

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

Elementary School X035

Franz Siegel

**261 East 163rd Street
Bronx
NY 10451**

Principal: Graciela Navarro

Dates of review: Tuesday, October 25 - 26, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Dolores Esposito

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 035 Franz Siegel is an Elementary school with 657 students from Kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 32% Black, 66% Hispanic, and 1% Asian and 0% other students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 12% 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 94.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and faculty are deeply committed to focused curriculum development to close the achievement gap for all students. (1.1)
 - The school has developed clear grade specific performance indicators and key standards that are also aligned to the Common Core Standards. For example, the school's Treasures reading program explicitly indicates the key standards that focus on fluency and comprehension which are emphasized in each teaching cycle. This was evident in reading and writing curriculum units that were shared by administration and teachers that focus on informational texts across the grades. As a result, teachers and administrators have meaningful discussions around designing tasks and lessons that meet the needs of all students as evidenced in the formative writing assessment results reviewed during meetings.
 - Teachers look at student work and formative assessments collaboratively during grade meetings to refine their units of study and plans. For example, teachers in the upper grades examine student work in writing and mathematics to determine common needs across the grades against standards. These form the basis for determining class goals that focus on building stamina in writing and critical thinking skills in mathematics. This process also facilitates their ability to determine key teaching points in their lessons that foster cognitive student engagement for all learners. As a result, academic tasks encompass these identified skills that are used to refine their curriculum units across the grade. Consequently, writing samples from a diversity of students show more depth in terms of content in the use of mathematical language and the use of revision strategies to enhance their writing craft.
- The school makes effective organizational decisions that align well with the school goals and improve the quality of student work. (1.3)
 - The principal has mobilized resources to support teachers' ability to meet the individual needs of students in support of the school goals. One example is her use of additional staff to support students with the greatest need including English language learners and students with disabilities. As a result, there is progress evident on formative assessments that were shared during teacher meetings. Another example is the departmentalized school structure in the upper grades for literacy and social studies with one teacher, and mathematics and science with another. This structure enables students to have an extended block of time of integrated instruction, and provides teachers an opportunity to focus in only two content areas. They have multiple structured opportunities during the week to plan and design lessons to strengthen their practice to improve the quality of student work that was shared during the meetings. This structure has supported the school's goal to improve student performance outcomes as measured by the New York State English language arts assessments. Teachers are matched based on strength, interest and need which results in greater collegiality

amongst staff and improved teaching practices that focus on content embedded lessons in mathematics that were observed during classroom visits. Teachers include process strategies that emphasize mathematical concepts and integrate mathematical language in their discourse. The use of technology during instruction was also evident across the various subjects and grade levels. Consequently, there are strategic teaching practices that were evident during classroom visits that bolster student achievement, as evidenced on the most recent progress report and current samples of student work that show progress from their drafts to final products.

- The school has a data driven culture that focuses on student outcomes across the grades to effectively gauge the overall status of the school's progress. (2.1)
 - The leadership gathers and effectively analyzes multiple data sources to ensure that teachers and students have clear expectations for teaching and learning, so that student achievement is maximized. For example, the school's data based curriculum is well aligned to key state standards across the grades and subjects with an eye towards alignment with the Common Core Standards in order to close the achievement gap for students. As a result, students benefit from engaging learning experiences that deepen content knowledge and improve student learning based on grade level standards and formative assessments.
 - After a careful analysis of formative and summative assessments, the leadership provides teachers with actionable, research based feedback for English language learners and students with disabilities. As a result, the school is able to target resources that meet their needs effectively as evidenced in action plans and feedback forms that were shared during the teacher team meetings. These resources include leveled texts with a range of genres to support school goals with the Common Core Standards. In addition, the school is able to effectively assess teacher practice and provide focused support to improve student outcomes.
- Teachers and teacher teams align assessments to curriculum that improve teaching practices across the classrooms. (2.2)
 - Teachers have developed assessment tools that enable them to have effective discussions about instructional decisions that include the use of rubrics. For example, during grade meetings teachers examine student work in writing and use a common rubric that is aligned to the curriculum. As a result, they are able to assess the effectiveness of the writing against the standards and revise grade level curricular benchmarks. Some of these identified gaps also inform classroom level decisions that effectively target student learning. Across many classrooms, teachers ask questions that promote critical thinking. Consequently, there is a better understanding of teaching practices that foster student learning, such as the use of good questioning techniques to provide students with clear next steps during conferences.

