

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 189 Lincoln Terrace
K-8 school K189

1100 EAST NEW YORK AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY 11212

Principal: Berthe G. Faustin

Dates of review: May 16-17, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Nancy Birson

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 189 Lincoln Terrace is a K-8 school with 1278 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 75% Black, 22% Hispanic, 1% White, 0% Asian students and 2% other students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 94.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school maintains a very safe environment where students are engaged and appreciate the excellent personal and academic support they receive. (1.4)
 - The tone and culture in the building is respectful between students, teachers and parents, and they all communicate regularly and feel that there are opportunities to have a voice in the decision-making process of the school. Parent leaders are actively involved in supporting the school's goals, such as researching the effects on the school of a planned retail expansion in the surrounding neighborhood. In addition, the principal hosts an annual Mother's Day Breakfast that grows from year to year and is an eagerly anticipated event. Students are eager to learn and feel supported by the staff. As one student shared, "I arrived in the school in 2005 and I had no skills. I was motivated by my teachers and will graduate this year. I am very grateful for everything this school has done for me." There is an inclusive culture throughout the building and is evident as well in the commitment to teaching and learning. Teachers in the school are always willing to meet with their peers and administration during scheduled meetings, as well as during non-mandated times, to share and improve their work.
- The school maintains a very safe environment, with high expectations for attendance where students are engaged in learning and appreciate the good level of support they receive for their personal and academic development. (4.4)
 - Guidance supports and promotes postsecondary readiness through twice a week meetings with students. During these meets students explore career options with speakers representing various careers who exhort students to "find your talent." Through a summer and after school program, sponsored by the Brooklyn District Attorney's office, with mock trial participation, students have opportunities to consider careers in law. Students in grade eight write resumes as part of a college-preparedness exercise. These have fostered changes in students' demeanor and attitudes. As administration and teachers note, middle school students in particular are more focused in classroom participation and discussions.
 - The school has established effective partnerships through the Haiti Cultural Exchange program as well as through various athletic venues such as the Brooklyn Generals, tennis weekends and girls' cheerleading. Identification of college graduation dates, and reinforcement during line-up and morning meetings ("the class of 2028, please stand"), communicates the school's expectation of future college attendance. As the principal states, "College and career readiness is not new to us. We have been training students for life." This has resulted in high levels of attendance and trust at the school.
- The principal makes effective decisions to align resources with the goals of the school in order to provide students with optimal learning experiences. (1.3)
 - The school has invested in resources such as the 100 Book Challenge and the Junior Great Books program designed to support the school's goal to align their writing with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) as well as engaging students with text through discussions and higher level questioning. As a result, discussions during classroom visits reveal that students are writing across the grades through quick writes and longer expanded pieces. They are strengthening their understanding of text through close reads and questioning. A review of

