

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Charles W. Leng

**Elementary School 054
1060 Willowbrook Road
Staten Island
NY 10314**

Principal: Anna Castley

Dates of review: December 7 – 8, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Michael L. Schurek

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Charles W. Leng is an elementary school with 892 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 7% Black, 20% Hispanic, 36% White, and 36% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 15% 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 94.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and parents who feel valued and who take pride in being part of the school community.
 - The school's "Do the Right Thing" campaign recognizes students for caring, respectable behavior, while its Ladybug Society encourages responsibility by enabling upper-grade students to perform services such as tutoring during their free time to foster a strong sense of community. As a result, incidents and suspensions have been dramatically reduced.
 - Students feel linked to each other and staff through daily conversations and copious written journal communications that take place regularly, and demonstrate higher order thinking skills. In addition to students choosing their respective apprenticeship areas, students in the journalism academy conducts interviews, and surveys other students to give them voice, effecting new outside basketball court construction this year.
- The school has highly effective communication systems for keeping students and families fully informed of children's progress and school activities.
 - Three student report cards are supplemented by two interim progress reports that are tailored by grade and address progress regarding the English language arts and math goals designated for all students, enabling both parents and students to recognize growth and next steps.
 - Teachers routinely utilize rubrics within the school-wide enrichment model that enable students to assess their own progress, express next work refinement steps and produce high quality presentations that deeply engage all school community constituents through active participation.
- The school maintains a supportive learning environment that conveys high expectations through annotated displays of student work and culminating presentation activities that involve the entire community.
 - Heavily attended school-wide fairs, showcases, presentations, and performances conclude enrichment activities. "Music in the morning" and voluntary student service programs, are evidence of a true working community striving to use acquired knowledge to share successes with all constituents. As a result, the school earns robust scores for academic expectations, engagement, safety, respect and attendance.
 - School leaders and faculty maintain an open door policy and actively seek parental input to make important decisions such as the use of recent grant monetary awards. In addition, community members, including parents, assume leadership positions when they conduct presentations to students about their areas of expertise in order to expose them to possible and varied fields of interest, thereby promoting vigorous school community participation.

- The school's systems and partnerships highly support students and their families in continual learning and promote students' personal growth and development.
 - The school has recently partnered with nutritional experts and a local roadrunners club to foster healthy living choices through health and wellness education and active engagement in exercise and dance for all 4th and 5th grade students. These real world learning opportunities track student progress and espouse a new perspective on healthy living that is life-long and shared with members of the school community.
 - Students' successes are celebrated in an ongoing fashion through "we live here" displays that recognize student work products, public announcements and charts "catching" students doing the right thing and numerous shows and presentations. These activities build self-esteem and contribute to the school's highly positive atmosphere, resulting in high attendance data for students and staff.
- Students benefit from teacher pedagogy that demonstrates coherence regarding effective learning strategies and regularly utilizes differentiation to engage a variety of learners.
 - Classroom practices and routines are all aligned with and reflective of the Joseph Renzulli School-wide Enrichment Model, enabling students to use varying learning and expression styles, interests and abilities to investigate and explore standards-based topics. A group of students work together using "realia" artifacts such as cacophonies and pyramids to research and gather information about ancient Egypt. As a result, students are highly engaged and excited about their work.
 - Differentiation of instruction is the standard methodology of teaching as evidenced by databased flexible grouping practices and routines that allow students to compact out of class lessons already mastered to pursue individual enrichment activities. These daily classroom procedures combine with a robust schedule of pull-out, push-in and in-class individual case study sessions that provide students with multiple entry points, supports and extensions into school curricula. Current data indicates that 64% of English language learners in grades 1 and 2 are on track to achieve school instructional goal benchmarks of 80%.
- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning.
 - The principal and her cabinet carefully analyze school needs and allocate resources to improve outcomes aligned to school goals, such as the decision to reorganize delivery of services to improve student outcomes. Teachers now provide assistance to targeted students through pull-out services and individual case study practices. As a result, 45% of special education students in grades 4 and 5 are on track to achieve school instructional goal benchmarks of 80%.
 - Teacher and student time have been strategically organized to provide the individual assistance referred to above and enable a vast majority of teachers to regularly collaborate to examine student work, discuss case studies and share best practices. Teachers now hold themselves accountable for the growth of their respective cohort students through

frequent progress checks and seek to develop strategies that can be shared across grades and subjects to increase student outcomes.

What the school needs to improve

- Identify and align school curricula with key standards to raise outcomes for both high and low achieving students.
 - Rigorous standards-based academic tasks are undertaken across grades and subjects that engage and challenge both high and low achieving students; however, the school has not identified key standards to emphasize in all classes, thereby reducing efforts to further close the achievement gap as evidenced in recent progress report scores.
- Align teacher and teacher team assessments to chosen key standards to effectively measure progress and adjust instruction at the team and classroom levels to accelerate outcomes for all students.
 - Teacher grade teams focus on lower achieving students and utilize periodic assessment results to group students and re-teach areas of need. Students receiving one-to-one case study services have their progress checked regularly by providers. However, subgroups of students who are not receiving these services do not receive the same regular tracking of their progress. Therefore, evaluation of teaching practices against key standards for all students is limited.
- Design a uniform protocol for learning walks to provide a common lens that enables teachers to observe exemplary practices, reflect upon the quality of their practice and embed a coherent school culture.
 - Most teachers participate in teacher performance reviews to set goals, self-reflect and create culminating products. Teachers receive one-to-one support through conferencing, mentoring, teaming and informal feedback as a result of administrative walkthroughs. Teachers generally embrace differentiation; however, they are not yet involved in observing their colleagues' practices firsthand. Therefore, teachers of special education do not consistently deliver the same rigorous instruction as their general education counterparts. This lack of coherence has contributed to significant drops in student performance and progress.
- Refine action planning by linking all school action plans to interim goals and targeted benchmarks to establish a cohesive system for measuring progress, expediting revisions and maximizing impact.
 - School action plans are established during the annual planning process and generally use measurable targets as the annual goal in the identified areas of improvement. Benchmarks measuring progress towards these goals at specific intervals during the school year are not indicated for the school's current math goals. The lack of these structures hampers the school's ability to determine the effectiveness of their actions along the way to allow for contingencies and to make timely adjustments to improve outcomes. It also limits the school's ability to align planning from one year to the next.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Charles W. Leng 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