

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**PS/IS 66**

**Elementary – Middle school K066**

**845 East 96 Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11236**

**Principal: Lucille Jackson**

**Dates of review: January 10 - 11, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Beverly A. Wilkins**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

PS/IS 66 is a K-8 school with 764 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 91% Black, 6% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 2% special education students. Boys account for 44% of the students enrolled and girls account for 56%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 95.0%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal is collaborative and proactive in making strategic organizational decisions that encourage school-wide support for instructional goals and students' needs, resulting in meaningful student work products. (1.3)
  - Analysis of summative data results utilized by the principal in consultation with school leaders bring about specific organizational changes which intensify the delivery of instruction in English language arts and in math. Due to intentional staffing, the school is better able to service more students through dedicated small group instruction and daily push-in and pullout academic intervention facilitated by in-house experts. The funding of a literacy and math staff developer coupled with an additional F-status literacy position provide additional support to teachers and students leading to key improvements in learning outcomes. This is evident in student work products closely aligned to writing rubrics and in the active participation of high achieving students in the newly instituted Math Olympia program.
  - Thoughtful teacher assignments support the school's goals of consistently improving student outcomes. Students' learning needs are met and understood by teachers who have the opportunity to work with a cohort of students for consecutive years. This insightful programming, in line with school-wide goals, stimulates professional reflection that increases ownership for student learning. As a result, accountability and precise instruction maximizes individual student strengths and remedy any lingering weaknesses. Therefore, these strategic organizational decisions and practices lead to in-depth feedback on student work resulting in 97% of eighth graders making gains on the skills assessment administered in the fall of the school year compared to their performance on the end of year assessment.
- Formal and informal observations present faculty with targeted feedback and clear next steps that elevate instructional practices across the school. (4.1)
  - School leaders currently use a variety of evaluation models, including the tenure tracking system tool, transparent checklists created in alignment with three domains of the Danielson's framework, formal observations with specific recommendations and clear verbal feedback along with follow-up observations, all of which contributes to improving instructional practice. Frequent collegial intervisitations, meetings with coaches for new and experienced teachers, along with administrative reviews of student work engender dedicated cycles of professional support. Thus, all teachers receive relevant next-step commentary toward improved practice. An example of the positive outcomes of this work was shared by an experienced teacher who reported adjusting classroom management techniques because of what she learned from observing the practices of a less senior colleague.
  - Structures for continued professional growth embedded in administrative practice foster tracking of teacher growth over time. This leads to

pedagogic support directly related to personal goals and to the instructional targets set by the school. Utilizing data collected from needs assessments and classroom observations, school leaders and teachers are able to address specific areas for professional improvement, therefore, teachers report receiving "central leadership support." Data-driven coaching and mentoring engender best practices, resulting in increasing scores in English language arts and math at the middle school level.

- Students and their families greatly appreciate the school's focused efforts to create a safe and respectful environment that promotes learning and supports their needs. (1.4)
  - The School Survey indicates that 96% of parents feel their children are safe at school and that the school maintains a warm welcoming learning environment. In turn, parents express high regard for the school as evidenced by the comment that families are lining up to get into this school because of the focus on the well-being of all students. Parents also mentioned that their children freely speak with adults within the community who know their children by name and physical description. A rise in parents and students' concerns about bullying within the middle school lead to a school-wide curriculum on bullying that educates students on the perils of this social issue. Because they learn about the causes and effects of bullying there has been a decrease in incidents involving such behaviors. Students confirm that staff focus on their learning and are readily available to assist with academic and social-emotional issues. This leads to students wanting to come to school, as evidenced by the school's 95% rate of attendance, and to their articulated interest in their learning, leading to personal and academic growth.
- The school community engages families in shared responsibility for student learning and takes an active role in communicating high expectations to its constituents, leading to enhanced student performance. (2.4)
  - The school provides all families with opportunities to engage in decision-making regarding the school's programs and offerings. Ongoing discussions between parents and administrators about the education of their children inspire confidence in the school's ability to reach the high expectations set for learning. Due to strong parental buy-in and support for success towards mastering Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), the school community collectively works to enrich student learning. Inclusive practices engender consensus-building that leads to new programs such as the recent groundwork for a Scholars Program that would nurture innate abilities to excel, inroads to parents' desires for extended building hours for the housing of an academic and recreational community-based program, and the spending of Title I parent involvement funds to maintain a school-based website. Together, parents and school leaders "work as one body" in order to assist students in meeting high standards for learning.
- The school has created strong and coherent curricula aligned with citywide expectations across grades and subjects that challenge and engage all learners. (1.1)

