

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**The Tribeca Learning Center
Elementary School M150
334 Greenwich Street
New York, NY 10013**

Principal: Maggie Siena

**Dates of review: April 10-11, 2011
Lead Reviewer: Olga Maluf**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Tribeca Learning Center is an elementary school with 186 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 6% Black, 15% Hispanic, 62% White, 15% Asian, and 1% Native American students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 45% of the students enrolled and girls account for 55%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 95.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school embeds rigorous habits and high order thinking skills across the State standards aligned curricula leading to high student achievement and engagement.
 - School leaders and teacher teams developed an innovative and comprehensive inquiry-based interdisciplinary curriculum that includes the arts and sciences, across all grade levels, enabling children to experience a deep understanding of content through hands-on projects such as building set designs and authoring theater playbills. The school's emphasis on its key standards, such as a comprehensive school wide writing program and integrated math curriculum, fosters active student engagement and embeds higher order thinking experiences leading to a majority of students reaching their benchmark goals.
- Students demonstrate high levels of consistent engagement in instructional environments where pedagogy is differentiated to ensure students reach and surpass their grade-level benchmarks.
 - School personnel emphasize creativity, exploration, curiosity, and higher order thinking through project based and differentiated learning. Visiting artists integrate storytelling, opera, puppetry and architecture to the school's internal art and music program. Children engage in high interest science and social studies topics, such as snakes, primates, immigration, bridges. Units of study culminate twice a year with school wide presentations and discussion forums. Project learning enables students to develop increased conceptual understanding of complex topics and themes.
 - Across all classrooms, there is evidence of students working in differentiated groups with multiple entry points into the curriculum. Students actively engage in book talks, move to work stations, and have opportunities for extensions in activities with suitable support by their teachers, paraprofessionals, or peers, allowing for each student to meet or exceed their individual goal.
- The principal makes strategic and highly effective organizational decisions that impact on the curriculum and student learning so that academic achievement increases.
 - The principal created a technology/science cluster position that infuses technology into the science curriculum. Children create stop-action documentaries showing how baboons socialize and primates behave. Thus reading, writing, and technology are integrated allowing students to deepen their understanding of content material while using their developing technology skills with a clear and evident purpose.
 - The strategic decision in teacher assignments includes the placement of teacher's assistants so that class size is further reduced, allowing pedagogues to work with small groups of students around identified needs and provide enrichment. This results in students reaching or exceeding their individual benchmark goals.

- The school has a cohesive system to assess and analyze student data as the basis for developing and adjusting targeted differentiated instruction and task development so that student's educational goals are supported in a timely and effective manner.
 - Inquiry group members, through the *Learning Assessment* study group, develop expertise in designing assessments; additionally, teams of teachers and individual teachers consistently meet, formally and informally, to analyze summative and formative assessments, at weekly team meetings throughout the school year. Teachers effectively track student progress and identify strengths and needs of students that are aligned to student's SMART goals.
 - Teacher teams and individual teachers use periodic assessments to create common assessments, such as rubrics, in all subject areas for group and individual work that give a clear portrait of student mastery. Staff members use assessment data to strategically plan academic tasks, create suitable groups of students, such as the accelerated student math group, that works to deepen conceptual mathematical concepts, and design differentiated lessons for all, therefore supporting each student's individual learning goals.
- School leaders and staff effectively analyze a wide range of assessment data that guide student grouping decisions and informs instructional planning resulting in identifiable, rigorous, and specific student goals.
 - Teacher teams use a benchmark assessment system, running records, and teacher created formative assessments to consistently develop annual and interim class goals, group students, and discuss student progress. Teachers meet formally on a weekly basis and informally on a daily basis to discuss students' progress thereby promoting greater instructional focus and engagement.
 - Teams of teachers, inquiry group members, school leaders, and instructional coaches, consistently analyze the formative and summative assessment data, to ensure differentiation for all students is leading to improved student achievement and to develop individual student goals and educational benchmarks.
- School leaders and coaches consistently engage teachers in analyzing and reflecting on teacher practice leading to improved pedagogy.
 - Teachers develop rigorous and interdisciplinary inquiry and project based research assignments aligned with the school's key standards of writing and conceptual math that lead to a common instruction focus and a coherent school culture.
 - The school provides a variety of pedagogical supports, such as mentoring, coaching, intervisitations, and whole faculty study groups. These job-embedded professional development opportunities aligned with the identified key standards, and supported by the instructional leaders, coaches, and outside consultants, engage teachers in the reflection and refining of practice leading to increased teacher effectiveness.
- The school maintains effective structures for monitoring progress of school-wide and individual student goals leading to improved learning opportunities.
 - School leaders and staff engage in frequent evaluation of school goals and interim progress. Teachers and parents frequently revisit the school's goals and their effective implementation during monthly staff meetings and school leadership team (SLT) meetings. Teachers analyze and evaluate class goals and individual student

goals using formative and summative assessment data. This allows the school and teachers to revise and refine the stated goals with great specificity and precision.

- Teachers evaluate goals for all student groups and subsequently develop action plans based on identified needs. These identified needs have led to various inquiry study groups that look at deepening conceptual understanding and improving student achievement and engagement. Students are now more involved in thinking about their own learning and exploring concepts through hands-on projects.

What the school needs to improve

- Further expand opportunities, systems, and structures for all parents to engage in reciprocal discussions regarding student progress and next steps to ensure parental educational support.
 - The school provides parents with frequent formal and informal feedback on student progress. Although the student's level of achievement is clearly identified, concise next steps are not consistently provided thus hampering parental support.
 - Teachers and teams of teachers effectively analyze and develop student goals and action plans. While most students can articulate their individual goals, some are still not able to clearly articulate their next learning steps, thus minimizing those students' metacognitive domain.
- Further provide professional development opportunities to refine pedagogical and instructional innovations that lead to increased and more effective teacher leadership opportunities.
 - The school provides extensive professional development, through its coaches, consultants, and instructional leaders on student's capacity to think deeply and critically about a topic, read informational texts, and write for a variety of purposes. While the staff has been exposed to the evolving State standards, the pedagogical implications for instruction have not yet been fully addressed.
 - The school provides multiple opportunities for teachers to engage in leadership roles, such as inquiry team leaders, committee leaders, and SLT members. Yet, without explicitly developed facilitative skills, such as active listening techniques and adult group dynamics, expertise in the leadership cohort is hindered.
- Expand structures that evaluate the assessment and performance information so that adjustments are made to further enhance data and assessment systems.
 - School leaders, through the extended cabinet quarterly meetings, periodic staff and inquiry data meetings, and monthly SLT meetings, consistently and effectively evaluate the in-house structures for assessment, instruction, and student goal identification. Without a full transition of the evolving State standards into assessment practices a more coherent alignment between curricula and assessment procedures is impeded.
 - Parents value the multiple ways the school shares student data. While the school evaluates these communication structures through teacher/parent feedback surveys, SLT meetings, and anecdotal evidence, the performance information provided to parents struggles to reach its fullest potential. Without adjustments

that address more strategic ways to communicate next steps for student improvement, academic growth is hampered.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Tribeca Learning Center	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