

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Clara Cardwell**

**K308**

**616 Quincy Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11221**

**Principal: Renata Clement**

**Dates of review: November 9 - 10, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Clara Cardwell is an elementary and middle school with 644 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 84% Black, 13% Hispanic, 2% Asian American, and 1% White students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 19% 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 89.8%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- School staff works as a unified team to create a calm, respectful and orderly environment that supports all students and enables learning to take place.
  - In addition to continuing the 'Brotherhood and Sisterhood Clubs' that support character development, and promote student leadership and respect, the school has instituted a male mentoring program with funds acquired from a grant. The students work with mentors at least once a week and engage in sports activities to promote sportsmanship and team work. Additionally, the school offers parents activities such as painting, jewelry making and yoga through the 'Boys Town Program' to provide positive channels for stress and promote parent leadership. Consequently, the school has noted an increase in the level of satisfaction among all constituents on the school's latest environment survey and a decrease in the number of incidents recorded since last year.
  - The school continues the good practice of addressing concerns for individual student's social development and progress through discussions and planning among guidance personnel, teachers and parents to provide appropriate interventions that support achievement. This has generated high praise from parents for the school's "nurturing" and "caring" response to their children's needs. In addition, the school's "open door" policy and student access to the entire staff ensures that every student is well known by at least one adult in the school. This has resulted in students expressing that the school is like a "family".
- The school's partnerships and collaborations support students' learning and social growth that support the development of post secondary skills.
  - School based personnel collaborate with teachers regularly, to help and assure that students receive the emotional and academic support they need to succeed. Guidance counselors present guidance lessons to maintain the focus on character development, and work with students and families to support articulation to high schools and plan for college readiness. Subsequently, the school had a high percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders who earned high school credit last year.
  - The school collaborates with the 'Global Classroom Program' that focuses on promoting student cultural awareness and with LEAP to provide students with additional enrichment programs in the arts. These experiences increase students' positive awareness of themselves and others and tap into students' talents and develop an appreciation of the arts, as well as extend learning and academic growth.
- The school is starting to improve feedback to students on their work and keep parents informed of school activities and their children's progress.
  - School wide communication systems inform families of students' progress. These include school designed academic reports that will be

sent home to all parents every three weeks starting in November. Teacher and parent initiated e-mails, telephone messages and one-on-one conversations are other avenues the school uses to discuss the progress of individual students. In addition, the school has shared curriculum information and sends home parent newsletters to inform families of school-wide events. These interactions are strengthening the home-school connection to maximize progress for all students.

- Parents participate as members of School Leadership Team (SLT) and contribute in the development of the school's Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) that drives the school's initiatives for the year. Additionally, the school's Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) along with the school's parent coordinator sponsor weekly workshops and family activities that have increased parent participation. As a result, parents express that they are partners in the school's decision making process to promote school improvement and student achievement.
- Teachers welcome opportunities to participate in collaborative inquiry and use this to develop leadership skills and raise learning outcomes for targeted students.
  - A majority of teachers participate on inquiry teams which meet at least once a week to work collaboratively to improve instruction and student outcomes. Most teachers work with targeted students, focusing instruction on identified skills in need of improvement. Selected teachers are working with colleagues and school leadership on the curriculum development team, while others work on the school data team to extend the collection and analysis of assessments to improve achievement. These exchanges are resulting in school-wide efforts to improve instructional strategies, increase student achievement, and deepen levels of professional growth and teacher leadership.
- The school is developing collaborative systems for tracking student progress toward goals and planning modifications based on outcomes in order to refine targeted supports and more closely meet student needs.
  - The school has hired a consultant to work with staff in the development of a data tracking system to monitor student progress of interim and long term goals. This tool is providing some information about overall data trends in student performance to inform school-wide decisions to guide progress toward interim and long range goals.
  - Teacher teams use binders to monitor assessment results for their target population students. This facilitates the analysis of the data and informs levels of achievement towards students' goals. As a result, teachers are able to adjust instruction. This protocol is leading to improvements in targeted skills in English language arts and math as evidenced by preliminary student outcomes.

## What the school needs to improve

- Align key State standards and curriculum to classroom practices to ensure that all students receive rigorous instruction that is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and tasks, in order to achieve at high levels.
  - The school has created curriculum maps that integrate the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in English language arts and math. However, they have not targeted key State standards and the use of strategies and higher order thinking skills were not evident in most classrooms. Assignments were rudimentary and did not generate thoughtful discussion, analysis, or depth in student work products, limiting considerably creativity and achievement for students.
  - Although there was evidence of curriculum planning, there is a lack of evidence of planning learning tasks designed to engage student sub-groups in most classrooms. The absence of embedded practices reduces opportunities to challenge all students, especially students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs). As a result, there is virtually a lack of any rigorous instruction to promote the engagement of a diverse student population.
- Improve the use of data to plan differentiated learning activities so that lessons reflect purposeful groupings to push thinking that meet the needs of all students at their entry levels.
  - 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 evident in most classrooms. While in a few classrooms, lessons included differentiated worksheet tasks based on students' readability levels there was no evidence of teachers using differentiated questions or teaching strategies to support authentic learning opportunities. This adversely affects understanding and skill development needed to maximize learning for all students.
  - Even though there was evidence of student participation in all classrooms, high levels of engagement were not present in assigned tasks. In some classrooms students were copying from the board and textbooks, while in others students were working on "Do Now" and worksheet assignments. This significantly hampers students' abilities to become partners in their own learning as evidenced in their work products.
- Align resources to support the development of a plan that accelerates the school's instructional goals to increase student achievement
  - While there are computers in most classrooms, evidence of their use as an instructional resource is inconsistent. This lessens the use of technology as a tool for learning, limiting modalities and accommodating learning styles for a wide range of students.
  - In efforts to increase instructional capacity aligned to school goals, the school has hired a consultant to deepen lesson development and enhance teaching practices. However, the consultant has not yet been

fully assigned to work with teachers to support their growth. This limits the time spent developing teacher practices to increase student learning and achievement.

- Extend data gathering and analysis practices to all core subjects to inform instruction and provide an on-going picture of progress for all students.
  - Teachers use standards based assessments to identify skills in need of improvement. However, the use of this information to plan instruction is inconsistent as evidenced by lessons not fully aligned to student needs and curriculum standards. This limits teachers' abilities to plan effectively to address students' academic weaknesses and teach 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 did not include the necessary component to properly determine the level of students' understanding of lesson content. This impacts negatively teachers' abilities to make appropriate instructional adjustments to address the learning needs of all students.
- Align the feedback from the use of observation protocols to ensure teaching practices lead to student progress and achievement.
  - Although school leaders conduct classroom walkthroughs and observations, utilizing a specific framework, the feedback from the observations does not consistently address strategies for deepening the rigor in lesson presentations and student tasks. This diminishes opportunities to improve instructional skills and practices that maximize student progress and achievement.
  - The school provides opportunities for professional growth that include support from network specialists working with teachers to improve instruction. However, the school does not consistently differentiate teacher development by need. Consequently, this reduces opportunities to strengthen instructional skills that improve teaching and learning for adults and students.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: Clara Cardwell</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 students' 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		

<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<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>