

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Bay School

Elementary-Middle School Q105

**420 Beach 51 Street
Queens
NY 11691**

Principal: Laurie Shapiro

Dates of review: February 3- 4, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Bay School is an elementary-middle school with 961 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 62% Black, 34% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's skillful and comprehensive organizational decisions provide a full range of supports for students that result in steady and continuous positive student outcomes.
 - The principal clearly articulates significant structures that need to be maintained to ensure the goals are continuously addressed. The principal continues to fund instructional coaches, who consistently share their expertise in literacy and math with staff that promote improved student learning outcomes. All teachers receive an additional preparation period each week to engage in professional development and collaboratively analyze data. In response to the need to improve the performance of English language learners, an additional teacher was hired. As a result, students demonstrate improved literacy performance in reading during small learning groups and make progress towards the goals.
- The school provides a rich and varied curriculum that is aligned to key standards and includes the arts in order to challenge and engage all learners.
 - Teachers use pacing calendars and curriculum maps that align with the New York City's scope and sequence and the Common Core State Standards are integrated in the English language arts and math curriculum. The school has identified key writing standards and aligned them with writing rubrics in all grades. As a result, data indicates that students are producing stronger writing products and making continuous progress in areas such as math and vocabulary. In a grade 4 science class, students are engaged in an interactive group activity to identify various ways to illuminate a light bulb. Science projects on electricity and the human body, integrate key art elements, such as shapes, form and colors, and help students produce three dimensional creations. Consequently, students are challenged and the school's annual science targets are met.
- The school uses a variety of purposeful evaluation tools to closely monitor the effectiveness of staff and provide information regarding next steps for professional development to promote better student outcomes.
 - Teacher observations are aligned to the goals and ongoing professional development opportunities, such as inter-visitations and one-on-one coaching sessions, to strengthen teachers' pedagogical habits. For example, teachers engage in development that focuses on improving their questioning techniques based on Bloom's Taxonomy. As a result, teachers across the school push students' thinking by asking *what if* questions during instruction to increase student engagement. Coaches work collaboratively with the school's support organization to ensure that optimal professional development opportunities are afforded to all teachers in the new core standards. Their work results in task specific rubrics that support students' writing across all grades.
- School leaders and faculty engage in regular analysis of a wide range of data that informs them of students' strengths and weaknesses so that instructional practices are adjusted.

- Second grade teachers observed that their students did not make sufficient phonic and vocabulary progress in the previous year. The entire grade presently streams three times a week in literacy and students are effectively placed in one of five distinct small groups based on individual need. As a result, the program's assessment inventory Lexile scores show improved student outcomes.
- Grade 8 teachers meet regularly and meticulously analyze the previous Regents exam questions to create assessments that replicate questions found on the Earth Science and Social Studies Regents. As a result, students who continue to struggle receive customized academic intervention services in order to improve their performance.
- The highly focused work of teacher teams takes center stage as faculty profit from consistent opportunities to engage in the inquiry approach to improve student learning outcomes.
 - Teachers work together in various kinds of professional collaborations. For example, teachers engage in weekly Data-Chatter inquiry team meetings, where they exhaustively analyze a broad range of data and plan math instruction for a targeted group of students. The team chunks their work into four week cycles and teachers make suitable adjustments, so the implementation of the middle school's new math program addresses students' needs more effectively through practices such as flexible groups and direct instruction. Teachers comment that all students, including English language learners and students with special needs, receive consistent targeted support, such as on-line individualized math instruction, and formative assessment results indicate progress in number sense and operations for the middle school grades.
- The school uses effective systems to review and adjust curricular, instructional and organizational practices that improve student learning.
 - Extensive formal and informal conversations emerged among the leadership and faculty regarding the decline in middle school students' math performance in areas such as problem solving. The school systematically uses team and cabinet meetings to collaboratively view demonstrations of various math programs by vendors to adjust their curriculum. Teachers collectively agree that the new program sufficiently provides the kinds of scaffolds needed for students to succeed. In a grade 7 class, students engage in meaningful tasks, such as using a SMART board to complete multi-step complex math problems. Consequently, teachers share that strategies that were traditionally used for English language arts, such as peer editing and index cards to assist with word problems, improve students' math performance in identified skill areas in the classroom and extended day programs.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen support that will enable a greater number of teachers to implement differentiated instruction so that a broader range of students benefit from purposeful groupings that promote academic performance.

- The school has articulated a set of beliefs regarding the alignment of higher order questioning to student achievement. In a primary special needs multi-grade class, students are dispersed in individualized and small groups to solve division problems without remainders. The incorporation of a plethora of math tools and technology supports promote high levels of student engagement in order to create individualized tasks. The *what if* question is on display and used to push students' thinking, along with many thought provoking questions. However, this level of individualization and student engagement is not evident in all classrooms. Therefore, sufficient extensions that challenge higher performing students to enable them to learn at elevated levels and accelerate their learning are not yet embedded across all grades and classrooms.
- Strengthen the feedback related to student progress shared with parents and students in order to provide clearly outlined next steps that foster students' reflection on academic and behavioral growth.
 - The school has avenues of communication in place, such as progress journals, that enable opportunities for parents to learn about their child's growth. However, the manner in which information is shared with parents about the progress of their child is inconsistent. The school's progress report does not consistently offer parents information on students' strengths and weaknesses that is skill specific in order to provide a clear picture of next steps needed to improve learning. As a result, students' ability to reflect on their own progress is hindered.
- Strengthen goal setting so that it consistently reflects long and short term goals that result in improved learning outcomes for all learners.
 - Teachers set goals for students that are related to the curriculum; however, they are not always articulated in a measurable way that indicates benchmarks. As a result, the school struggles to fully determine the rate of progress made towards student achievement. Additionally, teachers use data to set interim goals for students and make adjustments to their instruction for groups of students. However, the goals are not sufficiently differentiated to accelerate learning for all students, resulting in teachers' inability to gauge if students, especially subgroups, are making adequate progress.
- Refine the manner in which feedback is provided to teachers so that there is greater consistency in shared and independent reflection of practice in order to accelerate student learning.
 - Teacher teams engage in regular professional development to improve student performance through the implementation of the Common Core State Standards. Discussion at the team level involves how the standards are incorporated in the curriculum and rubrics. However, school leaders do not offer regular opportunities for staff to engage in reflective conversations that link to teacher practice such as inter-visitations. Without teachers' capability to reflect on their own growth, independently and amongst peers, their ability to articulate how and why they teach in a particular way hinders their progress towards further acceleration of student learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

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|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| School name: The Bay 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 |