

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Intermediate School 392

Middle School 392

**104 Sutter Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Shirley Wheeler-Massey

Dates of review: December 12 - 13, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Ainslie Cumberbatch

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Intermediate School 392 is a middle school with 311 students from grade 5 through grade 8. The school population comprises 79% Black, 15% Hispanic, 5% Asian, and less than 1% White, American Indian or Alaskan Native students. The student body includes less than 1% English language learners and 4% special education students. Boys account for 39% of the students enrolled and girls account for 61%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 95.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school uses an effective system for monitoring and adjusting teaching practice that provides strong support for the improvement of instruction. (4.1)
 - School leaders support instructional coherence by using observation protocol tools, reviewing student portfolios, and student data, to provide actionable feedback to teachers. All lesson plans require attention to differentiation of instruction and alignment with the New York State learning standards resulting in daily plans that incorporate a focus on higher order thinking and strategies. Consequently, they meet the needs of varied groups of students.
 - Short, frequent classroom visits, informal and formal observations, inter-visitations, and periodic review of student work products, all support the school's effort to improve teacher effectiveness. School leaders emphasize a focus on differentiation of instruction, questioning, and discussion techniques, in observation reports, and provide additional feedback to teachers through the use of a research-based tool. As a result, teachers implement appropriate next steps to support improved academic achievement.
- The principal and staff work well as a unified team to create a warm and supportive environment for teaching and learning to take place. (1.4)
 - In response to safety concerns noted in the school's last Learning Environment Survey, school leaders introduced advisories in the seventh grade led by homeroom teachers. Group and individual counseling sessions conducted by the guidance counselor that are scheduled in other grades, and cyber-bullying workshops provided to students, complement these strategies. As a result, student behavior shows improvement as noted in reduced incident reports, while parents and teachers describe the school as, "extraordinary" and "enriching".
 - Students demonstrate a strong desire to learn and reach out to teachers for needed support. They easily attach themselves to staff and rave about the cohesiveness of the school structure. Strong connections that run throughout the school include clearly publicized staff roles and responsibilities, which provide students with confidence that their opinion and concerns are valued and shared. A student stated, "The school is like one big knot ... you tell one you tell all".
- All staff gather a wide range of relevant data to understand and address individual student and sub-group performance, progress and learning needs. (2.1)
 - School leaders and staff meet regularly to compile and review data that include scholarship summaries, analyses from New York State exams, as well as safety and attendance. As a result, the school has increased tutoring opportunities for students and streamlined supports such as counseling, mentoring, and attendance initiatives that meet students'

needs as evidenced in improved school tone and a sustained attendance rate of above 90% for the school year.

- Administrators and teachers scrutinize periodic and in-house assessment results, student portfolios, and class work, to determine student progress. Consequently, students in the lowest third and selected males receive intensive small group and mentoring support that contribute to progress in their academic performance in English language arts and math as noted in classroom visits.
- Teachers use a wide variety of assessment tools to capture students' school wide progress and to inform classroom level decisions. (2.2)
 - Staff examine a wide range of student data that includes monthly, unit and periodic assessment data, to inform classroom instruction. Teachers measure the success of their instructional practice comparing student outcomes on a variety of assessments to ensure coherence between teaching and learning. As a result, when benchmark assessments and student work revealed that some students were struggling with following procedural steps in math and using choppy transitions in their writing, teachers introduced the use of graphic organizers in math and higher-level transition words in English language arts that enabled students to improve their performance.
 - Teachers' ongoing review of benchmark assessments, scholarship results, and classroom exit slips, provides a comprehensive picture of student and whole school progress. Teachers review this data relative to students' prior performance to see how well they are progressing. Subsequently, the school makes strategic plans that include individual student profiles and student goal setting to support the academic growth of students.
- Students benefit from a standards-based broad curriculum that incorporates differentiated teaching strategies, high school, and career readiness, with resources that support learning. (1.1, 1.2)
 - Monthly curriculum calendars focus teaching and learning at the school. Teachers across classrooms differentiate tasks well matched to students' needs to engage students in rigorous teaching and learning opportunities such as the depth noted in the study of linear and non-linear relationships and the rock cycle. As a result, expectations are clear about what students need to know and most students are aware of their learning goals.
 - Teachers collaborating in teams at least three times a week look at student work to ensure that school curricula are rigorous with clear standards that address the learning gaps revealed through data analysis. Consequently, this data analysis leads to focused literacy strategies, an emphasis on strong classroom dialogue, and assessment benchmarks suitable for individuals and groups of students.
- School leaders make informed and effective organizational decisions that support the acceleration of student learning. (1.3)

