

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Edward Hart School

Elementary School Q021

**147-36 26th Avenue
Flushing
NY 11354**

Principal: Debra Buszko

Dates of review: November 15-16, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Sheryl L. Watkins

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Edward Hart School is an elementary school with 1056 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 2% Black, 26% Hispanic, 13% White, and 57% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 96%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Students benefit from standards-based curricula, including art and technology that supports learning.
 - Based on the analysis of data, the school's focus is on writing across content areas. The application of Teacher's College reading and writing units of study and the Everyday math implementation supports this focus across all grades. Additionally, cluster and special program teachers including the performing arts staff and science lab reports show evidence of students' focus on writing. As a result, students demonstrate high levels of engagement and produce rigorous products such as their on-demand writing assessments and displayed work products.
- The principal has created a learning community that is focused on student outcomes with a vision to accelerate learning.
 - A comprehensive review of the school's data by administrators, teachers and parents, including the learning environment survey, summative and periodic assessment data informed the development of the school-wide goals. Members of the school community are able to articulate these goals, and work collaboratively to achieve them. This is demonstrated in the provision of websites and take-home work as resources for families to use with their children to supplement classroom instruction. As a result, the school, as a whole, is making strides in focusing instruction on the overall data-driven targeted areas for student achievement.
- The principal and staff work as a unified team to create a respectful and orderly environment for learning to take place.
 - The school's mantra of "Be Respectful, Be Responsible, Be Kind" permeates the building. Administrators consistently model these character traits in all interactions with staff, students and families. Students report that knowing and living these expectations ensure they can focus on their learning.
 - Under the leadership of the school's sole guidance counselor, students are trained to resolve student-to-student challenges through peer mediation. This fosters active participation in the school community, as well as promoting personal social/emotional growth. As a result, strong relationships among the school community, as well as adult and student supports, assures that, wherever possible, obstacles to student learning are overcome.
- Staff gathers a range of relevant data across key subject areas to understand students learning needs.
 - The administration and staff gather summative and periodic student data in English language arts, often broken down through item analysis. This provides the school with an overarching view of student strengths and challenges. As a result, there is deeper instructional focus on identified areas for improvement.
 - The school routinely gathers summative and formative information on student learning which provides them with an overview of students' strengths and areas

of need. For example, the unified math program assessments allow for ongoing review of student performance. This information has identified problem solving as a trend that impedes student performance. Strategies for embedding more focused instruction, such as the problem of the day in this area have provided students with more opportunities to practice these skills. The school is beginning to see an improvement in unit tests in math where problem solving is a component.

- The school has good communication systems for keeping parents informed of school activities and student progress, resulting in positive partnerships between school and home.
 - Parents appreciate the multiple levels of communication such as a phone messaging system, parent newsletters, the school's instructional newsletter, "Bridges", e-mail and the ongoing reciprocal communication they have with administration and teachers. As a result, parents report that their voice allows them to be "part of the solutions" for their children's achievement, not "part of the problem."
 - Students are often engaged in reflective practices, where they self-assess their own progress. For example, the provision of check lists to apply to their work enables them to determine if they "got it" or "need help". This assures that they can focus on developing those competencies that promote higher levels of achievement.
- The cabinet works cohesively to review and analyze summative data to guide decisions related to student assignments.
 - A detailed analysis of summative data, including lower grade performance, is shared with teachers and faculty, and parents, during parent leadership forums. Often there is a lens towards teachers' individual impact on student learning. Data for last year's class demonstrates teachers' impact on past student growth. This allows for their reflection on past instruction, and promotes their professional advancement. In addition, this information serves as a guide in the decisions at the end of the school year to generate class placements for the upcoming school year.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the practice of using periodic and classroom assessment data to differentiate learning activities to assure that all students are appropriately challenged.
 - The school reviews a wide range of data, including, but not limited to running records, periodic assessments, unit test in math and State exams. This provides them with an understanding of who the students are as learners and what they know. Teachers work to develop practices aligned to the school's beliefs regarding how students learn best; in order to be successful, they must have opportunities to engage in accountable talk, have multiple opportunities to be successful, and receive positive reinforcement for their accomplishments. However, teaching practices do not yet demonstrate targeted instruction based on academic strengths or areas of need. This limits all students from opportunities to engage in higher levels of thinking, including key subgroups.

- Deepen and systematize the organization and analysis of data to assure that instructional practices demonstrate closer alignment with student performance information in order to assure progress for all subgroups of students.
 - Teachers collect ongoing data during individual and small group conferencing. Most teachers consistently collect data; however, the analysis of this data is not consistent across all classrooms and grades. Also, the reliability in the systems used by teachers to manage information during conferencing is disjointed, ranging from consistent formats to recording overarching noticings, primarily in end of unit assessments. This prevents teachers from monitoring student progress for subgroups or having the ability to guide instruction for individual or groups of students.
 - The instructional programs in literacy and math provide cohesive assessments for teachers to understand the performance of their students. While teachers analyze classroom level data, such as the required on-demand writing assessments which complement the school-wide writing program, there is little evidence of the impact of data analysis on classroom instruction. This limits teachers' ability to select or design assessments that can be used to effectively revise curriculum and instruction.
- Strengthen the alignment of resources to school-wide goals in order to ensure that organizational decision-making supports higher levels of student and adult learning.
 - The school maintains professional relationships with a professional development partner to support literacy. Recent reorganization of staff due to funding constraints has necessitated the placement of teachers who were formally in coaching positions in classrooms. These skilled specialists' programs include several open periods a week, intended to support their colleagues. What is currently absent is targeted consistent support for individual or groups of staff members. This limits the school's ability to build capacity in all teachers, specifically related to differentiated instruction, limiting the acceleration of this school-wide goal and assisting teachers in developing multiple opportunities to provide all students with engaging and challenging academic tasks in order to develop higher order thinking skills.
- Align the formal and informal observation practices to school goals and expectations to ensure that there is a common lens with which to evaluate teaching practices and provide next steps for teachers, in order to promote increased student achievement.
 - A vast majority of staff engage in inquiry work as an alternative to formal observations. Formal and informal observations of newer teachers allow administration to determine fidelity to instructional beliefs such as the workshop model and accountable talk. However, observational practices used, systems for teacher feedback, and subsequent supports provided are not differentiated to meet the needs of teachers along the continuum of development. This limits the monitoring of teacher growth and pedagogical practice for all staff members.

School name: The Edward Hart 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			X	

learning?							
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