

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Mount Hope Centennial School

Elementary School 028

1861 Anthony Avenue

Bronx

NY 10457

Principal: Maria Luisa Barresi

Dates of review: November 30 – December 1, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Linda Trifon

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Mount Hope Centennial School is an elementary school with students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 13% Black and 87% Hispanic students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 9% 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 92.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders make informed organizational decisions that support teaching and learning. (1.3)
 - Resources, aligned to the school's instructional goals, bolster language acquisition of the school's second language learners. The school's hiring of an outside consultant to work with teachers builds their content knowledge, and supplemental materials purchased support daily instruction. The principal shared, "There is a common language and understanding in place and we can see in student work, that the students are making progress."
 - Cluster assignments, structured so that out-of-classroom teachers engage in teaching and learning with specific content area teachers has reduced teacher isolation and fostered collegiality and collaboration among staff. In addition, daily opportunities for out-of-classroom teachers to further support students in different learning environments has resulted in teachers sharing responsibility for meeting students' needs.
- School leaders and teacher teams gather and analyze a wide range of formative and summative data to identify student strengths and needs. (2.2)
 - Teams of teachers and individual teachers create rubrics, aligned with key standards, in all content areas. Learning outcomes that are measured against these rubrics provide students with an understanding of their strengths and areas they need further work. Student work that is analyzed during teacher meetings lends support to the discussions and decisions around revisions to curricular and/or instruction to further increase student mastery of the standards.
 - Teachers administer running records and other diagnostic reading assessments every six weeks, and engage in the analysis of student work, thus supplementing summative data to identify students' strengths and needs. In addition, pre-and-post assessments help teachers suitably identify strengths, needs, and plan for appropriate student groups. The school's on-going analysis of formative assessments indicates that students are making progress.
- School leaders effectively use classroom observations and the analysis of student learning outcomes to determine areas of instructional need. (4.1)
 - School leaders' adherence to a schedule over the past several years has allowed them, using short and frequent cycles of classroom observations, to measure teacher effectiveness against a research-based rubric and through the analysis of student work. Formal and informal feedback highlights teacher's strengths, provides actionable information for coaches, teacher leaders and teacher teams to support teacher development, and outlines next steps in line with teachers meeting their professional goals, As a result, clear expectations for best practice are

articulated and provided feedback impacts instruction implemented in classrooms.

- The school's effective professional development plan that includes timeframes, resources, objectives, and indicators of progress, includes an interaction report that identifies teachers, the type of support received, and the service provider. School leaders' weekly walkthroughs, which are complemented by inter-visitations of teacher teams to the preceding grade, provides support and feedback through a specific instructional lens. The literacy coach's support template outlines the assistance given to teachers, clearly cites evidence of impact on instructional practice, and the teacher's progress towards meeting his or her professional goal. This system enables school leaders to evaluate progress, make effective decisions regarding teacher practice, and to accurately determine next steps to improve teacher practice that affects student performance.
- The school conveys high expectations for attendance, behavior, and academics to teachers, students, and families impacting positively on student achievement. (3.4)
 - The school has embraced a common teaching framework that guides discussion about professionalism, preparation and planning, pedagogy, curriculum, professional responsibilities, and student learning outcomes. Collaborative teacher team gatherings and other professional development opportunities, provide school leaders with venues to communicate their high expectations for teaching and learning to the staff, resulting in a spirit of mutual accountability for best practice.
 - The school monitors and celebrates attendance at the school and up-to-date individual attendance data depicted on the school progress report, as well as curriculum updates, ensures that families are kept abreast of all aspects of their children's academic and social behavior. The parent coordinator meets with parents and plans celebratory events that heighten parental involvement. One parent shared, "Children are happy here. They don't want to go home. There's no such thing as an absence!" In addition, the parent coordinator and guidance counselor work together with parents and families so that they have opportunities to engage in meaningful workshops to gain an understanding of the academic and social needs of their children, thus supporting an effective partnerships with families, impacting on student success.
- School leaders and faculty's open door policy keeping families abreast of student progress provides for an understanding of academic expectations and next learning steps. (2.4)
 - School leaders and teachers conduct ongoing discussions with students and families regarding student progress. Every six weeks, progress reports sent home include teacher comments on how families can support their children. One parent stated, "If your child needs help, teachers work one-on-one to help me and help my child."
 - The school's 2011-2012 'Parent Engagement Calendar' that delineates various events and workshops, is engaging, and fosters family participation in school activities. Workshops for second language

learners increase language acquisition; math workshops deepen the school-home understanding for helping children at home, and health workshops around nutrition, obesity, and asthma, offer information emphasizing the importance of good health. These opportunities foster a culture and spirit of shared commitment for success. One parent said, “I regret to let my child go next year, but I’ll be back to volunteer.”

