taylor

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Ronald Edmonds Learning Center II is a middle school with 165 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 89% Black, 10% Hispanic, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 61% of the students enrolled and girls account for 39%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 88.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The social emotional needs of families promote targeted support from faculty and staff and leads to students' personal growth and development.
 - The principal, dean and social worker meet monthly with the staff to address families' social needs and share conflict resolution strategies that reduce emotional outbursts and conflicts among students. An outside mentoring agency works closely with the school to mentor students. Teachers receive training on mentoring themes and incorporate activities into units of study that assist students in their preparation for college.
 - The staff receives professional training on adolescent development that helps them target students' academic and emotional needs. Students and staff recite a daily pledge that promotes the belief that "college is not an option", a belief that is championed by the parents and students and is deeply embedded in the school community. As a result, students participate in a yearly college tour, strive to attain 80 and above in all of their coursework, and successfully complete high school Regents.
- The principal makes informed and effective organizational decisions that support improvements in learning.
 - In addition to providing weekly planning time for teachers, the principal responds to students' academic needs by funding teacher leaders who facilitate teacher collaborations and analyze classroom data. As a result, teachers plan lessons that help students build their skills in math and English language arts (ELA).
 - Creative programming enables teachers to share responsibility for small groups of struggling students. Teachers are strategically programmed to work with these students to build their deficiencies in ELA and math. Hence English language learners, students with individual educational plans and students with academic deficits receive intimate instruction from content specialists and are making progress.
- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of all stake-holders, which result in high levels of pride and engagement.
 - A well established respectful and professional tone exists within this school community. Teachers articulate an elevated set of expectations around student deportment and model the same as they interact with their colleagues, students and parents. As a result, students conduct themselves in an orderly manner in and out of the classroom.
 - The principal and faculty have established an excellent rapport with families, who they know individually, that goes beyond the classroom. The principal's daily community meetings helps him to access students' readiness for learning, and teachers meet with students in advisory groups, plan events such as gold carpet awards, and student and staff talent shows to foster positive self esteem. As such, children receive emotional support that positively impacts their achievement.

- The principal is highly respected by the school community for his ability to establish and maintain clear expectations and engage families in decision-making which results in a commitment to improving student outcomes.
 - A school-wide initiative to keep parents informed of the school's expectations around academic performance, attendance and dress code includes progress reports that are released every six weeks prior to student report cards, and include comments detailing students' academic progress, attendance, social development, and the need for growth in these areas. Furthermore, parents value their access to the principal and staff through collaboration on the school leadership team. They help develop the Comprehensive Educational Plan, review the budget, and make curriculum decisions that help children improve their learning.
- Staff, led by lead teachers, collaborate often to examine student work, share promising practices, and plan instruction that best meet student' needs.
 - Teachers meet regularly in grade and team meetings to plan lessons, share useful instructional strategies, and conduct inquiry into student learning. Persistent levels of teacher participation allow them to cast a focused eye on student achievement. Consequently, thoughtful planning among teachers connects assessment results to student learning.
 - Teacher leaders facilitate grade and inquiry team meetings and work collaboratively with colleagues to plan lessons that lead to improved instruction. This practice of distributive leadership provides opportunities for teachers to take on more school-wide decision-making.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen differentiation of instruction so that all lessons engage students and offer suitable challenge at their level, including questioning that elicits higher-order thinking thereby improving students' ability to think critically.
 - Teachers clearly articulate the learning styles and general academic needs of their students. However, a focus on differentiated instruction is not consistent across the school. Additionally, classroom teaching practices do not commonly embrace students as active participants in their learning or provide adequate focus on individual student's needs.
 - While some teachers group students for instruction, evidence of flexibility within these groups is lacking and there is little indication that teachers plan lessons across classrooms that include high level questions and engage students in critical thinking activities. This lack of rigor hinders students' academic advancement.
- Strengthen teachers' response to student work, to reflect guiding comments and convey high expectations, in order to increase academic rigor and clear next steps.
 - The school provides families with progress reports, mandated quarterly report cards, and opportunities for parents to discuss their children's academic growth with teachers via parent teacher conferences. However, there is little evidence that teachers consistently conference

- with students about where they are academically and what specific steps they need to take in order to improve their academic standing.
- Teachers respond to student work generally with performance level numeration and infrequently connect these grades to distinctive rubric criteria. Teachers do not give students enough explicit feedback to help them assess their work, plan the next steps for enhancing their work, or monitor their growth. As a result, students are not able to assess and evaluate their learning and determine next steps for ownership.
 - Expand data analysis and revise processes that lead to effective professional collaborations that influence decision making and changes in practice.
 - The coach sporadically reports back to the principal on teams' progress during inquiry and grade meetings. However, there is no established system to track and evaluate the effectiveness of the teams' work to ensure alignment to instructional goals. This limits the school's ability to revise and adjust instructional approaches that meet students' needs.
 - There is no evidence of inherent systems for assessing professional development supports and therefore the principal is not readily able to evaluate the impact on classroom practice. The principal does not effectively monitor teachers' professional needs therefore hindering the ability to revise plans to support improvements in teachers' practices.
 - Broaden the curriculum to include coherence and alignment with the standards and increase opportunities for students to participate in purposeful instruction thereby engaging them in rigorous habits and high order skills.
 - The school is in the emerging stage of incorporating the Common Core Standards into its curriculum. However, the school has not yet developed concrete strategies for aligning key standards with core subjects in order to further develop students' skills for college readiness.
 - In classrooms where teachers design rigorous projects and instructional activities that engage students, there is evidence that children are practicing higher order thinking and are involved in problem solving. However, these practices are not evident school-wide, resulting in inconsistencies in academic rigor across grades and content areas.
 - Strengthen the formal observation process and expand professional development in order to support teachers' expertise and growth so that they continually improve their practice.
 - In order to assist in making decisions around teacher evaluations, retention and tenure, the principal conducts observations and snapshots of instruction. These include immediate, general responses to classroom observations. However, formal observations occur infrequently and therefore teachers are not provided with the type of in depth feedback necessary to assist them in improving their instructional practice.
 - While the principal provides opportunities for teachers to be mentored and to benefit from working with their colleagues in teams, teacher growth is stunted by limited opportunities to attend targeted professional trainings outside of the school based on their individual needs.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Ronald Edmonds Learning Center II	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