

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 016 John J. Driscoll
Elementary School R016

80 MONROE AVENUE
STATEN ISLAND
NY 10301

Principal: VINCENZA GALLASSIO

Dates of review: January 11- 12, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Teresa Caccavale

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 016 John J. Driscoll is an Elementary school with 926 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 29% Black, 52% Hispanic, 14% White, 6% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 24% English language learners and 21% 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 91.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs that lead to meaningful student work products. (1.3)
 - o In an effort to support all students' mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in literacy, the administration has invested in Mondo non-fiction libraries on each grade in order to offer students more access to informational texts. In addition, a School wide fundamentals consultant was hired, specializing in the balanced literacy workshop model of teaching reading and writing, to reinforce the schools' alignment of curriculum maps and units of study to the CCLS. The administration has also invested in technology to enhance communication among teachers, specifically with a virtual Google-docs community, where staff have access to their colleagues' curriculum maps, units of study, and can add on, delete and initiate discussions in regards to lesson planning. These strategic decisions result in increased teacher collaboration, implementation of the workshop model and small group instruction aligned to a core belief of a balanced literacy approach to teaching and learning and more authentic student work products, particularly in writing.
 - o The school administration schedules time for staff to meet twice a week during common planning time. This year the addition of an instructional team with representatives from the administration, classroom teachers from each grade level and other support staff, including English as a second language (ESL) teachers, Academic Intervention Specialists and Special Education and Library Specialist teachers have been meeting twice a month after school. The grades meet to look at level 2 and level 3 writing samples from each class to analyze and interpret trends across grade levels. The school wide Professional Learning Community (PLC) meets to analyze trends horizontally across the school. As a result, teachers are developing writing units aligned to the CCLS, are learning new strategies for teacher collaboration in writing and there is some improvement in student writing as evidenced by writing on demand pieces, writing in folders and student writing displayed on bulletin boards.
- School leaders 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. (4.1)
 - o During the 2010-2011 school year, the staff participated in a Joint Intervention Team review which indicated that a structural system needed to be put in place for observations protocols and specific forms of writing. The observation process has changed to give teachers frequent feedback using short cycles of classroom visits with a focus on effective student work supported with criteria found on the Danielson researched based classroom observation rubric and Professional Learning Standards. The observation checklist also includes school goals. Teachers review feedback and are given opportunities to discuss and reflect with their supervisors for their next steps. In addition, teachers are receiving specific feedback (e.g. writing notebook collection and observations) that is leading to more student work products being produced in writing in response to literature. Teachers shared feedback they received from school leaders and found the reciprocal dialogue between the administration and teachers to be extremely helpful. As a result of this verbal and written exchange, teachers are beginning

to refine their classroom practice in order to support increased student performance.

- o The school leaders use the data from the observation cycle to identify trends and help teachers set professional learning goals. This protocol is also used to group teachers for differentiated professional development based on grade specific and individual teacher needs. All teachers involved in the *Time to Know* program receive coaching on a weekly basis from a *Time to Know* instructional coach. Teachers meet to discuss planning options, assessments and incorporate balanced literacy and the math workshop model into the program. Second year teachers serve as mentors to first year teachers, while continuing to build on their own knowledge of the program. These strategic administrative decisions result in thoughtful dialogue among staff to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills with a focus on student achievement. In addition, these systems allow the principal to make informed and effective decisions around teacher evaluation, tenure and assignments.
- School leaders maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults which cultivates a safe and orderly environment. (1.4)
 - o The parent coordinator works with the Title I Parent Advisory Council and guidance counselors, to provide ongoing workshops for parents and classroom teachers in coordinating services related to attendance and the social emotional needs of students. This ensures that each student gets one-on-one attention and related services when necessary. In addition, the principal follows up through daily meetings to make certain that the personal development needs and attendance issues for all students, with specific attention for at-risk students, are resolved successfully so that they are able to focus on their learning. Students participate in a variety of exciting in school activities for their attendance, behavior and citizenship, such as co-ed basketball teams and classroom competitions to work with a Grammy winning song writer as part of their violence prevention program. The school has also been working with the positive rapper, "Baby Jay", to enforce positive behavior and good citizenship both in and out of school. Students earn "Baby Jay" points which can be redeemed for rewards by completing homework, wearing the school uniform, and daily attendance. Students who demonstrate an effort in school, and have proven to be a positive role model are given the opportunity to attend both local and Broadway shows. The school was one of six schools in the city to receive a highly selective grant from "Art Achieve" to highlight the school's involvement in the arts. All of the opportunities available to students and adults support their academic and personal growth which leads to a safe and positive environment and success.
- A majority of teachers collaborate on teams to analyze student work in order to build coherence of instructional practice and build leadership capacity. (4.2)
 - o All teacher teams meet by grade three times a week, twice during common preps and once during professional learning communities (PLCs). The PLCs group meets weekly with a pre-planned agenda which results from collaboration with the cross grade Instructional Team. The grade teams are led by teachers who are part of the school wide vertical Instructional Team which meets twice a month after school with the school administration. The meetings are focused on student work and refining teachers' practice to build coherence across the school in alignment with the CCLS for effective instruction. As a result, leadership capacity is developing across grades allowing teachers to take a more active role than they have in the past, leading to an improvement in teacher practice for creating

rigorous tasks and well sequenced units with more effective instructional techniques as evidenced by adjusted curriculum maps and lessons to increase student performance.

