

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Henry M. Boehm School

Elementary School 055

**54 Osborne Street
Staten Island, New York
10312**

Principal: Sharon Fishman

Dates of review: November 22-23, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Mary Barton

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 55, The Henry M. Boehm School is an elementary school with 705 students from Pre-Kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 0.42% Black, 7.80% Hispanic, 86.24% White, and 4.68% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 17.45% special education students. Boys account for 49.50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50.50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 94.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal utilizes her limited resources strategically resulting in the resources being aligned to the school's instructional goals.
 - Structures are in place for teachers to meet a minimum of four times weekly. During these common periods for teacher teams, teachers on each grade level do Inquiry work, plan and revise curriculum maps in all subject areas and look at student work resulting in coherence in instructional practices across classrooms.
 - The Principal values the arts and uses her limited funding to craft programs in the arts for students including a band, grade plays directed by the drama teacher and a dance program. This exposure to the arts creates exposure and structure for students to develop their talents.
- School leaders and faculty make purposeful decisions to emphasize key standards for all learners in order to close the achievement gap.
 - Teacher teams meet frequently to design and revise curriculum in all areas. Through classroom visits, common instructional practices and expectations were in evidence allowing for equitable opportunities in instruction to occur for all students.
 - The school has adopted the use of the Common Core State Standards in grade 4 this school year. Using backwards design, they are using the new standards to revise units of study in order to challenge and engage students and serve as a model for design for all other grade teams.
- Teacher observation, feedback and performance evaluation are used to elevate instructional practices.
 - The administrators conduct walkthroughs frequently and have a feedback form to give to teachers for automatic feedback so that recommendations can be put into practice as soon as possible.
 - The Principal requires non-tenured teachers to gather a portfolio of evidence showing contributions they make to the school community and to their teaching practice. As a result, newer teachers serve on school committees providing services to students and their instructional practices have improved as a result of attending additional Professional Development offered by the school.
- Teachers work collaboratively in teacher teams, participate in collegial conversations and identify practices that support student performance.
 - Each Inquiry Team has a focus based on specific data for their grade and meet regularly using protocols that have been adapted for school wide use. Teams share their practices every month with colleagues across the school. These practices have resulted in increased communication among teachers and the increase of teacher leadership.

- Teachers share best practices with one another within their teams as they look at student work. They also meet vertically to understand the expectations of the various grades to inform their planning and the expectation from one grade to the next resulting in more thoughtful planning of student tasks.
- The school has a very good communication system in place to share relevant information with families regarding school programs and expectations so that students are well prepared to learn.
 - The principal meets with parents once a month at her “coffee with the principal” event where she sits with parents and listens to their concerns. Parents feel that the principal is transparent in the way she shares school information and expectations with the parents. Specifically, the principal conducted a town hall meeting in early September and presents at the monthly PTA meetings. As a result, parents feel welcome and informed about school policies and expectations and that their concerns are listened to.
 - The parent coordinator is a well regarded member of the school community. She coordinates frequent parent workshops on academic and social topics where child care services are available. She also promotes the ARIS Parent Link and the school’s website which she updates frequently with helpful links parents can access so that they can help their child at home. These services enable parents to be able to come to school to attend meetings and workshops so that they are informed about helping their child academically and socially. Even parents who cannot attend meetings can access the school’s website for helpful information so that they can help their child at home.
- The school has established very effective systems for school self evaluation, review and modification of practice with a clear focus on improving student learning.
 - One of the school’s non-negotiables is that teachers meet in their teams to review and revise curriculum maps and submit their revisions to the principal who also reviews and contributes to this work. Special attention is being paid to the new Common Core State Standards. This work is due at the end of every month. This system provides assurance that monitoring and revising of curriculum takes place in a way that provides quality assurance to the work.
 - Integrated collaborative teachers have revised curriculum maps to meet the needs of special needs students. Changes in modalities as well as in materials used have provided entry points that are more accessible for these students. This change in practice has resulted in students producing work that is approaching and meeting state standards.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen the rigor so that questioning extends higher order thinking skills.
 - While the school has heavily promoted that P.S. 55 is a Higher Order Thinking or “h.o.t.s.” school, classroom observations revealed that questioning using higher order thinking skills was not evident across all classrooms and not found consistently for higher achieving students. As a consequence, the stretching of thinking and reasoning does not take place for all students.
 - While the school has made differentiation of instruction a major focus in professional development for teachers, differentiation of instruction was not

evident across all classrooms visited. This inconsistency does not allow for specific strategies and routines to take place to meet the needs of all higher achieving students.

- Expand systems for teachers to supplement summative data with classroom level data in order to create a total picture of individual students' strengths and areas of need.
 - Teachers have become more adept in collecting summative data for students as well as reviewing it. However, there is no systematic procedure for including formative assessment data in the overall collection and review of data. By not having this procedure in place, teachers can not have a total picture of students. Hence, goal setting and targets for increased student performance are flawed.
 - While there is an increase in teachers assessing students during the course of mini lessons, it was not evident that there is an assessment for learning occurring consistently across all classrooms. Therefore, the opportunity for teachers to meet the needs of the students in real time as specific skills and strategies are taught is not taking place for some students.
- Communicate formal written feedback to individual students and their families about next steps on long and short term goals for students so that students and families may take ownership toward meeting those goals.
 - Students have goals for themselves and teachers have set goals for students. Parents should be informed of the initial goals as well as information on the status of the goals during intervals in the school year in writing. This missing piece does not afford the home-school connection to take place in this important accountability tool for students.
 - All student goals in various subject areas generated by students are not coordinated in one place so that they may refer to them. This lack of coordination does not allow for students to reflect on their next steps in all subject areas on a regular basis.
- Provide students and families across the school with interim progress reports at consistent intervals in order to inform them of student progress.
 - Although issued in grade 2 this year, the current practice does not allow all parents to have an opportunity to learn about their child's progress and to assist them to meet and exceed the standards.
 - While some teachers dedicate time to have students reflect on and confer with them on their individual progress, it is not a consistent practice across the school. All students, therefore, are not afforded the opportunity to reflect on and learn about their progress and to be informed about how they can be better students in the future.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name:	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