

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Coy L. Cox School

K-12 75K369

**383 State Street
Brooklyn
NY 11217**

Principal: Rudy Giuliani

**Dates of review: April 29-May 1, 2013
Lead Reviewer: Kathleen LeFevre**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Coy L. Cox School is a K-12 all grades school with 615 students from kindergarten through grade 12. The school population comprises 62% Black, 27% Hispanic, 8% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 9.68% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 83% of the students enrolled and girls account for 17%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 86.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and staff have established coherence and alignment between the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), the Citywide Instructional shifts and the school's curricula, to ensure that all students make progress in learning. (1.1)
 - Core curricula, aligned to the CCLS, have been purposefully chosen based on a thorough review of various data sources, including student data folders, Performance Acuity, New York State Alternate Assessments, Regent results and New York State Standardized Assessments in math and English Language Arts. The school community adopted a common English language arts and math curricula for students who take both standardized and alternate assessments at each grade level. Curricula include Unique Learning System, designed for special learners with diverse needs. The administration and instructional team analyzed the citywide expectations for implementing targeted CCLS and took steps to revise and extend the curricula to ensure rigorous learning for all students. For students in alternate assessment, the school refined the instructional tasks in both the Unique Curriculum and Treasures to be aligned with the CCLS and extended the lessons with relevant, hands-on applications, such as recycling projects. Underpinning the identified CCLS is a school-wide focus on text-based evidence and research-based inquiry in English language arts and the content areas, as well as a focus on fluency in math. Curricula include complex texts and incorporate end of unit performance tasks and monthly writing assessments that are evaluated by standards based rubrics. Student work products and data, including curriculum and teacher-developed benchmark assessments, Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) and student self-assessments, are continually reviewed and used to refine lessons, unit plans and assessment tasks, to ensure rigorous learning that helps students meet their learning goals. Curriculum maps and units represent a school-wide focus on the Citywide Instructional Expectations, leading to a coherent approach to implementing the CCLS to reach all learners from kindergarten through grade 12.
- School leaders make effective decisions regarding the use of resources, school organization and scheduling, aligned with the school goals for improved pedagogy and student performance. (1.3)
 - Through strategic budgeting and programming, the principal added two lead teachers and a technology teacher to the organization. The lead teachers participate in weekly inquiry team meetings to examine student work and develop strategies that are implemented across classrooms. Two Deans and a Crisis Intervention Therapist are strategically programmed to ensure rapid response to individual student behavioral needs. At each of the sites throughout the school, school leaders scheduled block programming of 90 minutes for English language arts instruction and 60 minutes for math, with an impact of increased time on task for all students and increased progress by students in meeting their Individual Educational Plan (IEP) goals. Furthermore, following an analysis of school-wide data and trends in English language arts

performance, the school strategically used its budget to support new curriculum for English language arts and professional development to ensure effective implementation. For increased access to technology, the principal hired a technology teacher who provides support to other teachers, on the use of SMARTboards and iPads, as funds were used to purchase SMARTboards, laptop carts and iPad carts. Moreover, the school's collaboration with an array of community based organizations, including Hip Hop for Kids, Artist Studio, Move to Improve, Achilles Kids, PENCIL Partnership, WBLs and Fairway, support the school's long range plans for increasing student movement to less restrictive environments. The school also has seven job sites, including Goodwill Industries, Marriott Hotels and Brooklyn Hospital, so that students have field-based experiences aligned with their career plans. Related service providers meet with teachers once per week with a focus on integrating career goals and academic habits with instruction to support students in career planning. In addition, the strategic decision to implement Get Ready to Learn (GRTL) with students in alternate assessment, has positively impacted on students' focus on their learning. Scheduling decisions enable teachers to participate regularly in at least three collaborative meetings each week, including common planning sessions, by grades and cohorts, to refine standards-based units of study. With mass preps across all 13 sites to ensure school-wide coherence in the implementation of the Citywide Instructional Expectations, teachers participate in professional development related to effective implementation of those expectations. Staff time is also structured so that teachers have time for inter-visitations linked to individual teacher professional development plans, and for in-class coaching and peer reviews. This strategic alignment of resources to the school's overarching goals and key priorities, has resulted in instructional coherence among classrooms, as observed in classroom visits and improved student achievement, as evidenced by student reading levels that have increased by a minimum of one level across the school year.

- School leaders and the staff have established a respectful and safe environment where students are engaged in learning and benefit from the effective level of support they receive for their social-emotional and academic development. (1.4)
 - All resources are strategically aligned to the school's overarching goals and key priorities. A collaborative and mutually respectful environment proactively addresses the needs of students, through highly integrated supports, including a matrix of behavioral expectations, an effective token economy program, the "Stay on Green" program, leveled point sheets, opportunities to participate in an array of clubs, and ongoing, consistent communication with parents. The school developed and implemented a "Stay on Green" behavior review card and a Sensory Solutions Matrix which identifies sensory causes, examples of behaviors and solutions. School administrators meet with parents of each child in the eighth grade to stress the importance of meeting interim check points and attaining the highest level (Level 3) in the behavior system, to support the student's transition to high school. Furthermore, clear attendance procedures are established to ensure daily outreach by teachers, administrators, related service providers and attendance personnel, as needed, guaranteeing that a higher average student attendance is maintained. The importance of academic goals and the role of good behavior in supporting the

