

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**Dr. Edmund Horan School
Middle-High School 79**

**55 East 120th Street
Manhattan
NY 10035**

Principal: Greer Phillips

Dates of review: January 28-30, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Kathleen LeFevre

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Dr. Edmund Horan School is a middle/high school with 290 students from 7th grade through grade 12. The school population comprises 34% Black, 60% Hispanic, 3% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 50% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 64% of the students enrolled and girls account for 36%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 81.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and teachers effectively align curricula to key standards and provide a wide range of learning experiences that promote cognitive engagement and support students in meeting their instructional goals. (1.1)
 - The school's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning provides a coherent overview of the units teachers need to teach over the course of the school year, in all academic areas and in vocational education, as aligned with the New York State Career Development and Occupational Studies standards for students with special needs. The school's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning and the curriculum scope and sequence were revised to be aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the 2012-2013 Chancellor's Instructional Expectations (CIE), with a school wide focus on problem solving in mathematics, scientific inquiry in science, collaborative exploration of historical concepts, and a focus on text-based evidence in literacy. In alignment with a school wide commitment to transitioning and supporting student independence for positive post-secondary outcomes, strategic emphasis is placed on making content relevant to real life situations that maximize transfer of skills and generalization, as well as cognitive engagement of students, including English language learners. Implementation of programs, such as the Super Chef program, Mouse Squad, Interoffice Mail Delivery Service, weekly Post Office Service, weekly Library Service and Maintenance and Clerical programs, provides students with opportunities to learn skills and apply them in the real world context of a school business. The Blueprint for Teaching and Learning is coherent across service categories and supports Individualized Educational Program (IEP) recommendations, with multiple points of access to curriculum concepts and skill sets necessary for movement of students to less restrictive settings and work site placements. The coherence in planning and expectations of rigor in all settings have impacted on student progress, as evidenced by movement of many students to the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), as well as participation of 59 students in various programs at Co-op Technical.
- School leaders make effective decisions around the use of resources, school organization and scheduling, aligned with the school goals of improved pedagogy and improved student performance. (1.3)
 - Through strategic programming in alignment with school-wide goals and high expectations around teacher practice and assignments, the principal has supported professional learning communities by scheduling weekly meeting time for two periods, so that teachers can examine student progress in meeting their goals and focus on creating increasingly more challenging tasks for all students. Staff time is also structured so that teachers have time for intervisitations in the areas of use of technology that have resulted in consistency in pedagogical practices, as evident in instruction in the different classes. Analysis of the school's schedule resulted in increased Academic Intervention Services for English language learners for an additional half hour each day, with positive

impact on academic achievement by this sub-group of students. Strategic decisions to implement Get Ready to Learn (GRTL) throughout the school have positively impacted on students' focus on their learning. Based on analysis of data and of programmatic schedules, the principal used her resources to schedule teachers to serve as Instructional Leads and to coordinate different areas and activities: IEP development and team meetings; Bilingual Education Student and Information Survey (BESIS) and English Language Learners; Transition; Job Development, and Technology. These staff members work with all teachers and students on sharing instructional strategies to ensure coherence of instruction and implementation of the Blueprint for Teaching and Learning. All students have access to technology, as the school has used its own funds and secured a Reso A grant to ensure that each classroom is equipped with a Smart Board and additional computers. Thus integration of technology, including iPads and assistive technology, has resulted in increased student participation in the curriculum. To support its goals of student independence and post-secondary outcomes, the school has established partnerships with community businesses so that students have increased opportunities to work outside the school. Another strategic organizational decision involves the school's partnership with the Harlem Studio Museum of the Arts, which provides students with increased access to the visual arts, resulting in heightened student enthusiasm around school activities that make students feel valued, creative and motivated to learn and succeed.

