

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Lyndon B. Johnson
Elementary School Q223

125-20 Sutphin Boulevard
Queens
NY 11434

Principal: Deborah Otto

Dates of review: May 8-9, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Lyndon B. Johnson School is an elementary school with 710 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 72% Black, 14% Hispanic, 1% White, 9% Asian students and 2% other students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 12% 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 92.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- A rigorous curriculum effectively incorporates key standards and higher order skills across all grades and subjects that engage a diverse group of students in tasks that support their critical thinking. (1.1)
 - School leaders and faculty adjust curriculum maps to include the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to ensure that students exceed their learning goals. The analysis of summative and formative data identified a need to improve students' multiplication, in primary grades, and geometry in the upper grades, including strengthening students' vocabulary, critical reading and writing across the school. Curriculum maps integrate social studies themes and provide rich learning opportunities for students, including students with disabilities and English language learners to engage in robust non-fiction text experiences. As a result, lessons across the school include challenging critical thinking standards-based tasks, such as supporting a claim, so that fourth grade students share their point of view and expertly defend their answers.
 - Across the school, evidence of high caliber writing reflects rigorous habits and higher order thinking, such as inference skills and critical thinking, for all learners. In a grade 2 class, students engage in drafting a procedural essay and practice in small groups to plan how they will introduce their topic and specific academic language that will be used to grab their audience. Vocabulary development is a major focus in the school as emphasized in teacher planning. Students across the school engage in daily journal writing with different prompts for each grade level. As a result, emphasis on higher order thinking skills across content areas positively improve questioning by students and staff and push students' thinking to promote student growth in writing, as evidenced in student work products for all student groups.
- There is a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best so that across content areas, questioning and routines generate meaningful student work products and discussion. (1.2)
 - The school has strong beliefs about how students learn so that small group instruction, explicit teaching, modeling and instructional supports, such as the use of graphic organizers, are emphasized and promote student achievement. Differentiated supports provide opportunities for teachers to hone in directly on the individual needs of students and enable them to be successful based on their entry points into the curricula. For example, in a grades 2 and 3 special needs classroom, students engage in turn and talk protocol to discuss a book. Tasks are differentiated to support students' understanding of what good readers do for character analysis and students who need additional support, use the interactive word wall. In a fourth grade class, during the mini-lesson the teacher effectively utilized the Smart board to teach multiplication of fractions. Students worked in pairs, questioned each other's logic for their responses and articulated their strategy. Hence, evidence of high levels of student engagement promotes high levels of student thinking that produce meaningful work products.
- The principal's thoughtful organizational decision-making and effective use of resources ensures that students are actively engaged in challenging academic tasks that meet the learning needs of all students. (1.3)

- The decision based on formative assessment data to have a second grade teacher loop with her class ensures continuity of high level instruction for grade 3 students. Students read a variety of exciting informational text, write exemplary essays, and research reports. As a result, the majority of these second grade students are reading at a fifth grade level, as indicated on their Fountas and Pinnell leveled reading inventory report. Staff benefit from targeted professional development in support of the school's goals. All out of class faculty use their instructional expertise to work closely with teachers during common planning and teacher team time. Once a week teachers engage in the analysis of student work, data, and collaborative lesson planning. The IEP (Individualized Education Plan) teacher pushes in and pulls students out of general education classes to support students retained on the grade. Their efforts have resulted in faculty becoming a cohesive community of learners that work collaboratively to create academic tasks that challenge students and improve their outcomes specifically in the area of writing across the school.
- Individual teachers and teams thoughtfully use a wide range of data to meet the needs of students and adjust instruction to ensure meaningful learning opportunities for all learners. (2.2)
 - The school designs their own assessments from Instructionally Targeted Assessments (ITAs) and Predictive test items, which include item skill analysis, to determine student mastery of specific skills that inform extended day and differentiated instruction. The leadership and faculty continuously examine their assessments to determine levels of rigor and ensure that they are effectively aligning assessments to key chosen standards in literacy and math. Assessment data provides clear evidence of individual and subgroups achievement. As an example, grade 2 teachers' analysis of their pre-assessment data revealed that students struggle with the base ten system. Teachers adjusted their practice to immerse students in regrouping and improvement in math, specifically in the area of numeration. Teacher effectiveness in tracking student progress based on relevant data has supported leaders and the faculty understands of student performance and progress of individual and groups of students to make effective instructional decisions as needed.
 - Significant emphasis is given to determining whether students achieved the objectives of each lesson since the implementation of the CCLS. Across classrooms, teachers use varied ongoing checks for understanding, such as scaffolded questioning, one-on-one conferencing, exit slips, and Think/Pair/Share. This results in teachers' ability to make immediate adjustments, such as directing struggling and accelerated learners to appropriate texts, technology, and tutoring, during and after the school day, to best meets students' learning needs.
- The school has established systems for monitoring classroom observation and providing feedback to teachers with a clear focus on improving teacher practice and student achievement. (4.1)
 - Observations of teachers, including teachers new to the school, occur daily and are based on a research-based rubric. All teachers receive timely feedback regarding the effectiveness of their teaching in the form of frequent cycles of observation. School leaders use formal and informal written reports and one-to-one conversations to engage staff in conversations about their practice. Effective feedback has improved teacher practice in areas such as student engagement, questioning, and the use of data to plan meaningful instruction. Teachers fully support one another in the observation process by holding

