

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**P.S. 048 William Wordsworth
Elementary school Q048**

**155-02 108 AVENUE
QUEENS
NY 11433**

Principal: Patricia M. Mitchell

**Dates of review: January 5-6, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Beverly Ffolkes-Bryant, Ed.D**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 048 William Wordsworth is an Elementary school with 366 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 66% Black, 15% Hispanic, 3% White, 11% Asian students and 5% other students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 91.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and parents who feel valued and who take pride in being part of the school community. (1.4)
 - In 2010-2011 the school was identified by the Mayor's Task Force on Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism as a school with student absentee problems. Through their Success Mentors program, the school, parents and students target students who are chronically absent and create incentives to encourage those students to attend school. As a result, the 2011-2012 attendance data to date indicates the school is currently at 95.53% attendance is in sharp contrast to the 2010-2011 end of their year rate of 91.88%. This led the Mayor's Task Force to invite the principal to share her best practices and lessons learned so far at the Principals' Gracie Mansion Winter Retreat.
 - The Students Against Violence in Education (SAVE) teacher, in her quest to put a positive spin on her program, created the Student SAVE Leaders. These upper grade students meet with the SAVE teacher during lunch to discuss school matters and offer suggestions in relation to student discipline. The student leaders also go into lower grade classrooms to read to students as well as help monitor lunch periods. Students and parents remarked during meetings how their presence has changed the school tone while cultivating school pride and an interest in learning.
- Administrators effectively use a wide range of assessment data to monitor school-level needs, student progress, plan instruction and create successful intervention strategies. (2.1)
 - The Instructional Team, which is made up of the principal, assistant principal and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Teacher Center coach, is purposeful in collecting and analyzing school, class and student data throughout the school year. They utilize data from many sources, including ATS, ARIS, ACUITY, Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System, Early Childhood Math Assessment, Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) as well as teacher-made assessments. For example, the Instructional Team analyzed attendance data and created a goal for improved attendance last year. As a result, attendance has improved dramatically and now stands at 95.53%. The school's OORS data indicates that the number of reports for the same period last year went from 54 to 37, revealing the successful work the school has done to address social/emotional needs of students. This recognition of trends in student performance and tracking of progress indicates ongoing understanding of areas of need throughout the school.
 - Analysis of student work products by the Pupil Personnel Team and the Administrative Team indicated that the special education students were not showing adequate progress. This informed their decision to consult with the Instructional Team in order to create interim goals, aligned with teacher goals, for subgroups of children. In addition, the school worked with a variety of Community Based Organizations to design school-wide intervention goals that included academic support, attendance monitoring, afterschool programs and increasing parent engagement through various activities and workshops, resulting in student progress across the school.

- Effective student support services and collaborations provide students with a wide range of opportunities to grow academically and socially. (4.4)
 - o After analyzing teachers' responses on the 2011 School Survey where they indicated, "they couldn't get any help at the school to address student behavior and discipline problems," the principal and the SAVE teacher created a "Steps for Progressive Student Discipline" document which was included in the Faculty Handbook and outlined the procedures for student removal. As a result, the number of incidences dropped from 54 to 34 from this time the previous year and the number of student suspensions dropped from 22 to 7. This change in the tone of the building has helped teachers interact more successfully with students who are disruptive.
 - o Strategic partnerships with a number of organizations support both the academic and social/emotional growth of students. One organization, the Leadership Organization, utilizing the National Bullying Prevention Grant, has created an Anti-Bullying program. Upstanders, a group of students from the school are trained by the organization in anti-bullying techniques, visit classrooms to talk to students about how to end bullying in the school. The group has also created a video that is shown in classrooms and in the community. This initiative has resulted in a decrease in classroom disruptions, as explained by parent volunteers during the parent meeting, and is accelerating students' focus on learning, as observed during classroom visitations.
- The principal makes informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning. (1.3)
 - o Through a School Based Option vote, teachers elected to meet once a week during a fifty-minute period for Inquiry Work. The principal, in consultation with teachers, has also built common preparation periods into the master schedule, thereby providing multiple opportunities for classroom and support staff to meet. This ensures sufficient time to analyze and reflect on improved instructional practices that lead to meaningful student work products and challenging and engaging instruction for subgroups of students.
 - o When analyzing the 2011 statewide math test results, the school data team has consistently noticed a significant percentage point drop in the number of fifth grade students who scored Levels 3 and 4. After discussions with teachers and instructional team, a collaborative decision was made to reorganize the fifth grade by having the fourth grade teachers "loop up" with their children for the 2011-2012 school year. Evidence of improved performance emerged in recent ACUITY results showing ninety percent of the fifth grade students scoring at Levels 3 and 4 in ELA. In addition, student work products show evidence of academic rigor and the level of engagement in grade five classrooms is superlative, demonstrating that this collaboration of teachers and staff has led to student success. An additional example shows how, after analyzing interim mathematics assessments, teachers and administrators made a strategic decision to decrease student load for each grade teachers. As a result, two grade three classes were made into three. In addition, these teachers were provided with an extra prep period each week to ensure student progress is aligned with school goals. Evidence of this work was revealed through recently completed Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) tasks.
- The school has established effective systems for monitoring practice with a clear focus on improving instructional practices. (4.1)

