

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

The Maure School

Elementary School Q055

**131-10 97th Avenue
Richmond Hill, N.Y. 11419**

Principal: Ralph K. Honore

Dates of review: January 29-30, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Beverly Ffolkes-Bryant, Ed.D

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Maure School is an elementary school with 603 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 15% Black, 28% Hispanic, 3% White, 14% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 40% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 14% 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 93.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes informed and effective organizational decisions across all aspects of the school to support improvements in learning. (1.3)
 - In addition to scheduling daily common preparation periods for grade teams to meet and revise units of study to address the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) and the Common core Learning Standards (CCLS), the principal also created a schedule where grade teams have ninety minutes of time for planning, inquiry or professional development twice each week. In order to address rigor, teachers utilize Webb's Depth of Knowledge to examine tasks, resources and higher-order questioning strategies that promote critical thinking. Some results of these planning sessions include differentiated tasks, use of shared reading and writing pieces to best model expectations, as well as student use of rubrics and/or checklists to monitor progress toward a specific goal. Teachers also use the time to examine student work to modify, re-teach or extend activities based on identified weaknesses and strengths. This is evidenced through updated curriculum maps in math and literacy which both serve to integrate social studies and science as per the CIE and Danielson's Framework regarding the Design of Coherent Instruction. In addition, cluster teachers have a double period planning block twice a month where they meet with the assistant principal in order to align their teaching to best support classroom instruction.
 - The principal has scheduled eight periods of every cluster teacher's program for Response to Intervention (RTI) of targeted students. Three times a week these teachers push into a lower grade class for small group instruction to reinforce students' goals. Cluster teachers confer with classroom teachers on Thursdays around student's CAFÉ (Comprehension, Awareness/Accuracy, Fluency, and Expand Vocabulary) or Voice, Organization, Ideas, Conventions, Excellent Word Choice, Sentence Fluency goals. These goals are predetermined using pre-assessments, student writing and benchmark data. Once data has been disaggregated and reviewed, the teacher determines which strategies will be used to best support learning. Administration schedules checkpoints where, together with staff, they evaluate student writing and next steps students and review performance, progress and next steps. In this way the principal makes a direct correlation between the classroom and cluster teachers' instruction. This enables the lowest performers to receive specific targeted academic intervention with a decreased teacher-to-student ratio, resulting in accelerated progress students. For example, the math/science cluster teacher was assigned the task of integrating CCLS-based problem solving across the school. His work across grades has proven to support gains; benchmark data in math shows an increase in performance across for all subgroups of students.
- Professional collaboration is a high priority and faculty profit from varied opportunities to share and develop strengths. (4.2)
 - Teacher teams use the 90-minute consecutive bi-weekly periods for refining the Everyday Mathematics program, using the CCLS and the CIE

instructional shifts as their essential guide. Along with the Webb's Depth of Knowledge rubric, teachers analyze the program to see if it meets their expectations and create strategies to supplement lessons. Teachers plan units of study using the Understanding by Design (UBD) backwards design model. Each unit is introduced with a pre-assessment, and then teachers evaluate the pre-assessment to adjust and plan for instruction that best supports the identified student needs, including formative interval checkpoints to measure progress towards achieving the goals of the final performance tasks. Teachers evaluate summative assessments through the Objective, Reflective, Interpretative, Decisional (ORID) protocol. One teacher reported how having this time and the tools made them put more depth in their planning and using UBD helped to provide multiple entry points and prepare content-integrated units of study. This shared planning time promotes coherence and consistency across all grades throughout the school as evidenced in classes observed and by students showing a growth of two independent reading levels and increased Lexile measures.

- Based on recommendations from last year's Quality Review report to "continue to provide opportunities for teachers to increase their knowledge of differentiated instruction," the principal introduced the ORID protocol as a tool for focused conversation around data analysis. It provides a set of questions to use when examining student work, honoring the good things found in that work and fine-tuning the assignment through a formal process of presentation and reflection. The school's use of UBD, common planning time, performance tasks along with the evaluation of tasks with ORID protocols has enabled the school to successfully track, monitor and determine student success through their CCLS-aligned performance tasks. Teachers remarked that using this protocol has caused them to be more reflective and that meeting regularly improves their teaching by enabling them to look at the data and identify trends. Evaluation of the pre-assessments as compared to final performance tasks reveals that students have attained unit-specific mastery of goals as a result of improved instruction.
- Through regular use of a wide range of relevant data, leaders and staff have an ongoing understanding of the performance and progress of individuals, which effectively informs instruction and organizational adjustments. (2.2)
 - Based on the recommendations from the previous Quality Review to "develop ongoing assessment practices that inform instruction and improve student outcomes," the principal purchased Literacy by Design for his lower grade students. This literacy series includes benchmarks assessments, a lesson checklist, a pre-assessment checklist, as well as a checklist of the particular performance tasks. Teacher teams use these various assessments to refine their unit plans as well as prepare for small group instruction. They also enter benchmark information into Reading Tracker so that the principal may access a class-by-class and grade analysis and then have one-to-one teacher conversations. This makes teachers more highly effective in making instructional decisions as it ensures that administration receives meaningful information on instructional practice, resulting in improving student performance as evidenced by the benchmark assessment data on all grades that indicates that students have been improving one to two independent reading levels per benchmarking cycles.