achievement of these goals, are communicated to parents at the beginning of the school year at Curriculum Night, attended by all staff and almost 400 parents. Parents unanimously reported that the school is very safe and that the behavior system is helping their children achieve their academic goals, as well as social and behavioral goals. As one parent stated, in commenting on the positive change in her child's behavior, "The school helps me raise my child so that every day I walk proud and hold my chest up high." In classrooms and in student meetings, students provided examples of how components of the Positive Behavior Supports help them to attend to their work and perform better on their academic tasks. To encourage positive behavior and social interactions, students participate in numerous school sponsored celebrations and initiatives, including Fall Harvest Festival, Winter Wonderland, Valentine's Day Special, the District 75 Dance Show, student-staff sports tournaments, the middle school Poetry Slam, Multiplication Challenge, the Senior Trip and the District 75 debate. To guide school improvement efforts, the school involves students in decision-making processes and committees such as Student Government, the Spirit Week Events Committee, and the Autism Awareness Expo. Students spoke with pride about their positive role in the school, with one student saying, "When I first began at this school, I did not know what would become of me...Now I see that I can be a true leader and can be the voice of the students. Now I know that I have a power and that power is my voice." Consequently, consistent attention to students' learning needs and ongoing monitoring of student behavior and parent communication, positively impact student success, as evidenced by the 65% of eighth grade students who transitioned to less restrictive environments (LRE) in grade nine, and by average student attendance that has increased from 86% to 88% during the past year.

- Professional collaborations are a high priority and teachers benefit from varied opportunities to research effective instructional techniques that promote student progress toward meeting their individual goals. (4.2)
 - Teachers across all school sites participate in collaborative inquiry work that focuses on integrating the instructional shifts into instruction. Team members, using consistent protocols where staff members rotate as presenters and facilitators, come together to develop curricula and lesson plans and to review student work using standards-based rubrics. Through the use of the rubrics, teachers have been able to maintain their focus on strengths and needs evident in students' work and to collaborate on identifying next steps. Teachers discuss the instructional strategies they use and collaborate to develop strategies for increasing student use of vocabulary and student reference to evidence in texts, to ensure that learning activities are connected to the higher expectations of the CCLS. For example, at one team meeting, teachers analyzed student work and determined that students were able to get the gist of the text but were not able to identify or cite evidence from the text to support their thinking. The team members suggested different graphic organizers, highlighting the text and a strategy of using folders to organize evidence, as seen in a video clip shared by the lead teacher. Lead teachers participate in the professional collaboration meetings to support the work of peers and follow up as necessary to ensure newly introduced strategies are effectively implemented. Lead teachers also support teachers with professional development resources, such as video clips of the identified

instructional strategies being implemented in the classroom and professional articles related to inquiry work. Teachers shared that, as a result of the structured collaborations and supports, they not only utilize data to better understand their students' skill deficits, but are also able to identify areas in their instruction that can be strengthened as they try new strategies. One teacher stated that their work in inquiry teams has "helped students become more engaged and assertive in their own learning." As a result this systematized teamwork, teacher teamwork yields improvements in teacher development, instructional coherence and mastery of goals for groups of students, for whom they share responsibility, leading to movement of an increasing number of students to less restrictive environments.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance teacher questioning and student discussion during the delivery of instruction, in order to enrich student participation, thereby increasing opportunities for further development of critical thinking skills. (1.2)
 - The school's belief that students learn best when they are challenged by rigorous and relevant tasks that require explanation of their thinking is supported by collaborative team planning and evident in benchmark assessments and student work displayed in classrooms and hallways. The school has examined the "look-fors" relevant to quality questioning and student discussion and shared these with the staff. Webb's Depth of Knowledge is used to develop questions for lessons and is specifically included as a category on teachers' lesson plans. However, in some classrooms, the level of questions posed to students did not result in higher levels of thinking. Literal questions did not provide students with ample opportunities to expand on concepts and to engage in productive student discussion. As a result, some students, including relevant subgroups, are not challenged to extend their critical thinking skills, thus limiting their opportunities to take ownership of their learning.
- Deepen teachers' responses to student work to convey meaningful feedback to students about their strengths and next steps so that staff and students share a clear understanding of how to improve student performance. (2.2)
 - Across all classrooms, well-organized binders showcase student work and CCLS aligned performance assessments in reading, writing and mathematics. Additionally, student work is displayed in each classroom and on hallway bulletin boards. Teachers evaluate students' efforts through checklists, rubrics and written commentary and use this information to inform instruction. For example, after a review of student work using an informational text writing rubric, one teacher added supplementary lessons that targeted ways that students can introduce a topic in expository writing. Commentary on student work recognizes student efforts and strengths but does not always include actionable next steps for improvement. As a result, all teachers are not able to accurately evaluate the effectiveness of curriculum or instructional decisions based on student performance, or to provide specific next learning steps, thus limiting gains in student achievement at the individual and school level.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Coy L. Cox School					UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score							X	
Instructional Core								
To what extent does the school regularly...					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								
To what extent does the school ...					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								
To what extent does the school ...					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	