- The principal gives new teachers one extra period per week to meet with the UFT Teacher Center coach. The new teachers also meet with the principal to discuss tenure decisions. Because of this frequent communication and access to thoughtful, professional guidance, new teachers feel supported and respected, resulting in a collegial environment and high levels of trust for the principal, as evidenced by teacher comments during the teacher team meetings.
- The school community has adopted the Danielson framework to assess and support teacher practice and student achievement. The framework allows for feedback using common language. Administration completed the first round of informal observations, gave feedback and next steps and returned to those classrooms to assure that those suggestions were implemented. This process results in actionable feedback about pedagogical strengths and identification of professional development needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop coherence and rigor in the school's curriculum tasks with the CCLS to ensure that all students make progress in their learning. (1.1)
 - Despite the fact the teachers engage collaboratively on grade level teams and the school reflects on the CCLS and work to align the curriculum appropriately, the practice of collectively creating rigorous tasks for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, is not yet common and consistent across the school. The result is the absence of engaging tasks that challenge students' thinking, thereby hindering their academic growth.
- Promote greater consistency in differentiation of instruction based on data so that lesson planning reflects purposeful groupings, students are challenged, and tasks and questioning extends thinking to maximize student learning. (1.2)
 - Whereas the school ascribes to the inquiry model as the most meaningful vehicle for learning and has communicated that rigor is designing coherent curriculum that meets the differentiated needs of students, the practice of providing students with multiple opportunities to fully engage in learning activities is limited. Most classroom instruction observed provided one activity for all students regardless of their performance level or learning style, thereby limiting entry points for students in the curriculum and the opportunity for students, especially English language learners and students with special needs, to produce meaningful work products that demonstrate higher levels of thinking.
 - The school community selected and agreed to focus on questioning and discussion techniques to promote teacher effectiveness. The administration has completed their first round of informal observations using that focus. However, there was no evidence of higher levels of questioning in most classes observed. This hampers students' ability to fully participate in instruction, reduces engagement and debilitates students' academic growth.
- Continue developing tools that will enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate and analyze student and student subgroup performance trends in order to support student progress. (2.3)
 - Before the school year began, the Principal worked with the Grade 3 teachers on the school's Comprehensive Grading Policy and created a proficiency scale for every item on the Department of Education's Report Card. This system was adopted across grades and incorporated into the student progress reports this year. However, at this

- point the administration and staff do not have a system to capture meaningful data from this policy across the school, hampering the ability to understand student performance trends that could inform improvements to instructional practice.
- Teacher teams across the school utilize a protocol to look at student work on a regular basis. In addition, the Grade 5 teacher team regularly analyzes ACUIITY data to target students' strengths and weaknesses. However, the use of data tools across teacher teams is inconsistent inhibiting groups and individual teachers from identifying more granular strengths and needs of student subgroups in order to improve student outcomes.
 - Refine and ensure that all goals include precise short and long-term measurable outcomes to monitor students' progress effectively and to reinforce ownership and accountability for both students and teachers. (3.3)
 - While teacher teams look at student work, including writing samples, to measure progress toward school wide goals, teacher teams and individual teachers are inconsistent in their use of ACUIITY assessments to measure students' baseline skills and progress. There is also no specified process for using these assessments to make timely adjustments to school-wide goals or instructional practice for student subgroups, limiting the development of scaffolds to target their particular needs.
 - The school distributes a student progress report that is given four times a year in addition to the regular report card. However, there is no section for parents to be apprised of their children's goals or specific learning targets behind these goals. While parents are encouraged to write their questions or concerns on the back of the progress report, they are not provided with specific information that would support them in helping their children at home to progress academically.
 - Expand the use of data analysis to evaluate and revise processes and programs within the school that lead to effective professional collaborations. (5.4)
 - Even though the school has strengthened the work of the teacher teams and through the SBO teams are regularly meeting and collaboratively working outside their regular times, administration is still developing systems to regularly evaluate teacher effectiveness. As a result, this lack of structured reflection on teacher practice and student outcomes hinders improved instruction.
 - The school has joined forces with Creative Connections to empower teachers regarding grant opportunities. This organization builds capacity and enables staff to play an integral role in decision making. However, outside of this grant-writing opportunity, systems for monitoring the levels of success of distributive leadership are developing, limiting the ability to pinpoint or utilize successful models.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 048 William Wordsworth	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
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