

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Mott Hall IV  
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school K522

1137 HERKIMER STREET  
BROOKLYN  
NY 11233

Principal Dr. T McBryde

Dates of review: May 15,16, 2012  
Lead Reviewer: Dr. Evelyn Castro

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Mott Hall IV is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 259 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 90% Black, 9% Hispanic, 0% White, 0% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 7% special education students. Boys account for 38% of the students enrolled and girls account for 62%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The hard-working principal and dedicated faculty work as a unified team to coordinate activities that engage all students in their own learning and promote their personal, social and academic development. (1.4)
  - o The school organization includes an advisory program where each staff member including the principal meets daily with their cohort of students. During the Advisory meetings, there are scholarly conferences that focus students on their performance so that they are actively engaged in their own learning. Additionally, clubs for young women and young men (Divas and Gents) provide engaging activities that support both the cognitive and affective development of the students resulting in the promotion of life skills that accelerate and empower the personal, social and academic development of students.
  - o The school provides opportunities that maintain student interest in their own learning. They visit colleges, engage in mentoring and career explorations that deepen their desire to succeed academically. Students participate in tutoring during free periods and after school hours. As a result of this support, students remain engaged in their learning to improve their academic performance.
- The school engages in professional collaboration using an inquiry approach and includes opportunities for staff to share leadership and gain strength in developing instructional strategies that promote improved learning. (4.2)
  - o Teachers engage in collaboration using an inquiry approach both by subject area and grade level to improve teaching practice and support positive student outcomes. Team meetings include an examination of student work and collaborative lesson planning which result in differentiated learning experiences. Sixth graders were given multiple choices to interface with Social Studies content. Team meetings and collaboration enable teachers to identify student needs and better provide differentiated lessons.
  - o Facilitation in the team meetings is rotated so experienced as well as new teachers are able to share teaching strategies. One team used the Lucy West template to plan effective math lessons. The distribution of leadership has increased teacher engagement in their professional development. Information from observations of new teachers and input from teachers about their own learning needs are part of the decision making in planning professional development leading to improved pedagogical practice that focuses on adult learning needs and focused student learning.
- Teaching strategies reflective of facilitation of learning are aligned to curricula and academic tasks that deepen student thinking and help children produce meaningful work. (1.2)
  - o Across classrooms and grades pedagogical practices reflect the belief that students learn best when they own their learning. Students were observed in pairs and in groups working on assignments after teachers modeled the expectations for the task. Students developed skills in predicting, hypothesizing, observing, and analyzing during science experiments on the Carbon Cycle.

Lessons were consistently delivered to facilitate student understanding and participation resulting in students producing meaningful work products.

- Classroom practices that include the use of curriculum maps, investigation, high level questioning, coaching and the use of graphic organizers for the purpose of improving student learning are evident in many classrooms. In some classes, student groups include a high functioning anchor student at each table. This anchor student, for example in math classes, facilitates discussion and problem solving with class team members. As a result high levels of student thinking and engagement are reflected in the quality of student work products and discussion of content.
- The school makes organizational decisions around fiscal and human resources that are closely aligned to its instructional goals and support learning needs of students. (1.3)
  - Teachers are scheduled to participate in classes of subjects other than the one they teach on the same grade. For example, a math teacher is scheduled in to a science teacher's class twice weekly as part of a unique support structure. This practice lowers the teacher student ratio, facilitates tutoring, and the reinforcement of skills. Subsequently, teachers across the grade willingly share responsibility for student learning in all subjects. This initiative enables teachers to meet student's learning needs individually and in small groups.
  - School leaders use fiscal resources to strategically hire teachers in the areas of music, art and technology in order to build school capacity and meet goals. These hiring decisions have resulted in a more coherent alignment to the school's instructional goals. The result of hiring new staff has helped increase the engagement of students in learning, leading to a greater emphasis on math and technology as observed in teacher use of smart boards, graphing calculators, laptops, and ipads to support student learning.
- Teachers analyze data from various assessments to identify the strengths and needs of all students including English language learners and students with disabilities and provide a complete picture of student ability. (2.2)
  - Data binders in each classroom reflect a variety of assessments that include formative and summative assessments, as well as the results of Acuity performance, school wide benchmarks and mock exams. An online system is used to monitor student independent practice and progress, and create flexible student groups. This results in adjustments to teacher's instructional decisions to support students as they work toward meeting individualized student goals towards mastery of concepts and skills.
  - Teachers examine individual formative and assessment data for all students including those with disabilities and English Language Learners. Using the assessment information, teachers have mainstreamed students in various subjects and focused on enhancing the teaching of vocabulary. As a result, student sub groups have made academic progress in this area as evidenced by increased performance on interim school assessments reflected in the 7th grade English Language Arts data binder.
- School leaders use data from frequent observations to monitor teacher practice, and provide actionable feedback that leads to professional growth and reflection focusing on the improvement of learning outcomes for students. (4.1)

