

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Andries Hudde

**Middle School 240
2500 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York
NY 11210**

Principal: Elena O'Sullivan

Dates of review: February 13-14, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Linda Waite

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Andries Hudde is a middle school with 1101 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 72% Black, 10% Hispanic, 3% White, 13% Asian students, and 2% other students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal utilizes the budget wisely and makes informed educational decisions to support student achievement. 1.3
 - The principal's astute decision to schedule lunch periods by grade level provides teachers with a common planning period in addition to their regularly scheduled department and inquiry meetings. As a result, teachers use the additional time to collaborate on revising curriculum maps, as well as planning content and skill activities necessary to promote the progress of all students. In addition, double period/90 minutes of English language arts and math instruction, twice a week, affords students the additional time on task necessary for them to gain a good understanding of the topic and allows for sufficient practice. Multiple integrated team-teaching classes on each grade level provide a reduced student/staffing ratio allowing for individualized attention. Thus, the school earned 4.0 exemplary credits in English language arts and math for students with disabilities and English language learners. Furthermore, teachers' assignments are carefully examined to purposefully align and ensure teachers' strengths meet students' needs. The seventh graders who did not perform as well as expected on the math State exam were programmed for an eighth grade teacher who works effectively with at-risk students. As a result, eighth grade students are performing well on end-of-unit tests and 82% are demonstrating steady gains including the lowest third.
- Teachers and teams use on-going assessment practices and analyze student-learning outcomes to adjust instruction and improve student achievement. 2.2
 - Classroom teachers create uniform mid-term tests comprised of selected key standards and utilize content and grade level standardized rubrics to ensure coherence of curriculum and reliability of scoring. An item analysis of answers yields a clear picture of student mastery of topics and skills, and areas needing further support. This allows teachers to adjust curricula topics, and instructional strategies. Consequently, there are suitable modifications and re-teaching of essential lessons and student performance is reassessed to measure mastery.
 - Teachers, serving as team leaders or facilitators on various teams, collect and analyze data including conferencing notes, running records, class work assignments, and projects, to identify strategies and adjust instructional practice that promote student learning. The English language arts team conducts a detailed item analysis of reading and writing assignments, and predictive and periodic assessments, determining students' common areas of strength and weakness. This has led to a school-wide focus on writing, with an emphasis on utilizing relevant details to support ideas, opinions, and arguments by using outlines and graphic organizers. As a result, 60% of grade 7 and 68% grade 8 students made a gain of at least of one level as evidenced by the interim assessments.

- The principal and school leaders effectively utilize the observation process and student learning outcomes to promote teachers' professional growth. 4.1
 - Members of the administration and teacher leaders utilize a research based framework and rubric to conduct frequent and consistent cycles of observations around a particular lens, the classroom learning environment. During post-observation discussions, school leaders provide teachers with individualized feedback, including written next steps. Observations, coupled with peer collaborations supported by coaches, and professional opportunities at the school and network level, meet the differentiated needs of teachers and provides them with opportunities to adjust instructional practices. New teachers who attended sessions on classroom management implemented strategies leading to improved student behaviors. Consequently, a school generated learning environment survey indicates that a majority of teachers have a more positive view of the support they receive. Effective management of professional development includes noting the date of an observation, rating, area of concern, and next steps for a teacher that includes registering, when suitable, for an appropriate series of workshops on formative assessment techniques, differentiated instruction, questioning, effective classroom strategies, English language learner methodologies, Understanding by Design, and/or curriculum mapping. Follow-up visits to the classroom serve to monitor implementation of learned strategies and level of success. Student learning is improving, as measured by periodic assessments that reflect a minimum 5% gain across all grades. Furthermore, the principal utilizes observations as the basis of teacher ratings. Teacher instructional effectiveness, along with databased student learning outcomes, professional contributions, and letters to file, serve as the basis for determining tenure and retention decisions, ensuring that every student benefits from good instruction.

- The school provides a safe, inclusive environment that successfully supports students' academic and social emotional needs. 1.4
 - The Learning Environment Survey and Occurrence Report are responsible for the school's concentration on safety and respect. Deans visit classes to discuss the Code of Discipline and consequences, while counselors address class, group, and individual issues. The substance abuse and prevention specialist trains and facilitates students participating in peer mediation and conflict resolution. As a result, members of the school community are more respectful of one another, the number of incidents has decreased by 67 and suspensions have decreased by 20%, attendance improved by 2.2%, and classroom environments are warm, welcoming, inclusive, and conducive to learning. The school's recent creation of three small grade-level learning communities, each located on a different floor and having a discrete lunch period, are overseen by carefully selected assistant principals, counselors, deans and teachers, thus allowing faculty and students to interact on a personal level, fostering students' academic and social-emotional learning. Students' report they are well known by their teachers and counselors and that they feel comfortable seeking academic and social-emotional support when needed. Students take advantage of

extended day, lunchtime tutoring by teachers, and after school programs to provide positive impact on their academic achievement. Students' engagement in school-wide decisions, along with the support and hard work of 38 teachers, are responsible for an array of new teams and clubs including boys' varsity basketball, step, golf, track, and yoga, resulting in a renewed sense of school pride.

