



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Bronx New School

Elementary School X051

3200 Jerome Avenue

Bronx

NY 10468

Principal: Paul Smith

Dates of review: March 1 – 2, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Sonia Menendez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 51 is an elementary school with 280 students from Kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 38% Black, 50% Hispanic, 5% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 95%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Students benefit from a well planned and standard based curriculum that includes the arts and technology, resulting in high student engagement.
 - Teams of teachers developed the broad and stimulating curriculum adapted from Teacher's College units of study. This collaborative effort ensures that it is aligned across grades emphasizing specific performance indicators based on a review of data. Technology and the arts enhance the curriculum in order to give students varied opportunities to showcase their learning.
 - Care is taken to develop units of study that are interdisciplinary and peak student interest. The entire school embarked on a Fairy Tale, Fables and Myths unit which culminated in students creating their own fairy tales, fables and myths. As a result of this thoughtful curriculum development, students are challenged, engaged and demonstrate creative thinking.
- The school effectively communicates with parents and students resulting in students' ownership of their learning and strong parental support.
 - Parents are extremely committed to the school and are strongly welcomed as partners in the education of their children. In addition to report cards, teachers write individual narrative reports detailing how students are performing both academically and socially. Parents are asked to share their goals for their children. This two- way flow of communication between home and school creates a very strong bond between home and school.
 - The school ensures that parents are extremely adept at using ARIS, the school's website and teachers' email to gather information on assessment results, homework and to communicate with individual teachers. As a result, parents are fully engaged as active partners in their children's learning.
- The school uses a wide range of data to understand and identify the strengths and learning needs of individual and groups of students in order to track their progress and provide extra support as needed.
 - In addition to Acuity, teachers use Teacher's College assessments, running records and student work to identify skills in need of further development and to create a clear picture of areas of strength. This analysis is used to plan effective lessons that result in progress as all sub groups of students demonstrate annual yearly progress in both English language arts and mathematics.
 - The school leadership and faculty engage in a comprehensive data review to ensure it has a full and up to date understanding of the performance and progress of each student, class and grade level. The triangulation of this data is used to find trends across classrooms, grades

and school wide. As a consequence of this analysis, teachers engage in a review of lessons that need to be re-taught, provide needed interventions and work collaboratively to identify next steps.

- The school's safe and nurturing environment is conducive to student learning and positively impacts students' personal and academic development.
 - The school's culture nurtures students and teachers and is described by parents as a family atmosphere where students refer to their teachers by their first name. Students in this small school enjoy learning and want to succeed. As a result, attendance is high and suspensions are rare. 1.4a
 - Parents interviewed during the review were very impressed by the detailed information the teachers acquire about their children. Parents say, "Students are important. Teachers know our children as a whole. They are not a number, but a person." As a result, parents are given a holistic view of their children impacting all aspects of their development.
- The strategic use of resources supports teacher teams to plan curriculum, instruction and analyze data resulting in gains in students' achievement levels.
 - The schedule allows for teachers to meet weekly in teacher teams for a two hour block that is used to review the detailed curriculum and units of study. Teachers plan in grade teams as well as vertically to ensure continuity as students move through the grades. As a result of this effective collaboration, vertical alignment of the curriculum is increased to support improved student performance.
 - The leadership makes good use of available resources to ensure numbers of students in classrooms are kept low. This allows for teachers to know students well and hold themselves fully accountable for student progress and learning.
- Collaborative teacher teams use an inquiry approach to create a learning environment that focuses on improved outcomes for students.
 - The school's use of a two hour weekly block of common planning time allows for all teachers to collaborate on developing lessons and rubrics, sharing of best practices, reading of professional texts and visiting one another's classrooms results in a process of collaborative inquiry and a sharing of effective practice. There is strong peer support and self-reflection and the impact of this work is monitored and evaluated carefully. One specific outcome of these effective collaborations is that the school has seen a significant increase in students achieving at Level 4.
 - A review of the data demonstrated a need for vocabulary development. Consequently, teacher teams used this analysis to embed vocabulary development in content and create lessons that promote understanding of words. An analysis of student work products demonstrate improvement in the quality of student writing.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance tools and protocols for teacher observations to provide differentiated feedback to further develop content knowledge and expertise that lead to elevated school- wide student outcomes.
 - The school administration uses protocols for observations that focus on limited aspects of teachers' instructional practice. Feedback does not always provide next steps through the lens of academic rigor so that instruction leads to an appropriate balance between challenging tasks and students' abilities.
 - Teachers engage in intervisitations and conversation with administrators to build on their instructional practice. However, teachers lack clear plans with differentiated goals and targeted professional development to enhance the quality of their pedagogy in order to secure improvement.
- Strengthen the evaluative process for annual planning so that instructional plans and practice are modified and refined based on student data.
 - Over the summer staff met to review and make revisions to the curriculum. However, as teachers analyze data from formative assessments during the school year modifications to the curriculum are not made in a timely manner in response to student learning needs and with an eye towards the evolving state standards.
 - Teachers meet regularly in teacher teams to identify areas of improvement and plan their instruction. However, the impact of this collaborative review is less secure in measuring progress towards attainment of goals since progress was limited as indicated on the recent Progress Report.
- Build on teachers' goal setting process to include interim targets and defined timeframes to measure success of instructional practices on student learning.
 - Teachers set end of year goals based on a review of data. Students and parents also identify long -range goals. However, goals are quite broad and lack interim benchmarks in order to ensure progress along the way to mastery of standards.
 - The collaborative culture of the school, coupled with effective communication, ensures that all constituents are well versed in the school's goals. However, additional attention is needed to set differentiated annual and interim goals for students who need additional support in order to maximize their learning potential.
- Strengthen teacher pedagogy to offer a wide range of rigorous experiences and choices so that it provides high levels of appropriate challenge for all students to maximize their learning.
 - Lessons are typically engaging and differentiated so that learners have multiple entry points. However, the most academically advanced are not

always fully stretched to achieve their maximum potential. This could affect levels of engagement and quality of work produced.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Bronx New 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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