



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Public School 340

Elementary School 340

25 West 195th Street

Bronx

NY 10468

Principal: Nelly Maldonado

Dates of review: March 24 – 25 2011

Lead Reviewer: Gwen Stephens

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 340 is an elementary school with 528 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 12% Black, 79% Hispanic, 3% White, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 22% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 94.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and faculty design rigorous curricula including the arts and technology that supports instruction and emphasizes key standards in order to close the achievement gap.
 - Teams of teachers receive “thumb drives” at the beginning of each school year to incorporate on-going revisions to curriculum calendars. Additionally, teachers are infusing the evolving Common Core State standards into the curriculum so that there are rigorous academic tasks that emphasize higher order skills. Emphasis on these standards including writing, speaking, and listening, has led to the creation of a ‘Robust Vocabulary and Conventions of English’ document that delineates tasks across grades and content areas. The impact is a challenging, evolving curriculum that engages students and supports closing the school’s achievement gap.
- Across classrooms, there is coherence and consistency in differentiated instruction so that lesson planning offers multiple entry points for all learners and opportunities for higher levels of engagement.
 - Evidence of differentiated practice is consistent across the school. Teachers utilize the school’s English as a second language initiative to leverage highly effective instructional strategies, into mainstream classrooms. As a result, lesson planning is scaffolded and offers entry points to meet the needs of all students, increasing learning opportunities.
 - Individual teachers use a workshop structure, mini lesson format, and detailed work in flexible small groups, all based on data, to provide effective routines including higher order questioning embedded into the delivery of lessons. Therefore, students receive strategic support during lessons leading to an acceleration of learning gains. A grade 2 bilingual classroom, with four separate databased groups, effectively involves students responding to a read-aloud with differentiated content, process, and product.
- The principal makes purposeful organizational decisions aligning resources to support school-wide instructional goals in response to the needs of the students.
 - The principal has adjusted schedules to provide time for teachers to meet in common planning teams, and in vertical and horizontal inquiry teams. Grade 1 and 2 students engage in successful small group targeted instruction before and after school. Strategic small group guided reading instruction during the Saturday program provides instruction for State assessments that effectively meets the needs of the students and advances their learning.
 - Every classroom, equipped with a Smart board, and the library as a multimedia center supports teachers’ in the use of additional resources, leading to lessons utilizing technology to provide students greater access to a full range of content in social studies and science. This practice is deepening the alignment of resources with instruction and curriculum to improve instructional coherence school wide and raise student outcomes.

- School leaders and faculty examine a wide range of data to monitor performance trends and create academic interventions that improve student outcomes.
 - A thorough analysis of data relating to students' comprehension strategies, including cycles of student writing samples, led to hiring of literacy consultants and coaches to reduce class size across grades 3 and 4. This enables teachers to provide additional instructional and skill support for identified students during guided reading instruction. Students are showing gains on the grade 3 English language arts predictive assessment with a 61% proficiency compared to the District at 60%.
 - Utilizing State data for math, teacher teams conducted item analysis across each grade to identify students' strengths and weakness, school wide trends, and patterns, to develop instructional strategies to support student learning. The focus on key standards has resulted in students scoring 66% proficiency in grade 3 and 60% in grade 4 on recent math predictive assessments, an increase of 4% points above the District scores, and 10% points above the overall school performance in math on the 2010 Progress Report.
- The principal has a clear "theory of action" that is communicated to the entire school community and is the basis for driving efforts to accelerate student learning and sustain growth.
 - The principal's clearly articulated school-wide goals are reflected in the Comprehensive Educational Plan and identify the school's focus on improvement in academic growth, sustainability of progress, and building leadership. Accordingly, the school's analysis of incoming grade 1 data, suggested that increased progress in the lower grades is attainable by strategically redesigning the pre-kindergarten curriculum to infuse emphasis on language acquisition, reading, and writing standards. As a result, the new curriculum document for pre-kindergarten is driving alignments through grade 1 as seen in this year's grade 1 student work products, demonstrating increased language mastery.
- The principal and her team use formal and informal observations to elevate school wide classroom practices, which supports a common instructional focus, increasing learning across the school.
 - The principal provides one-on-one support to gain insights that facilitate the development of individual plans that foster teachers' professional growth toward meeting the school's instructional goals. Specific next steps included in feedback, furthers teachers' development, allowing for successful alignment of classroom practice and targeted support that nurture teacher expertise.
 - Across classrooms, teachers use a common lesson plan template with the expectation of a consistency in lesson planning and delivery so that all aspects of the curricula are covered for students. Additionally, new teachers receive observational support from peer and lead teachers, coaches, and mentors, to ensure effective integration into the learning community thus maximizing opportunities for the faculty's success.
- The school successfully collaborates with community-based organizations to integrate youth services that provide students with opportunities that support academic and personal growth.

- Partnerships with Parents as Art Partners, collaboration with St. Barnabas Hospital, and Montefiore Hospital, provides the school with extended day opportunities and services for families including supports for mental health, nutrition, and parenting. The school's collaboration with community partners links its academic and personal goals to sustain growth.
- Teachers receive on-going professional development to understand and design successful educational interventions for students with disabilities. Teachers review new research such as the Garth Harries memo to gain insight into the changing models of special education. The school's development of a Response to Intervention model, which utilizes data to place students in tiers of learning for individualized support, reduces referrals, and improves evaluation services for students with special needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve reflective practices and routines to engage students and families in on-going discussions regarding student progress towards goals.
 - Students keep detailed reading reflection journals in which teachers provide feedback on student responses to reading tasks. However, there is inconsistent use of rubrics reflected in student work products that provides clear next steps for improvement and raises student levels of understanding and performance.
 - The school regularly maintains contact with parents to ensure communication of their children's academic progress, attendance, and discipline concerns. However, the school does not yet provide parents with a consistent approach to understanding school wide and student individual instructional goals, thus hampering their children's progress and meeting of the school's expectations.
- Create assessments that are aligned with the school's key standards and curriculum to evaluate the effectiveness of classroom level instructional decisions.
 - Individual teachers use a range of assessment data including periodic assessment, classroom level tests, quizzes, and student work, to track student progress. However, common grade wide teacher made formative assessments with adjustments for daily use are not yet evident. As a result, there are missed opportunities to review student's results across each grade to provide even greater information relative to student outcomes and to inform classroom decisions.
- Refine the communication of interim and long-term goals to highlight growth so that the school community endorses adjustments.
 - The school has developed action plans that identify long-term goals, and interim benchmarks. The principal and faculty are able to measure growth in a number of areas. However, there is no timeline for communicating progress to the school community in a manner to optimize the impact of actions and to celebrate success along the way.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Elementary School 340	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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