

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Warren Prep Academy

K028

**1001 Herkimer Street
Brooklyn
NY 11233**

Principal: Sadie Silver

Dates of review: January 30 - 31, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Warren Prep Academy is an elementary school with 255 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 77% Black, 12% Hispanic, 3% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 58% of the students enrolled and girls account for 42%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 91.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school makes effective organizational decisions to support improvement initiatives that promote student progress and achievement. (1.3)
 - After careful analysis of student outcomes on the State assessments and a review of the school's Progress Report, the school acquired additional resources to support instruction and increase student achievement. These include maintaining the school's staff developer who works with teachers to improve instructional practices in all subject areas and hiring reading and writing consultants who work with teachers individually and as a grade, at least once a month, to improve teacher practices on balanced literacy. Additionally, the school has provided a SMARTboard in each classroom and has established a computer lab to increase the use of technology for research and as an instructional tool. As a result, students are demonstrating progress in literacy and math as evidenced in improved performance on school-wide and formative assessments.
 - The principal has established a personnel committee comprised of teachers and members of the School Leadership Team (SLT) that engages in the screening of potential teacher candidates to recommend for available positions at the school. This allows school constituents to have input in the school's hiring practices and assignment of teachers thus, promoting shared leadership for instructional decisions that affect student achievement. In addition, selected teachers "looped" with their classes this year to maintain consistency of instruction and increase student performance. Consequently, Periodic Assessment data to date indicates increases in student progress for this cohort of students.
- School leaders use the classroom observation tool to improve teacher instructional practices to increase student learning. (4.1)
 - The school leadership conducts frequent classroom visits to observe instructional practices of all teachers using a research based rubric and Webb's Depth of Knowledge tool to increase effective and challenging questioning. Feedback to teachers, in particular those new to the profession, supports this teaching strategy as reflected in questioning observed in classrooms as well as rubrics to assess students' work. This is leading to improved instructional strategies and student performance as evidenced by increased student outcomes on school-wide English language arts (ELA) and math assessments compared to data collected in the November.
- School staff works as a unified team to create a calm, respectful and orderly environment to support increased learning and personal growth. (1.4)
 - The school's 'CARE Team' that includes the school psychologist, social worker, guidance counselor, teachers and administrative staff work collaboratively to address and meet the needs of individual students identified in need of additional social, emotional and academic support.

Subsequently the school has a safe and orderly environment and has noted a reduction in the number of referrals and suspensions at this point, over last year.

- The school has established a student government represented by a president and vice president from every classroom. The students engage in service learning activities focusing on projects that serve the community such as conducting food and clothing drives and participating in the 'Feed the Homeless Program' where students serve food to the homeless in the community. This has led to students expressing that they have learned to make a difference in the lives of people who need help thus, positively influencing their social and emotional development and achievement at school.
- The school keeps parents informed of their children's performance in school and is supportive and inclusive of families as partners with school leadership for school improvements. (2.4)
 - School staff communicates regularly with parents about their children's academic outcomes via e-mail messages, phone calls, conversations and progress reports sent home every six to eight weeks. This has resulted in the school staff receiving high praise from parents for keeping them informed of their children's progress so they can intervene, when necessary, to assist their children with making the needed adjustments to achieve in school.
 - The school continuously promotes active parent involvement through participation at school-wide events such as 'Curriculum Night', 'Reading with Your Child' and workshops on curriculum and the Common Core Standards. Additionally, there is parent participation on the School Leadership Team which is responsible for assessing school needs and developing the school's Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). This level of participation strengthens the school connection and collaboration to support student learning and improve student outcomes.
- The school's systems and partnerships provide learning experiences for students to promote their personal and social development and enhance their academic achievement. (4.4)
 - The school has trained teachers to use the 'Positive Behavior Intervention Support Program' (PBIS), a school-wide character development and behavior management system, that emphasizes teaching kindness and respect as basic concepts to guide student conduct. Similarly, consultants from the 'Restorative Practices Initiative' at the University of Pennsylvania, work with the school to train guidance personnel and teachers on the use of praise and rewards as strategies to modify behavior and promote a school culture of mutual respect. As a result, students express that they feel safe and well cared for at school.
 - The school received grant funds to partner with the 'Theater for a New Audience' that focuses on developing writing skills through literature. Currently, selected students are working on reading and writing their own ending to Shakespeare's play, The Taming of the Shrew. This has increased students' vocabulary, stamina and volume of written text that