- o School leaders initiate teacher development through a self-assessment tool and a research-based formative assessment program. Principal and Assistant Principals alternate formal and informal observations with frequent short visits to classrooms and give feedback to teachers using practices aligned to the Danielson rubric. New teachers receive additional support and are assigned a mentor, and participate in external professional development activities. As a result of the ongoing review of periodic assessments and teacher observations, school leaders expand effective instructional practices and promote teacher development.
- o School leaders use a research-based framework to formally and informally observe teachers and provide them with actionable feedback through verbal and electronic media. The schools observation plan is designed to strengthen instructional practice. Teachers develop smart goals for instruction that are a part of the focus of pre and post observation conferences. School leaders follow up with targeted professional development opportunities, monitoring of teacher practice, participation in team meetings and review assessment data leading to the school's progress towards its instructional goals to improve student outcomes.

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

- Develop greater coherence and alignment of curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards across the grades and in all subject areas, to ensure that all students make progress in their learning (1.1)
  - o The school has engaged in aligning the curricula with the Common Core Learning Standards by having each subject area teacher create two instructional tasks. However, lack of coherence of instructional design across all subjects does not always lead to scaffolding of work, including supports and extensions to meet students' learning needs, minimizing the opportunity for all students to have improved learning outcomes.
  - o Teacher teams meet across grades to examine student work and develop lessons that promote rigor and higher order thinking skills. However, not all lessons promote rigor for a diverse group or targeted instruction that exposes students to higher order thinking questions. For example, teacher questions in one 6th grade and one 7th grade class were low level. Students were given a variety of primary documents from the Civil War Era . They were asked to summarize documents. Not all students are encouraged to stretch their thinking which limits the level of student growth across the school.
- Enhance the structures used to organize student data, monitor student progress and adjust teaching practices to meet students' needs. (5.2)
  - o Create structures that organize data and reflect benchmarks indicating student progress and growth .Examination of student data in classrooms reflected goal setting with little evidence of benchmarks marking progress toward the goals. Students were not fully aware of their progress in academic achievement thus hindering the acceleration of learning.
  - o Embed and enhance the functioning of structures which enable the sharing of student data between and among teachers to improve teaching practice. Current data organization and its analysis by teachers do not yet facilitate and

accelerate learning based on student needs. Thus, students have limited opportunities to produce quality work products.

- Refine the structures in place to regularly evaluate and adjust curricular and instructional decisions in response to student learning needs. (5.1)
  - o School leaders and faculty established additional structures in the form of teams to refocus the school and create a greater alignment between curriculum and the school's mission. The new teams have begun to make adjustments in organization, curriculum, instructional practices and expectations of the Common Core Standards. This is evidenced by the change in scheduling of teacher time, (push-in teachers) curricular practice that enhances the use of technology (Engrade, ipads) and the teaching of mathematics using strategies from Lucy West. Adjustments are made based on ideas from individual teachers and teams communicating with the principal. However, current structures lack protocols and processes to change or adjust practice as well as make organizational decisions, thus limiting how the school determines the effectiveness of these decisions and their impact on achievement.
  - o School leaders and faculty are developing a structure for strategic multi-year planning. Currently, there is no clear process for organizing and using aggregated data about achievement, behavior and attendance over time, thus hindering school leaders and staff in opportunities to study trends and patterns and regularly evaluate and adjust how organizational resources align to support the school's goals.
- Continue to develop a system for measuring progress over time toward interim goals and identifies areas where improvements are needed. (5.3)
  - o The school did not engage in multiyear planning this past school year. However, leaders and faculty intend to start multi-year planning through a facilitated process by the end of the school year. The current structure does not yet align relevant documents in the planning process such as the CEP, Quality Review, and SSEF nor considers teacher development needs over time, limiting leadership's ability to determine effectiveness of school functioning as it relates to student achievement.
  - o School Leaders and faculty use numerous formative and summative assessments to measure progress on a monthly and weekly basis to develop student goals. However, data for multiple years has not been reviewed to identify trends over time. This is the first year of a new administration and the developing systems for multiple year review are being initiated as observed in team meetings. Thus the ability to measure progress toward interim goals and identify areas where strategies for improvement are needed is still limited.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Mott Hall IV	UD	D	P	WD
<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>	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?		<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>	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?			<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>	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?			<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	
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**

<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>
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