

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Ebbets Field Middle School
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school K352**

**46 MCKEEVER PLACE
BROOKLYN
NY 11225**

Principal: Margie Baker

Dates of review: May 31 and June 1, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Simmons

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Ebbets Field Middle School is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 419 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 78% Black, 18% Hispanic, 2% White, 0% Asian students and 1% other students. The student body includes 22% English language learners and 15% 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 91.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders analyze a range of relevant data across most subjects to understand individual student and subgroup performance, progress and learning needs. (2.1)
 - School leaders' review of a range of available student performance data, including item-skills analysis, attendance, suspensions, strengths, and needs focused on increasing students' reading stamina across grades. Data binders with student information provided to each teacher contains relevant information that is used in planning differentiated instruction in order to increase students' academic performance.
 - School leaders' review and analysis of student performance identified learning trends specific to learning gaps in reading. Additionally, the review of relevant information around teacher practice and its effectiveness related to student growth has led to teacher assignments matched to their content expertise and student needs, with an emphasis on improving teacher practice in differentiated instruction to support student growth.
- The school uses data to inform focused goal-setting setting and action planning at the school level in order to drive academic and social-emotional planning and improve student outcomes. (3.1)
 - School leaders have developed targeted goals, which are derived from summative assessment data, annual yearly progress mandates and item skills analysis of student needs. The goals are then adjusted and delineated in the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) and the Principals' Performance Review on a yearly basis. They focus on raising the level of student success by improving instructional outcomes for general education students, English language learners (ELLs) and other student subgroups. As a result, student SMART goals are seen in all classrooms and have begun to impact the quality of student work.
- Teacher teams are developing systems that use data to set goals for students in need of additional support in order to improve learning outcomes (3.2)
 - Administrators work with teachers to develop long-term and short-term goals with measurable outcomes for each interim checkpoint. Goals are reviewed at the classroom level. Administrators plan in June and provide profiles of students to all teachers in the beginning of the school year based on an analysis of formative assessments and student portfolios. During teacher team meetings, special attention is on language development students with disabilities and English language learners. Progress is monitored in addition to launching the development of pedagogical modifications. As such, teachers are developing measured progress towards meeting the long-term goals they have set for individuals and groups of students.
- Teachers collaborate on teams to examine student work and share ideas through a desire to improve their effectiveness on student outcomes. (4.2)
 - Teacher teams meet weekly by grade during common planning time to review student assessment data in an effort to identify students' strengths and

- weaknesses. Collegial sharing allows teachers to work together using varied strategies and resources to support student learning. Teacher team meetings focus on an analysis of summative and formative assessments and student outcomes on classroom assignments. This has led to teachers beginning to self-assess pedagogical practices in order to guide the effectiveness of their work. While currently there is no link to improved teacher practice teams are collaborating on creating unit plans for students they share in order to increase their efficacy of their practice on students' academic performance.
- The school has established effective systems for monitoring teacher practice that results in a clear focus on improving instructional practice (4.1)
 - School leaders conduct informal classroom observations of teaching practices and student work products. These observations and the analysis of student data inform the school's professional development opportunities to support effective instructional practices. As a result of this focused feedback, teachers are beginning to implement effective strategies that meet student needs.
 - School leaders have a log of assistance that tracks the professional development provided for teachers. The cabinet is beginning to differentiate professional learning experiences to meet the specific needs of teachers identified through formal and informal teacher performance data and classroom observations. Topics are selected based on classroom observations and an analysis of student needs and benchmarks for implementation are set to monitor professional growth. These observations and benchmarks inform the school's professional support system for teachers, including new teachers. Additional support is provided to new teachers by the Network, which has resulted in a decrease in student referrals. Consequently, teachers are beginning to implement effective strategies that meet students' needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop rigorous and challenging experiences to ensure that all students make progress in their learning. (1.1)
 - The school has made advances in aligning units of study with the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Nonetheless, the lack of embedded rigor in performance tasks results in low emphasis on higher order thinking skills, thus, students are not afforded adequate challenge thereby thwarting meta-cognition and the development of critical thinking skills. Curricula and academic tasks are mostly short answer activities. Tasks assigned are not sufficiently challenging for all students and do not take into account the diversity of learners, resulting in uneven levels of engagement. Teacher questioning does not lead to high levels of student thinking preventing students from performing at higher levels. Lessons designed by teachers do not consistently provide entry points suitable for all learners. The lack of academic rigor, especially in special education classrooms, prevents students from accelerating. For example, several high achieving students reported not being challenged in some tasks. This lack of alignment, specificity, and unclear benchmarks, impacts on the lack of rigor observed during some of the classroom visits. Consequently, there are missed opportunities to effectively engage all learners in critical thinking and reasoning, in order to prepare all students for postsecondary readiness skills.

