

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 003 The Bedford Village
Elementary School K003

50 JEFFERSON AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY 11216

Principal: KRISTINA BEECHER

Dates of review: January 9-10, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Denise Sontag

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 003 The Bedford Village is an Elementary school with 640 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 76% Black, 6% Hispanic, 2% White, 10% Asian students and 4% other students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 92.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school curriculum is aligned to State standards and includes opportunities for students to engage in a variety of challenging learning experiences, including in the arts, with multiple resources to support increased learning outcomes. (1.1)
 - The school's curricula, inclusive of all students, is aligned to the outcomes of key Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in all grades and all subjects with an emphasis on promoting both the academic and social aspects of post-secondary readiness and integration of the Arts. Through an analysis of summative State data in English language arts, there is an emphasis on critical thinking and listening comprehension across all grades, in addition to a priority in the Arts. Units of study are aligned to the CCLS so that all students engage in tasks that support the development of skills for post secondary achievement, as evidenced in student work samples and curriculum maps. Consequently, students' performance on literacy unit assessments reflects a 25% increase in listening comprehension. The principal employs the services of a plethora of arts-in-education partners to enhance the curricula by working in classrooms with all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, so teachers and students engage in meaningful and creative learning experiences during the school day and/or afterschool. Furthermore, as an Arts Achieve school, teachers are learning to incorporate the use of rubrics and assessments in the arts from the full-time theater specialist and are supplementing CCLS tasks for individual and groups of students to further improve engagement.
 - Building upon their collective work towards implementation of key CCLS tasks, the administration and staff developed a coherent checklist for rigor to ensure that teachers embed higher level thinking skills in academic tasks resulting in all students cognitively engaged in demonstrating their thinking. For example, across grades and subjects teachers reinforce language consistent with the 16 Habits of Mind such as, "How do you know that?", "What strategies did you use?" and "What is another way we can do this?" Additionally, the school's revised grading policy reflects more rigorous expectations, is consistent across classrooms, grades and subject areas, and further contributes to the school's instructional and organizational coherence. As a result there has been an increase in the number of students identified for both intervention and enrichment instruction.
- The school has an articulated belief system on how students learn best which is aligned to the curriculum that pushes all students to rigorous levels of thinking to increase progress. (1.2)
 - At the core of the school's curricula is the well-articulated belief that, "every teacher needs to teach as if all students are gifted". The school community acknowledges success in reducing the number of students in Level 1 for reading and math and has shifted their focus to extend the curricula so it is more challenging for students at, or above, grade level State standards. As an outcome of collectively reading *The Pedagogy of Confidence*, teachers and administrators engage in conversations that focus on students' strengths, not weaknesses, in order to make learning "clear and relevant" for those under-served. For example, during their grade level inquiry meeting, the grade 4 teachers compared samples of their students' work on fractions to a pre-assessment and discussed "ways to help them to become better problem solvers" resulting in the decision to re-visit the lesson using geometric pattern

blocks for follow-up exploration. Consequently, students' pass rate increased from 35% to 75% during the follow-up administration.

- All teachers are using the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and Bloom's Taxonomy verbs to frame questions in all subject areas to spark high levels of student thinking. Across classrooms, teachers effectively use modeling, cooperative grouping and the Sit up straight, Listen attentively, Answer and ask questions, Nod your head to show you are engaged, Track the teacher or speaker with your eyes (SLANT) strategy as part of their daily practice to foster high levels of thinking and student participation. Charts reflecting the acronym SLANT were visible and routinely referred to. Students in whole class and small group activities immediately responded to teacher cues such as "remember SLANT" or simply "SLANT", resulting in more accountable talk and students being able to clearly articulate what they were working on as well as incorporate higher level questions in their group discussions.
- The principal and staff work collaboratively to establish a safe, supportive and respectful learning community where students are engaged in learning and appreciate the support they receive for their personal and academic growth. (1.4)
 - The principal clearly sets the tone for an all inclusive and supportive environment as evidenced by the way parents, students and teachers feel about her choice of programs and actions, placing social-emotional safety on par with academic success. As one parent iterated, "the principal does not put personal issues aside. Recalling the unfortunate loss of her spouse she talked about the responsiveness of the principal and staff that enabled her daughter to graduate and go on to receive a scholarship. The same level of administrative support is unmistakable in the range of programs that are a well-built part of the school's culture. When parents and teachers shared concerns about the negative impact of lunchtime behavior on classroom instruction the principal implemented, "Play Works" to organize physical play, resulting in fewer reported incidents and greater transition to academic tasks immediately following lunch. Four social workers are a visible component of the school's culture and provide a menu of counseling opportunities positively effecting students' attitudes towards learning as evidenced by teacher and parent feedback. As a result of these and similar programs students have strategies to address anger management and are better poised to face academic challenges. In addition, parents are less stressed when interacting with school personnel and teachers are better equipped to orchestrate developmental support to impact student learning. As one parent shared, "I can go to any staff member and get results." *The Leader in Me* program further develops student self-confidence to succeed by enabling them to understand and employ habits that support their academic development. A student's ability to write a persuasive letter to the principal requesting changes to the school lunch menu is evidence of such self-confidence as well as providing a voice in school wide decisions.
- The administration and staff analyze a wide range of relevant data to inform school wide instructional and organizational decisions to track progress for all students. (2.1)
 - In addition to State assessments, every six weeks the administration analyzes a range of collective data. This data analysis includes an evaluation of State assessments in literacy and math as well as quick writes, item analyses of benchmark/Periodic Assessments and classroom observations to surface grade level and school wide strengths and weaknesses. This allows the administration to identify trends and make strategic adjustments to instructional practices.

