



**Department of  
Education**

*Joel I. Klein, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2010-2011**

**Judith K. Weiss**

**11x019**

**4318 Katonah Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10470**

**Principal: Timothy Sullivan**

**Dates of review: May 16 - 17, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Elizabeth A. White**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Judith K. Weiss is an elementary-middle school with 521 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 8% Black, 21% Hispanic, 67% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 93.5%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- School leaders and faculty make purposeful curricular decisions, aligned to state standards, resulting in increased interdisciplinary coherence.
  - The school has made strategic decisions to develop cross curricular strategies by focusing on writing in all disciplines. Common Core State Standards expectations have been embedded in writing rubrics resulting in more rigorous academic measures in literacy across the school. This has also resulted in higher quality and quantity in student composition. Curricular collaboration by faculty has resulted in academic coherence, particularly with the linkage between reading, writing and science. Visual arts are offered to students in addition to an after school special art intensive class where advanced artists develop portfolios to display their artistry skills. The school also engages students in Math Olympiads and Marathon Reading activities to enhance learning and provide challenge for higher achievers
- Classroom instructional practice typically ensures consistently engaging curricula and differentiated learning tasks resulting in meaningful coherent processes designed to meet student learning needs.
  - Students are actively engaged in classroom tasks via multiple groupings for different academic subjects matched to the varying needs of each student in each subject. For example, integrated algebra regents level coursework is offered for higher achievers in grade 8. Study Island is offered for those working on improving basic skills. In many classes students are asked to problem solve and then explain how they have come up with their responses as well as why they chose the strategies used. In addition, students engage in partner work and self reflection and say they are provided with “next steps, not just a grade” from their teachers. These strategies result in high expectations with appropriate support and challenge in most classes.
- Strategic organizational decisions have resulted in increased supports that foster improved student achievement.
  - Targeted programming and staffing decisions such as double period scheduling of ELA and Math classes allows appropriate time for the full implementation of the workshop model. This has resulted in effective scaffolded supports for students that include direct instruction with time for guided and independent practice. In addition, teacher assignments have been adjusted during the year to more effectively assign primary and support staff to classes. This has resulted in better academic instruction and intervention for students facing the greatest academic challenges both in ICT and general education settings.
- A culture of positivity supports school-wide efforts resulting in an environment conducive to learning for students and adults.
  - Comprehensive Educational Plan goals include strategies to reduce suspensions with strong support by the guidance counselor, who is proactive in addressing social/emotional youth development matters. Attendance monitoring is also a focus due to a decrease in last year’s average. Incentive programs entitled, *PAWs* and *Bulldogs* encourage student attendance via prizes and special events

like lunch with the principal. These efforts have resulted in lower incident rates and higher student attendance.

- School staff cares about student emotional and academic needs. Students state feeling that they have access to all adults for help, “not just their teacher”. Parents also state that staff is very accessible and are “open to ideas” to help improve school concerns. Students are motivated to succeed and feel they have influence on school decisions such as the design of their school yard. The school provides consistent engagement with students and families in an open exchange of communication regarding student achievement resulting in informed student progress monitoring.
- School leaders and faculty utilize multiple data sources to develop a clear portrait of student achievement across the school.
  - Comprehensive school reviews using data sources such as NY State tests, baseline exams, ACUITY interim assessments, *RALLY!* diagnostics, OORs data, attendance statistics, Teacher value-added data, Teacher’s College assessments and pre/post unit tests result in a clear overall picture of the school’s strengths and areas requiring supports. For example, the school has used data trends to identify writing as an area of need of curricular adjustment for general education students and those with IEPs in grades 4 and 5. This has resulted in changes on how academic support staff is deployed and how teachers are assigned.
  - Student progress is tracked both in the day and during afterschool tutorial programs with special focus on students with IEPs resulting in the adjustment of instructional time to provide extra supports such as *IMAGINE Learning* and *Language* web-based programs.
- Teachers create assessments aligned to performance indicators to effectively identify and plan for groups of students with similar needs.
  - Teachers supplement state test data by creating rubric assessments. In addition, they use performance indicator diagnostic tests and instructional materials like *Every Day Math* curriculum resources to identify student needs enabling them to plan for flexible group instruction.
  - Teachers analyze Acuity interim and extended day test data by grade to pinpoint students’ academic strengths and deficiencies. This enables them to set instructional strategies and goals, like lesson planning with content area teachers and jigsawing/chunking longer passages to be used in conjunction with graphic organizers.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Ensure that school-wide, teacher team, and classroom data is suitably tracked to provide opportunities for adjustments as needed.
  - School leaders use data to track progress towards school-wide goals but interim benchmarking and revision is not a current practice. Teachers also use data to track progress and goals for students. However, common assessments are not yet an embedded practice for teacher teams across all content areas. Limited

progress monitoring results in an insufficient ability to make timely strategic decisions and to assess on-going data with accuracy and consistency.

- Formalize teacher professional development supports to bolster school-wide instructional practices that align with student achievement.
  - A coherent school culture and focus on supporting key standards like in expository writing is evident across the school. However, performance evaluations based on student data and work products is not typical practice. Likewise, differentiated professional growth opportunities school-wide are limited resulting in an insufficient ability to match teacher development needs to supports. This results in a limited ability to fully impact teacher growth to improve student achievement.
  
- Develop a transparent system for monitoring school-wide goals over time that results in timely adjustments as needed.
  - While clear comprehensive school-wide goals are established school leaders do not yet systemically review long term goals during the course of the school year resulting in limited “big-picture” assessment of school-wide student performance.
  - Planning processes for monitoring school-wide goals have yet to be devised resulting in limited ability to make adjustments based on actionable data.
  
- Institute a system to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of teacher collaboration and capacity building in order to provide support as needed.
  - Currently, teacher teams work mostly independently without a data based check-in mechanism resulting in insufficient guidance and an inability to make adjustments in inquiry approaches that impact teacher practice and student outcomes.
  - School-wide technology expertise has not been sufficiently developed resulting in electronic resources such as SMART Boards and Digital Image Presenters remaining largely underutilized for data-based instruction.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Judith K. Weiss</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			<b>X</b>	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?				<b>X</b>
2.2 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			<b>X</b>	

<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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					
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>