

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Dr. Rose B. English School**

**Elementary-Middle School 327**

**111 Bristol Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11212**

**Principal: Dr. Stephen Appea**

**Dates of review: March 8 - 9, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Ainslie Cumberbatch**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Dr. Rose B. English School is an elementary-middle school with 715 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 78% Black, 19% Hispanic, 1% White, and less than 1% Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander students. The student body includes less than 5% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 45% of the students enrolled and girls account for 55%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 88.5%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school makes effective organizational decisions that support improvement initiatives and student learning. (1.3)
  - The school's investment in allocating personnel, funds for the purchase of portable Smart boards and programs such as I-Station, Ticket to Read, Achieve 3000, Imagine Learning and Destination Math supports the use of technology in classrooms and at home to engage students. Classroom visits, student progress reports and conversations with parents confirm the effective use of technology to support the various needs of students and extend learning by engaging them in reading non-fiction material and math lessons at their own pace, in total alignment with school's goals.
  - Thorough analysis of student performance data on State and school-based assessments revealed that student success in English language arts varied from grade to grade and that reading was a fundamental obstacle to student achievement. Subsequently, the principal strategically aligned teachers to elementary grades implementing a looping structure in some grades and the use of online programming to promote mastery of key Common Core Learning Standards across the school, such as Reading for Informational Text and Text Complexity. As a result, ongoing assessment results reveal momentum to meet or surpass student performance in grades 4 and 5 where the school achieved double-digit gains from the previous school year on New York State standardized exams.
- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and career readiness, with resources that support learning. (1.4)
  - Students express that they feel supported by adults and challenged in their work. They value their teachers' commitment to their success and point to their willingness to help them after class and during lunch hours by student request or teacher assignment. This support results in students wanting to achieve and excel in their studies as noted in classroom observations and interviews.
  - Students actively participate in school governance through their student government and elect "senators" to represent them in conversations with the principal. They applaud the level of instructional technology at their school, their relationship with teachers and the support services provided by the guidance counselors and social workers. They eagerly describe the school as, "amazing and protective of students."
- Staff gather a wide range of relevant data to understand individual student and relevant subgroup performance, progress and learning needs. (2.1)
  - Administrators and key staff meet weekly to compile and review data that include safety, attendance and school progress reports. As a result, the school has structured its improvement efforts to include a strong

academic and recreational after-school program, tutoring opportunities for students and focused supports such as counseling, mentoring, and attendance initiatives that lead to improved school tone and a sustained attendance rate of above ninety percent for the school year.

- School leaders analyze a comprehensive array of data including information from benchmark assessments, unit exams, online programs and progress reports, to uncover the strengths and challenges of individuals and groups of students. This data provides staff with critical information regarding student achievement for student subgroups, such as students in the lowest third and subgroups of students who are struggling. As a result, the school develops strategic action plans to address student needs.
- Students benefit from a standards-based broad curriculum that incorporates high school and career readiness, with resources that support learning. (1.1)
  - School staff collaborate to develop clear and detailed curriculum maps in all subject areas that are aligned to the new Common Core Learning Standards. This work has resulted in a coherent pre-k to 8 sequence that guides teachers' understandings of content and strategies. Consequently, teachers create classroom activities that challenge students and prepare them for high school and beyond.
  - School curricula align with the Common Core Learning Standards and lesson plans reflect planning based on classroom data and student assessments. In an English as a second language class at the beginner level, students were challenged to identify the parts of the head as an outgrowth of a story read from a big picture book. The teacher used visual stimuli, auditory repetition and peer interaction to engage students cognitively. As a result, students showed great effort in completing the scaffolded activities and experienced success in their learning.
- The school's highly developed communication systems keeps parents and students fully informed of each individual's academic and behavioral progress. (2.4)
  - School leaders use the school website, various online reporting systems, the monthly breakfast session with the principal, progress reports four times a year and parent conferences, as a platform to engage parents in a collaborative relationship. They provide parents with the tools to monitor student performance and regular opportunities to discuss student progress, attendance and learning needs. This process encourages parents to support the work of the school, as volunteers and advocates for their children. Parents report that they value their relationship with the parent coordinator and school staff. They applaud the level of technology at the school and the opportunities to monitor their child's' performance consistently. They report, "You can't say you didn't know."
  - School leaders and staff consistently engage parents in school decisions. Parents participate on a curriculum committee to share their perspective on the school focus. Recently, parent members expressed concern regarding the school's approach to Black History month in grade 2. As a result, additional aspects were woven into the curriculum, including a

school wide competition entitled, “Black history fact of the day” and “Guess who this important figure is in black history”. Consequently, parents feel a strong connection to the school and declare, “It is an A school”.

