

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

EAST NEW YORK SCHOOL OF EXCELLENCE

**Elementary School K677
605 SHEPHERD AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY 11208**

Principal: JUDY TOUZIN

**Dates of review: January 15-16, 2013
Lead Reviewer: Joyce Stallings-Harte**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

East New York School of Excellence is an Elementary school with 517 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 67% Black, 29% Hispanic, 2% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 92.8%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal provides dynamic leadership that promotes academic and personal growth of students and adults that is the impetus for a safe and supportive environment. (1.4)
 - The principal and staff recognized the need for improved school climate to increase both student and parent engagement and supported administrative discipline initiatives implementing the Stop Light discipline structure and an anti-bullying campaign enlisting the help of all constituencies. Students' concern around bullying was heard at Student Council meetings and confirmed on the Learning Environment Survey. Meetings with administrators and Student Council resulted in the anti-bullying, I-Care Campaign. Both students and parents express appreciation for their involvement in shaping these initiatives through student council and a special committee that let their concerns be heard and their suggestions turn into action. Daily in the school's gymnasium, the principal leads students in the recitation of their motto: "RESPECT: Responsibility, Excellence, Service, Pride, Exposure, Community and Tenacity, the ENYSESE Way". Children are addressed by the title "scholars" and are expected to act accordingly, exemplifying the school's motto. Students receive healthy social and emotional support through extra guidance support as needed. "Super Scholar Friday" when students are recognized for completing all assignments, 100% attendance and completion of a behavior log, which substantiates positive student behavior. They rise to expectations by achieving Super Scholar status. The school engages families through the 'I Care Family of Distinction' program for parental attendance at a minimum of 5 academically based meetings and/or workshops. Students report that they can be whatever they want to be, that they are "brilliant" and "can work and achieve anything". The principal's heartfelt, consistent and calm focus ensures that expectations are clear for the entire school community, and has resulted in faculty embracing these tenets to support the academic and social health of community participants thus supporting both student and adult learning. Teachers voice appreciation for having a voice in important instructional decisions such as securing outside professional development support in questioning to support their continued learning and improve their pedagogy. This strong focus on culture building has resulted in the establishment of a safe building characterized by respectful classrooms with well established routines and structures where students feel safe, respectfully collaborate with peers, and move seamlessly between activities, conscientiously following their teachers' directives in order to ensure the focus on growth for both adults and students.
 - The school is well focused on providing for the needs of the whole child and has established systems to support this work. Two daily team check-in meetings by the principal, assistant principal, dean, guidance counselor and coach coupled with frequently scheduled pupil personnel committee meetings strategically support understanding of individual student needs and the design of appropriate academic and/or social emotional interventions such as using the Academic Intervention Support (AIS)

Scholar tracker to more closely monitor student progress and placing students on the behavior log. In addition, the school conducts student interest inventories and uses this information to design club activities and match students to specific adults to best support the students' unique interests and learning needs. A formerly reticent student has excelled in a band program as a result of understanding that participation in the band is dependent on completion of academic work and improvement in behavior. In addition, close monitoring of guidance data, Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) reports and teacher anecdotal reports enabled the school to identify what is described as their "frequent fliers" and implement daily contact with parents for students who need more constant attention. This frequency of meetings contributes to a coherent effort resulting in ongoing adjustments to meet individual student needs that has improved attendance by 1.5 percent, a reduction in the number of classroom incidents, and increased focus in academic work within classrooms.

- Teachers use multiple assessments aligned to curriculum to assess student understanding and inform instructional modifications in order to improve student outcomes. (2.2)
 - In addition to using Acuity assessments, the school conscientiously administers Fountas and Pinnell running records three times a year, common grade-level interim math assessments every six to eight weeks as well as on demand writing samples and pre-, mid- and post-assessments for Common Core pilot units of study. Teacher's report that based on the evaluation of these results, they plan for differentiated reteaching using flexible grouping. One significant result is teachers' observations that students are progressing to higher reading levels than before as demonstrated by the Fountas and Pinnell tracking report.
 - The school employed a consulting firm to assist in the identification of schoolwide, grade level and student specific goals aligned to key standards and curricula. The school identified students in grades 4 and 5, who, based on the state English Language Arts and Math state tests, scored level 2 who need to move up and level 3 students who must not decline. Each student is made aware of their level and teachers conference with these students to establish goals. Level 3 students attend an enrichment scholars program twice weekly. The school consistently uses Acuity and unit assessment and State rubrics aligned to specific standards to analyze and grade student work and plan for instruction. Through the consistent use of standards based assessments and rubrics both students and teachers have timely feedback on progress towards goals and make instructional adjustments to inform next learning steps. This has resulted in a 6.9% increase in student performance as measured by unit assessments.
- Teachers engage in regular collaborative inquiry of student work promoting capacity building and shared accountability for improving student academic outcomes that results in improved student learning. (4.2)
 - A majority of teachers are involved in inquiry and during grade meetings are working collaboratively to develop unit bundles to align with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Teachers, at these meetings, the CCLS to align curriculum and units-of-study, referring to them as their

'bible' in all planning and re-teaching activities. Grade level teams meet twice a week and use protocols to review student work across the grades. Teachers assign themselves roles to ensure all members of the team share responsibility. All teachers have begun to use the Webb's Depth of Knowledge matrix to plan and evaluate tasks during grade conferences. Areas of student need are discovered and re-teaching plans are established. As a result, teachers wisely use findings to design rubrics for all units based on CCLS, strengthening the capacity of teachers to assess student work.

