



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Dr. Selman Waksman School

Elementary School 178

850 Baychester Avenue

Bronx

NY 10475

Principal: Evelyn M. Fulton

Dates of review: January 11, 20, 2011

Lead Reviewer: John P. O'Mahoney

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Dr. Selman Waksman is an elementary school with 444 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 64% Black, 30% Hispanic, and 4% White students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 22% 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 94.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is Developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions resulting in effective structures to improve and meet students' learning needs.
 - To support the school's instructional goals, scheduling has been developed to ensure that all teachers have three common preparation periods per week, as well as the use of one 50-minute period per week, for teacher team meetings. This allows teachers to collaboratively review and utilize reading assessment results to group their students according to their proficiency levels.
 - The principal has effectively leveraged the school budget to invest in reduced class size in the early childhood grades, continuation of English language arts and math coaches, and the purchase of Orchard, a new academic intervention program, for struggling readers. Each of these decisions leads to opportunities for teachers to focus on the needs of students, along with professional support from instructional coaches.
- The school is safe and orderly resulting in an environment that is conducive to student learning.
 - Groups of students state that they feel very safe in school and that the staff, "really care about kids and the way they learn". As a result, students stated they felt comfortable taking risks and challenging themselves when solving "hard math word problems."
 - The school has established positive behavioral programs such as the Citizen of the Month to recognize those that exhibit virtues expected of all. Student recognition during assemblies allows the school to highlight those who are shining examples meeting stated expectations.
- Teachers use data to effectively assess all students resulting in goal setting that meets the needs of all learners.
 - Teacher teams used data, (Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System -2, (E-Clas-2), Diagnostic Reading Assessment), to assess student reading levels and used the information to determine a grade wide goal. Grade 3's goal, to increase fluency, was monitored by students receiving both pre- and post-tests on fluency for each unit of study, which led to a better understanding of which strategies worked best in improving fluency skills.
 - Individual classroom teachers use the results from pre/post assessments in literacy to determine specific needs of students, plan instruction accordingly, and develop appropriate guided reading groups. Teachers' use of a variety of strategies, and students' results, are shared during teacher team meetings to identify best practices, and monitor student performance and progress towards set targets.
- Teachers utilize an inquiry approach to examine student work, plan together, and share ideas and best practices resulting in improved student outcomes.

- Each grades inquiry team meets regularly to review student data and discuss which strategies are most successful. To strengthen this process teams align research-based methods with their current instructional practices to determine what standards are being implemented and how lessons are evolving into best practices. As a result, teams are looking at different research models to strengthen their instructional methods and delivery.
- Teachers on inquiry teams take turns facilitating the meetings and setting agendas thus establishing distributed leadership roles, and resulting in lead teachers on each grade level.
- Professional development is tailored to meet the needs of all teachers and is effectively aligned to school-wide goals.
 - A comprehensive professional development plan uses data collected from teacher needs surveys as well as needs identified by school leaders during walkthroughs and classroom observations. This enables school leaders to provide feedback to teachers and make strategic decisions regarding teacher performance evaluation, tenure, and retention.
 - School-wide goals that are reflective of the escalating standards in New York State and the country incorporate tailored professional development. This ensures that all teachers receive a minimum of five exposures to the new Common Core State Standards, as well as opportunities to participate in teacher team development, resulting in staff looking at student work and implementing differentiation of instruction.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop a more rigorous and engaging curriculum which allows for sufficient access and challenge for all students.
 - Teachers are working from a variety of instructional programs and initiatives with no definitive State standard aligned curriculum for literacy. Consequently, the curriculum struggles to challenge all students with rigorously engaging high-level thinking tasks to close the achievement gap in student performance.
 - While there is evidence of the workshop model across classrooms, the emphasis on rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills is inconsistent.
- Consistently embed differentiated practices and effective questioning techniques into lesson planning to accommodate varied student entry points, and elicit higher order thinking.
 - Teachers use the workshop model for reading and writing, however, there is little evidence of differentiated instruction that incorporates technology, or that it is well matched to students' learning modalities, thus missing out on building upon students' strengths while supporting learning with well-matched activities.
 - Teachers do not yet use available data to effectively determine the type of differentiated instruction that would be supportive of student learning nor is there evidence of implementing methods for optimum outcomes.

- Enhance data analysis to effectively evaluate the impact of instructional decisions.
 - Teachers are given a plethora of data to analyze, and were trained in using the Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, Decisional, (ORID), protocol, to look at student work. However, there is a consensus that they are not yet comfortable using this protocol and teachers stated that they have not yet received sufficient training on data analysis and looking at student work. Consequently, staff are precluded from effectively differentiating instruction in their classrooms.
 - Teacher teams use pre/post assessments to determine growth on specific skills such as fluency in grade 3. However, there is no direct analysis of how increasing fluency will increase student outcomes on State reading assessments.
- Align teacher created assessments to the curriculum so that instructional decisions can be adjusted based on the analysis of student learning outcomes.
 - The school gathers data from the E-Clas-2 system, Everyday Math checklists, and Teachers' College checklists, to analyze student progress. At this time, there is no link between the data and the adjusted instructional decisions leading to student success.
 - The practice of gathering student data in reading and writing is inconsistent among teachers. Therefore, in the absence of identifying students' strengths and areas of need, teachers' ability to constantly incorporate differentiated strategies into their instruction is hindered, thus limiting data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects in order to develop a complete picture of students' progress across all aspects of the school.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of teacher teams to support and enhance professional collaboration that will lead to improved teacher practice.
 - Although the school has made a deliberate effort to develop the structure of teacher teams and schedule relevant meeting times, at this time there is no structure in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the teams. Thus, teams are unable to share best practices and learn from obstacles that other teams may face.
 - Although teacher teams are regularly scheduled, there is no evidence that there are opportunities for distributed leadership since the grade level teams do not have formalized opportunities to work with the principal or the curriculum team.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Dr. Selman Waksman	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