- student writing folders showed evidence of students collecting information and using graphic organizers to develop their ideas for writing. In alignment with the school's instructional goals, the principal has contracted consultants to provide a balance of demonstration lessons and weekly collaborative planning sessions with individual teachers and teams. As a result, teachers have developed useful tools to utilize with students to scaffold and improve the quality of their writing as evidenced in some samples of student writing. A great investment has been made to provide necessary interventions through Learning Support Teams, Reading Recovery, Reading Rescue and Saturday Academy in order to assist lower grade students in reading comprehension skills. As a result, students as well as teachers benefit from this early, collaborative effort as evidenced by summative end of unit achievement results in upper grade classes.
- o The principal initiated weekly opportunities for teachers to meet with colleagues across and within grades to plan, set goals and look at student work. These meetings are vertical as well as within the grade. Academic intervention teachers and teachers of English language learners are better able to plan instruction for the students they service as a result of the work resulting from these meetings and teacher teams are able to share the responsibility and accountability of meeting the varied needs of the students under their tutelage. This was evidenced in the coordination of the balanced literacy approach for reading and the emphasis of specific components such as independent reading and the 100 Book Challenge, guided reading, interactive read-alouds and word study to reinforce or enhance instruction to sub-groups of students.
 - Individual teachers and teacher teams use a wide range of assessment data to meet student needs and adjust instruction to make learning meaningful. (2.2)
 - o Teachers strategically analyze and evaluate Acuity interim test data as well as school-developed monthly assessments that incorporate constructed responses for teacher teams in order to pinpoint students' academic strengths and deficiencies, enabling teachers to set next steps for instruction. This analysis has led to many pedagogical adjustments, such as an extra period per week for students needing support in writing. In addition, teachers supplement summative data with individual student conference notes and checks for understanding through accountable talk stems and follow-up probes. Speaking and listening rubrics were developed and are in use by the school in anticipation of next year's citywide instructional expectations. The assessments in use at the school have facilitated continually revised student instructional groups resulting in timely attention to student needs in both the day and extended day learning environments.
 - The school provides supports for faculty and students that sustains a culture that celebrates academic, as well as social-emotional growth. (3.4)
 - o Teachers report student reading time, which result in weekly rewards for specific milestones. This data is updated daily and published in the school's "Monday Matters" that is distributed to the staff. As a result of this work, the school has seen an increase in students' reading stamina as well as in the range of text genres read, creating what they call a "culture of readers". The school's leadership team has a very clear process for sharing key information about the school's expectations through school agendas and parent meetings. Parents and students work collaboratively with the school to address academic and social emotional needs that support student learning. The principal has created various, regular opportunities for parents to meet with administration and teachers to listen to their concerns as well as share Glow and Grow status reports designed

to keep a balance in celebrating student behavior and achievement through positive comments followed by areas of concern. Parents have been introduced to the expectations of the CCLS through parent teacher association (PTA) and school leader team meetings. Parents report their understanding of the new demands and report seeing “more problem-solving in math, much more work in science” and other content areas through increased reading and writing by their children. The School Survey indicates high parent participation and commitment to the school's stated goals and, as a result, parents feel that they are true partners in their child's education.

- Comprehensive, data-driven goals are informed by needs assessments, which drive efforts to accelerate student learning and social-emotional growth. (3.1)
 - o Educational planning goals are based on the analysis of student outcomes and observation of pedagogical practice, resulting in strategic next steps to narrow the gap between English language learners, students with disabilities and all other students. The school has made changes to its academic intervention service delivery through the creation of Learning Support Teams designed to work with high Level 2 students during the school day, as well as training for educational assistants in an intensive reading intervention program. These subgroups’ gains have already started to come to fruition based on Acuity and classroom data.
 - o Comprehensive intervention plans to address student performance are a result of direct attention to the attainment of annual and interim data-based goals. The school’s utilization of quantitative (summative State tests) and qualitative (Quality Review, School Survey) results, among others, propel its planning documents such as the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). This has led to documented increases in students’ reading comprehension and mathematics’ skills as evidenced in the school’s monthly assessments. Teachers and parents are involved in data discussions and school level planning, informing the school’s CEP. One parent researched the school’s summative data results by grade and identified the grade with the highest results, leading to discussions around what was working and not working at various grades and collaboratively planning for the future.

What the school needs to improve

- Expand on the curriculum alignment process that has already begun, to better align the curriculum across grades and subjects in order to close the achievement gap for students. (1.1)
 - o The school has adopted Junior Great Books as a curriculum resource in English language arts. Teachers were aware of the need to provide tasks that were aligned to the CCLS, to include all students in discussions and to provide multiple entry points across the content areas. As a result of this resource, there is increased student participation and articulation of their points of view grounded in text-based evidence. This has led to further student engagement that, administration points out, has also improved attendance. However, curriculum maps across grades and subject areas have not yet been adjusted to fully reflect these foci, thus limiting opportunities to further close the achievement gap.
 - o Vetting the rigor of tasks is encouraged in teacher planning. In an upper grade class, students were engaged in high level conversations around linear equations and the misconceptions uncovered from a previous class. In a lower grade science class, students were generating questions around plants they were

observing and, in turn, questioning one another about the observations. While the principles of higher cognitive demand in tasks are understood in theory, there is not yet a school-wide definition that informs planning and practice. Teachers engaged in common planning of academic tasks are not always embedding the tasks in a coherent way across grades and subject areas. Students state that in math class, they have to "explain their work" while they do not yet express how other subjects are engaging them in more rigorous activities. Not all students are asked to consistently demonstrate their thinking and as a result students, including the lowest and highest achieving, are not able to articulate how changes in the curriculum are impacting them individually.

