



**Department of  
Education**

*Joel I. Klein, Chancellor*

**Quality Review Report  
Division of Performance and Accountability  
2010-2011**

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**School Name**

**06M189**

**2580 Amsterdam Avenue  
New York  
NY 10040**

**Principal: Theresa Luger**

**Dates of review: May 24 – 25, 2011  
Lead Reviewer: John P. O'Mahoney**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

PS 189M is an elementary school with 1083 students from pre-kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 0% Black, 97% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 42% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 94%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school is developing engaging and rigorous curricula which are aligned to Common Core State Standards and is accessible to all learners in the school community.
  - The school, with support of their Children’s First Network, is participating in a Common Core State Standards (CCSS) pilot focused on revising curriculum maps. Based on their study of CCSS and an analysis of the needs of their school; they have identified finding details and making elaborations as key standards to emphasize in reading and writing. Academic tasks are developed and the results are evaluated by Professional Learning Teams in the school to ensure they emphasize higher order thinking skills. This was evident in student work products, classroom visitations, and conversations with students and teachers. For example, a fourth grade science class was studying adaptation and focused on finding evidence and elaboration to support claims.
- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions which ensure alignment between the schools instructional goals and the learning needs of the students.
  - The principal has strategically used resources to establish a strong team which includes school based subject area experts, outside consultants such as Writing Matters and a data manager. The two on-site coaches meet with teachers to analyze data and plan instruction. The coaches also allow the school to provide professional development focused on evolving state standards at an enhanced pace. This is evident in the consistent alignment of lesson plans to key standards established by the school.
  - Teacher and student time is maximized in the classroom since all professional learning teams meet during common prep periods. The teacher teams are focused on gathering relevant data, including student work, and making instructional decisions based on it. This process led to the establishment of key standards in reading and writing which are consistently emphasized during classroom visits, student work products and lesson plans. Also, the extraordinary dedication of the staff allows the school flexibility in the school budget to offer before, after and Saturday school programs for at-risk students.
- The school has a safe and orderly environment where students are well-known, allowing them to be highly engaged in their learning and to strive for success.
  - The parents and students agree that the school leadership has established a safe and orderly environment which allows the students to concentrate on school work and not, as one parent said, on “the nonsense” that occurs elsewhere. This is evident in the small number of student suspensions over the past three years.
  - The school has a developed an initiative which allows students to have a voice in major decisions effecting school organizational and instructional decisions. For example, the student leadership team developed a recycling plan for the

school which has been connected to more engaging classroom work in English and science courses.

- The school leadership has established a clear set of goals which are based in data and are understood and supported by the entire school community.
  - The principal and the cabinet work closely with the School Leadership Team to analyze all available data including state assessments, school based interim assessments, student work, and classroom observations. This data is used to establish a clear and concise set of goals. After careful analysis of the data listed above it was established that grades four and five needed to focus more on critical thinking in reading and writing. Student writing samples show an increase in critical thinking skills from September 2010 to May 2011.
  - Families and faculty play an active role in shaping and promoting the school wide goals. Teachers and parents can articulate the schools goals established for writing and critical thinking and discussed how they had emphasized the use of details and elaboration in writing which leads to a committed school community focused on the needs of the school.
- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in the work of Professional Learning Teams (PLT) using an inquiry approach to promote teacher leadership and improve student outcomes.
  - During team meetings, teachers establish roles and objectives for the meeting and the year. They actively engage in looking at data and/or student work in which leads to higher levels of discourse around pedagogical or curriculum level changes that may be necessary. In the grade five professional learning team, teachers analyzed multi-digit multiplication problems given in January and again in March to see if progress was made with the group of at risk students with whom they work. Ninety percent of the at-risk students showed improvement in multi-digit multiplication after intervention strategies were introduced by members of the professional learning team.
- The school strategically uses child and youth development resources and has established partnerships with external organizations in order to support families in accelerating the academic and personal growth of students.
  - The school has three full-time guidance counselors and one Substance Abuse Prevention Intervention Specialist to address the social and emotional needs of the students. The administration has established systems of communication between the pupil personnel providers and classroom teachers so that students not making progress either academically, socially or emotionally are noticed and appropriate interventions are implemented.
  - Through partnerships with Apple Corps, Morgan Stanley Child Hospital, and the Manhattan District Attorney's office; the school offers workshops on topics such as cyber bullying to parents, students, and staff. These external partnerships ensure that all members of the community have access to information needed to successfully navigate their world at school as well as the community in which they live.

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

- Ensure that pedagogy is developed from a consistent set of beliefs of how students learn best to ensure that lessons are differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work.
  - While the school determines student reading groups using Fountas and Pinnell reading levels, in the majority of classrooms teaching strategies were not differentiated beyond this type of homogeneous grouping. Tasks and texts were not consistently differentiated to meet student needs. As a result, not all students have access to the level of task and/or text they need in order to meet the goals of the curriculum.
  - There is a standards based, vertically aligned curriculum that is being updated to align with the Common Core State Standards. However, tasks across classes are insufficiently differentiated and lack a high degree of rigor to enable students to produce high volumes of quality of work.
- Align summative, formative and classroom level assessments to curriculum and use the data to adjust instructional decisions for Professional Learning Teams and at the classroom level.
  - The school gathers a plethora of data to set goals and shares it with the staff. However, the data is inconsistently used in making instructional decisions at the team or classroom level limiting the ability to develop a clear picture of a student's strengths and areas for improvement to appropriately differentiate instruction.
  - Professional Learning Teams have developed writing rubrics which are aligned to Common Core State Standards and begun to implement them throughout the school. However, teams currently do not use the rubrics to compare writing samples from grade to grade or class to class to ensure scoring consistency throughout the school.
- Develop a system for measuring instructional effectiveness which is directly connected to student outcomes to elevate school wide practice and promote professional growth and reflection.
  - Teacher performance evaluation decisions are made through classroom observations. However, written feedback is inconsistent and often not timely. This does not allow teachers to make the necessary adjustments in their craft to increase student outcomes.
  - Opportunities for professional growth are available to the entire staff and new teachers receive the mandated mentoring but there are very few opportunities for differentiated support for staff members based on individual needs.
- Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with students and families to ensure that the entire school community is aware of the students' next learning steps.
  - The administration, teachers and teacher teams have access to multiple forms of formal and informal data, but there is no formal process for evaluating the usefulness of data sets to influence instructional planning to meet the needs of all students.

- The mid-year progress report is highly acclaimed by the parents, however, they would like more consistent communication about their child's progress and would like to be able to share the needs of their child with the school.

### Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: PS 189M	UD	D	P	WD
<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>	

**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