

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Central Park East II
Elementary school M964

19 EAST 103 STREET
MANHATTAN
NY 10029

Principal: NAOMI SMITH

Dates of review: January 06, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Luz Cortazzo

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Central Park East II is an Elementary school with 224 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 44% Black, 26% Hispanic, 18% White, 3% Asian students and 9% other students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 94.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well-developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The implementation of a teacher-generated curriculum including the Arts aligned to key standards offers a wide-range of rigorous learning experiences and choice that facilitates students' ownership of learning. (1.1)
 - Higher order thinking is continually pushed in all classes via Randall Charles's Big Ideas in Math, text complexity in literacy with the goal of providing students with reading instruction that will lead to college and career readiness level, and project-based learning structures that are embedded across curricula in all grades and subject areas. As a result, the vast majority of students in the fourth and fifth grade collaborative team teaching class fair well demonstrating their thinking on their mathematical practice as they construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others. Throughout the school year, the staff meets weekly after school to critically analyze the degree of challenge of projects, common assessments, and their alignment to the taught curricula. Based on their measurement of authentic student work products, staff consequently adjusts the resources, practices, and/or assessments, thus ensuring rigor for all student sub-groups, including those with individualized education plans.
- The implementation of well-differentiated, curriculum aligned, project-based learning gives the students the opportunity to undertake research and be highly active learners. (1.2)
 - Strong beliefs about how students learn best are consistent across classrooms, with project-based learning that allows students to follow interests, approach work in a multi-sensory way, feel safe, take risks and reflect on progress at the heart of the school's philosophy. Based on overall trends from examining varied writing on demand student samples, the second grade team identified specific examples of how particular lessons needed to address phonemic awareness and spelling strategies. This resulted in a school-wide implementation of Linguistic Phonics instruction that is now transforming the way students write.
 - Mixed-grade student teams, from 2nd grade through 5th grade, consistently engage in rich discourse across all classrooms. Teachers' practice reflects effective research-based elements of instruction such as multiple engaging entry points, modeling, guided practice and checks for understanding. Students engage in analyzing primary source documents in social studies, participate in the "Trout in the Classroom" program which involves raising trout eggs from the beginning of the year to maturity, explore real-world understanding of mathematical concepts, and provide peer assessment on self-selected writing projects. As a result, all students benefit from the continued differentiated instructional support of their texts, manipulatives, classmates and teachers, all of which support the underpinning of content.
- The principal makes informed and highly effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school that support improvements in learning. (1.3)
 - The principal sustains her long-term vision of high quality, direct services to students by channeling resources to the classrooms through additional staff. Thereby maximizing the school's capital resources and capacity. In this way, the bulk of the school funding is channeled toward high quality, direct services to students that result in consistent student progress as evidenced in data from school-wide reading benchmarks.

