

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Bay Ridge Elementary School For The Arts

20K264

**371 89th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11209**

Principal: Patrice Edison

Dates of review: March 13-14, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Karina Costantino

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S.264 is an elementary school with 267 students from Pre K through grade 2. The school population comprises 3% Black, 30% Hispanic, 46% White, and 21% Asian students. The student body includes 19% English language learners and 13% 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 95.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions around teacher assignments and resources, in support of the school's instructional goals to meet student needs and improve outcomes. (1.3)
 - The principal has strategically assigned teachers to work with the same group of students, looping from grades K to 1, 2 to 3 and ultimately from grade 4 to 5. In addition, the school has three teachers trained in Orton Gillingham (OG), as well as one hired teacher to implement OG instruction with struggling readers. The Orton Gillingham approach is multisensory, structured, sequential and cumulative, enabling it to be used with a variety of readers. It is particularly effective with English language learners (ELLs) because of its repetitive approach in teaching students language concepts. Throughout the school year, the teacher teams are being supported with five half days of OG coaching and model lessons, which results in closing the achievement gap for sub-groups. This ongoing professional support provides teachers with multisensory reading strategies that has resulted in 70% of the Hispanic students moving out of the at risk category as evidenced by the State early childhood assessment.
 - One of the instructional goals of the school is to provide all students with an exposure to a broad range of visual and performing arts to build literacy skills, specifically in the area of writing. In support of this goal, the school uses a combination of residencies through visual arts based organizations, music and theater teachers, as well as instruction from classroom teachers. All students are provided with experiences in dance, music, theater and the visual arts aligned with the Blueprint for the Arts and incorporating the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) across subject areas. For example, in theatre, students are writing original fairy tales that are then performed in the classroom or in the auditorium, which is a part of a brand new building the school moved into in September and has a stage and a sound system to simulate a theatrical production. As a result, students are supported in language development as evidenced in their writing samples.
- The school aligns all curriculums to the Common Core Learning Standards in a rigorous purposeful environment where all students become independent learners. (1.1)
 - Engaging students in Common Core aligned units of study in the four core academic subjects this year is a priority, as part of the Chancellor's Instructional Expectations (CIE). All curriculum maps and units of study are developed collaboratively by grade level teams, which target the Arts. The school then uses a unified template for all units of study across disciplines which ensure clear and concise language and learning objectives throughout the school, which builds coherence across all grades and subjects. All students self select topics of interest within each unit of study to support and promote independent learning. Consequently,

all students are engaged in learning that moves them towards college and career readiness, as evidenced by a comprehensive curriculum, aligned to State standards which motivate independent learning.

- In every classroom visited, there is a hands-on project based learning activity that supports student independence and promotes closing the achievement gap for all students. Challenging questioning and tasks help students employ higher order cognitive thinking skills. This is evidenced in the kindergarten rooms, where one area of each room is dedicated to a parking lot approach. Children identify examples of the elements of any story they are reading and place them in the proper lot, using post-its. In addition, during a math lesson, also in kindergarten, students were identifying the fastest ways to identify how many tens could be found in any number, by using toy cars in a parking lot board game developed by the teacher. Questions such as, “What is faster”; “How do you know?” and “Where is the evidence?” are consistently pushing children’s thinking. This tactile approach provided entry levels for all subgroups in order to support all learners in demonstrating their thinking.
- Teacher teams engage in inquiry based collaborations, driven by assessments and student work, that builds leadership, improves student achievement and informs teachers’ practice. (4.2)
 - All teachers are engaged in collaborative inquiry work where they meet on a daily basis. Team agendas are driven by the re-alignment to the CCLS with targeted focus on the writing curriculum as well as math. Teachers develop learning strategies as a result of looking at student work. For example, the kindergarten team had some difficulty with their students understanding multiples of ten. Consequently, the kindergarten teachers collaboratively decided to incorporate simple board games as an instructional strategy, such as Parking Lot, where the children parked cars in rows of ten. These hands on stimulus achieved the goal by providing students with visual and tactile experiences, so that all kindergarten students as well as sub groups, were able to articulate the concept.
 - Teachers have a very collegial relationship throughout the school and share with each other daily. Differentiated professional development for teachers strengthens teacher practices and when specific teachers attend staff development outside the school, they are then responsible for and are given time to present that staff development to the entire faculty. Teachers indicate that they are encouraged to make suggestions to the principal, resulting in a change in practice school wide, such as the change to Singapore Math to increase rigor in Math across the school. This collaborative culture allows teachers to have a voice in school wide decisions to strengthen student learning outcomes.
- Teaching strategies support educating the whole child in a learning environment where teachers’ pedagogy ensures engaging tasks for all students at their instructional levels, to improve learning outcomes. (1.2)
 - Teaching strategies across the school are varied to address the needs of the whole child, including all sub groups, during the planning process. A strong partnership with the District 75 School in the building and an

inclusion program brings valuable insight to the use of strategies that target success for students with disabilities (SWD's). For example, teachers ask higher order questions and allow for a "wait time" so that all students are afforded an opportunity to engage in critical thinking. The use of The Mondo Program, which is a visual curriculum, encourages participation of English language learners during lessons. In addition, the use of strategies such as "turn and talk", retelling events in a story and predicting story outcomes, allow all students to engage in lessons at their instructional level. Consequently, all learners, including SWD's and ELL's are supported in demonstrating proficiency as evidenced in their work products.

- Across classrooms, teachers craft questions to push student thinking, and give student school wide prompts, such as "I wonder, I think, and it reminds me of" which improves student engagement and results in the production of sophisticated work products. An example, as seen in a kindergarten lesson where children were looking at the elements of the story, "Whistle For Willy" was when students had to determine how Willy figured out the problem in the story. The teacher asked the students "What are your noticings?" This results in student discussions, encouraging and focusing children to participate in brainstorming to arrive at answers.

What the school needs to improve

- Create systems to regularly evaluate curricular and instructional practices, to inform adjustments for increased student learning, as well as monitoring teacher team practices to support the expectations of the CCLS.(5.1)
 - Although the principal visits teacher team meetings throughout the year, there are no consistent protocols or periodic benchmarking of their progress during the year to evaluate the effectiveness of their performance, resulting in an inability to maximize their instruction towards improving student outcomes. In addition, the school does not yet have a system in place to regularly monitor student progress across all grades and subjects. Thus, in the absence of periodic school wide assessment systems the school is limited in making informed decisions to adjust curricular and instructional decisions aligned to the CCLS.
- Align a school grading policy to key standards and consistently implement common classroom assessment practices to adjust instruction to meet the needs of all students. (2.2)
 - Although the school is immersed in the new Common Core Learning Standards and teacher teams are developing rubrics to the CCLS, they have not aligned the school's overall grading policy to key standards, thus limiting teacher feedback to students and teachers that reflects student mastery of content. In addition, not all teachers are making effective adjustments in instruction for all students. For example, Grade One teachers, who looped with last year's kindergarten, have an assessment book to record the progress of their students across grades and their next steps. However, there are different assessment tools used to record in

these books. This limits opportunities for teachers to have common data they need, in order to make informed and strategic instructional and curricular adjustments to consistently track progress in students' academic achievement across subjects and grades.

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Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Bay Ridge Elementary School for the Arts	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