- All teachers participate in professional learning opportunities that are beginning to promote independent and shared reflection, encourage leadership growth, and build classroom practices to improve student learning outcomes. (4.3)
 - o Professional development is based on the needs of the teachers and aligned to new initiatives and programs. Teachers can gain access to all sessions which are posted on the PS 16 website and in the ARIS community. Quality assessment designs are developing across grades as teachers begin to use *Webb's Depth of Knowledge* in creating assessments across grades and subject areas. Curriculum maps are continually revised, lesson plans aligned to the CCLS, and teacher teams are analyzing student work to plan instruction. In alignment with the school's belief that students learn best through the workshop model of teaching, there is evidence of the gradual release of instruction allowing students to work in small groups. Teachers are working with a consultant from Schoolwide and have received training in the workshop model in reading and writing workshop that includes a mini-lesson, independent work time and a whole class share. Teachers are supported in their learning through ongoing professional development that is tailored to meet staff needs as indicated on teachers' professional development goals and feedback given by administration on glows and grows to help support classroom practice. Consequently teachers are beginning to feel empowered to implement new practices they have learned and have professional conversations around their growth. In addition, there is an increase in teachers taking on leadership roles to facilitate the evaluation of student work products to drive instruction.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to refine alignment of the curriculum to targeted State standards in order to increase the performance of all students. (1.1)
 - o The literacy curriculum is primarily focused on informational texts in reading and writing. Classroom teachers in grades K-3 are using "Go Math" which is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and emphasizes big ideas and depth of understanding through interactive lessons and differentiated resources for students. These learning experiences however, do not consistently call for students to engage in rigorous thinking and/or use higher order skills to produce meaningful work. Although the literacy curriculum maps reflect initial thought to engage a diverse group of learners through basic extension activities, learning tasks are not refined using student work products so that the level of cognitive engagement can be assessed for all students through curricular revisions and increased scaffolds. This results in missed opportunities to maximize students' engagement and leverage the curricular revision process for increased outcomes, particularly for key student subgroups.
- Continue to develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, with differentiated teaching strategies and challenging questioning to accelerate thinking and improve outcomes for all students. (1.2)
 - o Across classrooms teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curriculum and reflective of a set of beliefs about how students learn best as indicated by

the paradigm shift to the workshop model approach to teaching. However, teaching strategies, questioning and routines inconsistently offer small group differentiated learning opportunities for students, including students with disabilities and ELLs, as evidenced by uneven levels of student thinking and participation and reflected in student work products and discussion. Thus, these uneven instructional practices do not always support students at their entry levels in order to increase their learning proficiency.

- Increase the coherence and frequency of on-going assessments in order to evaluate the effectiveness of curricular and instructional decisions to increase the performance for all students. (2.2)
 - o While all teacher teams and most individual teachers use summative and formative assessments and rubrics aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards to inform lesson planning and instructional decisions, there is no cohesive and consistent approach across all classrooms in both literacy and math, to evaluate each lesson or check for understanding in order to make immediate and purposeful adjustments to instruction to support all students. As a result, in some classes the lack of on going checks for understanding leads to some students not having a clear understanding of concepts and skills necessary to support their learning needs, specifically in literacy and math.
- Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups and students in need of additional support. (3.2)
 - o Some teachers have developed goals for students; however, there is no agreed upon timeframe for assessing progress and revising these goals. Although students who need interventions and enrichments have been identified based on data analysis, the goals set, based on this analysis, are not consistently aligned to the curriculum at hand. In the absence of an agreed upon timeframe and curriculum alignment, efforts to meet these goals are hampered to fully leverage areas of strengths and needs for next steps to ensure ongoing student progress towards mastery.
- Increase the consistency of the grading policies in the school to capture meaningful student data and information about student performance trends to identify next learning steps for individual or groups of students. (2.3)
 - o While all teachers use some type of grading policy to track student progress, inform report card grades and progress reports, these policies are not consistent across grades and subject areas. Grade and class level assessments tools used to track student progress are varied and do not allow for effective identification of common achievement trends for all students. For example, not all teachers have a grade book with clear assessment scores, and the use of conference notes vary across the school. Although teams of teachers meet regularly to share grade level trends in order to create adaptations to teaching points, as well as create some differentiated group activities, they do not have consistent systems for measuring progress towards student outcomes and identifying areas where improvements in plans or strategies are needed, thereby resulting in minimal or no progress in student performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 016 John J. Driscoll	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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