- The school setting of data-driven goals and action planning includes all constituencies and drives efforts around leveraging changes to promote student success. (3.1)
 - To raise student performance and address narrowing the achievement gap of second language learners, the school’s academic goals include a newly revised and more rigorous curriculum that leverages changes in instruction for this subgroup. The school’s action plan incorporates an organizational structure that now includes a plan for increased instructional support for identified students who fall across the language acquisition spectrum. The integration of visual literacy in daily instruction across all subjects provides necessary scaffolding for beginning second language students. To accelerate the performance of advanced second language learners, students receive additional instructional support by a second language teacher in a pullout program. In small group settings, advanced learners use thinking maps and graphic organizers giving them entry points to rich texts, academic discourse, thus enabling them to engage in a more rigorous curriculum with a focus on using higher order thinking skills.
 - Administrators, coaches, teachers, and lead teachers, share responsibility as committee members and in the school’s planning process. Goals and actions that are implemented after group discussions are effectively articulated through various communiqués including newsletters, memorandums, the school’s website and on-going parent workshops. Additionally, student-learning outcomes, revised after each unit of study, are also communicated to families providing for ongoing reciprocal sharing of relevant information. As the principal stated, “During my parent meetings, I share student learning outcomes and say, this is where we are and this is where we need to go.” One teacher shared, “We have ideas and school leaders provide the support, which sparks enthusiasm among the staff.” A parent said, “We all work as a team here.”

What the school needs to improve

- Enrich the curriculum to ensure that academic tasks in all classrooms are challenging and that questioning extends student thinking to increase student performance. (1.1)
 - The school has begun to integrate the Common Core Learning Standards into its current curriculum maps. One teacher team, with the support of a literacy consultant, is planning for greater rigor in lessons using Depth of Knowledge questioning techniques, and is designing performance tasks that require higher order thinking. However, instruction that emphasizes higher order thinking is inconsistent across all classrooms and subjects. Consequently, students with disabilities are not sufficiently engaged in

rigorous tasks nor adequately challenged, preventing them from making greater progress.

- Promote greater consistency in differentiated instruction, based on formative assessment data, so that all students are challenged. (1.2)
 - Across the school, there are some classrooms where teaching strategies and tasks provide differentiated learning experiences. In one classroom, some students were able to work independently on a task that differed from the activity for students who need additional support. However, instruction is not strategically differentiated to meet student's diverse learning needs. Teaching techniques and questioning do not yet sufficiently challenge higher performers, thus resulting in their uneven levels of engagement.
- Develop a system to track progress of the learning goals of student subgroups at the school, teacher team, and classroom level to evaluate progress and adjust instructional plans and pedagogy accordingly. (3.3)
 - The school's practice of providing feedback to families is consistent across teachers and subject areas. The school sends home progress reports every six weeks, and an open communication between administrators, teachers, and families keeps them abreast of progress. Yet, at this time, school leaders insufficiently track progress of identified students and groups of students. Similarly, teacher teams do not consistently track progress for student subgroups resulting in the school's inability to revise instruction and refine the learning goals in a timely fashion.
- Create a transparent system for measuring progress of student subgroups toward interim benchmarks to ensure accelerated progress. (5.3)
 - The school analyzes student performance and teacher development data when it revises its school-wide plans. Cabinet meeting agendas include gap analysis of student work and observation and walkthrough reflections to ensure alignment of the school's long-term expectations. As of yet, the school has not developed a system for measuring student progress so that midcourse revisions to pedagogy and curriculum are made in a timely fashion to ensure that all students' needs are being met.
 - The school's differentiated planning template includes planning for specific groups of students and denotes particular skills and strategies to be taught. However, systems for measuring progress toward interim goals for individual students and/or student subgroups are not yet fully embedded across the school.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: The Mount Hope Centennial 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