

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

I.S. 025 Adrien Block

Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 25Q025

**34-65 192 STREET
QUEENS
NY, 11358**

Principal: MARY ELLEN BEIRNE

**Dates of review: February 11-12, 2013
Lead Reviewer: Danielle DiMango**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. 025 Adrien Block is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 854 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 3% Black, 24% Hispanic, 28% White, and 45% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 96.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal schedules teachers to ensure they meet consistently and makes strategic programmatic decisions that support the needs of students (1.3)
 - In support of teacher growth and development through inquiry teams, the principal structures the school schedule to allow all teachers time to meet twice a week by grade and department and once a month for interdisciplinary planning. Additionally, to target individual student learning needs, classes are paralleled to allow for movement within grades and subject areas for students to receive mandated and intervention services and to provide a less restrictive environment for special education students in subjects they demonstrate areas of academic strength. Also, student data, such as post assessments and report card grades, is used to organize extended day assignments and as much as possible, teachers are carefully selected to work with students in need of instructional continuity and targeted support. This investment in strategic programming is bridging the gaps within curriculum and pedagogy and as evidenced in student portfolios is helping teachers determine appropriate next steps in order to improve student outcomes.
- The principal and staff foster a community where students feel supported leading to positive student behaviors and an enthusiasm for learning. (1.4)
 - Staff, students and parents work together to support a positive school learning environment. Programs such as peer tutoring and weekly assemblies provide opportunities for students to support one another in their learning and “check in” with staff members to communicate their concerns on topics such as bullying, anti drug campaigns, positive school behavior workshops, goal setting and promotional requirements. Students say they appreciate the fact that their views are heard and that there are many adults they can go to within the school to support their needs. This culture sets a positive school tone that encourages students to focus on achievement and has led to a fifty percent reduction over the past two years in disciplinary incident rates and suspensions.
 - The school has fully implemented the use of Datacation in order to compile and evaluate both academic and attendance data of students within the school. This system has an additional management tool, Pupil Path, which provides real-time snapshots of student’s performance for parents and students to view daily and has increased home-school communication through an internal messaging system that allows students, parents, teachers and the administration to remain in constant contact regarding the individual needs of students. This tool is also used by guidance counselors to identify student strengths and weaknesses around academic and personal behaviors. Counselors use the High School Readiness Tracker to benchmark where students are currently performing and help them to set goals and learn the necessary skills to prepare them for high school and beyond. The community commitment to this system helps prevent students from “falling through the cracks” and allows staff and parents to better support student development of proper work habits and organization skills and is a contributing factor to increased attendance rates of one percent within the school.
- Across classrooms, teachers are developing and beginning to effectively use assessments and rubrics that provide feedback to students and support them in making instructional adjustments to meet student learning needs. (2.2)

- During curriculum planning and inquiry time, teachers are working together to develop pre, post and midline assessments in science, math and social studies and the same format is used for writing in English language arts. Additionally, teachers are in the development and monitoring stages of rubric alignment to units of study and key standards. Despite gaps in alignment to the common core, teachers are using these tools as a way to measure student progress and students are beginning to use these assessments to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to set learning goals around units of study and formative tasks. This work is leading to discussions around how to improve student work.

What the school needs to improve

- Support teachers in the alignment of key standards to school curricula by engaging in collaborative decisions using the Common Core Standards across grades and subject areas to increase rigor and improve student outcomes. (1.1)
 - Teachers are working with the assistant principals and coaches to align standards to their curricula and some grade level teachers, particularly math teachers, are using student work to make purposeful decisions within units of study that emphasize key standards and promote rigorous habits. However, at this time, not all teachers are fully utilizing the standards to inform their planning at a high level and standards based curriculum is not consistent across grades, subjects and classrooms. Additionally, although curriculum maps contain recommended strategies for student subgroups, academic tasks are not crafted to provide full access for all learners, specifically English language learners and students with disabilities. Moreover, The English language arts, science and social studies teachers have developed units of study around nonfiction writing tasks such as argument and report of information. The dependent curriculum and classroom task expectations are mainly fiction based with nonfiction texts that, although incorporated, do not require students to apply knowledge related to analyzing this genre. Content area texts within classroom assignments do not expose students to relevant and/or complex text. For example, English language arts units require students to read poetry and biographies about the lives of poets. Classroom tasks ask students to write poetry. In science and social studies classrooms, text selected by teachers do not take into account student reading ability or readiness to bring them to a deeper understanding of the content. Consequently, there is a misalignment between student comprehension skills, work products and the expectations of the common core learning standards, including the instructional shifts, and students are not fully challenged in ways that promote college readiness. As a result, student learning opportunities vary from classroom to classroom limiting student progress.
- Further strengthen classroom practice to ensure implementation of a common core aligned curricula and challenging tasks with relevant entry points that will allow all students to engage in their learning and produce more rigorous work. (1.2)
 - While the administration identified higher order questioning, appropriate scaffolds, project based learning and turn and talk strategies to increase student thinking and participation as part of their instructional vision, teacher practice inconsistently reflects proficient knowledge of these instructional strategies. Although teachers strive to include these methods in their plans, the execution of these lessons for some teachers does not yield work

products or student discussions that reflect high levels of cognitive engagement. These inconsistencies in practice limit student growth and achievement as evidenced in a consistent decline in student progress on the school's last two progress reports.

- Build on observation practices so that teacher feedback, aligns to a common framework, supports teacher growth and informs professional development promoting a school wide culture of professional learning and reflection. (4.1)
 - The administration engages in walkthroughs and formal and informal observations and consistently provides feedback to teachers. However, school leader feedback from observations of strengths and areas for improvements in teacher practice does not yet thoughtfully and consistently align to a common teaching framework. As a result, there are no clearly defined, shared expectations for teacher practice limiting opportunities for teacher participation in their professional growth and increased student performance.
 - The school has a comprehensive menu of professional development opportunities offered to their teachers throughout the year but, administrators have not yet fully implemented a system to strategically link professional learning offerings to the data collected from classroom observations and feedback of individual teachers. Even though all teachers benefit from exposure to school wide pedagogical training, there are missed opportunities to focus on improving individual teacher specific skill based weaknesses and to build upon instructional capacity within the school.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: I.S. 025 Adrien Block	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