

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**Brighter Choice Community School**

**Elementary School K627**

**280 Hart St.  
Brooklyn  
NY 11206**

**Principal: Fabayo McIntosh**

**Dates of review: February 14 - 15, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Brighter Choice Community School is an elementary school with 140 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 4. The school population comprises 76% Black, 23% Hispanic, and 1% White. The student body includes 05% English language learners and 09% 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%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school is a nurturing community where all constituents work as a unified team to help students grow academically and socially to ensure student achievement.
  - In response to attendance and survey data, the school continues the good practice of 'Community Circle' where students, teachers, staff and principal gather in the auditorium once a week to recite the school pledge, recognize individual student accomplishments in attendance and academics and to reinforce students' commitment to learning and achievement. This has promoted positive relationships across the school and has established the school as a highly regarded learning community by all constituents.
  - The principal personally greets every student and parent entering the building at the front door daily to welcome and ensure that the school day begins on a positive note. Additionally, the principal's "open door" policy, the teachers who voluntarily come to school early and stay late to meet and work with students and the guidance counselor who teaches in every class at least once a week, ensure that every student is well known to the school community. Students eagerly seek support from the staff and comment that they "love" their school and teachers.
- The school is supportive and inclusive of families who feel valued and who take pride in being key partners of the school community.
  - Parents influence school policy through their membership and participation on the School Leadership team. This level of engagement gives parents opportunities to collaborate as equal partners in planning school initiatives and the development of the school's Comprehensive Education Plan to maximize their children's achievement.
  - The school continuously promotes high levels of active parent involvement through newsletters, the school website, conversations and school-wide social events such as "Friday Coffee with the Principal" and "Parent Mixers" where parents gather to meet one another. Additionally, high percentages of parent participation at workshops and their leadership on the Parent Teacher Association strengthen the home school connection resulting in greater communication and collaboration with families to support student progress.
- The school makes effective organizational decisions to support improvement initiatives, student learning and progress.
  - Despite budgetary constrictions, the principal allocated funds to purchase more classroom library books, The Brooklyn Music School Arts Program, the Sylvan after-school tutoring program and the National Geographic Science Program aligned to State standards for grades Kindergarten through grade two. This has increased the levels of instruction and enriched the learning experience.

- Teacher candidates for the school undergo a rigorous process conducted by the school leadership and hiring committee that includes several demonstration lessons and various interviews to ensure their capacity aligns with school-wide goals. Teacher placement also reflects this priority as support personnel, including the ESL teacher, push into classrooms to work with targeted students to support their learning.
- Teachers share common beliefs and practices for the delivery of instruction to promote student interests and address individual student needs.
  - Teachers differentiate lessons and lesson activities based on assessed academic levels. This practice includes students working in groups or individually on assigned tasks. This allows multiple entry points into the curriculum and targets instruction of skills in need of improvement. This has led to noted gains in students' progress in literacy and math.
  - Teachers across the school provide useful oral and written feedback on student work products that includes specific comments for improvement. This practice promotes teacher-student interactions and student reflection on the levels and quality of the work to inform their next steps for continued development and noted academic growth.
- Teachers work in inquiry teams to share best practices, look at student work, analyze outcomes and plan instruction for target population students.
  - To monitor the needs of targeted students in English language arts, the inquiry team administered Acuity periodic assessments and conducted interclass observations to assess the use of team-developed strategies. As a result, the school has implemented strategies that include student use of graphic organizers for note taking and the "popsicle cue" to generate student participation. This has increased the number of students actively engaged in lesson activities that enhance learning.
  - In response to analysis of summative and formative classroom data in English language arts and student work at team meetings, teachers have developed a universal protocol for the development of vocabulary that has promoted higher levels of oral language usage for all students.

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

- Deepen the delivery of rigorous standards based curriculum to ensure that all students make progress in their learning and achievement levels.
  - Higher order thinking skills strategies are visible in classrooms. However, this practice is not consistent throughout the school. In a few classrooms, student group assignments were rudimentary and did not generate thoughtful discussion, or depth in student work products, limiting creativity and achievement for some students.
  - While the school purchased laptops and there are computers in classrooms, computer tasks do not reflect refinement from student data and their integration into classroom activities is inconsistently used to challenge and engage a diversity of students.

- Extend the use of the observation tool to develop plans that support professional growth, improved instruction and student achievement.
  - Although the school provides a variety of professional development experiences, the activities do not differentiate consistently by need for new teachers. This reduces opportunities for staff members to strengthen skills that improve lesson delivery and increase student achievement
  - While the school leader conducts daily walkthroughs, the frequency and focus of observations for new staff are minimal. This limits opportunities for reflection on instructional skills and practices to enhance student understanding, learning and progress.
- Extend data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects to provide a complete picture of students' progress across all aspects of the school.
  - Classroom teachers gather and organize periodic and classroom assessments in data binders for all students. However, this practice is limited to English language arts at the school level. This hampers the school's ability to disaggregate the data to identify areas of strength and need for student sub-groups thus; diminishing opportunities to achieve instructional targets for all students and limiting the school's ability to evaluate and organize school-wide instructional programs in all content areas.
- Expand the evaluation of the school's curriculum and instructional practices in all content areas to ensure student progress.
  - The school analyzes data at cabinet meetings and teacher meetings to reflect on the success of instructional programs and resources. However, the school has not fully developed structures for gathering and analyzing the impact of school-wide programs and resources in science and social studies. This limits the school's ability to make adjustments that would enhance curricular coherence.
  - Although teachers regularly evaluate and adjust instructional practices based on student outcomes, the school has yet to develop a protocol for evaluating school-wide practices based on student data in all content areas. This hinders adjustments to improve instruction and maximize learning.
- Implement a clearly defined system that uses data to monitor the success of professional collaborations and development.
  - The school leader utilizes teacher meetings and other established structures to assess the success of teacher teams. However, the school has not yet fully developed a school-wide system to use quantifiable student results to measure the success of specific teams. This lessens the ability to monitor consistently the workings of numerous teams within the building.
  - Inquiry teams rotate leaders and encourage growth in all participants. However, the school is still developing structures with which to assess the success of support for distributive leadership and the levels of teacher growth. Consequently, gaps and strengths in the system are not readily diagnosed.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name:</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>