

Quality Review Report

2010-2011

Central Park East School

J.H.S. 013

**1573 Madison Avenue
Manhattan
NY 10029**

Principal: Jacob Michelman

Dates of review: February 3 - 4, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Luz T. Cortazzo

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Jackie Robinson is a middle school with 309 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 37% Black, 57% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. 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 school is proactive in identifying additional funding sources and, through collaborative process, makes effective decisions that support teaching and learning.
 - The principal's budgeting, coupled with staff input, results in strategic use of resources that support student learning. The administration ensures that teachers have multiple opportunities to meet, including common planning periods and bi-monthly inquiry team meetings in order to support data analysis and planning.
 - Teacher assignments are strategic. Additional content area teachers and City Year members push into classrooms two to four days a week to reduce the total teacher-student load, provide one-on-one interventions and share responsibility for meeting the needs of a manageable cohort of struggling students.
- Teams of teachers analyze formative and summative data to create a picture of students' areas of need.
 - A major focus for the administration is to increase the level of collaboration among teachers and their analysis of student writing as a tool for planning instruction. Horizontal and vertical teams meet bi-monthly to analyze common pieces of student work and use a protocol to facilitate instructional decisions. Teams use a rubric to support the discussion of student writings' strengths and weaknesses, identify next steps, which enables teachers to solidify instructional priorities for their target population and their individual classrooms.
 - Improving student proficiency in writing primarily on their answers to the short response questions is the focus of the inquiry work. The inquiry work within all three Academies have been driven the teacher exploration of best practices. A comparison of pre-and post assessments is showing student progression. This demonstrates shared accountability for student success, resulting in a good level of commitment to the school goals.
- Authentic professional collaboration within each academy encourages teacher leadership and is positively impacting teacher practice.
 - Teacher teams across grades and content areas consistently analyze student assessment data and student writing samples for their target population, resulting in the implementation of structures that enable them to share best practices, expand teaching skills and secure opportunities for personal growth. For example, the JRSA inquiry team analyzes student writing products and Acuity assessment data in order to note student progress and provide out of classroom intervention supports. Positive outcomes include improvements in student writing for the target population studied by the vertical team.

- Most teachers participate on a teacher team using an inquiry approach. Two monthly common planning periods allow teachers to meet in vertical teams to analyze current data, review student work, revise tasks and share strategies. Teachers take turns facilitating teacher teams and are empowered to be the key decision makers regarding actions that affect student learning.
- School leaders and faculty develop tools to organize data for making instructional decisions.
 - School leaders and team of teachers use tools which enable them to aggregate and organize data so that information about trends in student performance is accessible and useful for making instructional decisions. These tools are evident in the Inquiry team binders maintained by the vertical teams in the JRSA and Golden Falcon Academies. The information provided by these multiple sources allows teachers to revise and redefine the use of the school-wide writing process as well as provide continuity and consistency across grades for school writing expectations.
- Teams of teachers are consistently setting goals for students and are clear in providing the steps needed to make progress.
 - Each of the two inquiry teams observed use data to set goals for their 7th and 8th grade focus group for whom they are responsible. They set long-term and short term goals with benchmarks that are monitored four times a year. Consequently, the ability to monitor and provide interventions has led to success for the target population as evidence by the writing responses examined by the team.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine the curriculum emphasizing rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills for a variety of learners with different needs.
 - Although school leaders and staff develop curriculum maps designed to engage students in their learning, many teachers do not demonstrate the necessary skill level to adapt the curricula so that it challenges students performing at varied ability levels, especially students with disabilities and English language learners. Although the curriculum is designed to reflect key standards, faculty has not yet carefully integrated curricula across core subject areas. As a result, not all students are engaged in project – based learning. Moreover, performance based tasks are not uniformly rigorous to probe for deep understanding and application of learning across all content areas or grade levels so that every student is suitably challenged.
- Use the observation tool to ensure that teachers receive appropriate feedback and support to improve school-wide instructional practice.
 - There is little evidence of written observations, as only ten of twenty teachers have received a written observation thus far, and two new teachers have not been observed at all. The observation tool, a generic checklist, does not describe nor target required outcomes for students

based on data. This hinders the teachers' professional development as it relates to their performance as well as students' outcomes.

- Teachers have been given opportunities to attend professional development hosted by the cluster network as well as conferences of their own choice. However, there is not a formalized system for measuring the impact of these professional developments on student learning as the vast majority of teachers have not received formal observations nor received written feedback on their performance.
- Establish consistency of communication and ensure decision making processes across the school are transparent as a way to strengthen school culture for all constituents.
 - Parents express that a more precise feedback loop that include parents, would be helpful to them in supporting their children. Presently, parents receive monthly progress reports, but these reports do not offer detailed information regarding behavior, attendance, academic performance or next steps and often are left blank, hindering their usefulness as a tool for improvement.
 - Responding to last year's survey with high dissatisfaction among teachers and parents about their role in school decisions, the administration seeks opportunities for open discussion and communications with teachers. However, parents express that the school leadership provides limited opportunities for families to participate in school-decision making, hindering their opportunity to be actively involved in the school community.
- Identify effective student support services and collaborations to ensure that the personal, social, and emotional needs of students and families are met.
 - Although the principal has identified the child study team as an effective intervention tool to prevent disciplinary incidents, the school does not provide supports that enable faculty and staff to create a consistently safe and respectful culture. As a result, the school continues to experience a high number of incidents.
 - The school's partnerships are abundant; however, the school has not developed enough internal or external capacity to consistently support services for students and families leading to increased social and emotional growth for all students.
- Deepen differentiation of instruction so that all lessons engage all students and offer suitable challenge at their level.

Teaching strategies are differentiated in some classrooms. However some teachers do not consistently develop extensions to challenge higher achieving students, nor do they provide interventions for struggling learners so that they apply learning to new situations and further accelerate their own progress. This prevents students from engaging in the production of meaningful work products.

School name: Central Park East Junior High 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