

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Eubie Blake Elementary School

Elementary School K025

**787 Lafayette Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11221**

Principal: Anita Coley

Dates of review: November 27-28, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Eubie Blake School is an elementary school with 325 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 79% Black, 19% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 90.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has aligned the curriculum, including the arts, to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to ensure that students make progress in their learning. (1.1)
 - Teachers have developed curriculum maps and units of study that are aligned to the CCLS in all subject areas and by grade levels. These are shared and discussed across grades during the monthly cross-grade teacher team meetings where teachers meet with colleagues who teach one grade below and one grade above to ensure alignment of the curriculum throughout the school. In keeping with citywide instructional shifts, lessons in English language arts include the implementation of a literature-based program to deepen the level of questioning, provoke thinking and discussion and encourage students to use text evidence to support arguments. The art teacher integrates curricular units in science and social studies with visual arts. Currently, students are studying about the effects pollution has on the environment and what people can do to protect it. As a culminating art activity students are designing individual posters to message the unit's theme. Students also conduct research, use technology and go on field trips as extensions to the concepts taught in class and enrichment of their learning experiences. Additionally, teachers use student work and formative assessment outcomes, such as rubrics, to plan and develop tasks that challenge and engage individual and groups of students at high levels including students with disabilities and English language learners. This level of instructional planning and implementation has led to increased student progress and achievement in the areas of English language arts and math as measured by the school receiving an A in performance and a higher overall grade on its latest Progress Report and confirmed by current student performance tasks in these areas.
- Instructional practices offer multiple entry points and challenging tasks to engage students in thinking at high levels. (1.2)
 - The school has articulated and implemented a research-based teaching framework that reflects the school's belief on how children learn. Throughout the school they are focusing on print rich classroom environments, shared inquiry, higher order questioning and accountable talk. In several classrooms students engaged in discussions that challenged their thinking and generated subject area vocabulary usage, as in a science class where children were encouraged to explain the evidence that supported their hypothesis. Additionally, teachers use the workshop model in English language arts and math to present mini-lessons and provide differentiated learning opportunities for all students. Some of these include the use of the push-in model for instructional paraprofessionals to work with students with disabilities and employing an English as a second language teacher to work with English language learners in the classrooms to accommodate individual students' learning needs. Cluster teachers also push-in to classrooms several times weekly to assist students requiring additional support with specific skills and lesson mastery. Consequently, there is greater participation of all students at high levels, including student subgroups, as

observed in classroom conversations and activities and student work products that reflect the school's curricular goals in these areas.

- The school has aligned assessments with key standards and curricula to adjust instruction to meet the needs of all students to support improved student mastery. (2.2)
 - The school uses multiple assessments and annotated rubrics aligned to the school's key standards that include deepening questioning and comprehension, extending writing in all subject areas and solving complex math problems, to continuously monitor student achievement. These measures include summative, formative and periodic assessments, running records and analysis of student work. Additionally, the school recently purchased a computer-based program in reading and math that provides instant feedback for all classes and offers prescribed next steps on completed tasks to students and staff. Teachers access the information for individual students and the whole class, and administrators retrieve the information for all students and classes in the school to note progress and plan instruction based on outcomes. Teachers also confer with individual students and use the conference notes for feedback and adjustments on an immediate basis. Furthermore, there is written feedback on posted student work with comments for growth. As a result of these data analyses, teachers address student academic needs in a timely manner and adjust instructional plans to ensure ongoing student progress.
- School leaders use a research-based framework to assess instructional practices, provide feedback, articulate expectations and design professional development activities that support teacher growth. (4.1)
 - Using a set of agreed-upon instructional expectations, administrators conduct short, frequent classroom visits to provide immediate feedback through written notes, conversations and a checklist aligned to those expectations. Leaders give priority to new teachers, teachers new to the profession or new to the school and teachers in need of support. Action Plans were developed for every teacher in the school to provide differentiated opportunities for professional growth with new teachers receiving additional support from “buddy” teachers, mentors and other colleagues. The school hired a consultant who works closely with teachers in math and this year the school purchased the optional package offered by the network that provides intensive support services from network specialists for teachers and other staff to further improve teaching and maximize learning. Teachers and administrators incorporate standards into their collaborative team discussions and analyze student work and aspects of their teaching to assess what instructional skills need to be further developed to assist and move students to higher levels of performance. Teachers also eagerly share best practices and seek out strategies that have proven to be successful with students in their classrooms. These interactions and conversations have resulted in developing a culture of trust among teachers that promotes continuous drive for professional growth to improve practices. For example, in one classroom visited, the teacher used questioning scaffolds, an improved teaching skill gained through these measures, in order to generate higher order thinking for deeper discussions.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to extend communication of instructional expectations and career pathways among families to increase involvement and maximize student achievement. (3.4)
 - The school offers varied opportunities for parent involvement that include curricular workshops, monthly progress reports and orientation sessions to inform them of expectations. Despite these efforts, parental response and levels of involvement have not significantly increased. Consequently, progress towards their children's achievement and success in school and its connection to a path of college and career readiness is not clearly understood by all parents, thus limiting the potential impact on student growth.
 - Standards-based rubrics in literacy, writing and math were created by teachers at the team level for student self-reflection and assessment of their work. In addition, students now use textual supports to provide evidence in non-fiction writing assignments and classroom discussions. However, this is not as readily visible across all content areas as yet. Therefore, student ownership of learning is not fully embedded school-wide, especially in student subgroups. This hinders student preparation for higher levels of work.
- Expand school processes to more purposefully evaluate parent outreach for communicating expectations of the CCLS in order to accelerate student achievement. (5.1)
 - The school has processes in place to assess the level of implementation of the CCLS and instructional practices to make adjustments as needed based on outcomes. These include regularly scheduled analysis of school-wide unit and periodic assessment outcomes, analysis of student work at the teacher team and classroom levels, active participation of school leaders at teacher team meetings and classroom visits. However, though these systems are embedded for English language arts and math, they have only recently been expanded to include all content areas. As a result, these systemic evaluations are not as completely developed, limiting the feedback and lessening the potential impact on student success.
 - The school has established protocols that integrate teacher feedback and support parent involvement to deepen levels of school culture and enhance understanding of the CCLS expectations. Further, the school continually assesses levels of parent participation, attendance at workshops and responses to written communication. However, despite this outreach and ongoing evaluation, parent participation has not substantially increased. This limits the degree of coherence in the culture of the school and restricts the universal in-depth understanding of the CCLS among parents, thus hindering student progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Eubie Blake Elementary School	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score			X				
Instructional Core							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula, including the arts, physical and health education, 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 that is informed by a research-based, common teaching framework and is aligned to curricula, engaging and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products?			X				
2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels?			X				
School Culture							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?			X				
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?			X				
Systems for Improvement							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet students' learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			X				
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching with a research-based, common teaching framework 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				
5.1 Evaluate the quality of school- level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS?			X				
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed