

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Frank Sansivieri Intermediate School

Q073

**70-02 54th Avenue
Maspeth
NY 11378**

Principal: Camillo V. Turriciano

Dates of review: November 29-30, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Madelene Chan

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. 73 is an intermediate school with 1,597 students from 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 1.2% Black, 58.4% Hispanic, 14.5% White, and 25.8% Asian students. The student body includes 16.2% English language learners and 13.7% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 95.7%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well-developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The implementation of a teacher-designed curriculum, including the Arts, aligned to key standards offers a wide-range of rigorous educational opportunities and choice that promotes positive student outcomes. (1.1)
 - The school is well focused on providing curriculum with coherence across grades and content areas. Based on the needs of the students purposeful decisions were made to implement key standards. This includes writing that cites textual evidence to support explicit analysis, as well as explanations of inferences drawn from the text, and objective summaries after reading. Teachers use formal data, self-designed assessments, purposefully aligned to the CCLS units of study, and exit cards to identify specific areas of need for all students. Teacher teams focus on data-driven decision making that incorporate the inquiry cycle process. Within each team there is an understanding that on-going reflection must take place to determine if instructional shifts reflecting citywide instructional expectations have had an effect on student learning. Discussions are focused on the analysis of student performance on assessments and student work samples that reflect Common Core Learning Standards. As a result of these practices an analysis of 8th grade unit trends for English Language Learners indicate that this subgroup improved by 5.84% between pre and post assessments in being able to identify the theme of a story and ELLs in 6th grade increased by 32.05% in identifying supporting details in the content area of social studies, thus making progress to close the achievement gap.
 - Rigor is universally identified throughout the school as having students develop the capacity to understand content that is complex, and personally/emotionally challenging. Real world work tasks like students deciding whether Fullan's article on the Omnivore's Dilemma can help people decide what is best to eat, why and when are present in all classrooms, across the content areas and in the Arts. The school focuses on providing higher order thinking and direct instruction in the skills needed to manage the content and these skills are embedded in a coherent way across grades and subjects for all learners. To ensure that this instructional approach is being implemented, assistant Principals and instructional lead teachers facilitate in-house professional development and planning sessions. This work focuses on culminating performance tasks, rubrics, annotated student work ranging across levels, supports for helping students comprehend complex text and monitoring student progress by analyzing student work samples. Students are studying forensic anthropology by analyzing such poems as "Ancestors" and then comparing it to the text "Listening to the Bones" in order to interpret the literal and figurative meaning of their readings and to decipher vocabulary within the text. As a result of these practices students with disabilities have increased their understanding of the text and their Lexile reading levels by 8% collectively using this instructional approach to learning.

- Across classrooms, teaching practices reflect strategic use of scaffolds to provide multiple entry points and opportunities for effective student collaboration ensuring high levels of cognitive engagement. (1.2)
 - Teachers present a united front that best practices involve meeting students' individual needs which align to the school's beliefs about how students learn best. Each classroom has an agenda that conveys to students a roadmap of the learning journey the class will accomplish for the day. At select time periods throughout the school year, students' instructional goals are created during conferences with their teacher. Because of this collaborative process, all students understand their goals, and can articulate the next steps that need to be taken in their learning process. This thoughtful communication shows that students are writing extensively in the content areas and are able to make an argument and support it with details. Math reflection sheets have enabled students to see a clear picture of their strengths and needs. Students say this method allows them to "see the math problem like solving a puzzle and get the answer in a more logical way." Teacher teams agree that the school's well embedded method of collecting data through student conferences has helped them determine which skills need to be retaught or ramped up to support those student in need of remediation or advanced instruction. As a result student – teacher conferences in social studies for grade 6 have yielded gains of 43.48% for Students with disabilities who are also in the ELL subgroup (SWELLs), in their ability to determine the meaning of unknown words.
 - Multiple entry points to lessons and tasks are provided for all learners including ELLs and SWDs. Examples include the strategic use of scaffolding techniques including the effective use of graphic organizers with annotations or questions, leveled texts, activities with questions that match the appropriate depth of knowledge for the student- group strategies for skill building, and reinforcing and sustaining academic vocabulary in all content areas and the Arts. Data from pre and post unit assessments, exit cards and student work is used to group students with a focus during the work period. Rigorous tasks like defending a theory in science using a claim statement, two supporting reasons, and text evidence is established across the grades. Achieve 3000 and Carnegie Learning Mathematics are assessments used to plan for students' future tasks and next steps to determine and provide individual goals based on students' needs and the outcomes of their results. Both programs have proven successful; more than 20% of the students using Achieve 3000 have increased their reading by a minimum of 3 levels and all students using Carnegie mathematics for academic intervention services (AIS) have shown an average growth increase of 13.32%.
- School leaders and faculty engage in an effective teacher development process that provides focused, timely and meaningful feedback resulting in improved instructional practice. (4.1)
 - The school's implementation of the Danielson framework has evolved from an awareness of different components to a universal understanding of how creating purposeful instruction around targeted learning outcomes can benefit all students. Teachers agree that the short, frequent visits to their classrooms with immediate feedback supports them with ongoing

reflection about strategies that leads to an increased exchange of ideas and resources to develop better practices, school wide. All teachers analyze student work prior to planning lessons so that instruction is focused on the pre-assessment results and needs of each student. Successful results on post assessments in all content areas show that planning is more aligned to students' skills and teachers are adroit at eliciting and tracking concise evidence of student learning.

