



**Department of
Education**

Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Abram Stevens Hewitt

08X130

**750 Prospect Avenue
Bronx
NY 10473**

Principal: Lourdes Velazquez

Dates of review: May 24 - 25, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Timothy Behr

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Abram Stevens Hewitt is an elementary school with 508 students from Pre-k through grade 5. The school population comprises 23% Black, 69% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% Asian, 5% Multiracial, and 1% not reported students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 91.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The administration makes informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning.
 - Coaches assigned to work with assistant principals are strategically involved in all instructional phases including class, team, and administrative collaborations. This decision has been instrumental in creating immediate and effective communication between leadership and teachers to enable timely revisions in all areas of instruction to improve student learning.
 - Recognizing the need to support the school community in the implementation of the Star Bucks, positive behavior intervention program, the principal hired a full time social worker who focuses on infusing the program throughout the school so that it is an active and integral part of the students' daily social experience. This decision ensures that the school acts on its goal of monitoring student behavior to inform decisions and support school-wide initiatives. Teachers now consistently acknowledge and recognize good behavior, and use this information to guide instructional and recreational planning to support student learning needs.
- The principal and staff have created a learning community that focuses on student outcomes with a vision to continue to accelerate learning.
 - School goals, based on students' summative and formative data are embedded and aligned to the school's Comprehensive Education Plan. Analysis of the Progress Report and Quality Review recommendations enable the principal, administrative team, and teachers to develop focused instructional and organizational goals. As a result, the alignment of assistant principals' and teachers' goals assures a united effort towards cohesive instructional and organizational approaches as evident by improved student performance data of inquiry team students.
- The school has established systems for monitoring teaching practice with a focus on improving instructional outcomes.
 - All teachers are observed on a regular basis and receive feedback to evaluate their teaching practice. The administration meets with the coaches to review Periodic Assessment results. The coaches share this information with every teacher to analyze the data for their class and collaboratively plan next steps to address the needs of students. Tiered professional development and collaboration based on teacher needs enabled teachers to share their content knowledge and deepen their pedagogical skills. As a result, student performance is starting to improve as evidenced by teacher made tests and informal and formal observation reports.

- Teachers develop leadership skills through professional team collaborations utilizing the inquiry process with a focus on enhancing teacher practice to improve student outcomes.
 - The third grade teachers meet on a regular basis utilizing the inquiry model to analyze formative and summative data of their targeted students. Teachers develop and share strategies to support student comprehension skills through the explicit instruction of fluency strategies. As a result, there has been an increase in student independent reading levels as evidenced by running record assessments. Teachers are now expanding fluency development into their student writing activities. The next steps will include sharing instructional change strategies with the teachers of the early childhood grades in order to determine best strategies to improve student achievement.
 - All teachers belong to a collaborative team which effectively promotes their leadership and guides their own learning by utilizing numerous forms of data to analyze student achievement and sharing best practices and implications that promote student learning.
- All constituents agree that students receive a good level of support in their personal and academic development.
 - The principal has strategically enlisted the collaboration of several community-based organizations including the Morningside Center for Teaching Social Responsibility, that has provided much needed mentoring for students and focused professional development which provides strategies to teachers in dealing with various social, emotional and academic issues of students. Consequently, the school sustains a safe, inclusive, and respectful culture to improve student outcomes.
 - The “Turnaround” for children’s intervention is a program that involves the entire community. Workshops enable teachers to plan and execute lessons on topics such as attendance, bullying and respect for one another. These integrated youth development supports and services to students have afforded students opportunities to grow socially and enrich their learning experiences as evidenced by students indicating their comfort in seeking support from adult staff members.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend the emphasis of rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills across the curriculum and grades for a variety of learners with different needs in order to improve teacher craft and student outcomes.
 - The principal’s leadership team guides the development of aligning curricula to the evolving State standards emphasizing writing, rubrics, looking at students work, and independent reading levels across grades and content areas to ensure a cohesive academic program. However, not all teachers have the same skill set and the rigor is not consistent across all grade levels. Consequently, progress is not occurring in English language arts and math from class to class and grade to grade as evidenced by Periodic Assessment results.

- Promote greater consistency in differentiating instruction based on data, so lesson planning reflects purposeful grouping differentiated activities and targeted questioning that prioritizes student learning.
 - Teachers can identify the behavior patterns, learning preference and general needs of students in their classes. However, teachers do not consistently utilize this information to effectively incorporate instructional strategies for different students during lessons. Conferencing notes are not up to date in most classes. Data based flexible grouping aligned to skill specific areas of need on current formative assessments is not yet the norm in the majority of classrooms. As a result, most teachers present generic lessons and students exhibit very uneven levels of engagement, especially during English language arts and math. Consequently, student learning is not maximized.
- Develop a cohesive system to ensure that all teachers know their individual students' needs, strengths, achievement, and learning styles across curriculums on an ongoing basis to support targeted instruction.
 - Grade level teacher teams meet regularly with their respective assistant principal and coaches to analyze student data, including summative tests, interim classroom performance, attendance and behavior. However, teachers do not consistently utilize data to plan specific instruction for various targeted groups of students. Most teachers are not using the data results to reflect on the unique impact of their selected instructional resources and teaching styles on student achievement. As a result, students are not performing to their full potential.
- Ensure that relevant goals are set for all subgroups in English language arts with clear time frames and measurable success criteria in order to improve overall school performance.
 - The school uses summative reports to monitor the progress of its classes. However, the school is not incorporating a tracking tool to measure the performance and progress of all students, especially subgroups. As a result, most teachers are not revising their instructional practice to meet the needs of students. Consequently, the majority of students at the school are not making exemplary gains in English language arts and math as evidenced by the most recent progress report. Similarly, the school does not communicate the outcomes of summative test and next steps with the families of students. As a result, parents do not know which academic strands they should support at home.
- Develop structures to evaluate adjustments to curricular and instructional practices and strategic decisions in order to accelerate student progress.
 - The school is currently updating curriculum maps that are aligned to the evolving State standards. Ongoing analysis of data during teacher team meetings has lead to curricular revisions in English language arts that include the integration of competency skills and content mastery. However, the school has not developed a system to evaluate the effectiveness of these adjustments and the impact on students' learning

outcomes. This limits the school's ability to build coherence of best practices across the school to support student progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Abram Stevens Hewitt	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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