

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Bea Fuller Rodgers**

**Middle School 528**

**180 WADSWORTH AVENUE  
MANHATTAN  
NY 10033**

**Principal: Kristy Dela Cruz**

**Dates of review: May 30 , 31 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Castro**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Bea Fuller Rodgers School is a middle school with 272 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 2% Black, 96% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 37% of the students enrolled and girls account for 63%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- School leaders use a research-based framework to support teacher growth providing feedback from observations, next steps, and professional development. (4.1)
  - o School leaders engage in frequent cycles of observation and feedback using the Danielson framework to support each teacher's instructional focus. New teachers are provided with ongoing commentary as well as a mentor. This process of continuous dialogue and actionable feedback on high quality teaching practice after each formal and informal observation limits poor or ineffective teacher performance.
  - o Teachers develop SMART goals and engage in network and department meetings on differentiation, questioning, and developing higher order thinking skills, to support their professional growth. Performance evaluation is supported by a staff developer who assists teachers in implementing strategies to improve student learning.
- School leaders analyze summative assessment data and subgroup periodic data in order to provide actionable feedback and affect school decision-making. (2.1)
  - o School leaders analyze school wide data for all populations including English language learners and students with disabilities. Staff, in collaboration with the instructional team, identify trends and patterns that are included as areas of need in the Comprehensive Education Plan, the Principals Performance Review, and the professional development plan, with ultimate impact on school practices. Additionally, faculty identified the areas of school environment, questioning, rigor, and student engagement, as foci for walk-throughs and observations. Evidence provided in planning documents shows action taken following data analysis by school leaders and teachers that includes workshops and lesson planning on questioning, higher order thinking skills, classroom environment, and student engagement, to enhance the teaching and learning experience.
  - o Evidence in school leaders staff professional development planning binders reveal that student data is analyzed both for classroom assessments and periodic data, and for performance by groups and subgroups. School leaders and instructional specialists focus professional development support for teachers on individual and group goals across all subject areas, This includes pre- and post-unit assessments, student engagement, questioning ,and evidence of the classroom environment, thus reflecting rigor
- Data tools and surveys help school leaders and staff to analyze performance trends and make school level decisions on curricula and instruction. (2.3)
  - o School leaders and teachers organize, NY Start, ARIS item analysis, Acuity item analysis, and ATS reports, to analyze performance trends. The data then aggregated to inform instruction was shared with all teachers and curriculum specialists, as evidenced by faculty and retreat documents from staff conferences and staff retreats. Consequently, school leaders and teachers discovered a need for more frequent looks at on-demand tasks in writing and math problem solving, as well as checking for understanding.

- o Teachers reference trends in student performance, with a keen eye towards reading skills, to develop authentic on-demand assessment tools that capture student performance and guide curriculum practices and departmental grading, as evidenced in school conference notes.
- Focused school level goals are informed by examination of New York State and New York City student assessment data and include community involvement in action planning. (3.1)
  - o School level goals, including enhancing student engagement; improving teacher questioning, improving classroom environments, and developing higher order thinking skills, are included in the Comprehensive Education Plan, Principals Performance Review, and professional development plans. The entire school community is a part of the process of data examination, including State and City information, as well as the Learning Environment Survey, to focus goal setting the entire school to improve student outcomes.
  - o Needs assessment surveys and data collection influence students' and adult goal setting, and impact the school's action planning. The school used information culled from Datacation relative to the effect of number of hours spent watching television and the impact on student performance for planning. Accelerated learning as part of the curriculum, involves students in setting individual goals, as shared as evidence during student interviews. One grade 8 student set improvement in his math skills in problem solving as his academic goal and his social goal was to get along better with people by being more considerate. He said he "wanted to be an engineer and to achieve his goal he knew he had to do well in math and know how to get along with people "
- School leaders convey high expectations for staff and students thus impacting positively on student achievement. (3.4)
  - o School leaders and faculty communicate their high expectations for students through school leadership team meetings, informal walk-throughs focused around classroom environment, student engagement, and rigor. Newsletters, emails, and an open-door policy reinforce expectations. Students and parents interviewed say they know the school has high expectations for them based on verbal communication and actions they see on a daily basis. Parents respond to ongoing communication and feedback regarding school programs by increased participation in school activities.
  - o School leaders and staff, as well as families, collaborate and support students by participating in the school leadership team, the parent teachers association Parent Teacher Council, The Saturday Academies, orientation meetings, dance recitals, and the home learning centers, all of which serve as venues to share school wide expectations and relevant information. Parents who participate in surveys through Datacation are provided with feedback informing them of the influence of television on their children. Additionally, parents have been given Datacation presentations on information relevant to learning outcomes of their children. Thus, increased family participation has resulted in improved student outcomes as evidenced by surveys and data.

