

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 132 Juan Pablo Duarte
Elementary school M132

185 WADSWORTH AVENUE
MANHATTAN
NY 10033

Principal: XIOMARA NOVA

Dates of review: March 26-27, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Elsa Nunez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 132 Juan Pablo Duarte is an elementary school with 798 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 0% Black, 99% Hispanic, 0% White, 0% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 43% English language learners and 13% 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 93.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's use of resources and organizational decisions support the school's instructional goals to improve student achievement. (1.3)
 - o The principal has made sure that the school schedule affords teachers the opportunity to meet weekly in grade level teams in order to support the school's goals of improving student achievement in literacy and math. As a result of collaborative review of student work and strategic planning of methods to address identified areas of concern, teachers report that the tasks that are being implemented this school year are much more rigorous and have led to improved student results in reading and writing as evidenced by an increasing percentage of students reading at grade level and students' ability to use textual evidence to support a claim or opinion. A full time safety coordinator manages the school's efforts to maintain a safe and orderly school environment so that staff and students can focus on academics. The goal of improving teacher effectiveness is supported by full time literacy and math coaches as well as outside consultants that provide ongoing support to teams and individual teachers. The lack of progress of English language learners has been a major concern so the principal hired a consultant from New York University to work with teachers to meet the needs of this subgroup. In addition, the principal has identified lead teachers for all grades who attend professional development sessions outside the school and then turnkey information to colleagues. Lead teachers are provided with an additional preparation period to facilitate communication with administrators and support for teachers on their grades. As a result of these strategic decisions, student work indicates that students are implementing strategies promoted by teachers, such as student generated questions and summarizing of key ideas, in order to improve reading comprehension and writing.
- The school collects and analyzes summative and interim data in order to make curriculum and instructional decisions that support student progress. (2.2)
 - o Teacher teams work on developing tasks and rubrics to assess student progress towards meeting key standards with a focus on reading and writing for information. Teacher teams use the instructional bundles developed by the Department of Education to assure that tasks and rubrics are sufficiently rigorous. Rubrics developed are used across grades so that teachers share a common lens for assessing student work. Analysis of student work and teacher team discussion has resulted in adjustments to units of study, curricular calendars and instructional strategies to assure that students are adequately exposed to grade level curricula and standards.
 - o The work of teacher teams centers around the analysis of student data in order to identify trends in student achievement. Teachers bring work representative of the subgroups of students to teacher team meetings in order to strategically analyze work for strengths and areas for improvement. Teachers collectively identify strategies to be implemented across classrooms in order to improve student performance, such as the use of graphic organizers to categorize information and the use of conversational prompts in order to facilitate critical analysis of texts. Teachers regularly use results of interim assessments in literacy and math, reading levels, conference notes and information gathered from ARIS to inform instructional decisions. In addition, item skill analysis of interim assessments helps the school further target skills that need to be

- addressed across grades. Comparison of baseline assessments in writing and interim assessments in literacy and math indicate that students have made improvement in targeted areas, such as writing thesis statements, supporting the thesis with evidence from the text and writing extended responses in math.
- The school integrates support services with outside organizations in order to enhance the academic and personal growth of students. (4.4)
 - o The principal has allocated resources to enable the school to hire three guidance counselors and a safety coordinator in order to ensure that students receive the support necessary to make personal and academic progress. Students who engage in misconduct receive ongoing counseling in order to assure that social and/or emotional issues do not impede their academic progress. The safety coordinator conducts monthly grade level assemblies to highlight the principle of the month as part of the Peace-Builders Program, the school-wide character education program. The safety coordinator and the guidance counselors support teachers by providing individual and whole class lessons in order to promote a school environment that nurtures students' social and emotional growth.
 - o The school collaborates with outside providers in order to meet the social and academic needs of students. Alianza Dominicana provides after-school academic enrichment programs for over two hundred and fifty students. This same community based organization also provides families with mental health, medical and legal services to help address their social and emotional needs. The school's in-house mental health clinic, sponsored by Columbia Presbyterian Hospital, works with at risk students and their families to provide social/emotional support and guidance. The Healthy Schools, Healthy Families program helps educate students and their families on the importance of healthy eating habits. Other partners, such as Arts Connection and Community Word Project, help develop the literacy skills of students through the arts. As a result, parents report that the school provides adequate academic and social support to students and families as evidenced by results of the School Survey.
 - The school has established a short list of goals, based on analysis of student performance, that drive efforts to increase student learning. (3.1)
 - o The goals established by the school, which focus on improving student performance in literacy and math, were a result of close analysis of the school report card, progress report, standardized test scores and interim assessments. Results of interim assessments, end of unit tasks and reading levels provide the administration and teachers with information on student progress towards meeting grade level goals. This information is used to formulate individual student, class and grade level goals that in turn drive the efforts of teacher teams. These goals have been incorporated into the school's comprehensive education plan and the principal's performance review goals in order to focus the efforts of the entire community. Monthly workshops are provided for parents in order to orient them to school goals and to provide strategies to enable them to support their children at home. The goals guide the work of teacher teams, who plan units aligned to the school's key standards such as writing to express an opinion, response to literature and writing extended responses in math and develop tasks in order to help students accomplish these goals. As a result of developing a concise list of goals that have been communicated to students, staff and parents, the school community has focused its efforts as evidenced by parent participation in workshops and school events in order to better support their children and by the implementation across classrooms of a school-wide focus on reading and writing informational texts and reciprocal teaching.

