



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Mott Hall IV

Middle School 522

**1137 Herkimer Street
Brooklyn
NY 11233**

Principal: LaJuan White

Dates of review: March 23 - 24, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Ainslie Cumberbatch

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Mott Hall IV is a middle school with 257 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 90% Black, 9% Hispanic, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 38% of the students enrolled and girls account for 62%. 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

- Data driven organizational decisions ensure that resources are aligned to support instructional goals and that they sustain improvements in student outcomes.
 - School funding supports long-range plans that include accelerated learning opportunities for students on Saturday in Regents' coursework in algebra and living environment. Students report that these opportunities enrich their school experience and that the support of their teachers makes them feel confident.
 - Thorough analysis of achievement data reveals that students' skill deficits in math affects their overall school performance. Therefore, the principal hired a math coach and a consultant to assist teachers in implementing teaching strategies that benefit students. Additionally, teachers are able to continuously monitor their practice and student progress as a confirmation that this extra support is affecting student outcomes.
- School staff deliver an engaging standards-based curriculum that addresses the needs of a diverse group of learners.
 - Teachers deliver rigorous student-centered instruction incorporating higher order thinking opportunities for students. In grade 6 science, activities that include the use of hand lenses and probes to study the biotic and abiotic features of the environment, the study of gases in photosynthesis and respiration, and an analysis of how altitude and elevation affect temperature, enable students to engage in relevant content-specific hands-on activities.
 - Teachers use curriculum maps to provide a progressive development within each subject area and as a guide against which to examine student work to develop lesson plans that address the needs of students. As a result, students feel challenged and motivated in their classes and identify their school as a "professional" place.
- Teachers use curriculum maps and units of study aligned to State standards to support coherence and differentiation in teaching and learning.
 - Teachers throughout the school deliver daily lessons using flexible and skill-based groupings, group investigations, and demonstrations that facilitate student participation in activities such as the analysis of symbols in poems and the interpretation of figurative language in pieces of literature. This structure enables students to navigate the curriculum in well-matched activities and achieve greater success in class.
 - Curriculum maps include investigative classroom routines using lenses and probes, as well as coaching techniques such as the use of graphic organizers to write a dialogue between a child and a parent, and facilitate effective strategies that engage students as active participants. As a result, students report feeling inspired and captured by lesson designs that allow them suitable engagement in most classes.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to provide a complete picture of students progress across all aspects of the school and to make classroom level decisions.

- Staff use, and discuss with administrators, a range of student performance data that include Acuity periodic assessments, as well as school-wide benchmark assessments administered three times a year, to inform lesson planning. In addition, teachers monitor their own progress by comparing student success on a variety of assessment results to ensure coherence between their teaching and student learning. This practice facilitated early intervention with identified students by teachers providing greater targeted support to students in the classroom and extended tutorials.
- Students complete exams at the end of each unit and benchmark assessments in English language arts and math three times a year to assess knowledge and skills learned during the instructional cycle. This practice serves effectively as a means to help teachers align classroom work to student learning goals established at the start of a unit and course.
- School administrators establish data based systems to support teacher practice with a focus on improving student outcomes.
 - All teachers develop professional goals that align to student needs and State standards. Teachers engage in the common practice of using a color-coded tracking system to monitor student progress and deliver tiered support in keeping with school norms. Consequently, teachers engage in weekly collaborations at team meetings focused on improving student outcomes based on identified needs.
 - School leaders provide a range of supports to teachers that include one-on-one conferencing, collaboration with coaches, and mentors for new teachers in order to promote teacher professional growth. Administrators also meet with teachers regularly to review whole class data templates and action plan updates to ensure that teacher practice matches identified student needs. As a result, teachers feel supported and equipped to meet specific program goals.
- The school's highly developed communication systems keeps parents and students fully informed of students' academic and behavioral progress.
 - Parents value the school's informative website and the progress reports and report cards distributed four times a year to ensure they remain abreast of their children's academic progress, attendance, and discipline concerns. Students welcome the progress updates available through the online reporting system and individual needs-based teacher conferences. Parents and students also appreciate the accessibility of teachers to engage in dialogue related to daily assignments and student progress. As a result, parents report that they know their children's strengths and needs. They cheer, "We are on the right track and in the right place" and add, "This school gives me piece of mind." Students state that they feel supported by their teachers.
 - Parents report that the school provides timely workshops related to Acuity results, intervention programs, and academic resources available to parents and students. As a result, parents have the opportunity to become familiar with the curriculum and engage in discussions about how they can support their children in meeting school standards and expectations in order to accelerate learning.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that classroom teachers and teams utilize data to set long- and short-term learning goals that are measurable and time-based.

- Teachers have students review assessment results after various benchmark periods and ask students to set performance goals. However, since these are not targeted learning goals, they do not focus on needed skills to improve learning outcomes for students. Consequently, this impedes the acceleration of learning and not all students attain suitable success.
- Teacher teams utilize school-wide assessment data to set goals for groups of students who score below 75% on classroom and predictive assessments across all content areas. Teams also look at student work to identify underlying reasons for error. However, teams do not use this information to set differentiated interim-goals and benchmarks in all subject areas to maximize teacher effectiveness.
- Expand the level of inquiry-based collaboration to deepen the work of teacher teams within the school.
 - The school has established department and grade-aligned teacher teams, which utilize student data and provide ongoing opportunities for teachers to reflect on student needs. As a result, teachers are developing worthy interventions and supports. However, as the school does not yet consistently employ a specific protocol, aligned with action research, the work of teacher teams is not yet significantly impacting school-wide instruction.
 - Distributed leadership, while visible with some teams, is not yet deeply embedded in all collaborations, limiting the evenness of the success for all teams.
- Further develop school structures to ensure that effective teacher practice and use of resources result in student mastery of current and evolving State standards.
 - The school's team structure and color-coded benchmark system aid in the review of student progress and movement towards meeting emerging Common Core State Standards. Scholarship for last year highlighted the need to examine the alignment of instruction to State standards. However, although the school delivers a standards-based curriculum, it does not yet have fully developed systems to ensure that classroom teaching incorporates suitable adjustments that translate into addressing and supporting all areas to ensure student competency on State exams.
 - School staff's grade team meetings are a means of monitoring and improving the effectiveness of the instructional program. However, as this meeting structure is not yet institutionalized at the school level, full alignment and coherence between what is taught and how it is taught is limited.
- Strengthen the use of data analysis as a tool to regularly evaluate school systems and programs to ensure effective professional collaborations.
 - School leaders review teacher action plans and work with facilitators to develop team agendas and focus. Administrators also connect with individual team members informally to discuss key issues. However, this is not an embedded practice, does not always lead to actionable next steps, and limits their effectiveness.
 - School leaders do not regularly review student performance data with teachers as part of the observation process, nor do they include reference of movement towards meeting professional goals within the formal evaluation. As a result, recommendations do not go deep enough identifying necessary supports to enable teachers to achieve set targets related to student performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Mott Hall IV	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
-----------	-----------------------	----------	-------------------	----------	-------------------	-----------	-----------------------