



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Children's Workshop School

Elementary School 361

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

Principal: Maria Velez-Clarke

**Dates of review: June 1 – 2, 2011
Lead Reviewer: Gwendolyn Stephens**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Children's Workshop School is an elementary school with 261 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 11% Black, 34% Hispanic, 36% White, and 14% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and staff communicate high expectations to the school community about attendance, and academic performance that positively impacts student achievement.
 - The school communicates high expectations through assemblies, celebrations, parent breakfasts, informative workshops and parent orientation meetings. Parents participate on the School Leadership Team (SLT) and there is an active parent association. Additionally, parents attend sessions on the curriculum goals, to understand how to meet the school's expectations. These various structures offer families opportunities to participate in school activities that support them as key partners in their children's education. This results in shared commitment to high expectations in accomplishing the school's goals.
- The school has created a safe and personalized environment that fosters a climate of mutual respect and trust to support adult and student learning.
 - Professional development to create a culture of mutual respect and safety focuses on teacher's personalization of learning for students to support high achievement and social emotional growth. Students' comment that, "Everyone knows everyone and all the teachers support us. We get a chance to say what we like and the school listens". An analysis of attendance data led to a 92.0% attendance rate in the 2009-2010 school year. Teachers receive training in Anti-bullying strategies as well as understanding developmental targets for multi-aged groups. Improved attendance rates, and the large numbers of students who stay in the school from Pre- through grade 5 demonstrate the investment in the school and focus on improving learning outcomes.
- Teachers meet on teams in which they review students' work and analyze data in order to make adjustments to the curriculum and teaching practices that improve learning outcomes and build leadership capacity.
 - The new vertical planning team enthusiastically focuses on revisions to the English language arts, and social studies curriculums. Teachers collaborate in reviewing student work along with summative and Periodic Assessment data to create an understanding and coherence between what is taught, and how it is taught. This results in effective vertical changes in the curriculum, pacing calendars and instructional strategies that support student achievement.
 - Capacity building is reinforced through the school wide teacher team structure which has a new team. Teachers are self-directed as they engage in the inquiry process making recommendations to the administration on adjustments to teaching practices and curriculum that support students' learning needs. Consequently, teacher leaders are in place to support student improvements.

- The principal aligns the budget, resources, space and schedule in a challenging financial climate to meet learning needs aligned to the school's instructional goals which drives positive student outcomes.
 - The principal and her team evaluated the school's needs and allocated resources aligned to instructional goals. This includes the addition of a Reading Recovery teacher, funding for substitute teachers to provide coverage for teachers to attend professional development and an additional period that maximizes teacher collaboration on teacher teams. These decisions have enabled the school to continue practices that support improved outcomes.
 - Housed in a building with three other schools, the Children's Workshop School (CWS) occupies two designated floors. Student movement throughout the building is minimal and teachers on each teacher team are in close proximity to each other with a hub being the newly built library and media center, which facilitates their collaboration around student work. The strategic location of the school within the building results in better communication across the multi-age classrooms and supports more time for student engagement.
- The school's curriculum emphasizes key State standards and offers a wide range of rich integrated experiences to fully engage students and support their learning in all content areas.
 - The school uses newly revised curriculum maps and units of study that integrate the genres of visual and performing arts across subject areas to ensure the delivery of engaging lessons aligned with State standards. The curriculum's emphasis on writing development is reinforced across all subject areas to increase curricular alignment. Students use writing in a sophisticated range of skills from logs to investigations and detailed projects. One such interdisciplinary project is the Martin Luther King (MLK) Honoring the Dream. Detailed tasks, rubrics, and exemplar models are also developed to emphasize rigorous habits. As a result, classrooms and hallways reflect high quality student work products and engaging experiences that reflect increased learning outcomes.
- Teaching practices align to the curriculum and provide routines that lead to student engagement and match student-learning needs to create opportunities for student's success.
 - Teachers share a belief that students achieve and learn best when taught to be independent, critical and innovative thinkers. Classroom opportunities nurture their curiosity and creative thinking. This is apparent in upper grade math classrooms where detailed investigations are logged into journals and students explore complex solutions to math problems.
 - In a 5th grade science class on the continental drift (Pangaea) students interacted among 4 different stations providing them opportunities to test their knowledge and engage in hands-on experiments that included differentiation in process and product. Such school-wide practices have resulted in improved scores on NY State science assessments.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen classroom level data analysis on student learning in order to adjust instructional decisions that improve learning outcomes.
 - There is a range of academic levels within each classroom in CWS. The classes are multi-aged and not grade specific. Teachers analyze student work and data to determine strategies to address engagement and make instructional decisions. However, at this time instructional strategies do not consistently engage all students in sub-groups populations or some individual students' specific ability levels. Consequently, not all students have opportunities to work at their instructional levels in order to improve.
 - Teacher teams gather data and analyze instructional practices to align assessments to create a picture of individual strengths and areas of need. However, assessment alignment is not always implemented by all teachers in every content area. This lessens opportunities to address the needs of targeted students across all subject areas in order to improve student performance.
- Enhance processes to track progress toward data-driven student goals to meet individual and sub-group instructional needs and share feedback toward progress with families to improve performance.
 - The school is not consistently using data to track progress of individual and subgroups of students towards articulated goals. Consequently, adjustments needed to identify next steps for improvements are not made.
 - Conferences and anecdotal progress reports are provided to most families regarding student progress. However, providing feedback to all students and parents based on specific data targets is uneven across the school. This results in missed opportunities to identify pathways that allow students to make progress toward their goals.
- Unify observations tools to provide all teachers with feedback that promotes a clear instructional focus, on-going reflection and shared expectations for effective pedagogy and student accountability.
 - The administrative team uses various observational tools to conduct informal and formal observations to provide feedback to teachers that align with targeted professional development. However, the lack of a common lens to conduct observations does not allow the team to monitor and strengthen key instructional practices across the school aligned to articulated goals in order to strengthen professional growth and support tenure decisions for school wide improvements in student performance.
- Ensure that the school wide goals include precise interim and long-term measurable outcomes that promote greater accountability in meeting benchmarks and sustaining progress.
 - School leaders have a long-term plan for school goals as noted in the Comprehensive Education Plan. However, the school is developing structures with timeframes to review measurement towards the goals throughout the year for the purpose of revision and adjustment. The lack

of benchmarks at this time causes lost opportunities to refine achievement based on formative and summative assessments.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Children's Workshop 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