- Teacher teams have established structures to support collaborative review of student work and curriculum development in order to improve student outcomes. (4.2)
 - o Analysis of student performance is central to the work of teacher teams. All teachers are responsible for bringing student work that is representative of the subgroups in their class. All team members then closely analyze student work to identify trends in student achievement and to collectively plan strategies to help individual and groups of students improve on identified areas of concern. Teachers come to consensus on possible strategies and tasks that will be used to support struggling students in meeting grade level goals. Data on the progress of target students is shared with the team which has led to revision of units of study and tasks. Lead teachers play a key role in facilitating teacher team meetings, assuring that all members are active participants and assigning roles and responsibilities to all members. As a result of the work of teacher teams, teachers feel supported by team members and believe that they have a voice in curricular and instructional decisions that will ultimately lead to improved student achievement as evidenced by student work demonstrating that students are using more complex, content-specific vocabulary in their writing.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase the rigor of tasks and questioning across classrooms to engage students in higher order thinking in order to improve all students' academic achievement. (1.1)
 - o Beginning last year, teacher teams are involved in aligning the literacy and math curriculum to the school's chosen standards. This work began last year and is continued by teacher teams at grade level meetings to assure alignment with the CCLS. The school has identified writing to convey information, opinion and narrative experiences as well as reading of non-fiction texts as key standards in literacy. Teacher teams use student work as a guide to revise units of study so that they focus on key concepts. Teacher teams use the instructional bundles developed by the Department of Education as a guide to assure that their units are aligned to the CCLS. However, the tasks developed are not sufficiently rigorous in order to effectively close the achievement gap. In addition, across classrooms questioning is of lower level and tasks do not challenge students to engage in higher order thinking skills. As a result, students are not being adequately exposed to rigorous tasks in order to support their development towards meeting grade level standards.
- Ensure that lessons are suitably differentiated across classrooms to challenge and engage all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. (1.2)
 - o The school's inquiry team has done extensive research on reciprocal teaching in order to improve the reading comprehension of students. Teachers prompt students to use strategies such as summarizing, question generating and prediction in order to promote reading comprehension. Members of the inquiry team have conducted professional development for the staff who has embraced these strategies as ways to effectively provide scaffolds for reading difficult texts. Teachers also discussed plans to engage a variety of learners in small group instruction, re-teaching of key concepts and differentiated tasks to assure that all students are able to fully engage in content. However, across classrooms not all teachers are effectively using reciprocal teaching strategies to improve student comprehension and the tasks that students are asked to complete are not

consistently differentiated to meet the needs of subgroups of students, leading to the disengagement of students and missed instructional opportunities.

- Further develop structures for providing teachers with feedback, as a result of cycles of observations, to lift the level of teacher practice. (4.1)
 - o Danielson’s Framework for Teaching Rubrics was shared with all staff members at the beginning of the school year. The school identified Establishing a Culture for Learning, Designing a Coherent Curriculum and Engaging Students in Learning as the foci for the improvement of teacher practice. Staff was then engaged in identifying evidence that would support the effective implementation of the competencies chosen by the school. Teachers articulated that classroom environment has been the focus for school improvement. Review of written feedback provided to teachers indicates that most teachers have received at least two visits from administrators with a focus on classroom environment. Feedback as a result of these visits covered a variety to topics, including bulletin boards, book baggies and the unpacking of boxes. However, the frequency of feedback is inconsistent as most teacher received feedback at the beginning of the school year and then again during the second half of the school year. In addition, the feedback provided was not related to the school’s chosen foci for improvement for teacher practice and, as a result, across classroom there is limited evidence of the school’s goals for improving teacher practice.
- Improve the consistency and quality of feedback provided to students in order to clearly identify performance trends and promote student independence in achieving individual and school-wide goals. (3.3)
 - o Teachers keep class data binders containing results of standardized exams, running records, baseline assessments in writing and math and conference notes in order to track student progress. Administrators have developed a school-wide assessment calendar for the year, indicating dates for administration of benchmark assessments. Results of assessments are submitted to administrators and “data talks” are scheduled with administrators and teachers in order to review and revise individual and class level goals. However, data analysis does not yet lead to adjustments of school wide goals to help close the achievement gap of subgroups of students. Most student work displayed across classrooms and in student portfolios is graded and feedback is provided to the student. However, the feedback is not always connected to the rubric used and not specific enough to provide students with insight into what specific skill needs improvement and possible next steps. As a result, students do not clearly understand how they are graded and how feedback provided can support improvement.
- Improve school-wide systems for evaluating curricular and organizational decisions in order to make needed revisions that lead to improved student outcomes. (5.1)
 - o The school uses various sources of data to gauge student progress. Analysis of reading levels, review of portfolios and results of predictive exams provide information on how well students are making progress towards grade level goals. Formal and informal observations conducted by school administrators inform on the level of implementation of the curricular and instructional initiatives of the school. However, the school does not yet have systems in place to aggregate this data in a way that clearly identify effectiveness of school-wide instructional and organizational decisions. As a result, the school’s ability to plan for and adjust short-term goals in order to meet the school’s long-term goals is limited.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

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|--|----|---|---|----|
| School name: P.S. 132 Juan Pablo Duarte | 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 | |
| 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

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|-----------|-----------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| UD | Underdeveloped | D | Developing | P | Proficient | WD | Well Developed |
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