

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**EAST NEW YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF
EXCELLENCE**

Elementary School K677

**605 SHEPHERD AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY 11208**

Principal: JUDY TOUZIN

Dates of review: March 05 - 06, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Rose Marie Mills

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

East New York Elementary School of Excellence is an Elementary school with 517 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 4. The school population comprises 68% Black, 30% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 46% of the students enrolled and girls account for 54%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 90.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Administrators support teacher development by using a research-based framework to provide succinct and actionable feedback, thereby guiding their next steps for professional growth to increase student outcomes. (4.1)
 - The schools' participation in the talent management program ensures that teachers receive frequent and specific feedback through short frequent observations aligned to the Danielson framework, a research-based rubric. School leaders receive specific guidance from a talent coach, that include monthly professional development sessions and site visits, to successfully hone teachers' skills in the areas of planning and preparation, management of student behavior, establishing a culture for learning and engaging students in the learning process. Administrative feedback to teachers provides clear next steps and focus on the instructional activities of both the teacher and students in relation to meeting the school's instructional goals. One teacher received feedback that recommended that she guide students in asking follow up questions to their peers in order to raise the level of student engagement and higher-order thinking. New teacher are assigned to a mentor who support their development with classroom visits and one-to-one discussions. Additionally, the principal meets individually with teachers at least three (3) times during the school year to discuss their performance as well as the growth of their students. These focused supports guide improvements in teacher pedagogy to advance student achievement as reflected in improved instructional practices.
- The principal makes good organizational decisions around time and student class placement thus supporting the schools' instructional goals and improvement in student performance. (1.3)
 - Through the implementation of a school based option, the principal has gained the use of an additional fifty (50) minutes for teachers to meet and conduct inquiry work. In addition, all teachers have a scheduled weekly common planning meeting with their grade team. Daily preparation periods are scheduled by grade to facilitate teacher collaborations. School leaders also take advantage of non-attendance days to provide teachers with time to examine student work, create assessments, analyze data, discuss pedagogical practices, and share resources. As a result, on demand tasks in English language arts and mathematics reflect students engaging in extensive writing activities.
 - Student class assignment is guided by the school's philosophy that students learn best when they are heterogeneously grouped. At the end of the school year, grade teams, in consultation with administrators, review both students' performance and socio-emotional needs and create future classes ensuring that groups are manageable. The administrative team reviews teacher performance and match groups of students with the strengths of teachers. Thus, equity in student placement aligns with the belief system of the school and facilitates incremental student improvements evidenced by advancement in students' reading levels.
- Teacher teams create and use assessments and rubrics aligned to the curriculum and key standards, based on student data in an effort to improve student performance. (2.2)

- Teacher teams, supported by the literacy coach and math consultant, create benchmark assessments, unit assessments, and on demand writing and math tasks with rubrics aligned to the school's curriculum and Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Teams review students' work products aligned to the assessments and modify the assessments and/or pedagogical approaches based on observed trends. For example, a teacher team observed by this reviewer examined student work products from a math unit assessment and realized that many students chose the incorrect response to a specific question because they divided by the incorrect number. Teachers discussed their teaching strategies and deduced that they need to re-teach identifying key vocabulary in word problems. As a result, the teachers created a timeline for re-teaching and assessment, as well as brainstormed strategies specifically focusing on this skill.
- School leaders purposefully request student non-attendance days immediately after Periodic Assessment data becomes available. Staff use these days, called "action and analysis days", to scrutinize and disaggregate the results, focusing on students' strengths and weaknesses, performance of sub-groups, and class performance. Teams also focus on grade trends and plan interventions. All teachers complete a plan of action, based on the performance of their students, resulting in the adjustment of instruction to target deficiencies and promote student improvement.
- Students benefit from small class size, in an environment that fosters holistic growth and promotes academic success. (1.4)
 - Small class size is a hallmark of this school. The student to teacher ratio of 13:1 facilitates the needs of all students known by school personnel. The administrative team knows all students by name and regular check-ins with staff facilitates discussion of specific student needs. A full time family worker and part-time attendance teacher focus on attendance and provide the principal with daily reports. Teachers are guided to make referrals for students requiring additional supports to the pupil personnel team, so that their needs are addressed. The guidance counselor provides at-risk support for students identified with emotional needs and makes classroom presentations on areas of concern. Hence, small class size, attendance, and socio-emotional supports allow students to be focused on their work and guide their improvement.
 - "Super Scholar Fridays", held twice monthly, celebrates student success, fosters school spirit, and supports the social emotional development of all students. This year the theme of "respect" is the focus. Students participate in "Respect for All" activities through class presentations, guest speaker presentations, and recognition rewards. Perfect attendance and academic success is also celebrated at these events. Daily morning announcements remind students of their commitment to show respect and the reciting of the East New York Elementary School (ENYES) pledge that embodies the character traits of good citizenship. Students interviewed indicated that they appreciate this forum and that the activities encourages them to be interested in learning and wanting to succeed in life.
- The instructional team reviews a wide array of data, thus creating a clear understanding of strengths and areas for improvement, thereby guiding school improvement efforts. (2.1)
 - Last summer the school engaged in rigorous planning activities for the current school year which entailed a review of all available data sources to gain a comprehensive understanding of the school's strength and areas of need. Data analysis included information from the Learning Environment Survey (LES), New

