



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2010-2011

Young Leaders Elementary School

Elementary School 369

468 East 140th Street

Bronx

NY 10454

Principal: Dr. Karen Collins

Dates of review: April 14-15, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Yolanda Torres

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Young Leaders is an elementary school with 299 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 14% Black, 72% Hispanic, 3% White, 10% Multi-racial and 1% Native American students. The student body includes 23% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2009 - 2010 was 91.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders make strategic decisions in order to address the school wide instructional goals and students' needs.
 - Teachers have weekly common planning times to facilitate grade discussions and sharing of instructional practices. This horizontal and vertical collaboration leads to a cohesive communication on how to better support students' instructional needs. The school leadership has purposely kept small class sizes to provide students with focused instructional support via AIS, ESL and SETSS teachers. As teachers meet, they discuss possible strategies leading to the academic advancement of the targeted students. Moreover, the school has received two RESO-A grants to infuse the use of technological devices such as smart boards, desktop computers, printers and cameras.
 - In order to support the school's instructional goals, the principal has hired consultants to provide professional development in the areas of literacy, math and differentiated instruction. The school wide schedule allows special education and bilingual teachers to meet regularly with ESL and IEP teachers to plan and focus on the instructional needs of these student populations to increase their academic performance.
- The school collects and analyzes a range of data in order to identify school wide trends students' strengths and areas of focus for improved outcomes.
 - The analysis of summative data vis-à-vis CEP goals has assisted the school in learning about the school wide areas in need of focus. An analysis of Periodic data is made available to teachers for their reference and planning purposes for student subgroups that supports the coherence of school wide trends.
 - The school gathers and analyses a comprehensive range of summative data through the use of a collection and tracking tool that captures informal data throughout the school year for all grades. This tool enables teachers to monitor formative data while school leaders assess the school wide strengths and areas in need of focus resulting in strategic planning.
- Teams of teachers use data to track students' progress towards meeting goals in order to increase academic achievement.
 - Teachers input data into "grade books" on a monthly basis to track student progress and plan teacher professional development. This school wide protocol helps teachers provide feedback to students and parents via a grade-specific progress report for consistent communication.
 - Teacher teams use student work and Periodic Assessments to discuss next steps and plan strategic lessons customized to students' needs. As they evaluate student work, teachers begin to set goals for targeted students leading to differentiated foci to enhance student learning.

- The majority of teachers engage in the inquiry process resulting in increased professional collaboration and best practices to support targeted students.
 - Teacher engagement in weekly collaborative inquiry team meetings result in vertical planning and discussions amongst colleagues on the students' academic gaps. These collaborations have led to more focused teacher talks on how to help targeted students improve on areas most in need.
 - Collaborative teams complete online minutes, "Lessons Learned to Date" protocol and a Mid-Year Summary posted on the inquiry bulletin board to provide a school wide perspective of their learning and next steps for the inquiry process. Teachers develop agendas and conduct their meetings with support from the principal. This sense of empowerment and decision-making process leads to increased distributed leadership.
- The school has structures in place to regularly evaluate and share student performance data with families.
 - The school leaders have begun exposing teachers to the Common Core State Standards via the support of the Network. In addition, the school has adjusted its grading system and uses running records to monitor student progress in order to meet the expectations of the State Standards to provide teachers, students, and parents with a framework.
 - The newly developed Assessment Intervention Dashboard tool provides academic and attendance data which is used for continuous assessment of student performance and progress. This repository of data facilitates the deliverance process when sharing academic information with families.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that the alignment between curriculum and student tasks is rigorous and challenging to develop students' critical thinking skills.
 - While there is clear implementation of the workshop model aligned to Teacher's College units of study, there is inconsistent evidence of purposeful and rigorous delivery of instruction. Across classrooms, students' work is primarily limited to worksheets. Consequently, the lack of rigor hinders students' reach to higher levels of academic potential.
 - There is evidence of the use of rubrics with teacher and student comments posted on student work products. However across grades, the lack of student reflection and next steps fail to provide meaningful feedback leading to the development of students' critical thinking skills. Therefore, this limits opportunities for students to reflect and take ownership of their learning.
- Increase the differentiation of instruction towards cohesive instructional practices in order to meet students' multiple entry points.
 - Some teachers have begun to plan in accordance to students' learning styles. With the support of the Network, the school has engaged in professional development on differentiated instruction. While there is evidence of some pockets of tiered instruction, targeted lessons are inconsistent and do not meet the needs of all students at their

instructional levels. This inconsistency does not support higher student outcomes.

- As students work in small groups, with partners, or independently, there is some evidence of differentiated work products that fit the needs of students. However, the tasks planned for struggling students are too basic resulting in an uneven level of engagement and critical thinking.
- Continue to implement support structures conducive to a positive learning environment for adults and students in order to support academic and social emotional growth.
 - Although school leaders continue to focus their efforts on building a respectful and collaborative school climate, there is evidence for more support in this area. A review of the Learning Environment Survey (LES) reveals that teachers have a concern for safety and discipline. Although the assistant principal meets with specific students and their parents, student suspensions remain high and some teachers indicate that they do not feel supported. Consequently, this cultivates a climate where trust and safety are not clearly defined.
 - The school-created progress reports provide behavioral information to families. However, there is a need for more focused collaboration between the school and families in order to support the social and emotional needs of students that target behaviors and align students' needs to specific social emotional strategies for personal growth that lead to school success.
- Align data analysis to the curriculum consistently in order to create a clear picture of students' needs for improvement in academic performance.
 - Teacher teams evaluate data to inform their next steps in supporting targeted students' needs. However, there is an inconsistency in the analysis of the data to identify the specific strengths and needs of selected students resulting in lack of alignment between curriculum and student growth.
 - Some teams of teachers are experimenting and evaluating how the conferral process can assist them in supporting students' progress. Hence, the school is developing this analytical process to better support student subgroups such as English language learners and special needs populations as evidenced in student work folders.
- Incorporate data-driven classroom observations to provide teachers with meaningful feedback for professional growth leading to the advancement of student learning.
 - School leaders conduct periodic formal and informal observations. However, the observations lack rigorous recommendations aligned to classroom data and student work products. Consequently, the lack of data aligned feedback hinders teachers' professional growth.
 - The common instructional focus of the school is literacy. Although teachers use the workshop model for instruction in developing this focus,

there is inconsistency in how the model is implemented across classrooms leading to uneven learning outcomes.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name: Young Leaders Elementary 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
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