

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Crotona Park West

Elementary – Middle School 004

**1701 Fulton Avenue
Bronx
NY 10457**

Principal: Vincent Resto

Dates of review: November 18 - 19, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Dolores Esposito

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Crotona Park West is an elementary-middle school with 435 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 46% Black, and 49% Hispanic students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's effective systems identify key standards in order to align the schools curriculum to the Common Core standards resulting in the development of useful tools for learning.
 - The staff and administration continue to carefully align curricula and assessments so that higher order thinking skills are embedded in their teaching practices. This is evident in the curriculum maps, rubrics, and checklists for tasks, resulting in more engaging lessons.
 - The school is focused on promoting critical thinking skills and developing accountable talk through the literature circles that staff and students enjoy during extended time. "We love to talk to our friends about what we are reading because it is more interesting than doing worksheets."
- The leadership makes effective organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals resulting in improved teaching practices.
 - The school's investment in purchasing 16 new Smart boards supports the use of technology in classrooms to engage students. Many of the classrooms that were visited make effective use of technology to support the various needs of students by engaging them in reading and math lessons, supporting the focus on the school's goals.
 - The budget supports teachers with common planning, 4 days each week, to further develop assessments that are better aligned to State standards. Additionally, the principal uses his budget to provide teachers, support staff, and administration, time after school to plan curriculum, analyze data, look at student work, and create assessments in reading, writing, and math. The curriculum team's development of end-of-unit assessments in reading, writing, and math has resulted in improved teaching practices as discussed during teacher meetings and observed during classroom visits.
- The school collects a wide range of qualitative and quantitative data in order to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.
 - The leadership and administration gather data from various sources such as Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System, and the Developmental Reading Assessment to develop an overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers make good use of this data to develop end-of-unit assessments in reading, writing and math, which are included in the curriculum maps and detailed lesson plans. This supports a coherent school-wide approach to teaching and learning.
 - Support staff and assistant principals provide teachers with various opportunities to discuss their student data and plan lessons that target specific skills and strategies for improvement. This fosters collaboration between administration and teachers so that the needs of all subgroups are met more effectively.

- Administration and staff work collaboratively to develop common assessments that are aligned to the school's initiatives to support the academic development of students.
 - Teacher meetings indicated that there was a greater focus this year to design common assessments in reading, writing and math that are aligned to the core curriculum and units of studies. This has resulted in a more cohesive way to track progress and share timely information with parents about their children's progress.
 - Teachers, support staff, and administration, review, discuss and are beginning to monitor the impact that assessments have on student work. This allows teachers to make adjustments that are more effective in their daily instruction to meet the needs of all students with a keen eye to relevant subgroups. A partnership with a consultant supports the special education teachers in the teaching of writing, resulting in teachers tracking student progress and making the necessary adjustments towards helping students' meet set targets.
- Teachers work effectively in collaborative teams, using an inquiry approach that results in shared leadership and improved student learning.
 - Teachers have multiple opportunities to analyze their data and share their practice with colleagues, especially in the area of vocabulary development. This school-wide focus includes all content areas and is evident in teachers' lesson plans and curriculum units.
 - The school's expanded curriculum team includes teachers and support staff from various grade levels. They analyze data and develop common assessments so that instructional tasks are more targeted. This is building leadership skills and an understanding of data so that lessons and student conferences are more strategically planned and implemented. Teachers have shared their enthusiasm and taken a wide range of leadership roles in designing assessments and rubrics.
- The school provides a wide range of professional development opportunities leading to the sharing of practices that promote reflection.
 - The school provides meaningful opportunities for teachers to develop their teaching practices through coaching, mentoring and inter-visitations within the school. Professional development, during and after school, is consistently aligned to the school's goals, and incorporates the study and integration of the Common Core Standards. Teachers review student work as a means to monitor student progress, and use tools, such as technology, in their own grade meetings, that is then incorporated into classrooms to address students' various learning styles.
 - Teachers' analysis of data and review of authentic student work is practiced during both vertical and horizontal team meetings thus supporting capacity-building structures that are infused throughout the school and promote better school-wide alignment between content and practice.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine systems for measuring and evaluating student progress resulting in greater coherence of practices across the school.
 - The school is using Data Driven Instructional Fridays to refine and align assessments with grading practices. However, as this practice is still not yet

systemic administration is not able to make necessary adjustments to ensure coherence between teaching and learning.

- Although, the school is working towards refining their assessments and infusing some of the elements of the Common Core Standards, it still does not have fully developed systems to organize the data so that student progress can be effectively monitored.
- Further develop teachers' capacity to differentiate instruction effectively, based on student achievement data so that they can effectively measure progress towards meeting interim- and long-term goals.
 - The school's structured time each week during Data Driven Instructional Fridays enables teachers to focus on data with students. However, there is not yet a clear understanding of how to best utilize the data to target specific strategies needed for improvement, or how to better track the progress of students towards established goals.
 - Administration uses information culled from their collection of student data to provide ongoing feedback to teachers on their classroom practices. However, the school does not yet have systems to organize the progress of classes and individual students towards meeting long- and short-term goals. Therefore, they are unable to monitor progress and make timely adjustments to maximize student learning.
- Utilize data tools to adapt curricula in the content areas for a variety of learners with different needs.
 - The school uses data to develop curriculum with an emphasis on reading, writing and math, but it does not yet show evidence of good organizational tools thus limiting the effective tracking of trends in student performance in support of school-level decisions.
 - The curriculum team meets four days a week after school to analyze data and make curriculum adjustments as needed. However, as a developing protocol implemented this year, there is not yet effective school-wide communication or full understanding of the work. Therefore, all teachers do not yet benefit from the rich data conversations around student work and assessments, and do not yet have ownership or deep understanding of the work in order to make instructional decisions.
- Expand the goal setting process for and by students to effectively monitor their learning.
 - There has been a great focus for teachers to develop Smart Goals this year for each class. However, students are not able to articulate their next steps for improvement based on class goals and teachers are unable to monitor progress and use data precisely to target individual needs.
 - While the school is proactive in using data to differentiate instruction for all students, it has not yet fully developed goals for relevant subgroups of students including English language learners thus limiting the effective monitoring of their progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Crotona Park West	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