



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Intermediate School 339

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1600 Webster Avenue

Bronx

NY 10457

Principal: Jason Levy

Dates of review: January 25 - 26, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Carolyn Yaffe

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Intermediate School 339 is an intermediate school with 806 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 32% Black, 66% Hispanic, .1% Native American, and .1% Asian students. The student body includes 30% English language learners and 25% 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 87.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Administrators use a wide range of tools to organize and make data accessible to all school constituents, which supports the effective adjustment of school and classroom level decisions.
 - Using Google applications, the school's development of custom-made tools helps it to effectively capture data from various levels. Via the web-based math program 'School of One', school leaders collate daily assessment data to identify students who stalled in their skill development, resulting in implementation of suitable interventions. Review of cohort section sheets guides the flexible grouping of students that is increasing levels of engagement and performance. Analyses of common assessment data are focusing instruction on cause and effect, resulting in 3% of students showing gains in their proficiency.
- Administrators and teacher teams consistently gather and analyze information on student learning to identify areas of strength and need.
 - Analysis of referral and suspension data informed establishing an internal dedicated telephone line and responsible staff member to immediately address safety concerns and develop suitable responses. As a result, a more consistent system for quickly addressing classroom and hallway safety issues is in place and there has been a reduction in suspensions.
 - Teacher teams regularly examine State assessment data, Acuity, results from common assessments, and daily section sheets tracking student attendance, behavior, and work completion, to identify academic and behavioral trends. As a result, individuals and teams of teachers adjust teaching strategies and realign their instructional foci.
- The school thoughtfully organizes resources to support school goals.
 - The school's reorganization of its schedule enables teachers to have a reduced teaching schedule while extending time dedicated to each teaching period. Thus, each of the four-core subject areas now has equal instructional time and teachers are responsible for a manageable student load. Additionally, the scheduling of common planning time enables teachers, who share a group of students, to discuss and plan effectively.
 - To support the effective delivery of differentiation of instruction, administration sought and won grants so each student has a laptop. Allocated resources provide teachers with professional development in best practices, thus building the school's capacity to attain its goal of differentiating instruction using technology.
- The school provides professional development for teachers and has developed internal capacity and partnerships resulting in support structures for students.

- The school works with a community based organization to launch an Instructional Support Team to identify the most at-risk students within the school and provide appropriate support through clustering classes with a team of teachers, (POD). Professional development on understanding age appropriate issues and recognizing the difference between psychological issues and home issues are provided for teachers, resulting in the POD's ability to problem-solve and meet the needs of high-risk students.
- The school creates common assessments to gather data around the effectiveness of classroom level instructional decisions.
 - Departments create and analyze students' results from common assessments to gain a clear picture of mastery relative to chosen skills and standards. Analysis of the data spurs on-going conversations around areas of strength, needs of cohorts and subgroups, and it has resulted in revisions to daily lessons that now include skill building. POD teams use the data to identify and make decisions around and track progress for students in relevant subgroups.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop additional professional development and clearer accountability structures to support teachers in the design of rigorous academic curricula and tasks.
 - Teachers are collaboratively planning units; however, departments do not yet have curriculum maps that identify key skills and standards that will serve as a basis to assess student mastery over the course of the year. Therefore, teachers are limited in their ability to inform unit and assessment task planning and suitably engage students.
 - Although the school has done work to define elements of rigor, it is not yet consistently reflected in all classroom tasks across grades and subject areas, thus preventing all students from being appropriately challenged.
- Clearly define meaningful work products to support staff acquiring knowledge and becoming proficient in suitable task creation.
 - Although school leaders have identified student engagement as a goal, they have not yet clearly defined the key classroom elements making this an effective practice leading to uneven levels of student engagement across classrooms. This hinders the effective monitoring of progress in this area.
 - While administrators and teachers refer to rigor, engagement and differentiation as priorities, there are a lack of clear and consistent definitions and identified evidence to support these practices. As a result, classroom pedagogy is unevenly aligned to the curriculum.
- Extend the work with the classroom observation tool to elevate school-wide instructional practices
 - Although the school has developed a classroom visitation tool that focuses on rigor, engagement and differentiation, and has been used for informal walk-throughs, as of this date administrators have not extended

the use of this tool during a full team walk-through. This limits its effectiveness of providing suitable feedback to build teachers' capacity around common instructional foci.

- Formal observations are not currently consistent in terms of foci or specificity of feedback around the school's instructional focus. This prevents teachers from having clear next steps for improvement to support attaining school-wide goals.
- Build capacity at the teacher team level in creating measurable learning goals and interim benchmarks to clearly measure progress.
 - Goal setting at the POD team level is not yet consistent, as they do not yet use a unified practice of setting SMART goals for the subgroups of students for whom they are responsible. As a result, many of the POD's goals are not clearly connected to classroom practice, thus hindering the ability to plan for student improvement and to measure their progress towards mastery.
- Strengthen the current advisory structure to ensure the coordination of social and emotional support for all students in order to maximize student achievement.
 - The school has dedicated time for advisory but advisors do not currently serve as the formal liaison between school and home. The current practice of home contacts regarding academic and emotional concerns is not consistent across POD's, thus making it difficult to coherently track whether all students are receiving appropriate supports and interventions, and whether all families are suitably informed of their children's progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Intermediate School 339	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