

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 232 Lindenwood

K-8 school Q232

**153-23 83 STREET
QUEENS
NY 11414**

Principal: LISA JOSEPHSON

**Dates of review: May 30-31, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Sheryl L. Watkins**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 232, Lindenwood, is a K-8 school with 1054 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 8% Black, 37% Hispanic, 40% White, 13% Asian students and 1% other students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 94.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well-developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Students benefit from a rigorous and coherent curriculum that ensures all students engage in challenging academic tasks that ensure accelerated academic growth. (1.1)
 - o The school's curricula across grades have been updated to fully align to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). In doing so, there is direct evidence of the school's chosen key standards: building content vocabulary and higher order thinking and consistently offering students opportunities to deeply engage in reciprocal conversations that encourage them to demonstrate and support their thinking. This has led to the vast majority of students engaging in a minimum of two CCLS learning tasks, in English language arts and in math, that support students' ability to meet the higher expectations embedded within these standards. In addition, the rigorous curriculum at the middle school level in science and math prepares students for the Regents exams in science and math that has resulted in 100% of the students who sit for these exams passing them and moving on to high school with two Regents credits. Additionally, there is a continued increase in English language arts State test result for students with disabilities, as evidenced by an increase of over 5% in students moving from level 2 into level 3.
 - o Teachers consistently review academic tasks completed by students, resulting in modifications to instructional plans to ensure that all students are cognitively engaged. Most student projects in core subject areas are supported in cluster classes where art and technology teachers align their instruction to current curricular units of study. This is evidenced by the extremely high levels of engagement observed in all classes visited and student work products, which include written defense of student thinking, including writing from students with disabilities and English language learners.
- The school's consistently practiced philosophy about how students learn best is coherent across classrooms, resulting in high outcomes for learners. (1.2)
 - o To be sure that students engage in peer-to-peer discussions and that the vocabulary related to content is consistently applied, the majority of staff in all subject areas have shifted from imparting instruction to facilitating student learning. Teachers routinely discuss learning tasks, review student work products and identify continued challenges for students. These roadblocks are then addressed during dedicated guided reading periods or guided math groups where vocabulary is stressed and applied, assuring that students are consistently supported and progress to produce high level work products. This has led to continued gains for students as evidenced by an increase of nearly 10% of students moving from level 2 to level 3 on the New York State English Language Arts exams, and over 65 % scoring at levels 3 and 4.
- Strategic use of resources and highly effective programming ensure the instructional focus is met, resulting in increased student work products and outcomes. (1.3)
 - o Teachers are well supported in applying strategically chosen instructional programs such as Junior Great Books and Pearson Math. Funding is allocated

- and used to provide staff with ongoing professional development during the school day, after school and on Saturdays, where per-session funds are paid to teachers for participation. In its third year of implementation, the long-range plan to improve the depth of and quality of student writing products using the Junior Great Books yielded significant gains in writing products as measured by rubrics, where the vast majority of students demonstrate improvements in grades from level 2 to levels 3 and 4.
- o The school funds two full time academic intervention support teachers and an additional five part time staff members that focus on supporting guided reading and math across all grades. This assures that consistent small group support is provided both within classrooms and in pullout periods to target the challenges of students who have been identified through studying student performance information. This work supports the school's goal to increase student performance by a minimum of 5%. Data analysis of periodic and predictive assessments points to gains well in excess, nearly double, the said goal.
 - Highly effective data analysis within classrooms leads to ongoing adjustments to instruction to meet the needs of varied learners, resulting in consistent progress for all learners. (2.2)
 - o Across the school, coherent rubrics for writing have been enhanced by teachers to support the Junior Great Books program. In addition, all student projects are introduced using a rubric to guide students as they engage in all learning activities, allowing them to consistently assess their own work. Students report "they know what (they) have to do," as the expectations are clearly presented. Peer feedback and self-evaluation are embedded components of these projects. Teachers effectively monitor student performance, allowing them to adjust instruction to support ongoing student progress. Feedback to students is comprehensively aligned to the rubrics, and clearly includes an emphasis on the key standard of content vocabulary, resulting in students' ability to meet their next learning steps and continued growth in student work products.
 - o As a result of the analysis of student performance on the CCLS-aligned performance tasks administered this year, teacher teams are in the process of making adjustments to CCLS-aligned curriculum maps, instructional strategies and decisions intended to assure that student performance meets the higher expectations of these standards when they are fully adopted. For example, noting that students' greatest challenge lies in the area of describing their process for completing the written response in tasks, teachers are now modeling how to put thinking into written form and are providing opportunities for students to practice this skill. Students are already demonstrating progress in this area as evidenced in student work products.
 - Teacher development is driven by a commonly understood and adopted research-based framework, ensuring that all teachers meet pedagogical expectations and improve student outcomes. (4.1)
 - o Extensive professional development focused on the Danielson Framework for Teaching has assured that all teachers are aware of and work towards demonstrating competence in the Department of Education's six identified competencies. All formal, informal and short observations reviewed referenced attention to practices related to these competencies, and short observations contained very targeted feedback on the two competencies chosen by school leaders, engagement and questioning, providing teachers with clear next steps to enhance their practices. As a result, in all classrooms visited, a high level of

engagement, often driven by students responding to high level questions and participating in reciprocal conversation to share and defend their thinking, was consistently observed.