- meetings in each other's classrooms so that they may observe best practices through inter-visitations, and they use team meetings to reflect on their findings. Consequently, some teachers' comment that feedback regarding their teaching practices has improved student outcomes and students are encouraged to make connections, defend their position and take risks in all areas of instruction.
- The utilization of the common rubric has generated increased teacher focus on their practice and enabled accurate feedback that is both written and verbal to occur so that student performance continues to improve. Feedback provided serves as a catalyst for teachers' continuous teacher practice. Teachers use team meeting time and Monday professional learning community time to reflect on the common rubric to delve deeply into discussions, such as classroom environment and questioning. Teachers set professional goals and the leadership ensures that conversations include teacher reflection and next steps for improvement. Short frequent snapshots, aligned to the common rubric, provide opportunities for teachers to engage in a common language.
 - The school has developed effective systems to ensure that guidance training is provided to adults, and internal and external partnerships support students' personal and academic growth in preparation towards post secondary success. (4.4)
 - The faculty receives ongoing professional development, on topics such as, bullying, cyber-bullying and child abuse, to ensure that students are supported in a safe, inclusive and respectful school environment. Training is facilitated by the guidance counselor and staff from the school based clinic. The implementation of the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS), a program that serves as a framework for positive student behavior and encompasses the entire school community, has promoted improvement in the school environment and students' emotional growth, as observed in a decline of student infractions by 28% from the previous school year. Student data on behavior and academics is tracked so that appropriate interventions, such as clubs and counseling, can be offered. Classes across the school celebrate academic and social growth with a bulletin boards displaying student achievement that indicates positive, respectful and responsible behavior. The close monitoring of students coupled with effective training for staff and families has improved student behavior to ensure that students are on the path for secondary readiness.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen the manner in which data is organized so that trends in student performance are accessible across the grades and support curricular and instructional decisions. (2.3)
 - Throughout classrooms, individual teachers and teacher teams use data binders to organize information from a wide-range of assessment sources. At the classroom level 4th and 5th grade teachers identify gaps in math for fractions and multi-step word problems. Information regarding students' performance has helped the school identify the need to implement a new math program and provide more hands-on learning experiences. However, school leaders and faculty have not been able to effectively organize data so that trends in subgroups is analyzed school wide and utilized to inform school level decisions. As a result, the school's ability to consistently make school level decisions based on a granular trend analysis is limited.

- Individual teachers and teacher teams create assessments and rubrics that align with CCLS tasks and include higher order questions and skills. However, there is some inconsistency in classroom level assessments tools. For example, teacher-made formative tests and classroom specific grading policies are not uniform, therefore generating varying results regarding trends in student performance thus hindering a full identification of students' strengths and weaknesses across the grade. Consequently, faculty cannot fully verify the effectiveness of the curriculum or establish trends on the grade to determine their instructional impact on student performance and progress.
- Continue strengthening systems to regularly evaluate and adjust relevant student data so that information regarding student achievement may be shared with students and their families in order to improve student outcomes. (5.2)
 - School leaders and faculty use cabinet, teacher team and instructional team meetings to regularly discuss the expectations of CCLS, and students' behavioral and attendance performance. These meetings have led to immediate adjustments, such as a change in instructional strategies, and implementation of academic interventions. The leadership and faculty shares student progress with families via telephone conversations, email, and student daily communication planners. While the school captures a broad range of data, the data is not easily accessible and uniformly shared with students and their families in a way that helps them understand their next steps. As a result, students and their families' knowledge regarding how to strengthen improvements in academic performance is diminished.
- Expand the use of the goal setting process to create learning goals for students that include precise short and long-term measurable outcomes to ensure that all students, including subgroups, are on a path of mastery of the standards. (3.2)
 - The school utilizes various forms of data, including Periodic Assessments, teacher made tests, midterms and State exams, to set long and short-term goals for students with disabilities. However, the goals are not sufficiently differentiated to accelerate the learning for all students, resulting in diminished academic capacity.
- Strengthen systems to evaluate the effectiveness of professional collaborations and leadership capacity in order to monitor the success of instructional strategies that promote student achievement. (5.4)
 - The school utilizes cabinet and instructional planning meetings to assess the success of teacher teams. Grade leaders and team facilitators support their peers daily through regularly scheduled meetings where they engage in collaborative lesson planning and share effective instructional strategies during faculty and grade meetings. The leadership conducts routine "check-in" times to ensure that the teams' goals and objectives are on track, specifically in the area of the CCLS and performance tasks, and they use instructional team meetings to evaluate their findings. However, not all teams are aware of the effective work implemented by their colleagues that improve student performance, specifically in the area of writing. Consequently, the ability for school leaders to fully gauge which instructional strategies are most effective across the school is hindered. Additionally, while some teachers have taken the lead and serve as grade leaders and team facilitators, there are not many opportunities for staff to lead professional learning. As a result, teachers' resourcefulness and leadership capacity is stagnate.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Lyndon B. Johnson	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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