

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Raphael Hernandez/Langston Hughes School

Elementary School 030

**144-176 128th Street
New York
NY 10035**

Principal: Teri Stinson

**Dates of review: April 4-5, 2011
Lead Reviewer: Christina M. Villavicencio**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Hernandez/Hughes is an Elementary school with 272 students from grade PK through grade 5. The school population comprises 3% White students, 46% Black students, 41% Hispanic students, 1% Native American students, and 8% multiracial students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 30% special education students. Boys, account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the 2009- 2010 school year was 92.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school leaders and teachers ensure the curriculum is coherent and engaging by preparing and designing lessons that support students for college readiness.
 - The school leaders provide support for teachers to enthusiastically collaborate in crafting a curriculum that best meets the needs of the students and is aligned to key State standards. Lessons are designed around the power standards in English language Arts (ELA) and Math. This practice supports students to engage in lessons that are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards which are rigorous and insightful for students and support increased performance.
 - Teachers share best practice and devote time in crafting tasks that challenge students' thinking. For example, they are beginning to embrace Depth of Knowledge (DoK) in order to infuse rigor into the curriculum and student engagement. As a result, students are starting to close the achievement gap as evidenced by the students' growth in writing and mastering higher reading levels.
- There is a strong emphasis on differentiated instruction so that every student has lessons tailored to their entry level in order to support grade level work.
 - The administration and teachers have a common belief on how best students learn that is reflected in the use of the workshop model. Teachers differentiate instruction for all learners and craft lessons that allow students of various academic needs to have access to a rigorous curriculum. In addition, they provide scaffolding lessons so that each student can participate in assigned tasks based on their level of achievement. Consequently, this has raised the level of engagement amongst students as evidenced in student work products.
- Teams of teachers gather and analyze classroom data on targeted students in order to identify needs and accelerate learning outcomes.
 - Teacher teams collectively gather and analyze summative and formative data for all students. They look for patterns, trends and gaps in subgroup populations that highlight areas of strengths and needs. As a result of this practice, they are designing common assessments that link their instruction to the specific needs of students. Consequently, teachers are identifying learning targets and are aligning their instructional strategies to the curriculum in order to support improvements in student learning outcomes.

- The school communicates high expectations to families and students that incorporate their engagement to increase learning outcomes.
 - The parent coordinator, School Leadership Team (SLT) and staff members provide information to parents through their Family Month activities calendar which include Family Reading Nights. Parents participate in workshops that are aligned to the English Language Standards curriculum with a strong emphasis in science. Consequently, this has decreased student absences and increased parent involvement.
 - Through learning walks in collaboration with the school cabinet, parents are mutually exchanging ideas, which they say makes them feel empowered as active member of the school body. In addition, parents are given school wide updates on summative and formative data with the intention to seek their opinions and feedback for next steps, which gives them a voice in the decision-making process.

- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions to support school wide instructional goals in order to meet the needs of all learners.
 - The school has allocated four coach positions (ELA, math, social studies and science) in order to support the instructional needs for all teachers by coaching, mentoring or modeling lessons for teachers. Thus, the science coach supports the classroom teacher and students during science instruction. This support yields positive results for the students.

- The school leaders and teachers teams effectively collaborate in aligning common assessments with the school curriculum through various professional development menus.
 - Weekly professional development is provided through the support of the Children First Network and America's Choice on the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards in mathematics and English Language Arts. As a result, teachers created a data binder aligned to the Common Core Standards as a resource to enhance their pedagogical practices in the delivery of rigorous lessons for all learners.
 - The school offers opportunities for weekend workshops that are geared toward improving teacher development and pedagogy. As of result, teachers have multiple opportunities to implement school-wide instructional decisions and have a voice in revising teaching practices that builds leadership and support students' academic growth.

Areas for improvement

- Develop a school wide teacher observation tool in order to clearly identify pedagogical needs to target professional growth for individual teachers.
 - While there is a system in place for conducting observations, the observational tool differs among administrators. The lack of a uniformed classroom observational tool limits the coherent identification of teacher needs in order to support a common instructional focus.
 - Although there are four content area coaches for teacher support the structure is not cohesive and systematic. Therefore, the alignment of teacher observation feedback with teachers' professional goals by all coaches limits the impact to improve professional growth and students' learning outcomes.

- Conduct a consistent analysis of the interim assessment benchmarks for English Language Learners in order to identify strengths and needs and instructional supports that improve learning outcomes.
 - Analyze English Language Learners' (ELL's) data for patterns and trends. The NYSESLAT is a summative assessment that measures the students' four modalities of English language acquisition. However, this data is not shared or used by teachers in order to plan and differentiate instruction for linguistically challenged students. As a result, students are not moving to the next proficiency level in a timely fashion.

- Expand the use of rubrics to evaluate student tasks that are aligned to the State standards and Periodic Assessments in order to track progress towards goals.
 - Rubrics are visible within the school. However, they are not task specific, and therefore, do not support students with the monitoring of their own learning goals, or provide support for next steps in their academic growth. Consequently, students are missing valuable feedback from their teachers which impacts their learning performance.
 - Parents are given feedback on their children's work via progress reports, but these reports are not consistent across the school. Thus, families are not provided with regular opportunities to support their children in meeting high academic and social emotional learning standards.

- Evaluate school curriculum maps across content areas to gauge the quality of instruction and the alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards to accelerate student learning.
 - Although the school has structures in place to evaluate ELA and math curriculum maps and revise instructional practices there is a lack of structures across all content areas. However, structures to evaluate organizational adjustments are lacking to support improvements in all

content areas. Consequently, this hinders the growth of cognitive and content based knowledge for all students.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Rafael Hernandez/Langston Hughes 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