- Continue to develop teacher practice to foster rigorous instruction that meets the needs of all learners. (1.2)
 - The school has set a goal of delivering targeted, differentiated instruction across all grades and subject areas. While students participate in classroom tasks via multiple groupings for different academic subjects, not all assignments are sufficiently rigorous or differentiated to match the varying needs of each student in each subject. For example, proficient students in one classroom were instructed to complete acrostic name poems when finished with their assignments. In another lesson, all students were naming fractional parts of numbers, with limited active participation or differentiation. Pacing and questioning techniques that encourage higher order thinking are presently inconsistent across classrooms, thus limiting students' opportunities to accelerate their own learning.
- Fully connect feedback from teacher observation cycles to the school's chosen research-based framework in order to articulate clear expectations for teachers and support growth in practice. (4.1)
 - The school has identified questioning and student engagement as foci for teacher development. Formal and informal observations of teachers allow administrators to determine fidelity to overall school goals in these areas. Teachers engage in professional development through interaction with the school-based coaches and consultants as well as network and Department of Education offerings. However, observers do not always strategically apply the observation tool and process to the school foci. While the feedback provided captures strengths and challenges, it does not always align teachers' professional goals with the school's expressed goals, thereby hindering school leaderships' message around clear expectations.
- Expand the use of data analysis to regularly evaluate and revise the effectiveness of adult collaboration and capacity building in order to support distributed leadership. (5.4)
 - School leaders regularly participate in collaborative teacher team meetings and reflect on the data retrospectively. Some of the teacher team strategies such as more time on task, scaffolded tasks for struggling students and strategic use of graphic organizers, have impacted a number of students and have led to broader, school-wide implementation. However, the opportunity to utilize these teams to drive efforts to build coherence between curricular, instructional and assessment practices is limited. On one team, teachers acknowledged that they "need to place more effort and attention on instructional practices," but were analyzing student work from different grades and different tasks and were unable to articulate how they would evaluate student achievement absent rubrics or exemplars. Teacher leaders have been identified for each team and they

facilitate on a rotating basis, but are not always receiving sufficient support to develop their own skills as facilitators of adult learning. As a result, these teams are not yet impacting school decision-making processes on a more widespread basis and professional growth is limited.

- Modify the progress reporting structures to include specific strengths and weaknesses as well as next learning steps around CCLS performance tasks in order to increase parental support for student achievement. (2.4)
 - o Students actively participate in lessons and mention they work hard to advance to the next grade and please their teachers and parents. One student stated, "Now I get what I'm doing and my teacher is proud of me for meeting her expectations." Notwithstanding this understanding, students are not yet able to explain how their student goal sheets and classroom assessments inform their next steps and own expectations. They speak broadly of attaining an 85% as a passing grade or three's and four's on their tests and the need to study more and do better. They cannot always articulate how they fare on the school's selected standards and the teachers' feedback is not always specific enough to be actionable. School leadership makes a continual effort to communicate with students' families through interim progress reports, phone calls, and announcements and notifications via email and through backpack. Parents are appreciative of these opportunities to have reciprocal discussions with teachers of their children's progress. Parents are aware of the curriculum changes that are occurring and speak to increased informational writing and problem solving in math. They cite workshops on the Junior Great Books program where they leave with books and strategies to help their children. Yearly reading goals are shared with them in order to increase the amount of time students read independently at various times during the day at school and at home. They speak to their children reading more and seeming more engaged in school as a result. Some parents however, remain uncertain of the strengths and needs of their students as related to the standards and are not able to articulate how they can help with next steps, thus hampering parental support for CCLS integration.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 189 Lincoln Terrace	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
-----------	-----------------------	----------	-------------------	----------	-------------------	-----------	-----------------------