- Teachers routinely incorporate checks for understanding during whole class lessons and during small group work, based on their review of student data. For example, during the mini-lessons teachers ask questions to assess if students met the learning objectives. During small group instruction, teachers also ask questions to clarify content or student misconceptions. The student data includes formative assessments and supports the practice of promoting student reflection. As a result, students are beginning to write about their reflections in mathematics at the end of each unit as discussed with teachers and students. This becomes critical information in order to adjust instruction appropriately and improve student performance as evidenced on the school's formative and state assessments. These adjustments in the area of mathematics have resulted in a 9.4% increase in proficiency levels.
- The leadership supports the development of teachers resulting in improved student work. (4.1)
 - There is a cohesive effort from administration in providing focused support for all staff. The principal and the respective assistant principal meet with all of the teachers individually to discuss student data, goals and support. These conversations also include their work around the Common Core Standards. Even though there is very little turnover, new teachers receive extensive support from administration, mentors, coaches and their peers. As a result, teachers receive differentiated oral and written feedback from administration with clear next steps for improvement in teacher practice and student work. During grade meetings and classroom visits, teacher feedback provides students with guidance to improve their work and was evident in some lesson plans.
 - Teachers are receptive to feedback from administration and colleagues in support of school wide improvement. “ I have grown tremendously in this school”, “I now know what true planning looks like” is the general feeling amongst staff. The school has embraced the Danielson Framework as a guide to help frame common expectations for teacher practice across the school. For example, teacher feedback includes the use of data to plan instruction based on the formative assessments. Teachers are clear about the areas for development and implement the recommendations in their classrooms after collaborating with their colleagues during grade meetings. Teacher feedback is used to plan with their colleagues and used to refine their goals. As a result, there is a more cohesive school culture that establishes clear expectations and supports reflective teaching practices shared during grade meetings.
- The leadership has clear systems for organizing and evaluating data so that student learning is maximized across the grades. (5.2)
 - The administrative staff and faculty meet regularly during cabinet, inquiry team, grade and faculty meetings to review and evaluate useful grade level and school wide assessment practices that align to the Common Core Standards. There are structured daily and weekly opportunities to evaluate and adjust assessment systems in the school. These meetings include a review of end of unit assessments in reading and writing based

on the Treasures Program, Fountas and Pinnell levels, and English language arts practice tests. In mathematics, the school uses a wide range of assessments from Everyday Math Program and other formative assessments. These are tracked on a spreadsheet that is reviewed by each assistant principal and then shared with the principal to assess and evaluate practices across the school. As a result, staff is able to gauge meaningful information about student strengths, interests and needs that inform the planning for the Common Core units of study. In addition, some of these units incorporate student reflections which capture student learning in meaningful ways across the content areas. These are also used to adjust assessments practices across the grades to provide current student learning trends.

- School leaders and staff are engaged in frequent conversations about the various data systems that teachers use to assess student learning. After a careful review of the math data, some students did not make progress towards meeting grade level standards. As a result, teachers developed a math scoring rubric that is aligned to the state standards. The use of this rubric enables teachers to adjust specific learning targets for students and plan extended support or enrichment opportunities. In addition, teachers review a wide range of data to effectively analyze patterns and trends during grade meetings. This forms the basis for curricular adjustments that inform and target learning goals for students. As a result, progress in mathematics is evident in formative and summative assessments across classrooms. In addition, current student information is shared with parents through weekly and monthly newsletters to promote the coherence of practices across the school.

What the school needs to improve

- Expand the opportunities for differentiation of teaching strategies that are consistently aligned to student data so that student learning is maximized. (1.2)
 - While teaching practices are aligned to a clear set of beliefs that is student centered across classrooms, there is some lack of consistency in developing teaching practices that target student learning in their zone of proximal development. Teachers use data to plan for a workshop model approach in their daily instruction and afford students the opportunity to work in groups independently to differentiate learning. However, it is unclear how data is used to organize these groups and how strategies are selected during this time across classrooms. As a result, there are missed opportunities for learning for some students who are not challenged enough, while other English language learners struggle to complete assignments with insufficient classroom supports. Consequently, some of the subgroups, including students with disabilities are not able to make substantial progress based on classroom visits and student data that was shared during the meetings, compared to other subgroups.
- Deepen the goal setting process for individual students and subgroups to strengthen student learning. (3.2)
 - Although teachers collaboratively set goals for their subgroups, classes and subject areas across the grades, they have not yet utilized all of the

data systems consistently to refine and differentiate learning goals for individual students. Teachers shared various examples of classroom goals which sometimes included short and long term goals for students. These are uneven across the grades in terms of rigor. As a result, teachers are currently unable to consistently set high leverage goals that target specific strategies to enhance student learning, based on grade level standards. This was evident in a classroom with English language learners who need additional support to deepen their language development to enhance their writing skills. As a result, there are missed opportunities to utilize effective instructional strategies that cognitively engage students in the learning process.

- Establish a coherent process for providing student feedback across the grades in order to make timely adjustments to the instructional program. (3.3)
 - Although staff uses a wide range of data sources to track student progress and provides students and parents with feedback, it was not consistently observed across the grades as a systemic habit of practice. During classroom visits, there was some student work in notebooks and folders that had very specific teacher feedback. However, there was a range in the quality, volume and consistency of the feedback across classrooms. In addition, parents also receive a wide range of feedback regarding their children's progress. For example, parents in the lower grades receive weekly updates while some of the upper grades receive it monthly. As a result, some students are unclear about articulating specific next steps to assist them in their learning and sometimes struggle to explain their goals even though they may be able to figure it out using other classroom resources. In addition, this impedes the school's ability to effectively support students in meeting grade level standards and expectations.
- Develop strategic systems for monitoring progress towards school goals. (5.3)
 - Although the administrative team and staff carefully review a wide range of formative and summative assessments, there is still not a cohesive school wide system for monitoring progress towards interim goals throughout the year. For example, the principal reviews and monitors goals and student data with every teacher throughout the year, but this is not yet a consistent practice with the rest of the administrative team and staff. Teachers also discussed different ways for monitoring progress towards interim goals. Some that were shared during teacher meetings were more comprehensive than others. Even though there are different systems to monitor student progress across the school, these are not as cohesive yet. As a result, teachers do not yet have a consistent, process to monitor the progress of their subgroups as evidenced during the teacher meetings. Consequently, it impedes the school's ability to develop and adjust action plans to address the gaps in student learning effectively.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: Franz Siegel	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	
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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