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

- Develop alignment and coherence in the school's curriculum with key State standards and Common Core Learning Standards' (CCLS) tasks in order to develop rigorous habits and higher order skills. (1.1)

- o The school has a special project and has begun the development of units of study in literacy and math aligned with the CCLS as evidenced by professional development logs and curriculum maps. School leaders have used network support and included art and dance in the alignment using the blue print for the Arts. This and classroom observations in the literacy and math indicate a strong beginning in the work of curriculum alignment, however currently, the depth of the work is not sufficient to impact teacher practice in all classrooms as evidenced by classroom observations.
- o Teacher lesson plans, and faculty interviews confirmed awareness of higher order thinking skills as an important part of teaching practice. However, observations in classrooms revealed an inconsistency in teaching practices regarding lessons that promote higher order thinking. Observing a social studies lesson children were reviewing poetry that reflected feelings of people living in a suppressed environment in China. One student initiated a comparison to the concentration camps in Germany and the detainee camps for Japanese citizens in California The discussion of comparing and contrasting and evaluating circumstances was student initiated . However, there was limited teacher questioning to prompt this direction in the classroom discourse, therefore limiting incorporating sufficient rigor into teacher practice
- Assure that shared beliefs align with pedagogy and promote differentiated learning, questioning, and high levels of student thinking. (1.2)
  - o .School leaders have engaged teachers in reading *What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know* as well as promoting the study of adolescents. However, not all teachers are incorporating the shared beliefs on how students learn into their teaching practice as evidence by student interviews. .Several students reported during interviews that most teachers make their subjects interesting but one or two teachers only present a do-now and a summary quiz. Students are expected to find out information on their own Students state that most teachers feel one way about learning and try to make students enjoy the subject but a few do not, thus hindering engaging all students in suitable learning tasks that promote improved outcomes.
  - o Differentiated arts programming was evident during classroom observations. Some classrooms capitalize on the visual and kinetic learning evident in arts programming. However, classrooms across the school did not reflect that lessons were planned to challenge students based on data, accommodate different learning styles, nor use questioning to extend thinking and maximize student learning .
- Develop a greater alignment between schools instructional goals and the structured use of student and staff time in order to engage staff in meaningful collaboration and improve instruction. (1.3)
  - o The school provides workshops for teachers, parents, and paraprofessionals, using its resources to provide coaching and staff development. Teachers engage in digital learning as a tool for classroom and departmental grade conferences. Students have an open access library during lunch and other periods. However, resources are not yet allocated as part of a strategic plan, thus limiting how teachers receive suitable support from the schools specialists to better understand data, to collaborate, and plan as a team by subject and grade to improve classroom practice.

- o The school has developed a Saturday academy, a Community Family Youth Pilot Program, a New York State Emergent Bilingual program for emergent bilingual students, and a 3-D pilot for bilingual students, as well as a 21st Century Alvin Ailey after school program to effectively use student and teacher time and enhance learning opportunities. School leaders and some teachers have acquired many extended day learning opportunities for students. However, not all school staff integrate those extended day learning opportunities into their planning to improve student outcomes.
- Support teacher teams in the analysis of classroom and periodic data to improve student understanding and pedagogy. (2.2)
  - o Teacher teams for grades and subjects meet infrequently as evidenced by agendas and meeting notes. Two teams interviewed said they met just once for the school year. Individual teachers review and analyze data to plan for instruction. Opportunities to create assessments and extend data gathering by grade and subject to provide a complete picture of student progress is not yet evident, thus missing out on giving teachers an opportunity to collaborate and examine trends and patterns of all groups and limiting opportunities to share successful teaching practices.
  - o School leaders are engaged in the analysis of data and there is some use of data trackers and Datacat, a tool purchased by the school, on the part of teachers. Observations reveal there is limited use of checking for understanding and student self assessment during classroom lessons. Teachers by subject and grade have had limited opportunity to examine the data for the grade on an ongoing basis in order to collaborate and adjust teaching practices. Evidence provided from minutes and agendas reveal only one of the teacher teams meets regularly to analyze student data.
- Refine and ensure that there are annual and interim classroom goals for all student groups that include differentiation and lead to changes in classroom practice as needed. (3.2)
  - o School leaders, staff, and parents, review summative data, progress reports, end-grade data, teacher reflections, and observations, to develop informed goals. Differentiated learning goals are reviewed over time for subgroups. Interim assessment letters were sent to parents. However, there are no benchmarks toward goals presented or developed by school leaders and teams. Students who were interviewed all had goals but did not review those goals with a benchmark in mind. Students reported once a goal was achieved they moved on to a new goal. These goals were not benchmarked by time or progress, thus hindering students from knowing on an ongoing basis what is needed to attain success in a timelier manner.
  - o Individual teachers have engaged in setting classroom goals as evidenced by the SMART goals developed by each teacher and reviewed by school leaders. Staff developers and school leaders have supported individual teachers in this effort. Some teaching practices have changed in terms of student centered work and questioning. Grade and subject teams have adopted whole school goals but there is no evidence of team goals for grade level or subject teams, thus minimizing the impact of collaborative work towards improving student outcomes.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: Bea Fuller Rodgers</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		
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**

<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>
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