

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

The Jackie Robinson School

Public School 15

**121 – 15 Lucas Street
Queens
NY 11413**

Principal: Antonio K'Tori

Dates of review: October 17 – 18, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Lenon Murray

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Jackie Robinson School is an elementary school with 385 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 88% Black, 4% Hispanic, 3% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 1% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school implements rigorous, balanced curricula that reflects the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and that challenge and engage students. (1.1)
 - Based on the school's participation in the Department of Education's CCLS pilot program, teachers have a deeper understanding of the expectations of the Common Core. Teachers collaborate on their grade levels to create curriculum maps and pacing calendars, within the grade and across the grade, that reflect the Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, teachers analyze assessment results, including rubrics and writing samples, to use their curriculum maps to provide progressive and sequential tasks. Academic tasks and questions are designed to meet students at their point of entry and move them forward. This ensures that students are challenged and motivated. They describe their classes as "very interesting".
- Teaching strategies and practices are consistently aligned to the curriculum and reflect a relentless desire to continuously improve instruction to produce high quality student work. (1.2)
 - Throughout the school, there is a belief that students work best using varied learning structures. As a result, teachers use mini-lessons followed by flexible and skill-based groupings, along with investigation and demonstration lessons. In addition, teachers work systematically to develop varied levels of questioning, including essential questions that summarize the main points of the lesson and reflective questions that facilitate a thoughtful response from the students. Discussion is a regular feature of each lesson and this is facilitated by the teacher questions. In math classes, students describe the connection between place value and scientific notation. The structures and practices within the school enable students to participate in activities such as peer discussions, table talks, and individual analysis of complex texts. As a result, student writing samples reflect high quality (as evidenced in portfolios and student work products) with improvement over a six week period.
- Strategic organizational decisions support the school's instructional goals to effectively meet student learning needs. (1.3)
 - The principal has allotted funding to expand classroom libraries throughout the school in support of the school's literacy goals relating to student achievement in English language arts. In addition, the school maintains a literacy coach, academic intervention service providers who support teachers through push-in and pull-out programs, collaborative team teaching inclusion classes and an English language learner push-in and pull-out program. Newer teachers are teamed with more experienced colleagues as they hold themselves accountable for the progress of their students. This ensures that class resource texts offer a variety of difficulty to support students at the high and low end of proficiency; and that teachers receive the level of professional

development they need in order to support appropriate use of these resources to elevate their practice and increase student outcomes. As a result, student writing and unit tests are graded at higher proficiency levels than a year earlier.

- Teachers align assessments to the school's curriculum and use results to inform instructional decisions. (2.2)
 - The teachers use a range of assessments, including Acuity, Palm Pilot M-class assessments, unit assessments, Read-Works responses and standardized test results, to inform lesson planning. Additionally, teachers compare student success on a variety of assessment results to determine coherence between their teaching and student learning of the curriculum. This facilitates earlier intervention with struggling students which allows teachers to provide more precise support to students in class and in extended day sessions.
 - Students complete assessments and quizzes at the end of each unit and benchmark assessments are given several times a year to assess concepts and skills taught. During lessons teachers circulate around the classroom to check student work and re-teach as needed and student engagement and comprehension has increased. This practice has helped teachers to adjust classroom work to better meet student learning goals established at the beginning of the unit.
- Strategic teacher development practices provide targeted support using a commonly understood research-based framework resulting in elevated practice and improved student outcomes. (4.1)
 - School leadership uses formal and informal observations that include the use of short, frequent cycles of classroom visits, a review of student work, teacher conference notes and classroom data. The range of supports to teachers includes individual consultations with the principal, collaboration with coaches and consultants, and mentors for new teachers to promote their professional growth. Consequently, teachers are able to focus on improving student outcomes by implementing suggested teaching strategies immediately based on individual student needs.
 - The principal delivers written and oral feedback to teachers using the commonly understood Danielson framework as a guide. Teachers receive a detailed analysis of their strengths and weaknesses and work collaboratively with administrators to determine the steps they need to take to refine their practice. Newer teachers agreed to an extension of probation to strategically improve their practice. This approach has led to student improvement on the school's benchmark writing assignments.
- School leadership communicates the clear expectations to staff and families while supporting students to reach their full academic and social potential leading to increased student outcomes. (3.4)
 - School leaders communicate very high expectations for the staff and entire learning community. The principal regularly discusses the importance of being role models for students and the primacy of excellence over the speaker system and in biweekly newsletters that

address many areas of concern. Teachers acknowledge the consistent communication of the high expectations and promotion of professionalism. Network specialists provide training as needed and a culture of accountability is constantly promoted. This is evident during discussions on the teacher teams and discussions with the principal. Consequently, there has been a steady improvement in student performance this past year.

- Parents unanimously agree that the school communicates high expectations for their children and helps them support their children at home. Parents receive monthly workshops on working with their children to prepare them academically for school each day. Teachers reach out by phone and email to keep parents abreast of weekly progress. As a result, parents report that they know their children's strengths and needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Expand the involvement of students and families in school decision-making in order to enhance the culture of shared commitment. (2.4)
 - Parents are well informed about their children's academic progress, attendance and discipline concerns. Parents value the school's informative website and newsletters as well as the progress reports and report cards that are distributed a minimum of four times a year. Parents and students expressed gratitude and appreciation for the accessibility of teachers who engage in dialogue about daily assignments and student progress. The School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings, Parent Association meetings and school activities and assemblies are well attended and supported. However, parents are not yet aware of the CCLS nor how they can support their children at home in meeting the expectations embedded in the standards. This has resulted in families having a limited role in instructional decision-making, thus inhibiting a culture of shared commitment for all students.
- Increase the use of collaborative and data informed processes in setting learning goals for student subgroups and struggling students to improve performance. (3.2)
 - Teachers review assessment and benchmark results on a monthly basis and use the data to set goals for students for whom they are responsible. However, they do not yet consistently analyze data to set annual and interim goals for subgroups of students. This inhibits teachers' ability to strategically differentiate annual and interim goals for all students, particularly students with disabilities and English language learners, thus limiting student growth.
- Strengthen the integration of child development, guidance, and community-based partnerships with school-wide goals to enhance the social and academic growth of all students. (4.4)
 - The school's collaboration with internal and external partners, such as the Children First Network, has led professional development sessions on a variety of academic and social-emotional strategies, including Respect for

All. The guidance counselor provides counseling to at-risk in order to strengthen academic skills. However, the school has not yet established partnerships with organizations that can support the social-emotional needs of the families. This has minimized the school's ability to address the social-emotional needs of all students and families, thus limiting overall student achievement.

- Further refine the use of data to evaluate the structured professional collaboration and leadership development that exist in the school to increase their effectiveness. (5.4)
 - School leaders work with teacher team facilitators and to set the agendas and focus for team meetings. In addition, teachers are engaged in a variety of professional learning experiences and team leaders meet with administration to make adjustments to practices. However, adjustments have not led to coherence between instructional decisions and team practices, thus limiting teacher growth.
 - Each teacher team has a team leader. Team leader decides the structure and format of meetings to maximize the effective use of time. The content of the agendas are also determined by what is happening in the classroom. The principal is aware of the performance of emerging leaders because of drop-in visits to their classrooms and meetings and provides mentorship for them. However, his protocol for assessing the impact of teacher leadership on teacher teams is not widely known among staff. This leads to a reticence on the part of some teachers to take responsibility for their teams and contribute more to the professional learning community.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

| School name: The Jackie Robinson School | 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 |