

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**Elementary School M325
500 west 138 Street
Manhattan
NY 10031**

Principal: Gary Cruz

**Dates of review: November 15 - 16, 2010
Lead Reviewer: Martha Madera**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School M325 is an elementary school with 384 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 5% Black, 91% Hispanic, 3% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 56% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 93%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school maintains a safe and orderly environment that is conducive to student and adult learning.
 - The staff encourages high expectations for all students and is committed to achieving the school's goals of continuous improvement. During "Meet the Teacher Night", parents receive the school's discipline code to insight their support and ensure it is strictly adhered to. Students attend conflict resolution sessions provided by the school's substance abuse prevention and intervention specialist ensuring that students acquire skills necessary to maintain a culture that is conducive to learning.
 - The principal uses feedback from the Learning Environment Survey, analysis of academic data and attendance reports to refine the school's three tier intervention programs to support academic and social-emotional growth. Teachers know their students well and as a result make referrals to the guidance counselor and the school based support team as needed. This school wide intervention process promotes a positive environment of respect and academic growth.
- The school uses tools to organize data so teachers can track and analyze student progress, in order to support the instructional needs of all students.
 - The school evaluates a wide range of data to monitor the acquisition of identified key State standards. Using an excel spreadsheet; data is entered into a school wide tracking system that provides teachers with information regarding student mastery of a specific standard. Teachers adjust instruction based on the analysis of the data, in order to address students' instructional needs and support their academic progress.
 - Using the school's data trackers in literacy and mathematics, teacher teams review data to monitor students' progress and identify trends in classrooms and across the grade. This data is stored in flash drives for review by administrators who support teachers with resources to ensure students reach mastery of identified instructional skills.
- The school provides opportunities for families to be involved in school-wide decision making that support students in meeting school standards and expectations.
 - Parents appreciate the schools' open door policy and state that teachers are available to meet with them to discuss their children's learning needs. In addition to regular report cards, parents receive monthly student profiles which highlight the students' academic and social performance, and the parent coordinator provides training in the use of ARIS so that parents are equipped to assist their children at improving their academics.
 - Parents serve alongside staff as equal partners on the school leadership team. This has resulted in parents initiating and spearheading a proposal that has been approved to create a middle school in their campus. This school will secure P.S. 325's educational mission of ensuring students continue to

close the achievement gap using a curriculum that supports college readiness expectations.

- Teachers are engaged in structured professional collaboration on teams, using an inquiry approach to support improvements in student learning.
 - Teachers meet by grade to plan lessons, review data and log new assessment results into the school's data tracking system which provides them with information on students' skill mastery and facilitates the identification of grade level trends. As a result, teachers develop strategies and approaches that have proven effective in working with their struggling students.
 - Distributed leadership is supported across the teams as identified lead teachers coordinate meetings ensuring that the team's focus is maintained. Teachers review student work together and have developed rubrics that provide students with meaningful feedback, in order to improve learning outcomes across the grades.
- The school's multiple partnerships support students and families during the day and after school which enhance the academic and personal growth of students.
 - The school has reviewed attendance, behavioral and academic data in order to establish partnerships with outside organizations that best meet the need of its student population. In collaboration with these partners teachers are provided with professional development opportunities that allow them to link curricular with after school enrichment programs in order to promote students' social and academic development. America Scores and ASPIRA are two programs that provide students with opportunities to participate in dance, band, theater, sports, arts and craft and guitar playing. Parents report that these activities extend their children's' learning experiences and allows them to advance in their work.
- The school has structures to evaluate and adjust the ways in which data is aggregated and organized to ensure coherence of practice across the school.
 - Teacher teams have begun to integrate the evolving state standards into their curriculum and have developed common teaching strategies to improve student outcome. As a result, this work has increased collaboration allowing for a culture of data-driven instructional planning.
 - To support a coherent system of ongoing assessment and progress monitoring, the school replicated its EXCEL Math Tracking System to create Literacy Tracker. Teachers assess what students have learned and plan lessons that meet their learning needs. Students receive feedback on their progress during conferences with teachers and in their monthly student profile reports which are sent home to parents to ensure they support the students' academic success.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop academic tasks aligned to the curriculum that emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills, in order to elevate student performance.

- After reviewing the State data, the school revamped its curriculum maps to incorporate key standards and better address the needs of students. However, pedagogy and instructional practice across the grades are not aligned to the curriculum to meet individual students' needs. Lessons delivered are generic, leading to a general level of student engagement that limit students' abilities to engage in higher level learning.
- Teachers meet in grade level teams to review curriculum and analyze data in order to identify strategies that meet the needs of students. However, rigorous habits and higher order skills are not yet embedded across all classrooms and content areas. As a result, students are not challenged in their thinking to increase learning outcomes.
- Enhance lessons that offer differentiated learning opportunities, so that students have multiple entry points into the curricular.
 - Evidence of differentiation is sporadic and inconsistent across the grades. Lessons are generally teacher directed and do not always reflect the use of data to support struggling learners at their instructional levels. As a result, the needs of all students are not being met.
 - In Collaborative Team Teaching classes lessons to address the needs of sub groups are typically conducted in small group. However, there is little evidence that data is used strategically to plan differentiated lessons that address students' skill levels. As a result, students are left unchallenged and disconnected from the task, which hinders academic growth.
- Refine organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals in order to better meet students learning needs.
 - Although the school has hired a math and literacy coach to support the schools' instructional goals, teachers do not receive additional support in these areas to plans for the needs of struggling learners. As a result students are not engaged in challenging instruction to meet their needs.
 - To reduce student teacher ratio one additional staff member is assigned to work with the classroom teacher during the literacy and mathematics block. However, there is no time allocated to support collaborative planning for targeted students. As a result, student tasks are not refined to meet their needs. Thus, academic growth is limited.
- Align assessments with the school's chosen standards and curriculum, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of classroom level instruction.
 - Teachers analyze data to identify students' needs and use assessments that is aligned to key standards. However, teams are just beginning to develop common assessments to better support adjustment of curriculum and instructional decisions. As a result, the school cannot yet identify areas for improvement to differentiate instructional strategies.
 - Classroom teachers review student work to track progress and alignment to Periodic assessments. However, this practice has not yet lead to the alignment of lessons that meet individual students' needs and acquisition of grade level curriculum goals

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: M325	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