

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

P.S. 173

Elementary School 173

**306 FORT WASHINGTON AVENUE
MANHATTAN
NY, 10033**

Principal: DAWN BOURSQUOT

Dates of review: December 10 - 11, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Elsa Nunez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 173 is an elementary school with 718 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 3% Black, 92% Hispanic, 3% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 23% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 94%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is Developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's use of resources and strategic planning supports the school's goals of meeting student's social and academic needs. (1.3)
 - The principal believes that the delivery of instruction using the workshop model approach affords students the opportunity to engage in content through various formats, such as explicit modeling, guided practice, interaction with other students, and independent practice, resulting in the allocation of funds to support teacher implementation so that the various learning styles of students are addressed. Title I funds used to purchase professional development services from Teachers' College, provide staff with consultant support at the school as well as provide access to workshops at Teachers' College, in support of the schools goals of improving literacy instruction. Computer stations equipped with Imagine Learning software have been established in every classroom to provide individualized support to the school's large population of English language learners, resulting in improved English language acquisition as evidenced by the results of the New York State English Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT). Non-fiction texts have been purchased to support the school's efforts to align the curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards, allowing for the incorporation of science and social studies content into literacy units. The school employs full time literacy and math coaches to provide teachers with support in implementing instructional shifts to prepare students for the demands of the Common Core Learning Standards. Schedules reflect that academic intervention personnel push-in to provide services to targeted students so that they are supported in mastering grade level content. Licensed instrumental and visual arts teachers allow students to develop performing arts and artistic talents, culminating in presentations and artistic displays that are well attended by parents. The school collaborates closely with an in-house clinic sponsored by Columbia Presbyterian Hospital to provide services to at-risk students. Consequently, results of the Learning Environment Survey demonstrate that parents are satisfied with the education and interventions that students receive at the school.
 - Interviews are conducted by the administrative team and demonstration lessons are required by all applicants to school vacancies so that teachers hired contribute to the school's vision of developing a staff that values collaborating with colleagues and administrators. Administrators analyze teacher observations, student outcomes, and the strengths and personalities of the teachers, to make staff assignments to promote a productive relationship between students and teachers. Results of standardized testing in reading and math, NYSESLAT, running records and end-of-unit tests are analyzed to formulate need-based student groups so that suitable push-in services are provided. The school involves all students in the extended day program providing targeted instruction, and as a result, higher achieving students as well as struggling students receive small group instruction based on assessed needs on a daily basis.

- The school gathers and analyzes various sources of data that inform instructional decisions in order to promote improvement in student outcomes. (2.2)
 - Analysis of student work by teacher teams surfaced the need to provide explicit instruction on the structure of essays and adding details to support claims to produce essays that meet grade level standards. As a result, teachers revised curricular units to include explicit teaching points and scaffolds such as graphic organizers to support students in the development of essential needed skills. Students self-assess their work in writing and math using rubrics and checklists relative to select portfolio pieces, thus documenting progress and assisting in the setting of next steps. Analysis of student achievement data allows the school to strategically group students to provide intervention services based on identified needs, resulting in targeted plans shared by classroom teachers and intervention teachers.
 - The school's use of grade-wide end-of-unit assessments allows for the assessment of student progress towards grade level goals and adjustment of instructional plans. Additionally, data reports for students engaged with Imagine Learning Software that delineate progress in literacy skills such as phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, reading comprehension, and language development, help school personnel monitor the progress of English language learners and develop appropriate interventions. Class profiles, provide a summary of results of standardized testing, benchmark assessments, end-of-unit tasks, and portfolio pieces for all students, allowing school staff to track progress of individual and groups of students in order to develop and revise instructional plans.
- The school's clearly articulated list of goals, understood by the school community, allows for support of its efforts for improvement. (3.1)
 - The school has established school wide goals to improve the use of data by teachers to develop instructional plans, to provide early intervention to students entering kindergarten, and to promote the use of the workshop model to drive school improvement efforts. Incoming bilingual kindergarten students are offered placement in a transitional bilingual program to strengthen native language skills while learning a second language. Students in early grades also receive support in oral language development through the use of Imagine Learning Software that supports literacy development of English language learners. The school's efforts to promote explicit instruction is evident across classrooms as teachers begin lessons by gathering students to demonstrate the use of strategies leading to students practicing, applying the strategy independently, and for them to gain an understanding of targeted concept.
 - Achievement trends of relevant sub-groups and the provided interventions are monitored throughout the school year to track progress towards the achievement of goals. The principal aligns her performance goals to that of the goals in the Comprehensive Education Plan to focus the school's efforts on improving the performance levels of subgroups of students and the effectiveness of teachers. Classroom observations demonstrate that there is evidence of the implementation of school goals

such as workshop teaching across content areas, increased reading and writing of non-fiction, and the planning to use of scaffolds such as visuals and graphic organizers to support all students with a focus on relevant subgroups.

What the school needs to improve

- Increase the rigor of tasks and questioning in order to promote student engagement and improve student work products. (1.1)
 - The school reviews curriculum maps in both English language arts and math to align curriculum to grade-level standards. Professional development is offered to teachers by literacy and math coaches to support teachers in implementing the instructional shifts necessary to prepare students for standard based work. The math curriculum has been revised so that teachers engage students for longer periods on prioritized standards to enable students to develop deep understanding of math concepts. In literacy, curriculum maps reflect a focus on integrating content area topics into reading and writing units to better prepare students for critical analysis of non-fiction reading and writing. Teacher teams meet on a weekly basis to plan instruction and develop tasks to assess student progress towards grade-level goals. However, across classes the lessons implemented by teachers demonstrate that they still do not have a clear understanding of how to merge the instructional shifts necessary in literacy and math with their curricular units and as a result, lessons do not always appropriately challenge students or support higher levels of thinking.
- Improve the consistency of effective teaching strategies across classrooms in order to assure that the academic needs of all students are addressed. (1.2)
 - Across classrooms teachers use the structure of the workshop model to deliver instruction in an effort to support students through whole group, small group, and independent practice, so that students are supported in a variety of formats. Review of lesson plans and discussions with teachers indicate that teachers plan for small group instruction using conference notes and end-of-unit assessments in order to provide students with targeted instruction. Furthermore, teachers discuss the use of shared reading, videos, and graphic organizers, to provide subgroups of students with scaffolds to support comprehension of complex content and vocabulary. However, these practices are not consistently implemented across classrooms and as a result not all lessons provide entry point for students at varying levels.
- Further develop structures to provide teachers with feedback connected to a research-based rubric in order to improve teacher practice. (4.1)
 - The school has chosen Danielson's Framework for teaching to develop a common lens for discussion of effective practices to improve teacher practice. The school provides staff with professional development on the Framework during faculty conferences and grade level professional development sessions to develop a common understanding of effective practices. Grade-level lead teachers engage in weekly after-school planning sessions to provide staff with further professional development

for the implementation of this framework in order to improve teacher practice. New teachers, and teachers who are at risk of receiving adverse ratings, have been scheduled for several visits from administrators since the beginning of the school year to provide timely guidance. However, discussions with teachers and review of feedback provided reveal that oral and written feedback is not consistently connected to the rubric. As a result teachers across grades do not have clear expectations of an established cycle of observations or the focus for school improvement.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: P.S. 173	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