



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Elias Bernstein

Intermediate School R007

**1270 Huguenot Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10312**

Principal: Dr. Nora DeRosa-Karby

Dates of review: April 28-29, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Erminia Claudio

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. 007 Elias Bernstein serves students at the Intermediate level. The school has 1173 students enrolled in grades 6 through 8. The school population comprises 86% white students, 1% black students, 5% Asian students, 9% Hispanic students, 53% boys and 47% girls. Currently, 1% of the student body is English language learners. The school enrolls 14% students with Individual Education Plans (IEP's). The average attendance rate for the 2010 school year was 93.4%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers consistently articulate data based reasons for student groupings and design work to provide a variety of opportunities for students to progress.
 - Across classrooms, teachers plan lessons with differentiated entry points based on pre-assessments and teacher observation data. Students use appropriate leveled text and materials that support individual learning styles and academic rigor. Particular attention is paid to designing lessons that tap into multiple intelligences and students use rubrics to assess their own progress. Student work products exhibit various stages of editing and the infusion of rich language.
- The principal makes practical and effective use of resources in making organizational decisions that support the school's goal of increased achievement in all subject areas.
 - The principal has programmed common preparation periods for teachers to engage in data inquiry and planning. Analysis of pre-assessments and post assessments determine the strategies and high level tasks that teachers will use to support student improved outcomes. Consequently, student work products include textual evidence, connections to past learning and self reflection.
 - The principal has made judicious pedagogical decisions in hiring and teacher assignments. An on-site staff developer supports the implementation of Teachers College methodology, a seasoned science teacher mentors a new colleague, an academic intervention teacher provides math support for seventh grade at risk students, and a paraprofessional travels throughout the day with a sixth grade class to support small group instruction. Teachers provide extra support during lunch and after school to students that slipped to level 2 from level 3 on the 2010 English language arts State exam. To meet the social and emotional needs of students, the school is able to sustain three guidance counselors. All of the above support student achievement as evidenced by an increase in grade point averages across the school on third marking period report cards.
- Staff creates a wide range of assessments across all subjects to monitor the progress of the schools' long term goal of increasing the percentage of students meeting the state standards in English language arts and math.
 - The school has created a data base to capture and measure growth in English language arts and math for all students using summative and formative assessments as well as midterm exams. As a result, teachers make instructional decisions and plan rigorous tasks that support the school's goal of increased non-fiction writing in English language arts and extended responses in math.
 - The school has identified students with disabilities as a high priority for improvement. The lead special education teacher supports colleagues in tracking student progress in English language arts and math through the analysis of a wide range of periodic and classroom data. As a result, adjustments are made to the curriculum and differentiated tasks are developed.

- School leaders have established effective systems for monitoring teaching practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practice.
 - The principal and her cabinet meticulously look at hard and soft data, such as state exams, predictive exams, student work folders and teacher made assessments to set observational goals to guide their work as instructional leaders. Through formal and informal observations and focused walkthroughs, teachers are evaluated and provided opportunities to attend workshops that support differentiated professional development. This is evidenced in the strategic organizational plan that is created to identify which teachers attend Teachers College calendar days and the Children's First Network common core state standards curriculum workshops in English language arts and math. Teachers are also afforded the opportunity to do intervisitations to observe best practice in all core subjects. Consequently, there is cohesiveness amongst the staff to focus on strengthening pedagogical skill in questioning and constructed responses.
- Parents are key partners in the school's decision making process and are consistently informed of their child's academic progress and school programs to support growth.
 - Parents raved about the dedication and commitment to excellence that the administration and teachers consistently exhibit. They feel welcomed and supported by the administration and teachers. They believe that the school keeps them informed about their children's academic progress and that their input is valued by the school. Parents praised the school for offering a wide range of programs that support their children's academic and aesthetic well being. Parents report that their children come home happy and feel that their teachers know them well and are always available to help them. Some parents shared that many teachers tutor students during lunch. Parents expressed their gratitude to the school for providing parent workshops that support their understanding of academic rigor and test sophistications.
- Teachers benefit from participating in collaborations that provide opportunities for researching effective instructional techniques and foster professional reflection.
 - Professional learning communities in all core subject areas perpetuate continuous improvement in instruction and learning. By analyzing data and researching educational trends and best practices, tasks are created that are meaningful and engage students to think critically and reflect on their work. Consequently, teachers are reflective in their teaching practice. If something is not effective; teachers are agreeable to changing strategies midstream. Teachers continually update curriculum maps to reflect the teams' purposeful rich content and resource choices.
 - Teachers support each other through collegial sharing of resources that sustain improved student outcomes as evidenced in formative and summative assessments. A member of the seventh grade science learning community has developed standardized differentiated lab activities using Blooms Taxonomy. This has lead to an increased student completion rate and mastery of lab assignments for all seventh grade students. The special education lead teacher works with all teachers to support small group targeted instruction and shares her Orton Gillingham expertise with colleagues. As a result, students' reading levels have increased as evidenced on Teachers College running records.

- The principal and her cabinet work cohesively to review and analyze data to improve student outcomes by refining practice and programs to meet students' needs.
 - The principal and her cabinet meet weekly to discuss the schools' progress towards aligning the common core state standards into the curriculum. Data gleaned from summative and formative assessment, classroom visits and formal and informal observations are used to prioritize resources to support student outcomes. For example, the cabinet found that vocabulary was a concern in some classes. As a result, the English as a second language teacher works with colleagues to support the infusion of academic language. In response to the gaps in the current math program, the school purchased an online math program to reinforce needed skills. These supports have led to increased student outcomes as evidenced on Acuity and teacher made assessments.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance the use of technology in all classrooms to provide students with richer and more diverse experiences that promote individualized learning opportunities in all content areas.
 - While most classrooms either have SmartBoards or Elmos, and 12:1 students have iPads and notebooks, there is an inconsistency throughout the school in using data to plan engaging and compelling learning technology enhanced opportunities for students. Subsequently, not all technology tasks lead to personalized learning.
- Deepen teacher feedback on writing assignments to develop greater student and parent understanding of areas of strength, need and next steps.
 - All content area teachers write comments on student work and most students can articulate strengths, weaknesses and next steps. However, the quality of comments varies from class to class and does not always lead to enhanced student work and parent awareness.
 - While all teachers across content areas assign challenging projects, there is not a consistent grading tool. For example, some teachers use percentages and some teachers use levels 1-4. As a result, the lack of a defined assessment system for projects hampers the effectiveness of student reflection.
- Expand the use of existing evaluative structures to assess the work of teacher teams and increase the opportunities for sharing successes school wide.
 - Although the principal and her cabinet share data from summative and formative assessments during scheduled monthly faculty conferences, there is not a structure in place to evaluate the effectiveness of all teams and to provide feedback. This hinders the ability of school leaders to share trends and strategies to enhance teaching and learning and support professional growth.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Elias Bernstein	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