

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Jordan L. Mott Middle School

**Middle School X022
270 East 167th Street
Bronx
NY 10456**

Principal: Linda Rosenbury

Dates of review: March 23 & 24, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Eileen Waters

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Jordan L. Mott is a middle school with 642 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 24% Black, 74% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 35% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 92.4%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The administrative team utilizes observational data and a systematic process to craft personalized plans that support the individual growth of teachers.
 - The administration looks at student progress in literacy and content areas to monitor trends and address instructional concerns with teachers. Teachers develop a professional practice portfolio to demonstrate their professional growth and embark on a process that involves data collection, goal setting, action planning, reflection, and revisions. Hence, school leaders closely monitor and target the needs of teachers through student and teacher growth, fostering teacher accountability to student progress.
 - Targeted supports are provided to teachers through in house and external offerings to enhance pedagogical expertise. Teachers receive professional development from external partnerships, expert colleagues, consultants, weekend retreats and intra-visitations through the network. New teachers collaborate regularly with a mentor to plan and implement instruction and focus on attaining professional goals. A new teacher shared challenges encountered and how various members of the staff provide different supports to equip the new teacher with resources and strategies to be successful. As a result, a strong sense of collaborative learning has emerged as teachers continue to expand their pedagogical craft.
- Professional development provided to teachers has enabled them to incorporate strategies that address the social and emotional needs of students into their instruction thus cultivating a positive school culture.
 - Working with advisors for Educators for Social Responsibility, the staff has received professional development, resources and consultation that have supported them in developing a learning environment which allows students to maintain behavioral and academic success. Strategies gained from this work have enabled teachers to shift their teaching styles to improve classroom management through guided discipline. Teachers have learned to communicate more effectively with students to better address issues and get to better understand the students' perspective. Students are provided more responsibility in the classroom that has led to greater independence for their actions and learning.
- The administration's organizational choices allow the staff to address the needs of students and provide programs that support the school's instructional goals.
 - The development of smaller learning communities that include a dean, administrator, and guidance counselor has allowed the staff and parents to meet regularly and target the academic and emotional needs of students. Team planning sessions by grade and department foster collaboration and planning to address students' needs during 37 ½ minutes. Through various funding sources, classroom libraries provide students with leveled books to support literacy initiatives and technology along with professional development that is provided to make staff more literate in technology use. To support this initiative, a tech-support team was created to immediately address any concerns as the staff transitions in its utilization of technology. Most teacher

programs have been reorganized so that they teach one grade level and one content area for a student load of sixty students. These choices have supported the staff in addressing students' needs while making strides towards the attainment of the school's instructional goals.

- Members of the staff take on leadership opportunities that provide colleagues with professional learning that supports the school's goals and contributes to the culture of collaboration among teachers.
 - Professional development opportunities allow teachers to work with consultants to development curriculum, literacy instruction and leadership skills and colleagues to strengthen pedagogical practices through content knowledge. Teachers receive support based on their needs whether it is in technology use, working with the math team on data analysis, or transitioning literacy instruction into the workshop model. Teachers who attend external workshop are responsible for turn keying the information to colleagues. In team meetings, staff members review student work and behavior to identify areas of need and share best practices. Consequently, teachers' address and track students' needs collaboratively and improve pedagogical practices through the support of colleagues.
- The school leadership and curriculum teams have developed and shared the data based goals for the school that support the vision of accelerating students' academic progress and emotional growth.
 - The vision of the school is evident in the principal's long-term plan and data based goals that are developed collaboratively with both teachers' and students' needs on the forefront. State assessment results over time, led to conservative annual goals to increase content area performance as part of the long-term goal of students gaining mastery in literacy and the school's instructional transition. Some teachers are aware of school goals and how the goals align with their curriculum planning work. The work at the team and teacher level has led to coherence among colleagues as they collaboratively address the academic and social emotional needs of students.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen the continued development of curriculum so that key standards focused on accelerating student growth are embedded in rigorous tasks in order to challenge and engage all learners.
 - Curriculum is obtained from the New York State curriculum maps, the on-going development of units, and programs purchased by the school. However, these frameworks offer a broad overview and struggle to address the immediate needs of students as noted in data analysis. Academic tasks varied in the level of rigor and thinking asked of students. Some teachers provide tiered assignments based on assessment data to challenge students but this practice is inconsistent. Consequently, the curriculum struggles to provide coherently rigorous academic tasks that adequately challenge students and prepares them for high school level work. Without a curriculum that addresses the deficit standards, the school struggles to target its most needy areas.

- Continue to strengthen pedagogical practices so that learners are continuously engaged in independent thinking through diverse learning opportunities that exhibit a shared understanding of how students learn best.
 - Some teachers have the workshop model rituals in place and use tiered assignments for simple differentiated group work. Students participate in various kinds of collaborative group settings for hands-on activities, project based learning and reading activities. Explicit instruction is not consistently evident across classrooms and academic tasks struggle to amply engage students' higher levels of thinking through motivating tasks. Consequently, across the school, instructional practices have not yet evolved into strategic choices around ways to best meet all students' needs through purposeful pedagogical decisions in differentiating the process, content and product.
- Develop a consistent practice among staff that fosters independent analysis of comprehensive data around the deficits of students and subgroups to adjust instructional practices so that all learners are adequately challenged.
 - The use of common assessment data is new and has fostered teacher accountability in knowing students' needs. All teachers have not fully taken ownership in their use of data, leaving the responsibility on the administration and support staff. Without a clear understanding of students' and subgroups of students' strengths and areas for growth, teachers grapple with providing differentiated instruction that challenges all learners at their appropriate level.
- Advance the strategic aggregation of data so that all teachers are able to analyze student performance trends more deeply in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of student progress overtime.
 - The use of data varies across the school among administration, teacher teams and individual teachers. The school community has developed tools that allow the organization of data so that trends can be identified to make various levels of decisions. Data tends to be organized by the administration and instructional coach and provided to the staff for analysis with teams. Other teachers organize data independently to gather evidence around student needs so that instructional adjustments can be made to target students' needs. With teachers at varying levels in their manipulation of data, teachers struggle to purposefully use various pieces of data to monitor student growth continuously.
- Strengthen the practices in place to further evaluate the decisions made around the effectiveness of the curriculum, pedagogy and organizational decisions in order to make adjustments that intensify the acceleration of students' learning.
 - With the continued growth in curriculum and instruction, the school continues to evaluate the effectiveness of new initiatives. Through modeling of literacy components and instructional systems, the school has evaluative practices evolving. The administration visits classrooms to review pedagogical structures, instructional materials and use of resources. Walkthroughs have allowed the school community to begin to focus on instructional practices. The lack of embedded structures that regularly focus on the effectiveness of curriculum and instructional practices hinders the school from reaching the full potential of all students by making adjustments that address ongoing learning needs.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Jordan L. Mott Middle 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
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