- York Start, ARIS, Fountas and Pinnell reading levels, attendance, and school assessment data. Results revealed for example, that the third grade did not perform as expected on the New York State assessments; hence the grade is augmented with a strong teacher experienced with the third grade curriculum. Also, student writing was identified as an area for improvement therefore; there is a strong focus in this area across all subjects. Consequently, student writing products illustrate progress in responding to extended response questions.
- The school purchased a system that facilitates the scanning of Periodic Assessments, thus making the results available within hours of their administration. The efficient data specialist thoroughly disaggregates the data, discusses performance trends with the instructional cabinet, and prepares reports on sub-group and class performances. Teacher teams receive reports and are guided by the coach in understanding the results so that requisite interventions are planned. This thorough analysis guides school-wide improvement efforts.

What the school needs to improve

- Establish structures to enhance parent involvement and consistently engage families in the education process thereby improving student performance. (2.4)
 - The school provides parents with progress reports generated by each teacher; however the report does not provide specific information on student's strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, student goals, though developed in reading and mathematics, are not shared with families. Parents voiced their concern about not being provided with workshops to guide their understanding of what children are learning in school and ways that they can better support their children. Additionally, training on the Achievement Reporting and Innovation System (ARIS) has not been provided to parents since the beginning of this school year, thereby limiting understanding of student progress. The lack of comprehensive information on students' performance hampers parents' ability to be fully involved in the learning process in order to better support their children's academic progress.
- Communicate high levels of expectations to families, and purposefully engage them in school activities that support student development in an effort to increase the levels of expectation, thus improving student achievement. (3.4)
 - Activities to celebrate high attendance, student improvement, to embed high expectations are held during the school day; however, parents are not usually invited. Parents, trained as learning leaders and School Leadership Team members, voice their unhappiness with not being afforded opportunities to fully partner with the school. While the consistency of newsletters, with tips on how to help students succeed, have shown improvements in the past months, information sessions and workshops to guide parents in fostering student advancement are sporadic. Setting specific goals for high-need subgroups of students along with specific support are not consistent practices for teacher teams. As a result, the message of high expectations for all students is inconsistently conveyed thereby stifling student growth.
- Implement systems to regularly evaluate the work of teacher teams and capacity-building in order to build a strong cadre of teacher leaders to support the development of instructional coherence across the school. (5.4)

- The school is in its third year of existence and is at capacity this school year. While teacher teams are in place, there is no transparent system to regularly evaluate their effectiveness, in an effort to foster improvements. Team members rotate roles and submit meeting notes electronically via “dropbox”; however feedback from administrators, as a result of reviewing the work is not evident. As a result, teacher teams observed could not articulate their accomplishments as a result of the work that the teams have engaged in to gauge their effectiveness.
- Currently there are few identified teacher leaders at the school and leadership development activities to propel their growth are limited. The principal indicate that there are grade facilitators, and that the school is working to develop these facilitators to become leaders. Facilitators meet with the principal twice monthly, but are minimally involved in decision making. The school reviews leadership development opportunities at the end of the school year thus making it difficult to make adjustments to enhance capacity-building structures on a regular basis.
- Develop consistency of rigorous and cognitively demanding academic tasks in all subject areas across the school, in order to promote the development of higher-order thinking skills for all students. (1.1)
 - While student writing samples on display in classrooms and in the hallways evidence involvement in rigorous tasks, student portfolios lacked adequate tasks across content areas to illustrate consistency of practice. In many classrooms visited, portfolios pieces were limited to two or three pieces of student writing, and work folders were either not available or did not show students frequently involved in deep thinking activities that promote the development of higher-order thinking skills. In addition, tasks reviewed did not give the range of learners appropriate entry points into the curriculum. Thus, students show sluggish improvement on English language arts assessments.
- Bolster instructional practices so that lessons across the school consistently includes effective questioning that elicits higher- order thinking, extends learning, and differentiate learning opportunities for all students that accelerate academic growth. (1.2)
 - Whereas teachers have student assessment data and students sit in groups across classrooms, there is little evidence of differentiation of instruction. For example, portfolios and work folders reflect students frequently completing the same tasks and there is an absence of tiered assignments based on students’ entry points. The principal indicates that consistent differentiation of tasks to push student advancement is a next step for the school, and that it will be the focus in the next cycle of professional development. The absence of consistency of differentiated strategies across all classrooms lessens opportunities for all students to receive support at their instructional levels.
 - The school ascribes to the workshop model of instruction and teachers use this modality to deliver lessons across the school. School leaders have identified questioning as an area of strong focus this year and are engaging teachers in professional development to push growth in this area. Additionally, feedback from condensed and frequent observations guides teacher development in this area. Nonetheless, classroom observations reflect teachers inconsistently asking thought provoking questions that prompt high levels of student thinking and participation. These practices impede student progress as evidenced in the lack of rigorous work products across classrooms.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: EAST NEW YORK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE	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
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