- The school culture is collaborative, respectful and supportive of students' academic and social-emotional needs, resulting in a safe environment that is conducive to high levels of learning. (1.4)
 - A focus on positive behavior supports and socio-emotional learning is prevalent throughout the school and in all the classrooms. The school provides a collaborative and mutually respectful environment which proactively addresses the needs of students, through highly integrated supports, including school wide Positive Behavior Supports, Gotcha Bucks, A Crisis Team, Man Up, GTRL and Emotional Literacy. Extensive school activities and work opportunities, including a support group for girls (Shades of Beauty) and one for males (Man Up), help anchor students to role models who get to know them very well, resulting in increased engagement in the school community. Students consistently demonstrate understanding and use of the Emotional Literacy mood meter and are able to complete self-assessments of the impact of what they learn on their feelings, as exemplified at the Art Fair; students spoke about their work on self-portraits and how what they learned helped their confidence and willingness to take risks. In classrooms and student meetings, students are able to provide examples of how components of the Positive Behavior Supports program help them to attend to their work and perform better on academic tasks. To guide school improvement efforts, the school involves students in decision-making processes and committees, such as Student Government, the Event and Graduation Committee and the School Nutrition Committee; students spoke with pride about their influence on the school breakfast and meal menus. Teachers, school administrators and related service providers collaborate to address individual student attendance, through outreach to homes, attendance goal setting with students, and encouraging student participation in school

activities in accordance with their interests and Level I vocational surveys. Students spoke about the importance of high attendance and its impact on their achievement of individual goals and on the success of group activities. As a result, there are high levels of student engagement in school activities and parents unanimously reported that the school is very safe, with staff members who treat their children respectfully and in an age appropriate way.

- School leaders and staff utilize a research-based framework that ensures that all teachers receive ongoing feedback to promote professional growth and improved student outcomes. (4.1)
 - Through participation in the Teacher Effectiveness Pilot (TEP), the school continues to deepen the work begun in 2011-2012 to implement the research-based Danielson Framework to promote quality teaching that is IEP driven and aligned to the CCLS. The principal and assistant principal collaboratively observe teachers regularly and spend time discussing the observations, using the research-based framework to ensure that they are normed with each other and able to communicate consistent and coherent feedback to the teachers, grounded in high expectations for the students and inclusive of next steps to improve teacher practice. School administrators use the Learn feature in ARIS to capture informal and formal observation feedback to teachers, using the research-based Danielson Framework for teaching. Staff members, including new teachers, have developed Learning Plans in ARIS learn to help articulate their learning goals and action plans. The school-based coach meets with new teachers to review the needs of their students and to support their implementation of appropriate instructional strategies so that they are achieving their goals reflected in their action plans. To support the implementation of the TEP, this year there has been a school wide emphasis on implementing Student Learning profiles (SLP), as a measure of student learning. The school-based coach meets with teacher teams to facilitate conversations about the SLP, review student evidence, and provide instructional support. School administrators use low inference data from the observation cycles to support teachers in developing their instructional practice, through school-based support, including participation in professional development and provisions of opportunities for them to teach what they have learned to their colleagues. Teachers stated that the feedback they receive, along with their participation in teacher teams and professional development opportunities, helps to improve their pedagogy and use of data, resulting in student progress in meeting their IEP goals and objectives.

What the school needs to improve

- Further refine teaching practices and tasks so that all students are appropriately challenged to engage more deeply in learning activities that extend their learning. (1.2)
 - Although the school has focused on the Danielson competencies outlined in the Citywide Instructional Expectations, and has extended the focus on these competencies during observations, across classrooms, there is inconsistent use of questioning that is open-ended and challenging to all

students in the class. Some classes use assistive technology programmatically and teachers pose questions to the class, but individual communication systems are inconsistently used to engage student participation at the appropriate level of rigor. Limited range of differentiation and inconsistent levels of questioning that do not allow for multiple entry points for learning in some of the classrooms, result in missed opportunities for sustaining high levels of student engagement and critical thinking in different content areas.

- Refocus the analysis of data gathered at the classroom level to strengthen understanding of student performance that results in meaningful feedback to students about their strengths and how to improve their performance. (2.2)
 - Across the school, there is a culture of data collection; administrators, teachers and related service providers collect and use a range of formative and summative assessment data that includes Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI), Brigance Diagnostic series, New York State Alternate Assessment data, New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test, Level 1 Vocational Surveys, teacher constructed rubrics and teacher checklists, to assess independence and accuracy of students in performing tasks in the classroom. The use of the data helps track students' progress in meeting their IEP goals and objectives. Classroom teachers also develop and use rubrics that examine student accuracy and independence. However, although the schools' grading policies are aligned with the curricula and standards chosen, they do not go far enough in providing a clear picture of the extent to which students have mastered their learning goals. In addition, while teachers use assessment data to make effective adjustments to instruction, some students are uncertain of their areas of academic strength and weakness and are unable to clearly articulate their next steps to improve learning. As a result, learning is not maximized for all students.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

| School name: Dr. Edmund Horan School | 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 |