When lower grade level discussions around student data were muddled by teachers' using different measures the principal initiated the use of a commonly agreed upon system, thereby decreasing ambiguity and leading to more effective collaboration on actionable next steps for student progress. Early in the year, the administration and School Leadership Team (SLT) "deconstructed" the responses from the school's Learning Environment Survey (LES) and triangulated the data points to determine the CEP and Principal's Performance Review goals. A low score on communication, in particular the home-school connection, resulted in the creation of the *Bedford Village School* website via eChalk. Available in 52 languages the website contains important information about upcoming events, links to instructional resources such as ARIS and individual teacher pages that contain class specific information for parents and students. Parents and teachers attribute the improvement of students' preparedness to the use of this tool for open-access and improved communication between the home and school. Teachers, in response to pinpointing "what was lacking in daily routines to get students to retain number concepts" determined a need to supplement their math program with "more frequent and deeper practice" and engaged in "subitizing": the practice of instantly seeing how many. As a result, during a lesson on addition, 1st graders were able to represent their thinking in multiple ways.

- The principal clearly articulates instructional goals that have resulted in a learning community that is focused on student achievement. (3.1)
 - The basis of the school's "theory of action" is to improve teacher effectiveness and rigor through analytic and reflective inquiry work in order to directly influence student achievement on standardized tests while supporting students' social-emotional growth. To that end the CEP's long-range and interim goals have been re-directed to emphasize the judicious use of data by teachers to not only monitor the progress of students at-risk, but all populations. Furthermore, all teachers now engage in the inquiry process to focus on common core tasks and closing the achievement gap. The Partnership with Children and Play Works engage all students in programs designed to build self-esteem, motivation and leadership further accelerating students' social, emotional and academic growth.
 - The school's planning process is inclusive of parents, grandparents, teachers and students. Each grade elects a grade level representative with the 5th grade "Ambassadors" being most involved in planning events. Prior to regular PTA and SLT meetings the principal hosts "Ears on P.S.003", an open-forum for parents to share their concerns or the concerns of others in the spirit, "it takes a village to raise a child". The principal's weekly Town Hall meetings and bi-weekly grade leader sessions effectively contribute to goal setting and action planning. Parents, teachers and students alike find the principal to be extremely accessible, very receptive and supportive of their ideas engendering far-reaching support of school goals.
- Teachers frequently collaborate on teams to examine student work, visit each other's classrooms and share strategies and techniques for improving practice, in building leadership and improving student outcomes. (4.2)
 - All teachers, including subject specialists, take part in weekly grade level meetings organized around learning from students' work. Using the Authentic Teaching, Learning and Assessment (ATLAS) protocol, teachers take turns facilitating, presenting and recording implications for teacher practice that is shared with the administration. This feedback is used to generate the agenda for her bi-weekly grade team leader meetings. These systematic analyses lead to a

grade-by-grade monthly focus in all subject areas aligned to the CCLS. Flow of the Month charts are visibly posted outside classrooms and are shared with resource personnel. When grade 2 teachers identified a weakness in their reading program for writing responses they researched and shared strategies such as “Thoughtful Listening” to scaffold students' thinking, resulting in students being better able to develop and write effective responses.

What the school needs to improve

- Create a strategic plan to refine articulation and support from school specialists and partnerships to ensure instructional coherence that supports increased student performance outcomes. (1.3)
 - Resources (technology, partnerships and resource personnel) are aligned to the school's goals and are represented in organizational decisions. For example, the school has a goal to increase the use of technology by teachers and students. Consequently, the principal purchased 2 computer carts for each floor and monitors general use of the shared resource. However, formal articulation, and systemic monitoring of strategic connections to classroom and partnership work are not yet evident in long-range action plans. The lack of strategic connections to classroom work limits students' use of technology.
- Build upon individual teacher practice of using data to inform instruction so that teachers use individual strengths and achievements of their students to foster task engagement and accelerate progress toward next steps. (2.2)
 - Teachers and teacher teams use assessments that are aligned to the curricula. While teachers make consistent use of on-going checks for understanding such as conferencing and reviewing work folders they are not yet varied enough to ensure that individual students are aware of their next learning steps. Limited use of this practice does not allow teachers to make on-going instructional adjustments to meet the needs of all students.
- Expand the use of the school's observation tool to develop, with teachers, goals and plans to ensure continued professional growth that directly impacts increased student achievement. (4.1)
 - School leaders conduct frequent cycles of classroom observation using the researched based Danielson Framework and provide teachers with feedback on clear expectations for effective practices. While an Individual Improvement Plan does ask teachers to identify strengths and goals it does not solicit evidence to support acquired mastery that has led to improved student performance. As a result, use of the lab site model for professional development is restricted in ensuring that teacher performance outcomes directly align to student's academic improvement.
- Hone the teacher collaborative process to further ensure the establishment of differentiated goals to challenge and accelerate student progress. (3.2)
 - Across the grades teachers and teacher teams analyze a range of formative and summative data to establish annual goals for their students. While the analysis includes identifying students needing additional support to set differentiated goals interim goals do not effectively extend and accelerate students to reach their full potential.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 003 The Bedford Village	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 as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			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, use on-going assessment practices and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			X	
2.3 Use grading policies and tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends to inform instruction and curriculum?			X	
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress toward school and class expectations?			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 staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?			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, guidance/advisement 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, with particular attention to the CCLS?			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
-----------	-----------------------	----------	-------------------	----------	-------------------	-----------	-----------------------