

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Red Hook Neighborhood School

Elementary School 676

27 Huntington Street

Brooklyn

NY 11231

Principal: Rochel Brown

Dates of review: January 11 - 12, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Anita Skop

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Red Hook Neighborhood School is an elementary school with 228 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 53% Black, 40% Hispanic, 4% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 25% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 88.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The tone of the building is inviting and welcoming, reflecting the school's focus on providing an environment that promotes student learning and encourages parental involvement. (1.4)
 - The administration has worked conscientiously to establish a tone that is respectful and calm and a culture focused on academics. Conversations between parents, teachers, and the administration are collegial and target student needs. Further, a program that supports positive behavior has improved the interactions between students. Accordingly, students "feel safe" at school and parents comment that they "feel comfortable communicating with staff."
 - Students are interested in their learning and consistently indicate that teachers support them. "If you don't understand the work, teachers go through it again." Students, therefore, believe they can be successful and feel that school is a positive experience. Consequently, the school's attendance rate has already risen nearly 2% this year.
- The school's transparent grading policy, shared in detail with all members of the school community, enables parents to accurately interpret their children's academic standing and next steps. (2.3)
 - The use of ARIS and an electronic document collection system, as well as an extensive item analysis of State summative assessments, and periodic and predictive assessments, has enabled the school to collect and disaggregate data that defines individual student needs and targets subgroup trends. This reflective examination and analysis of data has led to the creation of a school wide grading policy correlated to the one to four rating system used on State tests and citywide report cards. A numerical range of equivalents to these ratings is used universally to score student work, determine report card grades, and explain levels of achievement to parents, making these processes easily comprehensible. As a result, parents have a clear picture of their children's progress, as well as an equally clear understanding of the steps needed to move them to the next level.
- The school collects data from a wide range of summative, formative, and student work assessments, enabling the administration to define school wide needs. (2.1)
 - By thoroughly dissecting and analyzing data from the New York State English language arts and math assessments, as well as periodic and predictive assessments, and student reading levels, the school has identified the need to deepen student reading comprehension skills especially for African American students. This led the school to change its reading program to a more structure schoolwide approach. This change significantly improved achievement last year. The analysis of attendance data and behavioral incident reports provides actionable information. Examining occurrence data, the school discovered that most

incidents take place in the classroom, indicating a need for classroom management support. As a result, the school implemented a professional development in conjunction the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program. This has resulted in a steady decrease in student incidents.

- The principal has raised expectations for all members of the school community by creating a clear vision of academic success with significantly higher levels of achievement for all students. (3.1)
 - The administration has crafted clearly defined, long-term goals that focus on student reading comprehension, math performance, and enhanced parental involvement. These goals are clearly stated in both the Comprehensive Education Plan and the Principal's Performance Review. Thus, improved academic achievement in both English language arts and math has been the driving force behind the school's vision for the past three years, and has raised the level of expectations schoolwide. This has resulted in an increase of over 10% in student proficiency on both assessments this year, despite the increase in rigor in the scoring protocols.
- Grants and partnerships bring opportunities for social, emotional, artistic, and academic growth to students, expanding their view of the world and enhancing college and career potential. (4.4)
 - Responding to an identified need for social emotional supports for students and expanded professional development in this area for teachers, the school has implemented the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports program and provided training for staff members. Additionally, the school has raised the level of student expectation through the work of its "Be a Star" team, which recognizes student success. As a result, classroom incidents have consistently decreased and the school has become a Network model for the PBIS program.
 - Partnerships with the Guggenheim Museum, Studio in a School, as well as other music, performing arts, and science collaborations, allow students to explore the world beyond their neighborhood. This outreach enables students to expand their academic and social skills, and develop a vision of a greater range of opportunities for post secondary learning and careers in the future.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen the alignment of the taught curriculum to the rigorous demands of the Common Core Learning Standards and increase higher order thinking. (1.1)
 - The administration has focused on student reading and writing as key standards and has recently launched the Common Core Learning Standards initiative. In addition, teacher teams have begun to coordinate the integration of this work. However, instructional practices and assigned student tasks that require higher order thinking are not routinely seen in classrooms. Consequently, students are not customarily able to

develop the critical skills in line with college and career readiness expectations.

- Ensure that all students are actively engaged in challenging, differentiated assignments that offer opportunities to create meaningful work products. (1.2)
 - Though the students are typically grouped for instruction, especially for English language arts and math, assignments are inconsistently differentiated, as is student support. In one special needs classroom all students were working with the same-leveled reader. Thus, instructional practices do not accurately target student needs and student progress is not accelerated.
 - Instructional practices, questioning, and student work, are typically at the basic response level, and hence very limited. Students are sometimes compliantly engaged, but confused as to how to follow teacher directions. In one case, a child was directed to use the dictionary to look up a word. However, as he did not know how to spell it, he struggled to try to find the word. Accordingly, teaching strategies do not lead to higher order thinking and students are not always actively engaged in meaningful, well-suited activities.
- Reflectively evaluate the number of programmatic choices to ensure that all programs are consistently implemented and established school wide. (1.3)
 - The school's administration has consistently targeted student growth as the focus of all of its resources. A school wide reading program has been purchased, as have additional materials for math, grammar, and behavior modification. In addition, a staff developer has been hired to support instruction. However, the quality of the implementation of all of these programs is not customarily rigorous, as not all teachers have been sufficiently trained. As a result, teacher practice is inconsistent and student work products indicate limited levels of rigor, impacting enhanced student achievement.
- Develop a common protocol for the use of rubrics across grades to expand the analysis of student progress and more clearly identify trends. (2.2)
 - Across the grades, rubrics are utilized that evaluate the writing "Genre of the Month" and are aligned to the reading program focus when possible. However, these rubrics do not always provide students with a clear understanding of their areas of need and next steps, as there is no consistency in the way teachers use rubrics to grade student work across classrooms. Some teachers simply indicate a level on the rubric while others circle specific areas and write instructional comments. Additionally, a limited number of comments appeared on other student work, and these often focus on neatness. Hence, not all students develop an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, affecting their capacity to self-assess, as well as their ability to improve their work.
 - Not all teachers regularly engage in ongoing checks for understanding. In some classrooms, teachers commonly circulate and support students, in order to address their needs. In other classes, students struggle with

assigned tasks while teachers continue with the lesson, unaware of their difficulties. Consequently, teachers do not routinely adjust instruction to meet student needs and students receive inconsistent support to complete assignments and deepen skill development.

- Enhance the level of feedback to teachers to include targeted next steps, professional development supports, and a timeline for re-evaluation. (4.1)
 - The school has developed and utilizes an observation tool aligned to the Danielson framework. This tool has been shared with teachers, as has a book on the domains, and the first round of observations with a focus on environment has been completed. In addition, the school schedules coach support and develops professional development plans based on these observations. However, feedback to all teachers does not sufficiently include clearly delineated, targeted next steps, defined support, and a schedule for well-timed follow up visits. As a result, ensuing evaluation of teacher practice and coach support is not universally timely, thus limiting the impact on student learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Red Hook Neighborhood 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		
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