

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**P. S. 59 William Floyd**

**Elementary K059**

**211 Throop Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11206**

**Principal: Dawn Best**

**Dates of review: March 4 - 5, 2013**

**Lead Reviewer: Alicja Winnicki**

## **Part 1: The school context**

### **Information about the school**

P.S. 059 William Floyd is an elementary school with 418 students from Kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 49% Black, 50% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 91.1%.

### **Overall Evaluation**

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school leaders effectively use a research based teaching framework to support teacher development with targeted feedback to enhance pedagogy and student growth. (4.1)
  - The principal and two assistant principals regularly provide teachers with actionable, instructional feedback that is guided by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE). Additionally, all teachers have participated in professional development aimed at common understanding of the framework. Moreover, there is continuous effort in providing new teachers and those new to a grade level with added professional support from consultants and the support network, especially in planning and student assessment. Frequent cycles of classroom observations are regularly scheduled for all teachers and specifically focused on teaching competencies. Each short feedback observation is followed by a structured one to one conversation with administrators providing specific and immediately applicable instructional strategies. Furthermore, school leaders look at student work and achievement data and offer more specific feedback that is also linked to professional development effectively aligned with their suggestions, thus meeting the needs of individual teachers. As one teacher said, “I was observed several times this year and received helpful feedback with a list of teaching strategies I was able to implement in the classroom”. As a result, teachers use meaningful feedback from observations as well as data from student work to improve their instructional strategies to meet student needs.
  - A review of formal and informal classroom observation reports reveals that school leaders use the Danielson’s rubric and adhere to the school specific areas of professional development. For example, informal reports capture strengths, such as providing ample wait time for students to respond with textual evidence. At the same time, teachers receive clearly outlined next steps. Additionally, school leaders follow up with focused formal and informal observations to monitor teacher and student growth and offer on-going support. As a result, consistent school-wide teacher development is improving instructional planning as evidenced by including strategies for student assessment and engagement.
- Grade level teacher teams work on integrating the Common Core Learning Standards in curriculum and analyze student work and assessment data to ensure student progress toward identified school goals. (4.2)
  - Most teachers meet at least once a week in grade level teams to work on aligning curriculum maps with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). They are in the process of analyzing student writing and other student achievement data such as the results from periodic assessments. Teachers are developing processes for monitoring student progress toward school goals, especially in reading and writing. For example, teachers compare the results of writing pre-assessments from the beginning of the school year to post-assessments from instructional units of study to identify areas for student growth, especially in writing

mechanics. Additionally, teachers are beginning to develop plans to incorporate learning strategies such as underlining or highlighting for improvement of writing conventions in shared writing and morning meetings. Furthermore, they have begun to share teaching practices and professional resources and articles that may support their work toward goals for improving student writing. As a result, students' published pieces, especially in response to reading, have improved in punctuation and the use of grammar and vocabulary.

- The principal makes decisions to use resources in alignment with school goals that result in support for professional collaboration and strengthened instructional capacity. (1.3)
  - The school's vision is to increase academic rigor across all content areas. Administrators align the budget and apply for various grants to purchase technology and new programs, bring partnerships and offer extracurricular activities for the students. For example, new writing and spelling programs were purchased in response to a need for building a stronger foundation in student writing. These programs, *Johnny Can Spell*, and the Scholastic's *Writing Traits* are implemented in grades 1 -5. Additionally, the principal, through a grant, maintained a Reading Recovery teacher who services students in early childhood classes by providing reading interventions. Similarly, a Spanish dual language Kindergarten class was opened as a result of a grant and in response to identified student needs in early childhood. Consequently, all identified students, including English language learners, receive prescribed interventions and participate in programs that help them become more proficient readers and writers as evidenced by student work products. Furthermore, partnerships such as the one with the consultants from the Australian United States Services in Education (AUSSIE) in special education, literacy and math are utilized to facilitate additional instructional help for teachers. These initiatives are increasing learning opportunities and supports to the academic programs for all learners.
  - Teacher programs and student schedules are structured to provide time for grade level teams to meet weekly and for teachers to visit each other to observe instruction. For example, teacher preparation periods were restructured mid-year to increase time for collaboration with coaches and consultants and for intervisitation aligned to individual teacher needs and leading to improvement of instruction. The principal realized that even though the objective was to program common periods every day for grade level teams to meet, there was a growing need for making arrangements for teachers' inter-class visits. Therefore the adjustments were made. Additionally, student schedules are organized to provide opportunities for academic interventions. Consequently, all grade level teachers have increased opportunities leading to improvement of instruction and building professional capacity.