- Provide greater consistency across the classrooms in the use of questioning and student discussion to provide multiple entry points for a range of learners. (1.2)
 - This year the school is focusing on the development of teacher questioning and discussion in order to provide multiple entry points, varied supports, and extensions to lessons. In some classrooms, students complete tiered activities and work cooperatively in ability groups. However, the vast majority of lessons observed and lesson plans reviewed did not reflect appropriate, intentional teacher inquiry that incites rich student discussions. For example, in the Social Studies classes the teachers ask students to find the answers provided in the texts. In two English Language Arts classes, the majority of the questions the teachers framed fail to lead students in rich discussion and accountable talk was not evident. Hence, the student voice was absent. As such, uneven planning and impromptu questioning did not stimulate high levels of student thinking and participation in differentiated tasks. Consequently, not all students are fully engaged in the learning process.
- 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)
 - The principal, assistant principals, teacher teams, and individual teachers have begun the work of examining student work products and assessing them based on rubrics. However, the current system has not yet determined whether other grading practices across the school are consistent with rubrics, thus precluding feedback to students from providing a clear portrait of content proficiency and mastery level in order to support their academic growth.
 - School leaders have developed and distributed data binders to teachers with summative as well as predictive data about student performance. However, there is only an informal monitoring of whether this collection of data is helpful to teachers or of how this data is used by teachers to make necessary adjustments to instruction. Additionally, conversations with teachers reveal inconsistent use of the data across classrooms. As a result, there are missed opportunities to make timely adjustments to pedagogical practices.
- Further deepen the analysis of data to identify trends and sub- group needs in order to apply strategic curricular and instructional adjustments across classrooms. (2.2)
 - During regular common planning sessions, teachers, facilitators, and the coach use data-informed and collaborative processes to discuss results of summative and periodic assessments in order to make decisions based on the individual needs of identified groups of students. However, infrequent checks on all groups of students create a lag in adjustments to instructional practices. Therefore, the delivery of tailored lessons is slowed affecting adequate achievement and progress for students within all subgroups.
 - The school sets realistic SMART goals for all students. Nevertheless, currently there are no established systems for daily record keeping such as conference notes, strategy checklists, exit slips, or student self-assessment practices, across the school. As a result, specific information that informs day-to-day teaching is not routinely captured. Thus, not all students make adequate achievement gains as evidenced on the NYC Progress Report where 17.1% students are performing at level 3 or 4 and 34.5% are performing at level 3 or 4.

- Align the use of resources in order to make effective organizational decisions, which empower the all constituencies in order to support the school's instructional goals. (1.3)
 - The school has an extensive array of web based software programs to specifically address English language learners and struggling students. However, the vast number of programs being introduced does not allow for reflective evaluation. Further, teacher capacity in the use of these programs has not yet been fully developed, resulting in implementations that are not strategic and have a narrow impact on student success.
 - Teacher assignments have been carefully reviewed and adjustments have been made that reflect greater support for subgroup needs, by targeting teacher strengths. In addition, targeted students receive intervention during the school day. However, the intervention services occur throughout the school day and sometimes students are pulled out of their core classes to receive services. As a result, the effect of the Academic Intervention Services (AIS) scheduling limits student development.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Ebbets Field Middle School	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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