

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Sheepshead Bay Elementary School

K052

2675 East 29th Street

Brooklyn

NY 11235

Principal: Ilene Altschul

Dates of review: October 24-25, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Linda Waite

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 052 Sheepshead Bay is an elementary school with 749 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 59% White, 19% Black, 14% Hispanic, 8% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 92.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal utilizes the budget wisely and makes educational decisions to support student achievement. (1.3)
 - The efficient use of space allows the administration to create dedicated rooms for cluster subjects such as science which allows teachers and students to utilize a variety of materials and equipment that are essential to understanding content and displaying and celebrating students' work products. As a result, students are engaged in meaningful hands on activities, accountable talk and writing assignments that explain their findings and thinking process. Title III funds support English language learners by offering a Saturday support program that leads to many students passing the NYSESLAT and reaching higher levels of proficiency in the English language arts and math state exams. Other allocations fund two coaches and a Teachers College consultant who provide teacher support and academic intervention services for students. Consequently the level of proficiency in ELA went from 46.1% to 52.3% and from 66.8% to 68.9% in math. Student and teacher time is structured to include a 120 minute literacy block for grades K to 3 and 90 minute blocks for grades 4 and 5 as well as 90 minute blocks for math four days a week. This additional time on task is responsible for a majority of students making gains in reading and math as reflected from their benchmark scores to present scores as evidenced tracking forms. The school's use of a School Based Option provides teachers with a common planning period for 50 minutes on Thursdays in addition to their regularly scheduled vertical meetings. As a result, teachers use the extended time to collaborate, share best practices, design tasks and rubrics which are positively impacting on student achievement as noted by the 3 additional credits for exemplary gains on the Progress Report.
- The principal and school leaders effectively utilize the observation process and student learning outcomes to promote professional growth. (4.1)
 - The principal meets with each teacher beginning in September to develop goals and action plans that promote professional growth. Administrators are tactically assigned specific grade levels to observe that align to their area of expertise which promotes coherency of policy and practice across the grade. School leaders utilize a research based framework and rubric to conduct short frequent cycles of observations based on a particular focus. All teachers receive informal observations with immediate individualized feedback and next steps in writing. This, along with collegial collaborations by peers and coaches is providing time for reflection and revision of practice leading to teachers feeling well supported as noted by continuous high scores by teachers on the engagement section of the Learning Environment Survey. The principal utilizes noticings from informal and formal observations and student learning outcomes including various assessment data to determine teacher assignments. For example, the instructional strengths of a second grade teacher served as the basis for a change of assignment to fourth grade. As a result, teacher strengths and

students' needs are well aligned and students are making good progress, both behaviorally and academically.

- The school maintains a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes towards learning that support the growth of students and adults. (1.4)
 - Key personnel meet, greet, and respectfully respond to children's issues as they enter the building each morning. Thus, students' feel welcomed, safe and valued as important members of the school community. The hallways and classrooms serve as displays for students' work products that align to Common Core Learning Standards making students feel confident that they can meet the challenge of high level work and are motivated to learn. The Book of the Month Club supports character development by identification and exploration of positive traits. This supports the school's literacy goal and fosters an inclusionary environment. The Pupil Personnel Team meets on a regular basis to review identified students, discuss strengths, needs, strategies and next steps. Students are benefitting from extended day, Tier I and Tier II academic supports and social-emotional intervention services that are positively impacting their achievement as noted by conferencing notes, running records and work products.
- Teachers and teacher teams use a range of data to understand the performance and progress of individual and subgroups of students which informs instructional practice to improve learning. (2.2)
 - Teachers consistently utilize assessment practices such as do-now activities, problems of the day, conferencing, homework reviews, thumbs up or down, white boards and questioning to determine student mastery. Consequently, teachers revise their practices to better meet the needs of all students. Students also use these strategies and rubrics to reflect on their own level of understanding which leads to accountability for learning. Teams of teachers and individual teachers use Acuity, Teachers College Assessments, benchmark and classroom data to identify students' strengths and needs. The 5th grade team administered a baseline reading and writing test to all 5th graders and identified vocabulary and stamina as a need for a particular group of its English language learner students. As a result, teachers utilized Tier I and II words and strategically increased the length and difficulty of reading which led to significant increases in performance levels as measured by a benchmark assessment.
- Effective school support services, collaborations with parents and outside agencies provide students with support necessary to promote academic and personal growth.(4.4)
 - One of the school's priorities is professional learning opportunities for teachers of Special Education, counselors, and the SAPIS worker on Assertive Discipline, sensitivity on homelessness, cyber-bullying, and Respect for All. In addition, all staff members receive emergency preparedness and building response training. Consequently, incidents and suspensions are at a minimum, the school runs smoothly and the school environment is safe and conducive to learning. Furthermore, the school's celebration of students' achievements and community service through monthly award ceremonies recognizing Student of the Month and Citizenship helps promote and accelerate academic achievement and

