

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

I.S. 206 Ann Mersereau
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school X206

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BRONX
NY 10468

Principal: DAVID NEERING

Dates of review: December 5-6, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Nadya Awadallah

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. 206 Ann Mersereau is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 391 students from grade 5 through grade 8. The school population comprises 15% Black, 81% Hispanic, 1% White, 3% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 29% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 91.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- A respectful tone in the school creates a culture that supports academic growth for students and adults. (1.4)
 - o The school staff uses attendance data, incident reports, the Learning Environment Survey to gain feedback from parents to improve programs, policy and supports. Additionally, the staff implements the program titled Overcoming Obstacles to improve the school's environment and create a positive learning culture in the school for both the students and the staff. This produces a family-like atmosphere where adolescents develop socially, emotionally as well academically.
 - o The school's open-door policy promotes communication and a welcoming environment for staff, parents and students to discuss issues and address concerns. Additionally, the school leadership, guidance personnel and teacher specialists meet with classroom teachers weekly to review data, discuss individual student's needs and identify students who require additional interventions. This practice has resulted in each student being well known by faculty and receiving support for success in school.
- The principal and his cabinet make strategic organizational decisions well aligned to the schools instructional goals and long-range plans. (1.3)
 - o School budget and resources were leveraged to allow the entire staff to be trained in the Collins Writing Program, improving student performance through writing and thinking across curriculum. The school also placed state-of-the-art technology including smartboards for all students. These resources support the schools key writing standard and advance the effective use of digital learning.(a)
 - o The school maximizes the use of human resources such as teams of teachers sharing responsibility for groups of students, coaches, and external consultants who share expertise and collaborate with teachers and administrators. Teachers are grouped in common planning teams based on subject and grade level and have targeted groups of students during the extended day that did not make adequate progress on the ELA State tests. Inquiry and Common Planning Teacher Teams meet a minimum of one time per week, to discuss student progress, plan for curriculum reform and assess their practice. Small groups of struggling students are assisted in reading skills through Implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI) using National Reading Styles as primary, reading intervention. These decisions result in improved instructional practice that engage students in meaningful tasks.
- School leaders utilize an effective classroom observation system, which is proactive and differentiated resulting in reflective practice in order to elevate student outcomes. (4.1)
 - o The principal maintains a portfolio for each teacher that includes goals, snapshots and formal observation reports. A feedback sheet that identifies the specific focus of the classroom visit captures strengths, challenges and next steps to support teacher's development. In addition, the leadership is working collaboratively with teacher teams around norming good practices to work toward

consistency of teacher development and to improve teaching and learning. These data sources along with student data and work products inform decisions regarding teacher evaluation and tenure. This portfolio coupled with an analysis of learning outcomes is being used to provide actionable feedback to teachers and next steps for professional growth and reflection resulting in elevated instructional practices.

- o The school is using a research based rubric for evaluating instructional practices. All teachers reference the rubric for self-reflection and use a common language when discussing professional growth with school leaders. As a result, mutually agreed upon differentiated support is provided to teachers in the form of coaching, inter-visitations, mentoring and targeted professional development to improve teacher practices.
- School leaders and faculty regularly analyze assessment data to track student performance and progress, which effectively informs classroom level curricular and instructional decisions. (2.2)
 - o Administrators and school staff strategic use of summative and formative data, rubrics, and student work, informs planning and grouping of students, that change based on student progress, needs, and interests. As a result, teachers are now focusing on vocabulary development, comprehension skills, persuasive writing across grades and subjects and the use of key questions to engage students in deeper thinking and understanding.
 - Teachers across the school use daily homework assignments, lesson exit slips, notebooks, common rubrics, and grade and class lessons to monitor and assess student needs and progress. This supports teachers in using timely instructional information to make adjustments to meet student needs and increase learning. Students speak highly of the fact they receive support from their teachers during lunch periods or after school.
- The curriculum at the school is sound and coherent resulting in standards-based academic programs promoting high levels of student learning. (1.1)
 - o The principal actively engages members of the school community, including school leadership team constituents, to revise curriculum maps and units of study to include key State standards and new Common Core learning standards (CCLS) and tasks. Teachers and school leaders carefully construct units of study in math and literacy, which engage students in a rigorous and complex task as a unit. Based on the analysis of student work, academic tasks are complemented with modified rubrics for targeted groups of students, such as English language learners. In addition, there is a strong emphasis on writing across the curriculum, hence, students' writing products reflect higher level of cognitive engagement across grade levels.
- The dedicated principal and staff have created a data centered action plan that is well focused on long and short term goals and accelerates student learning. (3.3)
 - o School leaders and staff use student benchmark results, periodic assessment data, and teacher made assessments to monitor students' progress throughout the year and to set long and short term goals. Teachers meet weekly with the literacy coach and math coach to review student work to ascertain progress towards goals set for each class and individual students. The school leadership meets regularly to review data and recommendations of the teacher teams leading to revisions in school plans that support student learning.

- o As teachers collaboratively refine goals for student learning, these are leveraged to improve classroom practice and provide feedback to families on student progress via report cards, individual teacher outreach, and student progress reports to inform of student performance. This helps parents develop a deep understanding of exactly where their children are as learners and provide recommendations to elevate them to the next learning step.

What the school needs to improve

- Promote consistency in the use of differentiated instructional strategies across the school to strategically meet the individual needs of all students. (1.2)
 - o Instructional strategies and routines are differentiated across classrooms, enabling students to work in small groups on designated learning activities. However, strategic assignment, flexibility in grouping and standards for accountable talk are not consistent enough to sufficiently meet diverse needs of English Language Learners. The school focuses on various levels of questioning which are incorporated into lessons to encourage discussion and increase student thinking. However, lesson extensions and specific scaffolds for English language learners are not fully embedded to push their thinking and broaden their learning experiences so that they meet their full potential. As a result, English language learners are not always fully engaged to participate in discussions and increase their learning.
- Revise school plans to include targeted long-term goals that focus on school improvement and integration of the Common Core Standards. (5.3)
 - o The school successfully measures and monitors performance of individual students over time, especially in literacy. However, the leadership team has not yet developed multi-year plans to reach a clear vision or measurable interim benchmarks of progress towards school and subgroup goals. At this time, this results in unclear measures of school performance, and limits the schools ability to measure the efficacy of curricular and programmatic decisions as it moves to integrate the Common Core Standards.
- Promote greater consistency in the use of classroom-level data to differentiate goal setting so that all lessons are rigorous and engage students at their level. (3.2)
 - o Teachers use data regularly to set students learning goals across grades and subjects to improve learning. However, goals are sometimes broad and lack specific interim benchmarks, particularly for English language learners and do not lead to necessary supports or extensions. Consequently, learning goals for some students are not timely, and well defined, leading to the lack of differentiated tasks matched to students needs.
- Expand partnerships and community links to support students and teachers with services that support students' academic, social, and emotional needs. (4.4)
 - o The school implements Overcoming Obstacles as their advisory program that comprises the core of the schools infrastructure around increased academic achievement and improved school environments. This component of the school is the key vehicle for ensuring consistent, effective communication between assorted staff members, students and families so that students experience maximum success in class projects, summative tests, and daily social

interactions. The school has also developed an after school partnership with Good Shepherd Services which facilitates visual arts, choir, literacy and math instruction aligned to standards to engage students. At this time, however, the school does not yet have a rich variety of professional development opportunities through which teachers may further develop their own range of strategies for dealing with the social complexities of the schools' age group.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: I.S. 206 Ann Mersereau	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