

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**Lyndon Baines Johnson**

**Elementary School 151  
763 Knickerbocker Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11207**

**Principal: Maria Anaya**

**Dates of review: January 8 - 9, 2013**

**Lead Reviewer: Lillian Druck**

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

### **Information about the school**

Lyndon B. Johnson is an elementary school with 433 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 25% Black, 73% Hispanic, and 2% other students. The student body includes 15% English language learners and 12% 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 93.1%.

### **Overall Evaluation**

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school's embedded structures contribute to a positive, caring environment that promotes learning and enhances students' personal growth. (1.4)
  - The attendance team, which consists of the assistant principal, guidance counselor, attendance teacher, and a health aide, meets monthly to closely monitor and improve student attendance. This provides members of the team with relevant information to communicate via phone calls to parents the importance of their children being in school every day, and to identify and then conduct home visits as a follow up for those students demonstrating patterns of absences. Additionally, the guidance counselor and dean meet regularly with small groups of high-needs students based on teachers' recommendations and parents' requests regarding discipline, social-emotional and academic issues, and provide counseling services and engage students in academic and mediation activities that support their needs. The combined efforts of the various staff members ensure that the personal needs of all students are met as evidenced by improved self-esteem noted across themes in students' writing pieces published in newsletters and work folders.
  - The dean works with a group of students in grades 3, 4, and 5 who make up the school's safety patrol squad, to help them understand their role in promoting safety. Students on the safety patrol squad take pride in assisting with the school's arrival and dismissal procedures while serving as role models for their peers. This group of students in small group conversations with the dean, teachers during professional development sessions, and parents at planned workshops, engage in discussions around topics that include safety, anti-bullying and conflict resolution. Thus, the school community's efforts focus on promoting effective student behaviors. Family outreach activities include Breakfast with the Principal, a multicultural luncheon for staff and parents, and workshops that offer targeted strategies to instill in students values such as responsibility and respect. As a result, students demonstrate positive attitudes and good discipline in school as noted by fewer suspensions, specifically five suspensions reported from September through December 2011 compared to two suspensions during the same time from September through December of 2012.
- School leaders convey high expectations that support learning so that students and faculty achieve success in meeting their goals. (3.4)
  - During faculty conferences, grade meetings, and lunch-and-learn sessions, school leaders offer training on the school's research based teaching framework, workshop model components, and professional responsibilities. Additionally, the principal and assistant principal offer individual and small group opportunities for sharing of expectations regarding instructional practices using the Danielson framework as a common lens to improve classroom practice. Discussions focus on both the findings that are captured through individualized color-coded feedback sheets highlighting strengths and weaknesses observed in

classrooms during walkthroughs, and supervisors' comments that identify target areas requiring improvement and follow up. As a result, these systems hold staff accountable to meeting expectations as outlined in the school's common rubric, specifically regarding instructional practice and professional responsibilities.

- School leaders and staff communicate expectations related to the content knowledge and skills that students are expected to attain via progress reports, parent workshops, and the principal's honor roll criteria, so that students acquire skills relative to real world experiences and independent learning. The parent coordinator works with members of the school's parents' association to coordinate workshops on topics such as Developing Positive Learning Habits, Homework Help, Expectations of the Common Core Standards, and Preparing Students for the State Assessments, in order to provide them with valuable helpful information to understand their children's progress toward meeting grade benchmarks and next learning steps. One parent stated, "Knowing what my child can do to improve his reading helps me support him better at home and in school." Parents also learn about critical behaviors and personal values that support college and career readiness, such as responsibility, commitment, and teamwork. Consequently, families reinforce organization skills and school responsibilities at home, which are leading to improved work habits and increased student writing as evidenced in parents' statements about their children's perseverance with homework and projects at home, and students' eagerness to succeed in school.
- The instructional cabinet sets clear goals and effectively communicates the school's improvement efforts, resulting in a shared commitment to promote student learning. (3.1)
  - The school's goals and action plans that focus on strengthening teacher development, aligning units of study to the Common Core Standards, improving communication, and strengthening instructional practice, serve as a framework for identifying trends and effective planning. The data specialist provides support by tracking the progress of students in English language arts (ELA) and math to ensure that they are meeting set grade-level benchmarks. For example, a review of ELA instructionally targeted Acuity assessments administered in December to grades 3, 4, and 5, indicated that approximately 25% of the students met grade benchmarks. This analysis prompted adjustments to student goals and a closer look at the formative assessments used in classes to measure student learning. As a result, the school's instructional team is working on improving the alignment of academic tasks and formative assessments to the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), with close attention to the instructional shifts, in order to improve student achievement in upcoming instructionally targeted assessments. In ELA, adjustments focus on increasing reading of informational texts, using text-based evidence to inform or make arguments, and incorporating academic vocabulary in student writing, with a goal of increasing by 10% the performance of students in related standards.
  - The principal regularly shares the school processes that help improve student achievement and classroom instruction through faculty conferences, grade meetings, and school leadership team sessions. These settings provide opportunities to review student data in ELA and