- School leaders and coaches have developed detailed month-by-month robust learning tasks for each grade and across subject areas that provide content alignment with CCLS, including essential questions, learning objectives, rubrics, and assessments. This focus on instructional coherence linked to key standards integrates rigorous learning goals using the Understanding by Design and Depth of Knowledge matrixes. Implementation of City and State standards is evident in curriculum maps for kindergarten through grade 8, in order to accelerate student performance toward closing gaps in English language arts and math achievement.
- Teachers receive training to implement the Turning Protocol for examining student work. This results in analysis of work products that surface high, medium, and low academic performance. Consequently, students are engaged in instructional-leveled tasks that match their skills and abilities. This practice of academic refinement produces growth in students' ability to attend to multi-step math problems and lead to increases in expository writing proficiency as evidenced in a review of student work.
- School leaders and faculty regularly evaluate the quality of instructional practices and organizational resources to ensure coherence toward increased student outcomes. (5.1)
  - Increasing the level of academic rigor is a priority in the school, leading to effective systems that reinforce the school's commitment to implementation of the CCLS. School leaders and faculty make regular assessments and student reviews to identify skills and concepts that impede student progress. Their findings lead to specific changes to curricula and shifts in the delivery of instruction such as the re-teaching of content or the use of tailored graphic organizers. As a result, the school has achieved 11% overall growth on the fall English language arts periodic assessment and increases in performance on math assessments.
  - Monthly guided instruction that aligns to a CCLS task affords teachers opportunities to develop instructional capacity. With the support of coaches and the Children First Network, teacher constancy in ongoing evaluation of pedagogic practices results in adjustments to instructional decisions that affect the delivery of daily lessons. During weekly grade level collaborations, teachers share content expertise in evaluating resources and student outcomes. This work extends their understanding of how best to address students' academic strengths and needs.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Deepen differentiated learning activities across classrooms and grade levels to provide appropriately challenging tasks that maximize student learning. (1.2)
  - Active participation in hands-on activities, cooperative grouping and opportunities to demonstrate learning are articulated beliefs about how students learn best. Lesson planning and most classroom activities

reflect a school-wide commitment to these beliefs. However, teachers' understanding of differentiation and use of effective questioning vary across classes and grades. Therefore, not all engagements appropriately challenge students' abilities or incite participation through students' strongest modalities, which limits learning.

- Extend the assessment systems used by teachers so information they need to assist students' understanding of content and skills reflect varied use of on-going checks for understanding. (2.2)
  - Development of Domain Three of the Danielson's framework guides the use of common assessments and standard-based rubrics, enabling cogent evaluations of summative and periodic data and, as such, teachers make effective shifts in curricular and instructional decisions. For example, unit assessments across content areas generate interim learning targets; supplemental English language arts and math resources support strategy work. Nevertheless, the lack of a class-based notation system during lessons reduces teachers' ability to track individual trends and successes that lead to optimal teaching and lesson preparation. Consequently, the absence of a system that captures ongoing checks for understanding inhibits reflective teaching and thwarts immediate adjustments to meet students' learning needs.
- Create a system to provide teacher teams with valuable opportunities to share key insights and best practice focused on improving instruction and student mastery across the school. (4.2)
  - School-wide inquiry work has resulted in a collaborative environment where teachers are empowered to make decisions aimed at improving student learning. This shared leadership has led to the staff establishing effective structures for identifying, targeting, and assessing students to increase their learning outcomes. However, there is no system for sharing the work of individual teacher teams across the school. As such, the lack of a depository for collecting best practices, pedagogic insights, and instructional breakthroughs via vertical networking hinders hastened student advancements and opportunities for greater pedagogic growth.
- Establish a clear and congruent practice of providing periodic feedback to students and families in order to foster accelerated progress toward targeted learning goals. (3.3)
  - Teacher teams review an array of periodic assessments, including Acuity, ARIS Tier System data, conference notes, literacy assessment systems, running records, attendance, in-house unit assessments and monitor behavior ensuring necessary adjustments support end of year success. Scrutiny of students' movement toward learning goals influences grouping, which interventions they receive and their individual learning goals. Because the practice of interim reporting to families is not yet routine, some parents do not have a clear understanding of how their children are progressing and are not aware of how to can help at home until they attend a Parent-Teacher Conference. The lack of an established system for sharing benchmark feedback with students and parents thwarts additional at-home support, thereby impeding progress towards mastering learning expectations.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: PS/IS066</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
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?				<b>X</b>
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding student progress toward school and class expectations?				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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?			<b>X</b>	
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?			<b>X</b>	
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
3.4 Communicate high expectations to staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?			<b>X</b>	

**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**

<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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