- Established teacher teams and faculty led professional development opportunities build capacity strengthening teacher leadership and voice. One teacher described the administration as "constantly listening" and other teachers stated that as a result of their request for assistance with unit planning, they received requested coach and resource support. Teachers who attend special summer training are charged with professional turn-keying and ongoing support of their colleagues. Thus, active supervisory support and distributive leadership structures have developed teacher leaders throughout the school and empowered every teacher's voice in key school decisions. After review of student work, teacher's requested additional materials to use for guided reading. With additional materials and as a result an increased focus on guided reading student reading levels have increased by on the Fountas and Pinnell tracking report.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to develop curriculum units that provide coherency across the grades and challenging academic tasks aligned to key standards in order to promote the development of higher-order thinking skills for all students. (1.1)
 - The school's curriculum maps in literacy and math include some integrated units-of-study along with revised pacing calendars and new curriculum maps integrate the CCLS. Teacher teams report that they require support in order to develop plans that are more challenging and specific to student needs. Teachers are developing performance tasks yet those tasks are highly procedural and thus do not always challenge students or provide rigorous learning activities that meet the higher expectations of the CCLS. They state that they need more expertise to deepen the work. Therefore, curricula aligned to key standards across grades and subject areas to support all students in meeting State standards, is not evident across the school, thus limiting students from learning experiences that ensure higher order skills and work habits to meet the CCLS expectations.
 - Classroom visits and a review of student work products reveal inconsistencies in engaging students in rigorous task. For example, in a first grade class all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, worked on the same questions from a textbook even though they were grouped according to ability. In a second grade classroom, the teacher asked literal questions that were of low-level as determined by Webb's Depth of Knowledge and additionally caused student confusion hindering them from engaging in the lesson. These inconsistent practices hinder student achievement across grades and

subjects. (b)

- Deepen the use of differentiated learning activities and instructional strategies to provide appropriately challenging and rigorous learning opportunities that promote high achievement. (1.2)
 - Observation of teaching practice indicate uneven application of high level teaching practices across grades that offers multiple entry points for all learners. In a second grade classroom students used question stems to engage in discussions and ask questions of classmates, asking each other clarifying questions. Conversely, in a third and fourth grade classroom, there was little to no evidence of questioning and discussion as the teacher promoted teacher to student interaction solely. Consequently, some lessons did not require high levels of student engagement potentially limiting students from producing meaningful work products.
 - Teachers have been working to improve their skills in differentiation order to increase student achievement, however instructional tasks are not always and/or challenging for all students, leading to uneven levels of student engagement. For example, during a fourth grade reading task all students were asked to provide evidence to question after reading a text. All students read the same text but not all were able to engage in the lesson due to difficulty with text complexity. For others, the assignment was not sufficiently challenging. Teaching strategies and questions do not always create opportunities for students to think deeply, challenge each others' thinking or generate questions of their own. As a result, the limited development of multiple entry points necessary for all learners to be cognitively engaged in all lessons hinders academic progress.
- Improve feedback to teachers to more closely align to the school's chosen research based framework in order to elevate instructional practice (4.1)
 - Supervisors write lengthy formal observations and regularly provide written feedback for informal visits that capture "glows" and "grows" that is beginning to support teacher development. However, this feedback is not always closely aligned to the school's chosen research-based rubric. While feedback is categorized into domains such as designing coherent instruction and designing effective questions, lack of focus on the specific differences among the levels of performance make less clear the steps necessary to improve. This diffuses clear expectations and the understanding needed to rigorously support teacher development. While teachers acknowledge that supervisor feedback is helpful, all teachers do are not receiving the targeted feedback needed to improve, nor are they able to take steps towards meeting the expectations set forth to improve their practice.
 - Administration effectively uses teachers and coaches to provide professional development to peers and uses student data in re-assigning teachers to grades to maximize teacher strength in student performance. However, these practices do not ensure that professional development decisions target the most strategic needs identified by formal and informal observations or develop a common understanding needed to elevate instructional practice. Teachers state that while they are collecting a lot of student data, they need support to address the learning needs of all

students. Therefore, observation reports do not effectively target the integration of the common teaching framework necessary to support teacher development.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: East New York School of Excellence					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	