

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

The Walt Disney School

11x160

**4140 Hutchinson River Parkway East
Bronx
NY 10475**

Principal: Lori Baker-Armond

Dates of review: December 7 - 8, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Elizabeth A. White

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Walt Disney is an elementary school with 454 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 61% Black, 36% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 30% 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 93.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is Developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has very good communication systems for keeping families fully informed resulting in the effective promotion of parental involvement.
 - School staff consistently communicates with parents via bi-weekly progress reports in all subjects. The reports include academic, student conduct, and adherence to the uniform policy information. It also provides an opportunity for parents to comment effectively enabling on-going reciprocal communication between parents and the school, resulting in clear high expectations for all.
 - School leadership effectively provides parents an opportunity to understand student performance by establishing a forum to encourage parental collaboration through monthly parent roundtables. This forum results in an open exchange of information regarding students learning needs and outcomes.
- A positive school culture supports school-wide efforts resulting in an environment conducive to learning for students and adults.
 - Risk-free classroom environments evidenced by teacher/student rapport result in increased student engagement and adult-student interaction. Teachers often offer encouraging comments to promote student participation. Student work is celebrated in all classrooms, with written teacher feedback offering praises and next steps. The school's positive behavior intervention support initiative effectively offers guidance to students resulting in increased social emotional development.
 - Students interviewed are enthusiastic about their school. They engage in high numbers in academic, enrichment and recreational family activities offered by the school. They particularly like the school's "entertainment" which includes activities like parent student sports competitions and 'Welcome back' barbeques. Their active participation results in students being effectively supported by teachers during the day, in extended learning programs after school and on Saturdays.
- School leaders make effective budgetary decisions aligned to school-wide goals that have resulted in increased support for improvements in learning.
 - Technology integration is a school-wide focus. Across classrooms newly purchased SMART board technology is utilized to increase student engagement resulting in improved instructional effectiveness with regular classroom instruction and intervention services.
 - Skills sophistication is offered on Mondays after school. Due to school bus scheduling constraints, the school also offers this program during the regular school day via paid teacher preparation periods resulting in access to additional academic support to general education students as well as to students who receive special education services.
- The school uses a wide range of relevant data which enables them to assess and analyze student performance trends.

- Classroom teachers across the school have assessment binders that include summative, interim and diagnostic data. This tool provides greater accessibility to student outcome information enabling teachers to tailor instruction to meet the needs of individual students and subgroups of students.
- Teacher teams use protocols to examine students' work. This practice allows them to better analyze the quality of work, the students' level of understanding, as well as the effectiveness of their instructional practice.
- Classroom teaching practices are regularly assessed enabling the school to reflect on pedagogy and determine areas in need of professional growth.
 - The workshop model instructional approach is evident throughout classrooms resulting in instructional coherence across the school.
 - Administration conducts regular formal and informal observations of practice as well as one-on-one data talks with teachers. Written feedback is provided to faculty based on these assessments. This process results in actionable feedback to evaluate pedagogical strengths and professional development needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop coherence and alignment in the school's curricula with state standards in order to support effective teacher practice.
 - Currently curriculum maps, particularly in ELA, are under administrative review. Similarly, embedding key standards that align across grades leading to improvement for all subgroups is still a work in progress. Because a curriculum is still being developed it has not yet been assessed to determine the impact on meeting the needs of all learners.
- Further develop the consistency of differentiated practice to effectively provide appropriate challenge to students in all classes.
 - The school has adopted several new instructional initiatives such as Achieve 3000 and the Renzulli model, resulting in teaching practices that are just becoming aligned to curricula to meet the needs of all learners.
 - Management of differentiated practices is not yet consistently applied across classrooms resulting in varying levels of student support particularly for students receiving special education services.
- Build upon gathering and analyzing data to ensure that information from teacher teams impact school-wide instructional decisions.
 - Teacher teams are currently working identifying power standards with aligned assessments however this work does not yet impact school-wide curricula decisions. This results in a lack of clarity on how the work of teams informs school-wide curricular development.
 - While teams have sufficient data to identify students' strengths and needs the creation of differentiated instructional practices are just beginning limiting the impact on student outcomes.

- Provide further structure for targeted teacher development that aligns to whole school and teacher goals with rigorous monitoring procedures to evaluate the impact on student achievement.
 - The results of pedagogical assessment conducted by administration have not yet resulted in formal teacher development plans. The result is limited performance-based accountability that produces positive student outcomes.
 - Currently, only the data specialist receives formal training on inquiry resulting in limited opportunities for teacher leadership development and teacher team ownership of the inquiry process.
- Establish systems for measuring progress towards short and long term goals that result in effective progress monitoring.
 - School leaders do not yet systemically review long term goals resulting in limited “big picture” assessment of school-wide student performance.
 - Processes for monitoring school-wide goals have yet to be devised resulting in limited ability to make adjustments based on actionable data.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: The Walt Disney 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