

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Vito Marcantonio**

**Elementary-Middle School**

**433 East 100<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York  
NY 10029**

**Principal: Cynthia Rochez**

**Dates of review: October 25- 26, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Luz T. Cortazzo**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Vito Marcantonio is an elementary-middle school with 364 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 34% Black, 60% Hispanic, 2% other, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 13% English language learners and 34% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 89.2%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school provides a very safe, nurturing environment that fosters high expectations and coordinates supports to impact positively on students' attendance, personal, and academic development. 1.4
  - Parents and students generously admit that the school is a safe place where students' social-emotional and academic needs are promptly addressed. The frequent review and effective use of information relative to the school's Learning Environment Survey, referral, attendance, and suspension rates lead to the implementation of effective strategies, which resulted in diminished disciplinary and behavioral issues. Additionally, the school's participation in "Wake Up, New York" and the use of the school messenger have resulted in an increase in student attendance. Preliminary results indicate a 2.6% increase in yearly attendance rate.
  - Students say that, "The staff cares for us." "We go to the principal, guidance counselor, City Year workers, because they handle problems nicely." Thus, all students know that there is someone there to help them.
- The school's internal capacity and successful partnerships with outside organizations support students in learning and in promoting academic and personal growth. 4.4
  - The school's guidance counselor and social worker share strategies and provide workshops that support the professional development of teachers so that they are better prepared to service challenging students. Additionally, the AVID, (Advanced Via Individual Determination) program, an elementary through postsecondary college readiness system, is targeting the least served students in the academic middle who have the desire to go to college and the willingness to work hard. The impact of this program is resulting in students' social/emotional improvement and participation in enrichment and motivational activities that make college seem attainable. The students' proficiency level in English language arts and math are increasing as noted in their latest assessment results. An array of additional external partnerships, provide students and families with extensive social service and recreational experiences. Consequently, these deeply embedded and integrated services are well evidenced in the school culture by the calm environment in the building.
- Parents have valuable opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and monitor their progress through regular and open communication with school administrators and staff. 2.4
  - Parents speak highly of the myriad of ways that school personnel communicate progress with them. The school's newsletters, calendars, school messenger, and individual conferences with parents and students, support the mutual exchange of information. These resources provide parents with a steady stream of information, resulting in clear expectations regarding attendance, behavior, and academic performance, increasing learning outcomes.

- Interactive parent workshops relating to the use of ARIS Parent Link, help parents have a better understanding of academic performance by enabling them to keep abreast of their children's academic strengths and weaknesses, and for participation in the planning for next learning steps. Thereby, this solidifies the home-school connection.
- Teachers across the school welcome opportunities to participate in collaborative inquiry and professional development and use this to strengthen instruction and raise learning outcomes. 4.2
  - A majority of teachers participate on grade and multi-grade level teams, using an inquiry approach. Two weekly common planning periods as well as "Special Scheduled Fridays" allow teachers to meet regularly to examine student writing, review and revise rubrics, share strategies, and discuss their primary focus on writing within the content area with an eye on relevant student subgroups not making suitable academic gains. Positive outcomes include improvements in vocabulary development and conventions of writing for the subgroups studied by the team.
  - A literacy consultant and house leaders who facilitate teacher teams are empowered to be key decision makers. Thus, they are actively engaged in analyzing student work; monitoring and aligning curriculum to the Common Core Standards; and sharing best practices. This is resulting in teacher effectiveness in the ownership and direction of their efforts and in a buy-in to the future vision of the school that affects student learning.
- Teaching practices align to the curriculum and teachers' questioning strategies and classroom routines; enable students to participate in discussions. 1.2
  - Across classrooms, teachers' instructional practices represent the understanding of the school's belief that students need modeling, independent practice, and collaborative engagement. Additionally, teachers employ critical thinking strategies, and higher order questions that lead to general levels of student thinking and participation, as evidenced in student work products and classroom discussions.

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

- Refine the curriculum so that it emphasizes rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills for a variety of learners with different needs. 1.1
  - Although school leaders and staff develop curriculum maps aligned to key standards, many teachers do not demonstrate the necessary skill level to adapt the curricula so that it challenges students performing at varied ability levels. Moreover, performance-based tasks that probe for deep understanding, application of learning, and promote rigorous habits, do not coherently extend across all content areas or grade levels so that every student is duly challenged.
- Ensure that the organizational decisions support the school's instructional goals and meet student-learning needs. 1.3

- Although the administration ensures that teachers have multiple opportunities to meet in grade levels and with a literacy consultant, the structure does not yet include data analysis or planning in order to engage students in challenging academic tasks. This limits staffs' ability to strategically differentiate instruction for all students and increase opportunities to extend student learning.
- Build upon the existing system to identify strengths and areas of need for special education students and English language learners and make strategic instructional decisions. 2.2
  - Although teams of teachers supplement summative data analysis by examining periodic and classroom level data, their analysis is not sufficiently rigorous to determine the progress of special education and English language learners across all grades and subjects. This prevents the school from identifying trends, and implementing precise instructional strategies, thus hampering the acceleration for these two subgroups. Additionally, across classrooms, teacher assessment practices do not reflect consistent on going checks for understanding or student self - assessment, resulting in the lack of student ownership and an unawareness of their next learning steps.
- Use an observation tool to develop teachers' goals and plans that reflect and support attainment of school-wide goals to support professional growth and achievement of students. 4.1
  - Although the vast majority of teachers articulate committed support for the instructional vision of the school, school leaders have not yet put in place frequent cycles of observations that include suitable feedback or clear next steps aligned to a research-based rubric. This hinders the school's ability to provide for follow up relative to implementing the noted changes, or to use evidence of student outcomes to identify next steps to improve teacher practice.
- Establish a systemic approach to the gathering, analysis, dissemination, and use of a common assessment and extend the analysis to examine patterns and trends of all relevant subgroups in order to take timely action. 3.3
  - School leaders use a range of data to evaluate progress towards plans and goals. Teacher teams and individual teachers use data at the classroom level to track progress of relevant subgroups. However, the school has not yet selected a common assessment to set and track its ambitious goals; this leads to some inconsistency in the adjustment of goals and the setting of interventions that can be implemented as a result of the analysis of common assessment data..

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: Vito Marcantonio</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
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		
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		

<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<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>