- The school's commitment to effective and consistent communication to students and families regarding expectations for learning ensures that students are reaching higher levels of achievement. (3.4)
 - High expectations are consistently shared with families and students. The principal hosts monthly breakfasts where they discuss topics such as the Special Education Reform, how to help children learn to read, nutrition and supporting students in preparation for the State exams. Families in the middle school begin the process of making high school choices in the seventh grade. The guidance team invites parents to informational meetings, where a review of academic success leads to preliminary high school choices. This process continues throughout the year and into eighth grade. To date, 99% of families report acceptance to their high school of choice. As a result, parents and students articulate a committed focus on consistently striving to reach higher levels of performance.
 - Student's social-emotional growth is continually supported through instruction in and attention to Core Knowledge virtues such as caring, self-discipline, citizenship, honesty, courage and fairness. These virtues are grounded in phrases that are boldly displayed throughout the school, serving to assure that these expectations are met, as evidenced in the very strong focus on learning. When necessary, guidance supports for individual and groups of students are put in place to assure they are meeting the social-emotional growth expectations of the school.
- Students' personal and academic growth is a result of the highly supportive and mutually respectful learning environment. (1.4)
 - Each administrator strategically supports specific grade bands within the school. The additional teacher working with small groups of students within guided reading and math periods assures that students are well known, allowing for strong trusting relationships to build. Students report they "know someone is always there to listen if they need help." This has resulted in no more than three students who consistently engage in reportable behavior incidents, enabling students to focus on their learning.
 - Student government at the middle school, and "Kids who Care," a community service project program at the elementary school level, provide students with voice in the school's community service efforts. The middle school representatives organized and conducted a fundraising event where \$4,500 was raised for Cancer Care. The elementary school students conducted and led a pet food drive resulting in vast amounts of food and toys donated to a local pet shelter. Both these initiatives promote attention to and awareness of the school's core value of citizenship, honoring the learning that occurs when performing service to the school, community and the country.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to build upon the work of collaborative teams using an inquiry approach so that effective instructional practices assure shared improvements for sub-groups of students. (4.2)

- Teacher teams meet regularly, with the support of administrators and coaches, to continue the work of updating curriculum maps, review student work products, analyze common assessments and share strategies used during instruction. Teacher leaders emerge when the teams recognize academic and instructional strengths within their colleagues. While this has resulted in more targeted and instruction, the system used for determining the efficacy of strategies that have proven to be most effective in meeting the learning needs of students is not consistently applied. This limits teacher's ability to strategically embed the teaching of these strategies so that greater numbers of student groups, or individual students benefit, potentially limiting higher levels of progress for some students.
- Ensure that teacher teams set long- and short-term goals for groups of students that are based on an analysis of student performance and learning needs so that progress is consistently accelerated for all learners. (3.2)
 - Administration and teachers have set goals to promote school-wide progress that are consistently supported in teacher practice. Data analysis identifies which students are in need of additional support and targeted instruction is immediately provided during guided instruction and in after school tutoring for those who struggle. Enrichment activities are also offered where appropriate. While interim performance information is analyzed that reflects attention to long-term goals, short-term goals have not yet been formalized, preventing teachers and administrators from measuring progress and assuring that all students are on the path to their highest possible levels of achievement.
- Extend the current system used for analyzing student data so that trend identification in performance leads to modifications to instruction for students. (5.3)
 - The school's long-term goals reflect the Chancellor's Instructional Initiatives evidenced in the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan. The instructional cabinet meets frequently to discuss progress towards meeting overarching goals. However, this process is not fully transparent in that all faculty across the school, including non-pedagogical staff, have not yet taken ownership of said goals by developing connected interim goals. In addition, interim goals set by teachers do not consistently align with the overarching school goals and are not monitored to determine progress made. As a result, the school is unable to consistently determine year-long progress towards attaining end-of-year goals, based on teacher information, and to make midpoint adjustments when necessary.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 232 Lindenwood	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
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

UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed
-----------	-----------------------	----------	-------------------	----------	-------------------	-----------	-----------------------