

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 047 John Randolph
Elementary school X047

1794 EAST 172 STREET
BRONX
NY 10472

Principal: THOMAS GUARNIERI

Dates of review: February 14, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Myrna Rodriguez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 047 John Randolph is an Elementary school with 1147 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 25% Black, 63% Hispanic, 1% White, 8% Asian students and 3% other students. The student body includes 19% English language learners and 11% 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 93.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school maintains a high level of mutual trust, respect and positive attitudes that support learning and personal growth for faculty, staff and students, (1.4)
 - o Students are enthusiastic about learning and have high expectations of themselves and the adults that teach them. Parents and students attribute their success to the Principal and assistant principals who promote a learning culture that embraces the use of data, including the School Survey, and behavioral reports to improve student progress. As a result students are willing to do extra, including coming in early, work during lunchtime in order to achieve learning goals, such as improving their reading level. School data indicate that reading levels show marked improvement for a majority of students
 - o All students belong to a small learning community led by an Assistant Principal, coaches and teacher leaders. As a result, students say they are well known by several adults in their learning community. This effort is coordinated by instructional teams to ensure that child and youth development supports are in place. Academic supports in the form of in-class push-in teachers, and before and after school individual tutoring are in place for all students. This produces high levels of student achievement as evidenced in student work products that demonstrate authentic research, high levels of thinking including analysis, evaluation and reflection by students.
- The school aligns its curricula to key state standards in reading and writing and incorporates the Arts to engage a variety of learners. (1.1)
 - o The school has diligently integrated the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) within its curricula in order to close the achievement gap. The school has selected key standards, including the city recommended instructional standards in English and Math and writing to promote increased learning. The school recognizes that the English language learners and special needs students must have more targeted instruction so they have various push in teachers and staff who work directly with them. Across classrooms higher order skills and tasks are emphasized as the means to achieve high level student work products. Student data throughout all grades show progressive achievement for varied groups of students in class and reading assessments based on Fountas and Pinell and Early Childhood Literacy Assessment System data.
 - o The leadership and faculty use student work and data to develop tasks and projects for classes and across the grades. The whole school has several projects throughout the year, such as multicultural themes, and most recently, Black history month projects. These projects are geared to promoting student learning integrating literacy, social studies, science and math with the Arts focusing on comparisons, evaluations, and analysis of information. The tasks for each grade level are developed using the CCLS so that learning outcomes are at high levels for all students. Teachers ensure that various entry points, rigorous vocabulary and writing tasks are developed for the different grades, English language learners and special needs students ensuring that all students are cognitively engaged and produce high levels of student work.
- The leadership has developed teacher pedagogy based on alignment with curricula and differentiated to meet student needs. (1.2)

- o The majority of teachers align their teaching practices based on a set of beliefs of how students learn best. They believe that through Balanced Literacy and targeted vocabulary development through accountable talk all students can achieve high levels of success. In most classes, evidence of these beliefs include targeted vocabulary throughout lessons, and student conversations and responses are vocabulary rich and embedded in the units of study. This results in more engagement of students in accountable talk that guides them to achieve the learning outcomes of the class lessons.
- o Teachers effectively use questioning to elicit high order thinking from their students. This is evident throughout the class lessons, as teachers coach students to respond with content vocabulary and in small groups as students converse to accomplish tasks. High levels of student work in portfolios, projects, displayed work, and student discourse are the results of the teachers' use of purposeful questioning.
- The school aligns assessments to curricula and analyzes student learning outcomes to adjust instructional strategies and practices across classrooms and within teams. (2.2)
 - o Teams of teachers use various assessments and have adapted rubrics from the CCLS to analyze student learning outcomes in order to adjust classroom level curricular and instructional decisions. Teachers adjust student goals based on this analysis, and scaffold lessons or provide extensions for individuals or groups of students who have demonstrated high levels of achievement. Teachers incorporate different strategies shared by coaches and teachers based on the analysis of student outcomes. Teachers share their outcomes within teams and with the instructional cabinet. The leadership provides continuous monthly feedback to improve or revise instructional strategies through targeted professional development, one on one coaching by the assistant principals and coaches, and whole team coaching. The school adjusts teacher and staff schedules to meet the needs of each class, including pushing in teachers, coaches, and staff to provide targeted instruction. As a result, targeted individuals or groups of students receive the extra attention, which has shown to be successful by the results of class grade assessments, student work and improved reading levels.
 - o Across classrooms teachers use on-going assessment checks for understanding by the use of strategic questioning throughout the lesson, and having students display their work publicly throughout the lesson. This allows the teacher to know if students understand the content, and allows them to determine whether to individually tutor, form a small group for conferencing or do a whole class review. As a result, all students are engaged and held accountable for their learning.
- The leadership has a coherent strategy to support student learning making strategic organizational decisions that meet student needs and support key instructional goals. (1.3)
 - o Through the strong leadership of the principal, the school community has made the commitment to meet weekly in inquiry and grade teams. Teacher teams effectively use their time to review and revise the curricula, plan future lessons and design tasks so that they meet students learning needs.