## What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that across grade and content areas, academic tasks are planned to cognitively engage all learners, including English language learners and special education students in rigorous curriculum. (1.1)
  - The school is in the process of aligning curricula and lessons with the CCLS as revealed by a review of curriculum artifacts and the school's "at a glance" planning reference. The Common Core Curriculum Maps resource for grades 1 - 5 is used as a roadmap for planning instructional units of study in literacy while the Envision Math program is utilized to plan the CCLS aligned math units. The literacy maps list the standards for literature and informational text and attempt to align teaching points with priority areas. However, the documents do not reflect intentional planning for multiple entry points for diverse students and for engaging English language learners or special education students. Similarly, essential questions are an attempt to plan for higher order questioning but, as observed in classroom visits, teachers inconsistently use higher order questioning techniques that would promote development of rigorous habits for all learners, including high achievers. Consequently, all learners are not provided with cognitively engaging and challenging tasks as outlined in the CCLS thus limiting student learning and achievement.
  
- Enhance instructional practices across the school so that in all classrooms students are engaged in higher order thinking through multiple entry points and appropriately challenging tasks and discussions. (1.2)
  - The leadership has provided professional development to familiarize all teachers on the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to strengthen teacher capacity in developing multiple entry points and high order thinking and to support student engagement in discussions, based on the Danielson framework for teaching. Although teachers of classes we visited are attempting to implement UDL strategies such as graphic organizers or guided questions, questioning in lessons is mostly low level and aimed at recalling or retelling. For example, in one class we heard a teacher ask "What do you remember about multiplying numbers by 10?", while in another questions were directed at recalling information from an informational text. Similarly, embracing a developing school belief around student engagement through a turn and talk strategy, teachers in most classes are beginning to implement this practice as part of active engagement in a mini-lesson. However, lessons across the school are still predominantly teacher-centered, thus inconsistently addressing student learning styles and needs and limiting opportunities for student discussions, development of voice and higher order learning. While some UDL strategies for collaboration such as pair or group work were evident, the embedded extensions and supports of tasks were worksheet based, thus limiting student opportunities to extend their learning. Consequently, inconsistent implementation of high order questioning hampers student access to rigorous tasks and minimizes student opportunities to discuss and extend their learning.

- Improve the use of assessment practices across grade levels so that adjustments to instruction are timely and effectively meet all students' learning needs. (2.2)
  - Teachers across the school use 4-point standards based rubrics to assess student written responses to reading, personal narratives and problem solving in math. In science and social studies teachers also use standards based 2-point rubrics to assess understanding of content. In addition, upper grades teachers use data from periodic assessments such as Acuity to identify trends and skills that need to be addressed. Grade level teams are beginning to use common formative assessments, such as a baseline writing and end of a unit post-assessment, to analyze student growth and to identify skills and areas for academic improvement. Although grade level teachers have access to these results from formative and summative assessments and make effort to measure student growth, there was little evidence that those teachers make timely adjustments to their instruction. Similarly, there was limited evidence that teachers use the results of periodic and formative assessments to plan for flexible grouping or individual students. Therefore, the absence of data based instructional adjustments limits teachers' ability to address and meet students' needs.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

<b>School name: P.S. 059 William Floyd</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>		<b>X</b>					
<b>Instructional Core</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?		<b>X</b>					
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?		<b>X</b>					
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?		<b>X</b>					
<b>School Culture</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?		<b>X</b>					
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?		<b>X</b>					
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?		<b>X</b>					
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?			<b>X</b>				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an <b>inquiry approach</b> that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?		<b>X</b>					
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?		<b>X</b>					
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>