math, along with results from tutorial, extended day, and enrichment programs that are in place to improve student learning. Higher performing students participate in enrichment programs that enhance their writing skills and extend their learning, such as computer classes where they use technology to produce a school newsletter. High needs students benefit from extended day activities to strengthen their literacy, math, and test-taking skills. Lunch-and-learn sessions provide opportunities for teachers to analyze student data, generate common assessments through Acuity, and share instructional resources such as teacher-friendly websites to supplement their lessons. As a result, the school community is effectively informed of the school's processes to increase academic achievement and is part of a coordinated effort to improve student performance.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Strengthen planning of curricula and increase rigor in academic tasks so that lessons promote high levels of thinking and cognitive engagement for all students. (1.1)
  - The school's curriculum maps reflect the instructional cabinet's efforts in designing units of study aligned to the Common Core State Standards. Curriculum maps incorporate essential questions, big ideas, and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies tied to grade-specific units of study and performance tasks. However, in some classrooms, students worked on basic math problems, heavily scaffolded tasks, and hands-on activities that were completed quickly, requiring little student effort. Therefore, academic tasks and lessons that incorporate rigorous habits to engage all students in developing their cognitive thinking skills are inconsistent across grades and subjects. This hinders student achievement as noted in the results of the recently administered ELA and math instructionally targeted assessments, and the limited student progress reflected in the school's Progress Report.
- Promote consistency in the use of instructional strategies and the delivery of lessons so that they fully challenge thinking to improve student learning. (1.2)
  - A focus on the design of coherent units of study and the use of assessments to measure student learning as outlined in the Danielson Framework supports the school's transition toward the implementation of the reading and writing workshop model. However, lessons reveal that teaching strategies, questioning techniques, and supplemental resources do not consistently offer adequate scaffolds or multiple entry points that augment learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of all students. For example, charts to support English language learners with academic vocabulary, teaching artifacts to reinforce effective reading and writing strategies, and student groupings to promote high levels of student interactions, were not observed across all classrooms to support all students. Consequently, student discussion, class participation, and efforts to promote thinking, are uneven across classrooms and subjects, thus limiting opportunities for increasing student learning.

- Improve the use of assessment results to monitor student progress and inform curricular and instructional adjustments to meet the needs of all students. (2.2 )
  - Teachers use running records, checklists, rubrics and exit slips as common assessments to measure student learning. The assessment results, which include students' reading levels assessed in September and December, Acuity data, and end-of-unit test results, are collected in teachers' binders. However, not all classroom teachers use the information as a practice in revising lessons, adjusting instruction, or modifying curriculum to target identified learning gaps. Additionally, the use of ongoing checks for understanding, and student self-assessments are not common practices across all classrooms. Therefore, effective revisions to lessons and academic tasks to meet students' academic needs are not consistently executed across the school, thereby limiting opportunities to maximize the learning potential of all students.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Lyndon Baines Johnson	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score		X					
<b>Instructional Core</b>							
<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					
<b>School Culture</b>							
<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				
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<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 <b>inquiry approach</b> 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					
<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>