- The school uses an efficient system for monitoring and adjusting teaching practice that provides strong support with a clear focus on improving instruction. (4.1)
  - Administrators use frequent classroom observations to support improvements in instructional practice. Through formal and informal observations, teachers receive detailed feedback on specific areas of need such as in the area of higher-order questioning, which is a school-wide focus and the implementation of engaging classroom tasks. Teachers remark that they find the feedback, “Very developmental”. Consequently, there is considerable buy-in of the school’s efforts to improve teaching and learning.
  - A strong emphasis on teacher development serves as the foundation to improve instruction. School leaders administer a professional development survey to teachers three times a year, provide them with access to an on-demand professional development platform and develop individual action plans for teachers to improve their instructional practice. In addition, administrators support teachers on probation in building capacity towards achieving tenure. As a result, school expectations are public and feedback to teachers addresses their individual needs.

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

- Extend the good practice of differentiated instruction so that learning activities across all subject areas and classes consistently provide rigor and challenge for all students. (1.2)
  - Teacher plans denote efforts to differentiate classroom instruction to address the varied needs of students. However, teacher sophistication in the delivery of the lesson varies across the school. In one math class dealing with the Pythagoras theorem, questions posed by the teacher were procedural and lacked depth such as, “How do we determine the unknown length of a side of a triangle?” In addition, the assigned task had no real world application and students struggled to understand the concept. In contrast, students in an English class examined how to extract details from a text and then worked in groups to cite evidence from informational articles to develop an argument in support of a claim based on group consensus. At present, not all students are exposed to challenging tasks or sufficient scaffolds to support their learning.
  - The student classroom experience varies from one class to the other. Group work and opportunities for students to engage in accountable talk are part of the routine in some classes. However, across classrooms lesson implementation that incorporates effective grouping and structures for student participation is inconsistent. Some student notebooks and work folders do not show sufficient evidence of tiered supports to ensure consistent progress for struggling learners. As a result, not all students

are engaged in sophisticated conversations or generate meaningful work products.

- Revise the process of data analysis to establish a systematic and disaggregated review of student performance to further support targeted instruction. (2.2)
  - Teachers reflect on various data streams at a virtually instantaneous level based on a variety of online and traditional assessments. However, analysis of student progress across subgroups is not always evenly investigated. As a result, the impact of interventions for specific groups of students such as holdovers and those in temporary housing are not always identified as quickly and coupled with immediate adjustments to curricula and teaching practices.
  - In some classes teachers conference with individuals and groups of students. In classes with instructional technology where students learn at their own pace, teachers check in with students through verbal prompts and make immediate instructional adjustments if necessary. However, in other classrooms, ongoing checks for understanding were not sufficiently evident, resulting in some students struggling independently with the task as noted in one math class, or others being inadequately challenged in a social studies class to increase their level of thinking.
- Further expand the present data systems used for collecting and monitoring the progress of student achievement to ensure the information is used effectively in collaborative inquiry. (5.2)
  - The school extracts a wealth of data from classroom and school assessments, as well as progress updates from the numerous technology programs that support student growth. Currently, the school uses spreadsheet data repositories to warehouse the various data streams and the school website and an online reporting program as the mechanism for sharing student progress data with students and families. However, the system in place does not ensure the work of school teams is guided by a coherent review of this assorted data and that students interpret their next steps based on the multiple forms of information shared. Consequently, the absence of a refined structure dilutes the effectiveness of the information gathered.
- Refine action planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks for school wide plans, teacher team plans, and student subgroups so that progress can be measured, readjustments made and success evaluated. (5.3)
  - School leaders and teacher teams use data from periodic assessments, scholarship results, online programs, classroom observations and student work products to monitor the progress of teachers and students. However, the school does not set interim goals in all areas and at all levels to clearly define what they want to achieve using a given timeline. As a result, the lack of clearly defined benchmarks minimizes the school's ability to evaluate its progress towards achieving intended goals at all levels.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: Dr. Rose B. English School</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>	

<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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?		<b>X</b>					
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			<b>X</b>				
<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>