- Teacher assignment and student time is structured to respond to the learning needs of all students and the high-engagement philosophy of the school as observed in all collaborative team teaching classrooms during the math block, where each teacher services a specific grade thus reducing total student load. As a result of these strategic decisions, time on task is optimized for the entire school community who share a clear focus leading to increased student achievement.
- The school is a very safe place where students are consistently engaged in learning, and they appreciate the high level of support they receive for their personal and academic development. (1.4)
 - Staff, students, and parents unanimously agree that the school's healthy and safe climate where students' social emotional and academic needs are readily addressed underpins the high percentage of student attendance. The school excels at knowing each child well and capitalizes on staff expertise in employing the Responsive Classroom approach that fosters a safe, challenging and joyful classroom environment for all students. Teachers use this approach to examine student work from a particular child, as observed during the second grade integrated co-teaching team teacher team meeting, where the examination of on demand writing set the foundation for school-wide Linguistic Phonics instruction. These practices impact students' academic and social-emotional growth positively.
- Teachers have an ongoing, solid understanding of the performance and progress of all students by group and by subject, which effectively informs instructional revisions throughout the school year. (2.2)
 - All teachers consistently demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of each student's changing needs, as demonstrated by their ongoing analysis of a wide range of data, including a Design Your Own interim assessment in math, Teacher's College Assessment Pro in Literacy, unit tests, conference notes, student writing, math samples, and longitudinal grow charts. As a result of supplementing summative data with these pieces, teachers are prepared to adjust their teaching resources and strategies to challenge students appropriately. Additionally, teacher teams across the school meet continually as part of their structured inquiry work and informally during their personal time, to reflect on their assessment practices, examine student work samples for evidence of standards of mathematical practice and student self-assessment to further analyze the rigor of performance tasks. This ensures their alignment with the taught curricula, and allows for regular discussion of student learning needs to ensure that all students, including students with individualized education plans, are challenged and engaged.
- Parents have many valuable opportunities to be involved in their children's learning and monitor their progress through regular and open communication with the school administration and staff. (2.4)
 - Parents speak very highly of the myriad ways the school staff engages them in reciprocal and on-going discussions regarding student progress. Parents expressed their appreciation for the very comprehensive reports they receive three times a year. These detailed reports provide an analysis of student performance, attendance, and areas of celebration. Students are encouraged to reflect on each progress report narrative to summarize that which they have mastered and where continued improvement is required for optimal academic performance. Additionally, at the November goal setting conference, students,

parents and teachers agree on realistic goals to be reviewed, revised and reported three times per year. Consequently, parents report that the strong culture and shared commitment between the home and the school supports student progress.

- Parents are key partners in their children’s education and are kept well informed, resulting in a very high level of parent support and shared commitment to school goals. (3.4)
 - Parents cite a multitude of ways that the school staff keeps families informed and convey their high expectations for student attendance as well as social/emotional and academic progress. Parents note the school staff is easily accessible via teacher-personalized telephone calls, class letters, assemblies, class celebrations and emails. Parents feel strongly that their views are valued, they have a voice in the direction of the school, and that the school is working in the best interest of their children. Additionally, a broad level of support results in the active involvement of parents in the school. They have been an integral part of the Annual Long Term Planning that brings parents and staff together to reflect on their work and set goals for the following year. Parents state they are most appreciative of the openness they feel the principal and the staff have towards them and are committed to support the students to achieve the set goals.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance the informal cycles of feedback to teachers by using a research-based framework to improve their effectiveness and result in increased student achievement. (4.1)
 - Although the school principal visits classrooms daily and teachers receive frequent feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching beyond the formal observation structure, the school is at the beginning stages of implementing a research-based rubric and aligning the components identified with school goals. Consequently, the school leadership is only starting to implement the identified components and has not yet fully prompted teachers with clear next steps to improve their practice, hindering increases in student achievement.
- Consolidate multiple databases to enable teachers and administrators to analyze the impact of interventions and effectively track sub-groups of students’ progress towards their achievement goals around literacy and math. (2.3)
 - The principal, teacher teams, and individual teachers, all analyze data to match groups of students for placement in intervention groups in reading or math, or enrichment activities in the Arts. Similarly, every teacher in the school uses a balance of quantifiable interim data, from Design Your Own assessment (DYO), Teacher’s College (TC) Assessment Pro, Acuity, unit tests, or anecdotal notes, in order to address the changing academic and social needs of individual students. However, at this time, the school does not yet use one uniform tool that enables all members of the school community to access performance and progress data through a common lens by gender or for sub-groups.
- Formalize period check-ins, focused specifically on the school’s systems for reflecting on performance data organization and performance report dissemination, so that structures are evaluated and revised in a timely fashion. (5.2)
 - At this time, several informal conversations have occurred to further improve assessment practices, data collection and reporting assessment data to families.

However, a calendar for systematically discussing, evaluating and modifying necessary changes throughout the year has not yet been formalized. Therefore, some inconsistencies occur in the way performance data is used to inform instruction.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

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|---|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
| School name: Central Park East II | 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 |