- As a means of monitoring teacher performance and effectiveness, TeachBoost software is utilized by the administration during walkthroughs. Teacher reports are generated that analyze individual and school-wide instructional trends incorporating the key selected components of the Danielson Framework. This data supports teacher development by carving out specific expectations align to teachers' annual and interim goals. The school's literacy and mathematics coach, with support from instructional lead teachers, collaborate with assistant principals on professional development sessions and the interface of peer to peer inter-visitations. Teacher surveys lead to professional development menus on topics of choice that reflect goal setting and measurable objectives. Trends in teacher feedback inform individualized plans of support for all teachers so that instructional and content-area support is developed. The success of these systems is seen school-wide. Modified pre- and post assessment skill based questions for supporting details in social studies reflected the following improvements: general education students increased by 41.49%, ELLs increased by 32.0%, SWD increased by 37.76% and SWELLs increased by 39.07%. Evidence of student progress and teacher growth has deeply impacted increased student outcomes.
- Analysis of school data to develop an understanding of subgroup patterns and trends has led to meaningful feedback to students and adjustments in curriculum. (2.2)
 - Scantron Performance Series is administered during the school year. This data is disseminated to teachers in all content areas and is used to assist them with addressing student needs. Students' growth in Lexile reading levels is benchmarked and monitored from the beginning of the year to the end of the year. *ACUITY Benchmark & Baseline Assessments* in ELA and Mathematics are also used to differentiate instruction based on the learning standards. An analysis is conducted on the performance of all students as well as students in each sub-group for each assessment that is administered. At this time assessments are used to determine student progress according to students' goal sheets reflecting a transparent system for all content area teachers in tracking progress and adjusting CCLS embedded curriculum. This practice has defined the planning stages for teachers and has created a comprehensive system to determine long and short goals and long term next steps towards student progress. As a result, all ELLs and students with disabilities are showing an increase of 15% in math proficiency.
 - Pre and post unit assessments aligned to state exams provide evidence of how students are performing in relation to the standards. Prosper Assessment System Pre and Post test units in ELA, mathematics, science and social studies are used to differentiate instruction based on the state standards as well as skills. These assessments provide data

regarding student growth within each unit as well as throughout the course of the school year. Actionable feedback in ELA and math, derived from these assessments, has assisted students in self-checking their work. A result of these successful practices is the revision of informational rubrics by ELA teachers after students created a more user friendly approach to identifying supporting details in complex text.

- School leaders make effective organizational decisions that are well aligned with school instructional goals which support efforts toward improved student learning. (1.3)
 - All resources are strategically aligned to the school's overarching goals and are reflective of key priorities. ELMO document readers and LCD projectors have enhanced classroom instruction, particularly for students who are visual learners. Language support is being offered through the *Rosetta Stone* program and is being implemented as an additional support system for beginner ELLs. Students are benefitting from this program as seen in their work products for building vocabulary and interpreting complex text. E-Chalk is an online server that was purchased to create an additional connection between students, parents, and teachers as a means of providing parents with information that they need to help make learning successful for their children. Parents rave that they are very fond of this program and depend on it to spot check for daily homework and long-term assignments. The implementation of these resources is a direct connection to the requests from last year's Learning Environment Survey to increase supports and communication between students and parents and the school. These resources and structures are supporting improved student learning.
 - Structured student and teacher time promotes high levels of critical thinking and supports instruction by targeting learning needs. Various programs illustrate the level of high support students at IS 73 receive. A Title III grant provides before and after school programs to support English Language Learners. Tier 1 & 2 Academic Intervention Services (AIS) for at-risk students provides small group instruction within their class work period in the form of scaffolds that are specifically designed based on assessment results. Additionally, in each grade, three classes have been parallel programmed to support the initiative of flexible programming as a means of supporting the instructional needs of special education students. Special education teachers' schedules have been modified to support flexible programming. These schedules have enabled teachers to group students for success and provide remedial or enrichment services with a decreased teacher to student ratio. This has resulted in an increase in English Language Arts and math post test scores for all subgroups of students throughout the content areas.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to evaluate decisions pertaining to policies, practices and the CCLS, implementing appropriate modifications as needed to ensure school wide coherence. (5.1)

- Weekly team meetings afford the staff the opportunity to reflect on the curricula they have designed and look at student work to determine where changes would benefit the needs of all students. Although this process has proven successful throughout the content areas it is not as evident or purposeful in the work of ancillary classes where students receive supportive services in ELA, math and English language services. As a result, it is difficult to determine the short and long term learning needs of students receiving ancillary services in alignment with the CCLS.
- Professional development is a well- planned school process that is linked to effective teacher feedback and follow-up visits to determine if scheduled professional development learning is implemented and effective. Although professional development practices are assessed for effectiveness, a direct link to student mastery of the CCLS is not present in all areas of this process. The lack of an interim goals time frame hinders purposeful evaluation and coherence in determining what all teachers need to learn to support student achievement.

Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Frank Sansivieri Intermediate 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