

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

The Ronald Edmonds Center

Middle School K113

**300 Adelphi Street
Brooklyn
NY 11205**

Principal: Dawnique Daughtry-Pemberton

Dates of review: November 27, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Barbara Freeman

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

MS 113 is a middle school with 894 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 77% Black, 19% Hispanic, 0% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 92%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school sustains a culture of respect and reciprocated trust towards excellence enabling academic and personal growth to flourish with adults and students. (1.4)
 - There are clear expectations about behavior, safety and respect that are part of the school's culture. The school believes in restorative practices to ensure students learn from their mistakes. The use of a 'mediation room' gives students and the staff an opportunity to "distress" during conflicts. Students participate in advisories which address topics such as bullying and respecting diversity and have a functioning student government that meets with the principal regularly. This results in an inclusive and welcoming community in which all voices are valued and solicited.
 - The school uses extensive team structures to make the school seem small. The Children are Reason Enough (CARE) team, attendance team and Pupil Personnel Team (PPT) offer assistance to students and teachers to identify supports and strategies to resolve student's academic, social and emotional problems. Guidance counselors, deans, and school leaders make a concerted effort to know all students by name and build a rapport to support them. Through these efforts attendance has increased and incidents of student behavioral infractions have decreased enabling the school community to thrive.
- The school conveys high expectations for teachers, through the use of a common framework, and students and families through consistent dialogue promoting college and career readiness and helping students attain them. (3.4)
 - School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff through faculty conferences and small group professional development. During the sessions teachers have the opportunity to work with a research-based framework to measure teacher effectiveness. Through classroom observations identified domains around student engagement and teacher questioning are discussed including the expectations for teacher practice in each component. Through these team discussions, observation data, and support from an on-site coach, teachers are supported leading to a system of mutual responsibility and accountability for high expectations in teaching and learning.
 - Through a customized website, email notifications and participation in college driven activities parents are informed of the expectations of their students from grade to grade. The school uses an electronic grading system, Teacher Eze, which allows parents to view student progress in real time. Parents are encouraged to follow-up with teachers to discuss their concerns and next steps. Activities centered around high school admissions, auditions, and specialized testing are emphasized ensuring that parents are continuously informed about their child's progress towards rigorous academic, behavioral, and social expectations. As a result, both students and families are engaged and supported in a path for college and career readiness.

- The school uses classroom observations to assess teacher practice and analyzes student work in order to provide feedback that lead to increased teacher effectiveness across the school. (4.1)
 - School leaders engage staff in 4-6 week cycles of classroom observations. Based on initial cycles and the examination of student work and progress, the school is focusing on planning, lesson delivery, classroom management, and data analysis. Teachers are informed of the focus and receive feedback within 48 hours via a written document or verbal conversation of next steps. Increasingly effective feedback to teachers is becoming a consistent practice resulting in a more focused support for the development of teachers.
 - School leaders are developing a system for using the information from teacher observations to design professional development that addresses integration of the common core learning standards (CCLS), support for the research-based framework to measure teacher effectiveness, and developing team inquiry work. Additionally, the school has used the support of external partnerships to deepen content area work. Teacher assignments are based on teacher licensure, and student growth data. Supports are provided to build capacity and teacher leadership enabling the school to have a secession plan that promotes within the building.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to strengthen the designed curricula and academic tasks to ensure it is rigorous and engaging for students leading to increased academic performance for all learners. (1.1)
 - Building on last year's work, the school selected to use a new curriculum for English language arts (ELA), math and all other content areas. Textbooks are aligned to key standards that the school has identified that require more emphasis based on student need. For example, writing across the content areas is a major focus this year. Other areas are building student vocabulary, strengthening students' understanding of complex text, and supporting their responses to questions posed and asked. Tasks centered on using and citing text-based evidence are evident in curriculum maps and teacher plans. However, curriculum maps, units of study, pacing calendars, and teachers' plans lack alignment to skills that are focused on higher order thinking or rigorous standards. This limits students' engagement with the demanding curricula.
 - Students' prior performance and assessments is the primary information used when planning academic tasks. School leaders monitor student work while observations are focused on student engagement to determine whether students are challenged by assignments. Students with disabilities (SWDs) are an identified focus group. The school has focused on understanding their needs and challenges based on their Individualized Educational Plans (IEP). In turn, they are provided with the opportunity to use instructional supports such as graphic organizers, extended time, and multiple ways of representation of their work. However, across classrooms these practices are inconsistent for

identified targeted populations, thus limiting their ability to engage in rigorous academic habits and higher order thinking skills.

- Strengthen teacher development to include a shared belief on how students learn best that is aligned to curricula and addresses the needs of all learners enabling them to produce meaningful work. (1.2)
 - The school believes that students learn best through flexible grouping, open-ended questioning, various levels of activities, and high levels of student discussion allowing all students to participate and take ownership in their learning. Teachers are seen as moderators and facilitators monitoring students' work, progress, and engagement. When needed appropriate supports for struggling students are provided. However, across classrooms student discussions were rarely emphasized during the instructional period. Additionally, teachers were engaged in lengthy teaching points limiting the amount of time students had to practice new concepts with appropriate materials thus limiting students' abilities to interact with the curriculum and produce meaningful work.
 - Teachers revisit student work and stress real-life applications to increase student engagement. Across classrooms students were grouped and worked on assigned tasks. Teachers walked around and monitored student work and engaged in conversations about their findings and next steps. Teachers use questions to clarify and assess student thinking. However, this practice was infrequent and not differentiated to support the diversified student learning needs and skill deficits within the classroom especially the schools target SWD group. This limits their ability to interact with a challenging curricula and cognitively demanding tasks resulting in student work that does not consistently demonstrate higher order thinking skills.
- Expand the alignment of common assessments to curricula with ongoing teacher assessments and the analysis of student work to make strategic instructional decisions on the grade/department and classroom level. (2.2)
 - The school's assessment calendar reflects more frequent diagnostic testing to support the instructional goals and identified key standards. Teachers use student goal sheets, mastery sheets, progress reports, unit exam and exit slips as other means of assessment. Each content area has established its own grading policy which incorporates students' performance on projects, exams, class work, and homework. Departments determine the weights of each component. However, the school's use of common assessments by grade/department is limited narrowing their ability to provide accurate feedback to teachers and students on student progress.
 - Teacher Eze and class mastery sheets are used to determine students' progress toward school goals. The school has identified additional student needs such as developing academic vocabulary, time management, and mastery of prior skills as other areas of focus. However, limited adjustments in the curriculum maps and unit plans are inconsistent thus reducing the school's ability to achieve instructional goals and increase student achievement.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Ronald Edmonds Center	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