social-emotional growth. The school also utilizes counselors to conduct in class life skills lessons on topics such as; time management, study skills and test taking strategies. Counselors, assistant principals and the parent coordinator conduct visits to district intermediate schools to acquaint students to various programs. This, along with middle school application meetings for parents and students prepares students to successfully transition to the next level in their educational experience. Linkages with the Park Rangers Salt Marsh Project, the Environmental Center and Cookshop provide real world experiences that enhance and support the school's science and literacy curriculum. As a result, students are performing well on the state science exam. The school also offers an adult education program that provides English as a Second Language to its parents which results in increased confidence in their speaking skills and in participation at school functions such as Parent-Teacher Conferences.

- The principal and school leadership teams have created a coherent vision supported by action plans that are focused and leveraged to improve student performance and progress.
 - The school's theory of action that all children can learn if their instructional needs are being met and if they are engaged in meaningful learning results in a well thought Comprehensive Educational Plan. Goals and action plans are carefully selected based on a variety of data including teacher surveys, state exams, Progress Report and Quality Review. Thus, the school is focusing its attention on improving achievement in literacy, math, reading and writing for English Language Learners as well as developing rigorous tasks and teacher effectiveness. The school's implementation of the workshop model, guided and independent student practice, accountable talk, differentiated instruction and effective questioning is responsible for the increase in recent Acuity interim- assessments in English language arts and mathematics across all grades and sub-groups. The principal and chairperson effectively involve all constituencies of the School Leadership Team by utilizing planning sessions to share and discuss assessment results, work in strategically organized groups to develop goals and create action plans that promote higher levels of student performance and progress. Hence, members feel valued as equal partners in the school-wide decision-making process. This, together with the communication systems the school utilizes to share goals such as: on-line copies for the team members and the Parents' Association, conversations with and written highlights from the parent coordinator, faculty and parent conferences generates a broad base of support for the school's vision and mission.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop rigorous curricula and tasks that will promote students higher order thinking and problem solving skills. (1.1)
 - The school offers a broad curriculum including the arts, technology and foreign language (French and Spanish) to a variety of learners. While it offers a rigorous and challenging literacy curriculum through Teachers College, it utilizes pacing guides in other content areas such as math. Consequently, some students including those with Individualized Educational Plans do not benefit from a coherent curriculum and therefore, have not been able to meet annual yearly progress in math. Currently, the

school is aligning key state standards to the common core learning standards in math and is in the process of planning tasks, and assessments. However, the lack of emphasis on rigorous tasks impacts the ability of some to develop problem solving and higher order thinking skills necessary for success in the 21st century.

- Continue to ensure that activities and student work products are differentiated sufficiently to meet the needs of all students. (1.2)
 - Teacher practice reflects that students learn best when they are motivated, engaged and their instructional needs are being met. Within the framework of the workshop model lesson, teachers utilize data to form learning groups, differentiate materials, and process. Teachers are differentiating the levels of questioning necessary to engage students. However, the complexity of do -now and application activities vary within the grade. For example; the higher level 5th classes solved problems of the day and applications that were rigorous and thought provoking while a middle level 5th grade class completed two do-now examples that involved adding decimals. As a result, the levels of student thinking and participation are uneven.
- Refine the system for evaluating the quality of curricular and organizational decisions to make adjustments and increase coherence across the school with particular attention to CCLS. (5.1)
 - School leaders evaluate the quality of the literacy curriculum in June and make necessary curricular and instructional adjustments as needed in response to the Common Core learning Standards and students' learning needs. However, the same structure is not utilized for other content areas. As a result, decisions such as purchasing a math program to support problem solving and more appropriate software such as Rosetta Stone for intermediate and advanced English language learners does not occur in a timely fashion. Thus, the progress of some students is hindered. School leaders build capacity by having teachers serve as team leaders and facilitators on inquiry and common core standards teams but it has not yet provided training in facilitation skills that would ensure coherent practice and focus by teams in reviewing and evaluating curriculum.
- Refine structures to evaluate systems for organizing data and sharing information with students and families to increase coherence of policies and practice across the school. (5.2)
 - The school has a structure in place to review Accountability Tools to make needed adjustments to practices. The analysis of the Learning Environment Survey is responsible for the school issuing an academic update in October to make parents aware of reading and math levels. However, the school does not have a system in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the information being shared. Therefore, progress reports lack pertinent information such as; strengths, weaknesses and specific strategies for improvement. Hence, not all parents can fully support their children's learning which hampers the academic progress of some students. The school also has a system in place to evaluate how they organize data. As a result, they have adopted googledocs to make data easily available and understood by teachers. However, it is still in its beginning stages and therefore the school has not yet created a system to measure its effectiveness.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: The Sheepshead Bay 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 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