

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

East Village Community School

Elementary School 315

**610 East 12 Street
New York
NY 10009**

Principal: Robin Williams

Dates of review: month June 1 - 2, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Daniella Phillips

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

East Village Community School is an elementary school with 181 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 20% Black, 32% Hispanic, 35% White, and 13% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 93.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school excels at knowing each child well and offers very good supports so that students develop as respectful, confident learners.
 - Staff training in *Responsive Classrooms* and *Schools Attuned* has produced strong consistency across classes in rituals and routines. All teachers use strategies that help students build academic and social-emotional competencies through modeling, positive language, choice, and logical consequences. As a result, 100% of teachers report on the *School Survey* that students and parents treat them with respect, and 100% of parents affirm a mutual respect from teachers to students. In addition, very small class size and an expanded Collaborative Team Teaching program means that each teacher takes direct responsibility for coordinating youth development concerns for a small cohort of students. This focus on knowing students well results in low incidence of student conflicts and individualized approaches to support student growth.
- Teachers work exceptionally well in collaborative teams sharing best practices and relevant research that benefits students' learning.
 - All teachers voluntarily stay after school weekly for two hours of professional development and they participate in grade-level and inquiry teams which engenders a high level of professional discourse among faculty. The gender inquiry team, for example, has studied poor achievement by boys in reading and math and boys' increased at-risk behaviors. The team's careful review of student work, student interviews, performance trends, and research in the field of gender studies has led to significant adjustments over the past two years. For instance, teachers re-allocated books in classroom libraries that appeal to boys, they modified Teachers College reading and writing curricula to include open genre units of study, and they added supervised recess play time daily before school. These changes help account for a steep rise in boys' achievement as 63% of boys scored at levels 3 and 4 on the State English Language Arts exam in 2010 compared to 44% in 2008.
- School staff involve parents as full partners in key policy and program decisions which reinforces this vibrant, cohesive community.
 - Parents actively engage with school leaders and faculty in key decisions, such as the selection of music program partnerships and conversion to recycled trays in the cafeteria. This collaboration results in a strong shared commitment to school goals. The school leadership team administers surveys to families four times a year which then guides school staff on a number of issues. Staff encourage parent involvement in students' learning with meaningful and regular communication, as well as hands-on projects. This year, parents, students, and staff proudly collaborated in performing and producing a multicultural CD, "Songs from the East Village," which celebrated children and adults learning together.

- Resources of all types are harnessed effectively to improve student learning.
 - With a limited infusion of funds, the school has leveraged a technology initiative that has simplified access to student achievement data through Googledocs and made delivery of instruction more visually interesting and engaging. For instance, interactive white boards were added to all upper elementary classrooms with good evidence that teachers use them to deepen students' interest in and understanding of topics.
 - The majority of classes at this school are co-taught in the integrated collaborative teaching (ICT) model. School leaders invest significant resources in this model, including targeted professional development, which results in high levels of teacher collaboration and in-depth knowledge of each student.
- School leaders prioritize the observation of classroom teaching with frequent, constructive feedback and professional development that strengthens teaching practices.
 - Teachers receive regular feedback from administrators through a well-organized system of formal and informal observations. This year, school leaders introduced teacher evaluation rubrics with focus on delivery of instruction and classroom management, which clarified to good extent teachers' understanding of expectations in these areas. School leaders have used a range of observational data, student performance, and work products to make strategic evaluation and retention decisions.
 - School leaders encourage teacher leadership by drawing on their expertise to build capacity, especially with new teachers. For example, three teachers in the school received training as *Schools Attuned facilitators* and now coach and support other staff. Moreover, many teachers visit each other's classrooms as "critical friends," a practice that encourages professional growth and reflection among all teachers.
- Teachers use student assessment data wisely so that instructional planning meets students' needs.
 - With good consistency, teachers review results from State tests, interim assessments, and student work products and then plan instruction and guided group work from this data. Teachers balance well predictive data with student work samples and classroom assessments in their planning and goal setting for students. This year, teachers developed individualized packets of practice questions and work for students in extended day that has resulted in efficient gains in skills for the most struggling students. Through their involvement in designing periodic assessments, teachers have developed expertise in gauging students' learning achievement which has led to improved targeted instruction.

What the school needs to improve

- Raise expectations for task complexity and writing across content areas to challenge students at higher levels.

- Students did poorly last year in writing constructed responses to questions on the State English language arts test, so school staff wisely identified expository writing as a focus for improvement. Teachers have taken steps to emphasize writing as a key standard and adjust curricula plans, yet students have limited understanding of what expository writing is, what genres it includes, and insufficient examples of challenging writing assignments across content areas. Teachers administer on-demand assessments in writing and have a writing rubric as a common lens for evaluating students' work. However, more work is needed to share mentor texts and, thereby, elevate expectations for writing across grades and content areas.
- Monitor closely students' learning and progress in science and social studies to improve consistency across grades.
 - This year teachers have developed unit assessments in science and social studies, but they are not integrated well with learning in other subject areas. A notable exception is the interdisciplinary and in-depth learning about local New York City history and waterways in third grade. Therefore, inconsistent instruction and assessment in science and social studies limits students' ability to make meaningful connections in their learning across content areas. The school is developing review structures to evaluate and adjust curricular and organizational decisions, with implementation of "Tools of the Mind" in pre-kindergarten as a prime example. This initiative stemmed from careful review of student achievement data, whereas the science and social studies curricula also require similar analysis for school improvement planning.
- Deepen the rigor in differentiating instruction so that questioning and tasks better meet the needs of higher performing students.
 - Students appear highly motivated and sufficiently engaged in class as they learn individually, within small groups, and in whole class settings. There is good attention to multiple learning styles, as teachers vary instruction for visual, auditory, and kinesthetic preferences. For example, drama and visual art feature prominently in teaching social studies content. Teachers differentiate across classrooms, especially in varying questions, using scaffolds, and planning for multiple learning styles. However, there is a lack of altered assignments or extensions for higher performing students which may account for this group's substantial declining scores on State exams.
- Refine expectations for teacher feedback on students' writing to make clear next steps for learning.
 - Teachers confer regularly with students in class and provide useful feedback via rubrics evaluating student work and extensive narrative reports to families. However, the lack of detail in teachers' comments regarding next steps for improvement prevents students from advancing in their learning in significant ways. Teachers keep good track of students' progress on unit and periodic assessments and leverage this data for targeted interventions and next step conferences.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: East Village Community 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