

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Elijah Stroud

Elementary School 316

**750 CLASSON AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY 11238**

Principal: OLGA MALUF

Dates of review: March 19 - 20, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Simmons

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Elijah Stroud is an elementary school with 256 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 78% Black, 15% Hispanic, 6% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school uses student work and data to develop and refine curriculum and academic tasks that are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, (CCLS), so that students across classrooms are engaged and demonstrate progress. (1.1)
 - Teacher's College reading and writing provides administrators, teachers, and students, with a common language and alignment of unit of studies that support student learning. Opinion/argument writing units run through the entire curriculum starting in kindergarten where students write list books on their likes and dislikes. At each level students write informational texts based on topics of personal expertise and based on nonfiction reading and research. Writing skills are developed across the curriculum through writing about reading and content area literacy. In addition, the lower grades, kindergarten through grade 2, use the Unison program to internalize reading skills and to encourage students to express their thoughts. As a result, student work products in writing contain more volume and details than at the start of the school year and students are cognitively engaged in challenging tasks across all content areas.
- The principal strategically aligns resources to develop teacher practice and provide enhanced opportunities for student engagement that promote academic achievement. (1.3)
 - The school's part-time science teacher for kindergarten through grade 2 provides hands on experience. In addition, the part-time drama teacher exposes the students to poetry through the multicultural lens. Using the push-in model, two teacher assistants are programmed to support students through academic intervention services. The school's extensive school wide enrichment program fosters critical thinking through student inquiry. As a result, strategic use of resources and programming, teams of teachers know exactly what students need to be successful and support them towards mastery as evidenced in students' individual goals and student work products.
- Across the school differentiated teaching practices aligned with key standards reflect a common teaching framework with appropriate supports and challenges, resulting in meaningful work products. (1.2)
 - Through a balanced approach to learning, inclusive of the arts, teachers plan and use a wide range of strategies such as modeling, guided practice, application, and feedback, to engage students in a thinking curriculum. Lessons are implemented through the workshop model where mini lessons are delivered in a variety of modalities including the use of technology and Smart Boards, followed by guided work in small groups, and one-on one support, allowing for individualized, targeted instruction. The comprehensive collection of differentiation strategies in all subject areas allows students to explore text complexity and produce work products that reflect levels of critical thinking.
- A highly supportive, inclusive and mutually respectful environment that ensures learning for all results from the school's intensive focus on students' personal and overall academic growth. (1.4)

- o The principal has created a nurturing learning environment that is welcoming and cherished by the entire school community. To address bullying and foster a culture of respect, the school created a merit badges program to encourage positive behavior. The attendance incentive program culminates in monthly award celebrations and class certificates for those students that have perfect attendance. As a result of the recent attendance initiatives, the attendance average has already increased by 1% to 94% as compared to the last year's average of 93%. Students feel they have a voice and are respected by the principal and her staff and that the school has high expectations for them. During the student meeting, students shared their best work products, explain the evaluation process, and next steps to achieve their learning goals. Collectively, these practices ensure that students are partners in their learning and motivated to succeed.
- Parents are informed of student progress, using a variety of tools, and involved in school activities resulting in a concerted effort to increase student growth. (2.4)
 - o Newsletters and calendars update families on upcoming school activities and events. Frequent parent workshops, including the CCLS, are structures in place to ensure families learn about the school's curriculum, programs, and resources, used to support students' academically and behaviorally. Parents, during their meeting, expressed that their voices are heard in the school community. Parents feel comfortable expressing their concerns relating to scheduling of workshops and the need for translation. As a result, the school revised the schedules and supplied appropriate communicative resources based on the input of the parents. To that end, parent involvement has increased 15%.
- The school's systems and partnerships support students and families' personal growth and development, promoting progress. (4.4)
 - o The school raises the daily adult-to-student ratio by utilizing outside organizations to bring extra adults to the school. They assist teachers and provide the one-to-one attention and small-group activities necessary to ensure that all students' social-emotional and academic needs are met. Recognizing the delicate balance between the academic and social growth, professional development for staff is integrated to address both these domains and supports teachers as they strive to meet the academic and social needs of the students. Professional development provided through Columbia Teachers' College allows the school to consistently enjoy a safe and respectful environment by continually improving the levels of student engagement. The school-based mentoring program builds student self-esteem as they work toward strengthening literacy skills. The partnership at Yale University through the C8 Sciences, providing targeted support for students, is based on brain plasticity and supports all students, particularly special needs children. As a result, teachers noticed increased stamina and engagement in the classroom.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that individual and teams of teachers gather and analyze meaningful periodic and classroom level data, and align it to the school's chosen standards, in order to target the needs of all students, including key subgroups. (2.2)
 - o Teachers gather a variety of data, such as reading level, predictive, computer program and math assessments results. This informs them of student performance in ELA and math. However, the analysis of student data does not yet lead to an in depth understanding of students' specific strengths and skill deficit for

targeted groups of students, particularly students with disabilities, limiting teachers' ability to meet the needs of individuals and relevant subgroups.

- Expand systems for monitoring student achievement data to ensure that the information is shared with students and families and to make timely adjustments to teaching practices across the school. (5.2)
 - o Administration and teachers gather a variety of information, including summative and periodic, that is shared with students and families. However, the principal has not yet established a system for evaluating the alignment of assessment practices to the school's instructional focus, curricula, and organizational decisions. As a result, there is limited coherency and cohesiveness in the data that is gathered, shared and how it is used by various members of the school community thus hindering suitable revisions in articulating assessments to ensure measuring student progress.
- Ensure the teachers set data-informed measurable goals for key sub-groups that are aligned to the curriculum so that changes to classroom practices result in accelerated learning for all learners. (3.2)
 - o Classroom teachers set individual goals for students and monitor them accordingly. While this sets expectations for more targeted instruction for individual students, there is little evidence that the unique needs of key subgroups, specifically students with disabilities, are being addressed. This prevents all students from maximizing their learning opportunities and inhibits progress for these students.
 - o Teams of teachers meet to review student work, discuss curriculum and share teaching strategies. However, there is little connection between implemented strategies, student work products, and the focus of curricular initiatives. Therefore, there is an inability to determine what practices improve student outcomes or teacher practice.
- Build upon the teacher observation and feedback process to ensure closer alignment to the chosen research-based framework with a focus on student work in order to elevate teacher practice. (4.1)
 - o The school leader is visiting classrooms and engaging teachers in a balance of clinical and informal observations. Ongoing oral and written feedback informs teachers of the quality of their work. While the school leader provides quality feedback using a researched based framework, there is a void in the understanding of individual needs of teachers and the system to align the feedback process with individual teacher goal setting. To that end, progress monitoring is still not an embedded practice, and as such teacher development efforts are not fully leveraged for maximizing outcomes in teaching and learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Elijah Stroud	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	
1..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
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