- The school and parents work collaboratively as partners making decisions and sharing information to promote student progress. 2.4
 - The principal's decision allowing teachers to utilize electronic grading programs, EZ Pro-Grade and Engrade, is responsible for effective on-going reciprocal communication with parents and students about attendance, class-work, homework, projects, test grades, and conduct. This, coupled with report cards, detailed progress reports, and fall and spring school conferences, provides an opportunity for students and families to assess progress towards meeting standards and expectations. Hence, students and parents are able to clearly articulate next steps, and parents can support their children's learning at home. Parents are invited to school sponsored workshops on topics such as ARIS, Common Core, literacy/social studies, math, and Engrade, which identify strategies to support learning. Thus, parents who are attending more meetings feel more confident in helping their children at home, evidenced by attendance at meetings, school surveys, and verbal feedback.
- The school's effective support services and collaborations provide students with a wide range of opportunities to grow academically and socially. 4.4
 - Teachers and counselors are receiving professional development on Positive Behavior Intervention Supports, (PBIS), Respect for All, Bullying, and Cyberbullying, leading to meeting the behavioral needs of students and developing a culture of respect in the school. School leaders recognize students' success through gold and blue honor rolls, Arista, and at spring award ceremonies, thus celebrating academic achievement, citizenship, and attendance. Consequently, students are motivated to reach their potential, achieve their personal goals, and succeed. The school's tactical plan of internal and external support services ensures that all relevant personnel, including assistant principals, and the pupil personnel team, partner to effectively support students and families experiencing academic and personal difficulties. Partnerships with outside agencies such as; Urban Advantage, Learning Through Expanded Arts Program, and The Youth Service America Science Grant, engage students in utilizing an inquiry approach to develop hands-on research skills preparing them to problem solve community issues such as the wetlands near Jamaica Bay and recycling at the school. Dare 2 Dream provides a series of after-school workshops on professional etiquette, networking, and interviewing skills, financial literacy, and community building. In conjunction with Dare 2 Dream, the school hosts two career days, one for male, and one for female students, who through surveys identify their interests and select career workshops in which to participate. Students' social, behavioral, academic growth, and career awareness is accelerating.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop rigorous curricula and tasks that promote high level critical thinking and problem solving skills for all students. 1.1
 - The school offers a broad curriculum including the arts, technology, and foreign language that aligns to the Common Core Learning Standards, (CCLS), and emphasizes key standards, based on an item analysis of formative and summative assessments. While the curricula emphasize higher order thinking skills and problem solving in many of the general education and intellectually gifted classes, particularly in math the level of rigor is not consistent across all grades and subjects. This is especially true of self-contained classes where students with disabilities do not have the opportunity to engage in tasks that foster critical thinking preparing them for the challenges of high school level work.
- Ensure that activities and student work products are differentiated sufficiently to meet students' needs. 1.2
 - Teachers use various forms of data to create learning groups and differentiate materials to reflect reading, skill level, and learning styles. However, not all teachers create rigorous tiered activities or differentiate work products that consistently lead to high levels of engagement and critical thinking. In some classes, while they have the materials they are not used well to create tiered activities, and debrief, thus missing out on an opportunity to engage students in critical thinking and learning. .
- Refine the system for evaluating the quality of curricular and instructional decisions to make adjustments and increase coherence across the school with particular attention to CCLS. 5.1
 - Teachers update curriculum maps on an on-going basis. However, as administration reviews maps and unit plans twice a year to make adjustments, these untimely reviews lead to inconsistent levels of rigor and challenge, impeding improving learning outcomes for some students. Additionally, while the school works to ensure the link between curriculum, instruction, and resources, it is in the beginning stages of developing timely comparative assessments.
- Set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student sub-groups, and students in need of additional support. 3.2
 - Teacher teams utilize periodic assessments, class work, and performance tasks, to identify an area of concern and learning target such as students will be able to identify relevant information from irrelevant information. Teams also review the Acuity error analysis report to identify the underlying cause for the error, and plan appropriate strategies for improvement. However, teams do not use this information to set differentiated interim-goals and benchmarks for students. Therefore, it cannot be ascertained that goals are met and revised teacher practices are yielding necessary learning outcomes, thus hindering the mastery and acceleration of some targeted students.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Andries Hudde	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