- o The leadership strategically manages the budget to ensure that student needs are met by providing multiple push in teachers and staff in all classrooms, effectively reducing the ratio of adult to student. The school provides the necessary teacher supports to assure that English language learners and special needs students have direct instructional services within and out of class. This is an expensive model but it has resulted in significant increase in student outcomes as evidenced in periodic, reading and class assessments.
- The school uses the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate teacher pedagogy and has strategies to enhance professional growth for all teachers. (4.1)
 - o All teachers have had at least three informals and one formal observation in which feedback is both oral and written. Teachers are supported through the feedback they receive regarding student work and data from various assessments. This collaboration between the leadership and teachers results in improved teacher performance as reflected in student work products and data.
 - o School leaders offer feedback to teachers emphasizing strengths and next steps to improve instruction using the Danielson framework and rubrics. The leadership and teachers have attended various professional development activities in the use of this framework that allows teachers to learn about their craft and sets clear expectations for their work. As a result, the leadership and teachers have set the focus and the lens through which observations are made, improving teacher delivery of instruction.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen the analysis of data to identify a clear portrait of the school's strengths and needs including progress of high achieving students and attendance. (2.1)
 - o . The school regularly gathers summative and formative data for subgroups such as the English language learners and special needs students, but specific data analysis and next steps for accelerating the learning of high achievers is not as developed. The absence of detailed analysis of the progress of higher achieving students limits teachers' abilities to develop and design higher levels of enriching tasks and assignments that promote advanced learning.
 - o Currently, leaders analyze the attendance trends of all students to develop differentiated support strategies for groups of students and individuals. However, the action plans and strategies to improve attendance are not comprehensive or proactive enough in targeting students who may be close to becoming "at-risk" thus limiting opportunities to prevent absence issues that adversely affect learning outcomes.
- Further develop tools and analyze grading policies so that student performance trends accurately inform instruction and curriculum. (2.3)
 - o The school has developed tools for gathering various data such as enhancing ARIS with school adaptations to capture more data for analysis of student mastery. However, the performance trends of some key subgroups, because they do not have targeted interventions, are not currently used to inform some instructional and school decisions. These groups include high level achieving students, students in temporary housing, and students who have moderate lateness or attendance issues which affect their learning, This impedes the school from further improving instruction.

- o The school grading policy provides meaningful data about student performance and mastery at the class level, but currently does not fully inform curricular, instructional and organizational decisions. Although the current grading policy and class assessments are designed to provide feedback to students about their progress, there is not a clear alignment between the two systems resulting in conflicting messages about mastery of skill in class work versus achievement in benchmark assessments. As a result, the school's ability to provide accurate and meaningful data is limited.
- Extend parent engagement to include students' next learning steps and expectations that will promote post-secondary success. (2.4)
 - o Parents agree that the strength of the school lies in the continuous dialogue they have with teachers, staff and the leadership. Teachers call home for many reasons, including praising student effort. Parents are aware of student goals and to a lesser degree, next learning steps. Parents and students know next steps for improving reading skills, but are not fully aware of how to improve other subject areas including writing, social studies, and science. This limits opportunities for students to receive support at home.
 - o School leaders regularly engage families in school decision making around school activities rather than instructional activities such as deciding what educational trips for each grade will benefit their children, as expressed by some parents. Although the school has an open exchange about student progress data with families, some parents indicated that information regarding students' next instructional steps to achieve goals is not clearly defined. As a result, the school misses the opportunity to improve student performance by fully engaging parents to support student learning.
- Effectively and consistently analyze data to set differentiated learning goals for student subgroups and students in need of additional supports (3.2)
 - o Individual teachers and teacher teams gather and analyze data to determine students' weaknesses and strengths in order to plan lessons and differentiate their learning tasks. However, in most classes students who need extensions are not assigned work that is sufficiently challenging. Some students, when questioned conveyed that they had extra work to do, or could read a book, or look over their work, but in many cases, the work did not promote high levels of engagement or thinking. As a result the opportunity to accelerate the learning of some students is limited.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 047 John Randolph	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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