reflects their development as authors. In addition, the 'Pure Elements Program' offers dance, vocal training and step for students resulting in student performances four times a year. This has elevated students' self esteem, tapped individual talents and enhanced student learning and growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen alignment in the school's curriculum with key State standards and tasks to ensure that all students receive rigorous instruction to achieve at high levels. (1.1)
 - The school has created curriculum maps by grade level that integrate Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in English language arts and math. However, key State standards and the use of strategies for higher order thinking skills were not evident in several classrooms. In these classrooms assignments were rudimentary and did not generate thoughtful discussion, analysis, or depth in student work products thus, limiting creativity and achievement for students. Additionally, the planning of higher order learning tasks designed to engage student sub-groups was inconsistent. This reduces opportunities for challenging all students, especially students with disabilities and English language learners, with rigorous instruction to promote engagement for a diverse student population.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction so that lesson planning reflects purposeful groupings and tasks extend thinking to maximize learning for all students. (1.2)
 - The school has expressed its belief in differentiated instruction as a means to meet the needs of students performing at various levels. However, this practice was not consistent throughout the school. In some classrooms lessons minimally included differentiated questions or teaching strategies to support authentic learning opportunities. This adversely affects understanding and skill development needed to maximize learning for all students.
 - While there was evidence of student participation in all classrooms, engagement in assigned tasks that generated higher order thinking was inconsistent across the school. In some classrooms students expressed uncertainty of the tasks at hand and were not able to complete the assignments, while in others some students completed assignments quickly and were not given guidance on what to do next. This hampers some students' abilities to perform and achieve at high levels as reflected in limited students' participation and challenging tasks.
- Extend the use of tools to organize and analyze student outcomes aligned to key standards to provide an on-going picture of progress for all students. (2.2)
 - Teachers use assessments to identify skills in need of improvement. However, the use of assessments that are reflective of key State

standards to identify specific student needs, in order to accelerate learning is inconsistent. Consequently, lessons are not fully aligned to student needs thus, limiting opportunities for teachers to plan effectively to address students' academic weaknesses and teach the curriculum mandates.

- Although there was some evidence of lesson evaluation and learning reflected in teacher questioning and student assignments, this practice was not consistent throughout the school. Several lessons observed did not include checks for comprehension at the end of the lessons to properly determine the level of students' understanding of lesson content. This negatively impacts teachers' abilities to make appropriate instructional adjustments to address the learning needs of all students.
- Extend the use of assessment data in all content areas to set goals for student subgroups and improve instructional practices across the school. (3.2)
 - Although there is evidence of student goals in English language arts and math, this practice is not consistent across every classroom. Furthermore, processes for setting data informed goals in all subject areas for all students, including student subgroups, are not yet fully developed. This limits opportunities to focus instruction based on students' identified academic needs thus, diminishing learning and progress for all students.
 - Teacher teams have set goals for target population students and are working to improve teacher practices to promote student achievement of goals. However, the school has not yet fully established universal instructional protocols or leveraged significant changes in teaching methodology stemming from students' goals. This lessens implementation of effective practices to maximize learning.
- Expand the school systems for review, evaluation and modification of instructional practices to increase student achievement. (5.4)
 - School leaders participate and provide input as active members on teacher teams. However, systems that regularly provide data and inform collaborative team impact on student performance are not yet fully in place. This reduces the level of data-based support that can be provided to teacher teams in order to maximize their effectiveness on student achievement.
 - While the school has provided structures and opportunities for teacher leadership development via grade leaders, teacher team leaders and instructional specialists, systems that regularly evaluate the effectiveness of these structures is not yet in place. This affects the level of support provided to maximize teacher participation in decision making and leadership roles to improve teaching and learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Warren Prep Academy	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