- Based on the recommendations from the previous Quality Review that stated that although some teachers were conferring it was not a consistent, school-wide practice, the principal along with staff members on every grade, implemented the CAFÉ system for literacy. Initiated as a result of book studies, teacher team meetings, intervisitations and modeled instruction, CAFÉ is a school-wide initiative that is also inclusive of the English language learners and special education teacher support service programs. Teachers use pre-assessment benchmarks and, together with the student, create goals in one of the CAFÉ areas. Small group instruction and conferring is then based on that identified focus. Teachers give post-assessments to ensure students have mastered that level before moving on. Upper grade students use their CAFÉ goals to guide their written self-reflections and then receive teacher feedback. This practice allows teachers to analyze students' work and level of understanding as well as the effectiveness of their own instruction.
- The principal's expectations for delivery of rigorous, standards-based curricula results in teacher-created instructional units with progress monitoring checkpoints, resulting in improved in student performance. (1.1)
 - After analyzing the previous year's CCLS tasks, State exam data and this year's CIE, administration realized that there were not enough content area studies. As a result, teacher teams plan and update unit maps to ensure that content areas studies are included in the three forms of writing identified through the CCLS. Meanwhile, the school's instructional focus is on the Conventions of Writing and Academic Vocabulary. The "Tiered Words" program was developed in response to ACUITY, Scantron and prior state exam data that informed the school that content-specific vocabulary presents challenges to students when dealing with complex texts. Through this school-wide program, teachers, students and administrators identify tier 1 words and generate new lists of tier 2 and 3 words to use during instruction and writing. Teams also incorporate Danielson's Designing Coherent Instruction, Student Engagement as well as Questioning and Discussion in their unit plans where students must explain their thinking through small and large group discussion. Teachers include extra prompts in their planning for discussion-based lessons that help facilitate higher-level questioning and student discussion.
 - Based on the results of the 2012 Progress Report where the school received 1.9 out of 16 Closing the Achievement Gap points, the school purchased the ACHIEVE 3000 online literacy program as an RTI for targeted assistance for students in grades 4 and 5. The school made a conscious decision to provide repeated practice of common core learning in order to ensure independence among students, the reading and writing elements that are embedded within ACHIEVE 3000's language arts activities help students develop the capacities recommended by the CCLS. This program provides non-fiction articles in various student reading levels so that all self-contained and Integrated Co-Teaching classes may utilize it for students with disabilities as well as with students who received a scale score between 635-666 on the State exams. Students work online independently, and when students struggle with a particular component the program sends a message to the teacher who then provides further reinforcement through in-class conferencing. ACHIEVE 3000 tracks students and tells whether or not they are college

ready. While RTI and ACHIEVE 3000 address literacy, the content area components support student performance in both social studies and science, as indicated by improved student outcomes on their performance tasks as measured by CCLS-aligned rubrics and ACHIEVE 3000 data. For example, in one class, students working within this program read three versions of the same text as part of a unit on ecosystems. Teachers prepared the lesson by sharing prompts and characteristics of higher-order questions according to Webb's Depth of Knowledge, then students generated questions to share with classmates based on those articles. Due to literacy work like this across grades and subject areas, many students have moved two independent reading levels in two weeks and are now reading longer text passages. These opportunities ensure that all students are engaged and their needs are being met, resulting in accelerated progress toward reaching learning targets.

What the school needs to improve

- Promote more consistent communication to ensure that relationships across the school are supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and parents in order to make them feel valued and part of the school community. (1.4)
 - Many students come to the school as newly arrived immigrants from various countries. In previous years the school had a Welcome Class for these students and students expressed how they enjoyed coming to school and feel safe. However, the students also mentioned how there were incidences of teasing that happen during lunch and morning lineup periods. The school previously implemented a Peer Mediation program to promote behaviors in students. However, both the mediation program and the Welcome Class have been disbanded. Additionally, there has not been any professional development or outreach to staff to address these issues. Not having these programs for students and professional development opportunities for staff limits needed student supports, which negatively impacts both their academic and personal growth.
- Design a uniform protocol for both informal and formal observations to provide a common lens that evaluates teaching practices and identifies next steps. (4.1)
 - Administration does informal walkthroughs of classes using the domains presented in the Danielson's Framework for Teaching and has prepared an observation template to use. Classroom observations and school protocols, however, do not reflect a clear instructional focus on a specific domain; therefore it is unclear if or how the broad feedback helps to improve pedagogy. This lack of a clear focus to elevate rigor inhibits both professional growth and related student achievement.
 - Even though administration purchased the Teachscape online program to use as their observation tool to systematically improve teaching practice and to accelerate teacher's professional growth using Danielson's Framework for Teaching, technology limitations have prevented them from using it. Although observations and walkthroughs are being done, there is no ready data for administration to use to inform their design of differentiated professional development. This lack of data limits

opportunities to elevate the school-wide instructional practice in targeted and differentiated ways.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Maure 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