

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

The Eastwood School

Elementary School Q095

179-01 90th Avenue

Queens

NY 11432

Principal: Kim A. Hill

Dates of review: December 3 – 4, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Lenon Murray

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Eastwood is an elementary school with 1,414 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 15% Black, 37% Hispanic, 2% White, and 46% Asian students. The student body includes 30% English language learners and 6% 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 94.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and faculty share a very clear set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by a research-based framework and leads to growth in student progress. (1.2)
 - Teachers utilize instructional techniques that facilitate different entry points for their students and maximize their ability to become fully engaged in the lessons. For example, in a second grade mathematics class, students are grouped based on unit assessments and the teacher's unique knowledge of their strengths and challenges. This knowledge is often gained from periodic, one-to-one conference between student and teacher. During a fifth grade class transitioning from math to literacy the teacher made interdisciplinary connections involving sequencing, comparison and building to problem resolution using text-based information. Across classrooms students engage in diverse activities that are informed by Depth of Knowledge matrices. As a result, classroom data shows improved achievement in reading and an increased volume and precision in writing across subjects as evident in student work folders and bulletin board displays.
 - Teachers generally organize their teaching points around essential questions and require their students to provide rationales for their answers. During a fifth grade self-contained class of students with disabilities, the teacher and paraprofessional provided their student groups with adequate wait time to wrestle with their answers on the question of mandatory uniforms. In another class on the grade students kept returning to their text analysis of "Thunder Rose". The teacher actually inquired of the students "What questions should we be asking to build our case?" Across classrooms students consistently engaged in discussions that demonstrated high levels of student thinking and led to effective learning as evidenced on student exit slips indicating that eighty percent of students are at mastery levels.
- School leaders strategically align budget, technology and coaching while making organizational decisions that effectively support instructional goals to meet student learning needs through quality work products. (1.3)
 - The school's organizational decisions include the assignment of English as a second language teachers to support English language learners both in the classrooms during the literacy period and as small groups during other periods of the day. English language learners are also engaged in challenging tasks through web-based programs such as Achieve 3000 to strengthen their literacy skills. Both classroom teachers and English as a second language teachers work collaboratively on their teams to track the progress of English language learners and plan lessons to meet their needs. As a result, 100% of the students who receive second language services increased their comprehension and academic vocabulary as measured on running records, unit assessments, interim assessments and web-based assessments.
 - The school leadership has organized the scheduling to provide a minimum of two formal teacher team meetings each week and several

more informal meetings. The inquiry process is driven by student data results. Academic intervention now includes the computer lab and a constantly increasing inventory of laptops with at least one hundred added in the fall. A web-based program utilizing individual passwords and tailored instruction has become available to all students in grades three to five. As a result, students have been more continuously involved in challenging tasks as indicated in their individualized computer profiles in which the degree of difficulty has increased by an average of 10% over three months.

- The school has created a strong and coherent curriculum aligned to key State standards to meet the academic needs of students and increase achievement. (1.1)
 - The school leadership and faculty strategically utilize the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to align its scope and sequence guides, its curriculum maps, units of study and subject area rubrics. Teacher teams use the CCLS to integrate the CIE instructional shifts in English language arts and math. Teachers consistently engage in the development of well designed units of study focused on the analysis of challenging texts which support informational and persuasive writing. Teachers across grades refine the curriculum maps and are familiar with essential questions, skills and tasks that are driven from the standards. This approach has led to increased emphasis in the school community on college and career readiness.
 - Classroom visits reflect that teachers, across subjects and grades, focus on higher order thinking skills and they have already administered CCLS-aligned units of study in literacy and math. Students have been learning to research specific topics and write coherent answers to essential questions using non-fiction texts to support their positions. A large emphasis is also being placed on academic vocabulary. Consequently, there has been a significant increase in the quality of assignments presented by students as evidenced by completed CCLS tasks.
- A variety of assessments that are aligned to the curriculum and consistent across classrooms and grades enable teacher teams and individual teachers to adjust instructional decisions and increase student performance. (2.2)
 - Teacher use a uniform grading policy informed from their regular meetings. They devise specific rubrics to evaluate particular subject areas and assignments. The CCLS are used as their ultimate guide. Unit tests and teacher made quizzes routinely supplement the interim assessments to provide a clear understanding of student mastery. English language learners and students with disabilities are carefully monitored to ensure that their individualized educational plans and second language goals are met and surpassed. For example, a fifth grade special education teacher and a second grade Bilingual teacher were quite conversant about their students' individual achievement goals. This professional discourse results in teachers making continuous adjustments to improve their instruction as monitored in formal and informal observation reports.
 - Across classrooms teachers use various methods to consistently check for understanding during their teaching. In a fifth grade class the teacher circulated among the flexible groups continuously monitoring their

progress of the assignment. In a third grade class students were called individually to the whiteboard to demonstrate their work. In a second grade math class students were using money manipulatives to calculate their answers. In a fourth grade class, students were required to hand in their exit slips before transition to the next subject. Teachers then implement strategies that may include re-teaching, strategy lessons or individualized conferring. As a result, student groupings are flexible so that tasks are matched to students' learning needs and academic deficits are carefully strengthened.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen professional development and teacher feedback loops to improve teacher practices resulting in an accelerated pace of instructional change. (4.1)
 - The school leaders have made a robust effort to explicitly use the Danielson Teaching Framework to elevate the instructional practices at the school. The administrators have used frequent cycles of observation to provide clear feedback to teachers in a timely manner. This feedback is both oral and written. Informal observations take this form while formal observations are not as directly tied to the rubric. The rubric is used in specific areas to provide clear expectations. While teacher practice is demonstrating improvement based on the rubric, the work of connecting student work and data directly to the rubric is continuously evolving. As a result, teacher goals are not yet fully tied to ongoing student achievement.
- Further develop structures to regularly evaluate and adjust the process for increasing the coherence of practices that integrate the CCLS into all assessments. (5.1)
 - The instructional cabinet of the school regularly monitors the effectiveness of the teacher teams and the professional development practices that are embedded in the school. The cabinet consists of the administrators and coaches at the school. Teacher leadership is supported and encouraged. Teachers share best practices with one another. The same leadership group is responsible for communicating the CCLS expectations to the school community. The process is working at this time as teacher feedback on the School Survey indicates a high level of confidence in the leadership of the principal. However, with the increasing demands of the CCLS and the rapid emergence of more challenging State tests in the near future, the school needs to develop a more balanced structure that is monitored by teacher leaders themselves leading to increased achievement. .

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

| School name: The Eastwood 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 |