- Teacher programs facilitate routine engagement in common planning by grade, English, and math teams. These meetings focus on the review of student work, the examination of school data, and case-conferencing around struggling students. Teachers declare that they are better poised to support students as evidenced by noted growth on assessments for the majority of students.
- Teachers participate in school plans that include curriculum development, tutorials, committee work, and curriculum night, to support school-wide goals and individual student learning needs. Teachers voluntarily tutor students after school, and on their lunch hours, to ensure consistency of student support and success. This commitment enables the school to provide an in-depth support system and successfully move struggling students.

What the school needs to improve

- Promote more consistent use of classroom data to differentiate goal setting so that all lessons are rigorous and engage students at their level. (3.2)
 - Although all teachers consistently generate progress reports and set goals for groups of students based on classroom benchmark assessments, not every teacher uses this data effectively to establish individual learning goals for selected students or suitable targets for on-going improvement reflective of the students' annual and short-term goals. Therefore, students' progress and achievements vary across the school.
 - Teachers analyze data and plan for differentiated instruction for students so that each student can engage in relevant tasks and progress towards proficiency. However, within each class there is not yet a refined focus on goal setting for subgroups of students that propels students to achieve to their fullest.
- Expand the level of inquiry-based collaboration to deepen the work of teacher teams within the school. (4.2)
 - English language arts, math, and grade teams, utilize authentic student work as a lens for teachers to reflect on student needs and their own practice. As a result, teachers develop worthy interventions and support. However, not all teachers are equally involved in using action-research, thus limiting the impact of the work of teams on school-wide instruction.
 - Distributed leadership, while visible in team structures, is not yet deeply embedded in collaborations with the administrative team, so that ideas surfaced at team meetings do not always flow seamlessly to the school leadership to receive immediate attention.
- Further develop school capacity to provide students and families with opportunities for personal growth and academic development. (4.4)
 - The school uses its guidance counselor, school-based support team, and homeroom teachers, to provide students with social and emotional support and motivation to attend college. Although staff are trained to

provide a support structure that includes character development and/or advisories, at present, staff do not receive training to build their expertise in supporting families in navigating through the multiple pathways after high school graduation, including the process of postsecondary planning. As a result, teacher capacity is limited to providing students only with an emphasis on a college education, an awareness of their college options, and visits to institutions that are cited as accredited and notable.

- The school's academic partnership with two colleges provides tutorial and student teaching services. Students also benefit from a comprehensive after-school program that includes mentoring and recreational services. However, the school has not yet drilled deep enough into elements of student behavior to identify the needs of the more difficult, acting out students, thereby missing out on opportunities to include targeted interventions to improve student behavior.
- Refine action planning to include long-term goals that focus on student progress as you move to implement the Common Core Standards. (5.3)
 - School priorities in the Comprehensive Educational Plan and other planning documents address annual goals. However, long-range plans that reflect the principal's vision, such as increasing the number of Regents' exams offered, are yet to surface publicly as concrete plans. As a result, these plans do not significantly inform the work of staff related to the development of specific programs.
 - School plans for student success include a review of student work through the lens of the Common Core Standards and the alignment of assessments to unit plans. At present, a formal process for monitoring and assessing the impact of school-wide plans that goes beyond scholarship results and identifies the effectiveness of organizational and instructional practices is still emerging. As a result, the school has limited ability to determine the effect of all of its actions.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Intermediate School 392	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