

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

The Salome Urena De Henriquez

Middle School 218

4600 Broadway

New York

NY 10040

Principal: June Barnett

Dates of review: November 21-22, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Lori Bennett

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. 218 Salome Urena is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middles school with 317 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 4% Black, 95% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 45% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 59% of the students enrolled and girls account for 41%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 89.9%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and teachers align curricula to key standards and offer positive learning experiences to support student learning. (1.1)
 - A standards-based curriculum emphasizing writing provides students with an appropriate range of opportunities for improvement. Teachers work in collaborative teams to create academic tasks and curriculum maps that academically challenge large groups of students. Deconstruction of the Common Core standards and analysis of student work products highlight gaps in student learning relative to the newly adopted expectations. These results are used to refine curricula to better reflect the kinds of writing the Common Core demands. Consequently, students participate in learning experiences that cognitively challenge and engage them, thus resulting in an increased production of authentic writing aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS).
- Administration makes strategic organizational decisions to support instructional goals to meet the academic needs of students. (1.3)
 - Humanities teachers co-plan and teach a similar cohort of students within a block-scheduling model. This decreases the teacher-to-student ratio thereby enabling students to receive additional instructional supports within the delivery of instruction. In addition, the block-scheduling model implemented extends the instructional time on task, allowing for increased time for student learning. As a result, teachers and students report, respectively, that students have a deeper understanding of the use of content within literacy, and increased engagement has led to reduce off task behaviors.
 - In support of the school-wide initiative to improve writing, the principal purchased technology based writing, and supplemented classroom libraries with additional content trade books. The master schedule includes two common preparation periods for focused planning and instructional preparation. A school-based option (SBO) extends the instructional day to support teacher team collaboration. As a result, teachers within the humanities plan academic tasks and prompts that require students to use content-based evidence to substantiate their positions, orally and in writing. Thus, a review of students' writing samples reflects more detailed information in support of their argument.
- Teachers use data from formative and summative assessments to create measureable goals to ensure that instruction aligns to curricula and address the needs of students in order to support their achievement. (3.2)
 - Teachers and teacher teams make good use of formative and summative assessment data, including baseline writing samples, Acuity and student work products to identify additional supports for each student and to determine students' strengths and weaknesses. These data results are used to set differentiated learning goals. For example, small group strategy lessons, such as emphasizing the use of a vocabulary word bank

for English language learners (ESL), addresses the targeted academic needs of these students; As a result writing proficiency has improved as evidenced by increases in the students' extended writing responses.

- Classroom teaching practices are regularly observed using a research-based framework, enabling the school to reflect on pedagogy and determine areas in need of professional growth. (4.1)
 - The principal utilizes a research-based rubric to guide informal classroom observations. Administration engages in monthly facilitated learning walks for all teachers along with additional class visits for those new to the profession or struggling. Feedback, both written and in conversation, highlights strengths and weaknesses in teacher practice and offers next steps to improve pedagogy. Teachers agree that the feedback, using student work as data motivates them to hone their skills and provides them with the specific steps they need to do so.
- Effective partnerships support students and families in continual learning thereby promoting students' personal growth.(4.4)
 - The school has strengthened its partnership with the Children's Aide Society by hiring a faculty liaison to coordinate academic support programs geared to increase student achievement. After-school staff collaborates closely with the school staff to align academic interventions and social emotional counseling to the learning and personal needs of students. Co-developed and co-delivered training on character building, student leadership development, life skills, and de-escalating negative situations are a few of the trainings provided to teachers and students. These trainings and services assure that teachers and students are equipped to handle the academic and personal needs of students. As a result, in and out-of-class incidents have decreased, thus enabling students to concentrate more for success.
- The school's safe and respectful culture creates a supportive environment that promotes learning for all students. (1.4)
 - As part of the school's safety policy and procedures, the principal and staff are present in the halls during the change of periods to ensure that students get to class with minimal to no negative incidents. The dean and community associate worker coordinate and lead efforts to prevent cutting and absences. They distribute and collect homeroom attendance sheet that teachers use to indicate the presence or absence of individual students. In addition, students are placed in homeroom classes led by a homeroom teacher. Homeroom teachers engage students in discussions regarding behavioral and academic expectations several times during the week. Students who have not met the school's behavioral and academic expectations talk with their homeroom teachers and depending on how severity of the situation, are put on behavior sheets or contracts. This assures that children have an adult who helps address their personal needs, thus ensuring a focus on increasing student outcomes.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen pedagogical practices so that teaching strategies include scaffolds and extensions and result in high levels of student thinking. (1.2)
 - Teachers utilize the workshop model of instruction and plan for differentiated learning groups. Students engage in partner work and small group instruction, as well as independent practice. However, teaching strategies and instructional practices were not strategically differentiated on a consistent basis for the varied levels of English language learners and students with disabilities across the school. In some classrooms additional scaffolds for struggling students and extensions for those at proficiently were not present. As a result, classroom discussions and learning prompts did not consistently result in high levels of thinking for groups of students.

- Increase the consistency in the use of formal and informal assessment by teachers, so that there is meaningful and actionable data on what students know and can do, thereby improving instructional decisions.(2.2)
 - Teachers are increasing their use of a variety of assessment tools, including rubrics, baseline tests, on demand writing samples, vocabulary tests, and end-of-unit exams, to determine students' strengths and needs. However, very few of the assessments used explicitly indicate what students know and do not know relative to the school's chosen standards, at a very granular level. This limit the actions teachers can take to ensure their instructional and curricular decisions are most effectively addressing the learning needs of key groups of students. As a result, teachers do not accurately adjust instructional decisions to promote acceleration of progress for all learners.

- Deepen inquiry work across teacher teams so that the teams consistently analyze student work to gauge the effectiveness of pedagogical approaches student groupings and use of resources to build teacher capacity. (4.2)
 - Teachers work in collaborative teams by disciplines on a consistent basis and are beginning to analyze student work to determine learning needs. However, teachers do not yet consistently implement an inquiry-based approach to supporting identified deficit skills. As a result, student data is inconsistently used to determine the effectiveness of teacher practice.
 - The literacy and math coach lead and guide teacher learning experiences throughout the school. For example, the English language arts and math teacher teams are led by coaches who coordinate the learning. This provides those teams with guidance in building pedagogical capacity. However, the administration has not yet established structures to ensure that all teachers have the opportunity to take on leadership roles, thereby expanding their capacity and influence in instructional and school decisions.

- Expand the practice and process for evaluating the effectiveness of teacher learning to ensure elevated pedagogical practices.(5.4)
 - Administration provides teachers with multiple learning opportunities to build their capacity in content and skill. However, there is not yet a fully developed process in place to determine the effectiveness of teacher

team collaborations and teacher development practices, thus limiting the positive impact on pedagogy.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Salome Urena de Henriquez _M218	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