

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Ann M. Short

Elementary School 146

**421 East 106th Street
New York
NY 10029**

Principal: Dr. Mona Silfen

Dates of review: October 27 - 28, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Luz T. Cortazzo

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Anna M. Short is an elementary school with 468 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 25% Black, 71% Hispanic, 1% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 35% English language learners and 46% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45 %. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is a safe place where students are engaged in learning and appreciate the high level of support they receive for their personal and academic development.
 - The school maintains a safe and respectful culture. Staff, parents, and students freely admit that the school is a safe haven where students' social-emotional and academic needs are readily addressed. Attendance is currently at 94.0%, and safety incidents are minimal, thus enabling students to focus on their academic growth. Students know that teachers and other staff members swiftly resolve conflicts and concerns. Students say that, "teachers care for us," and, "We go to Dr. Silfen because she handles problems nicely." Thus, all students know that there is someone there to help them. As a result, there is evidence of growth in students' self-esteem and development of leadership skills as noted in student meetings and interactions with staff.
- Skilled specialized support personnel and external partnerships ensure meeting the personal, social, physical, and emotional needs of students.
 - School guidance counselors and social workers provide well-delivered professional development to staff thus ensuring that they are better prepared to provide requisite supports for "challenging students". Partnerships such as focused collaborations with Ramapo for Children, Enact, Positive Behavior Intervention Systems, and the International center for the Disabled, integrate well with school-based supports throughout the school day to meet students' social-emotional needs in a cohesive manner through counseling services. These supports are deeply embedded in school culture and directly help students' value individual differences and increase their motivational levels leading to improved student outcomes in dealing with difficult situations.
 - Successful external affiliations such as with the 92nd Street Y, Yorkville Athletics program, Chess in Schools and Science Inquiry Club provide students with enriched learning about life skills, tolerance, and science and the environment.
- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the schools resulting in improved academic outcomes for students.
 - The principal's budgeting acumen, coupled with staff input, results in strategic use of resources. Teachers have multiple opportunities to meet, including daily common planning periods and frequent team meetings, in order to support data analysis and instructional preparation. A review of data revealed that a small number of students perform above grade level expectations. As a result, enrichment clubs offered during the morning extended-day program provide additional support leading to accelerating learning.
 - Grade-leader liaisons collaborate weekly with coaches and administrators to discuss and provide support for teacher teams that share the responsibility of meeting needs for targeted students.
- Teachers work effectively in collaborative teams to share good practice, develop tools to analyze data, plan instruction, and create intervention strategies as needed.

- The school has effective structures for teacher collaborations. Teacher teams create assessments aligned with the school's key chosen standards in math curricula. Teams conduct school-wide walkthroughs to identify trends and provide feedback on the effectiveness of curricular and instructional decisions, resulting in teachers planning for differentiated instruction.
- Teams of teachers consistently gather and analyze student work, Acuity results, as well as diagnostic pre-and post-unit assessment data at the school and grade level in order to identify trends and create a picture of individual student's strengths and areas of need. This collaborative approach at the team and classroom level ensures that students' next learning steps are addressed, and enables teachers to reflect on instruction and implement targeted strategies.
- Parents have many opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and monitor their progress through regular and open communication with administrators and staff.
 - A broad-based level of support results in the active involvement of parents on the school leadership team. Parents support before- and after-school programs and state that the staff listens to their "point of view".
 - A wide variety of information, including results from unit tests, ARIS parent training, homework, class assignments and testing data, enable parents to monitor their children's progress. As such, there is shared accountability for student success, resulting in a good level of commitment to school goals. Additionally, school events such as the First Annual Character Day, and monthly Family Fridays, provide opportunities for parents to engage in important school activities.

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 the school leaders and staff develop curriculum maps and pacing calendars designed to engage students in their learning, academic tasks that probe for deep understanding, application of learning, and promote rigorous habits, do not coherently extend across all classes or grade levels so that every student is suitably challenged.
- Design a uniform protocol for learning walks and observations that provide a common lens that evaluates teaching practices and identifies next steps.
 - School leaders periodically utilize protocols that focus on standards and adjust curricula to ensure instructional alignment in response to the needs of teachers. However, they are at the beginning stages of developing a common learning observation protocol that regularly monitors and evaluates teacher practices, supports coherent pedagogical practices, and supports accelerating student learning.
- Ensure tracking of learning goals through good use of a common assessment allowing for an understanding of patterns and trends of all relevant subgroups in order to take timely action.
 - The school has assessment tools that it utilizes to analyze student performance trends overtime. Data from the school's math baseline assessment informs instructional planning thus allowing administrators and staff to target probability

and statistics skills and provide student interventions. However, the school has not identified a common assessment to evaluate student progress across grades and for classes in order to take suitable action.

- The school uses a range of data to evaluate progress, and individual teachers use data at the classroom level to ensure students make progress. However, the school has not yet standardized a common assessment or feedback protocol to communicate results to students and parents. This leads to inconsistency in reporting information.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiating instruction to ensure that instruction provides entry points for learning activities matched to students' capabilities leading to high levels of engagement and extended thinking.
 - Although the school utilizes data to establish groups based on performance or skill, teaching practices across classrooms, and tasks assigned, are not sufficiently challenging or differentiated for all students, resulting in uneven levels of engagement. The delivery of instruction does not consistently provide early entry points suitable for all learners and questioning does not lead to high levels of student thinking.
- Refine action planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks for all plans to enable the principal and staff to modify goals and objectives in a timely manner in order to optimize the impact of actions and to celebrate successes along the way.
 - Currently, there is no transparent school-wide system for administration to measure and evaluate student progress toward interim goals, or identify areas where there is a need to modify plans. This is hindering the school's ability to ascertain specific areas where adjustments and improvement to curriculum and instructional strategies are essential to increase student achievement.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Ann M. Short	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