

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

P.S. 098 The Douglaston School

Elementary

**40-20 235 STREET
QUEENS, NY, 11363**

Principal: SHEILA HUGGINS

**Dates of review: Oct 24, 2012
Lead Reviewer: Anita Saunders**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 098 The Douglaston School is a/an Elementary school with 235 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 1.3% Black, 8.5% Hispanic, 57.9% White, and 25.1% Asian students. The student body includes 1.7% English language learners and 8.5% special education students. Boys account for 51.9% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48.1%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 96.39%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal's strategic leadership promotes organizational decisions that clearly support different levels of goals to constantly improve student outcomes and student progress. (1.3)
 - Time has been allocated so that teams of teachers meet weekly in their vertical teams and again with the principal during a school based lunch hour option. These lunch hour meetings enabled staff to examine bar graphs resulting from data analysis of student scores for grades 3-5 in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math and provided clear evidence of the need for acceleration of level 3 and 4 students, especially grade 3 in math and grade 5 in ELA. The school has adopted a new math program for all grades that differentiates lessons through tiered assignments and has adapted all curriculum maps to include more challenging assignments. Specifically in reading and writing the use of various thinking maps for organization, and hand held devices during lessons for assessment has supported all students to meet their learning goals. Additionally, the principal was able, despite very limited funding, to provide a special arts program that explores environment through visual arts using various media, including technology, a theater program for grades 3-5 that combines history with script writing and performances, and a Lego robotics program to provide additional acceleration and enrichment. Library for all classes, with a parent volunteer acting as librarian, has been made possible due to collaborative efforts with the PTA. Furthermore, block programming for math and ELA have been instituted to ensure improved progress for all students and raise the level of achievement. Teacher assignments have resulted in some grade change so that the most effective teachers were placed to close the achievement gap and hold themselves accountable and as the primary provider of instruction for students with disabilities(SWD) and English language learners(ELL). For example, the ICT Special Education teacher was moved from kindergarten to first grade to ensure continuity and accountability in achievement and instruction for the Special Education students.
- The principal and staff work as a unified team to create a calm, respectful, orderly and caring environment that promotes learning and increasing student achievement and progress. (1.4)
 - Children attend a short, early morning assembly with the principal each day where an emphasis on respect, relationships and helping others in the greater community are emphasized, using a Book of the Month for reflection and discussion. As a result, the Student Ambassador Team meets with faculty advisors to decide on philanthropic endeavors such as the adoption of the Briarwood Shelter with a food drive three times a year and raised funds for the United through Reading Program enabling the production of videos for military parents to read to their children. In addition, the Student Council meets monthly with the principal to voice concerns and make suggestions. Consequently, they have adopted "Bucket Fillers" where students who help others are added to the bucket and celebrated through a monthly recognition assembly with a certificate, a luncheon with the principal, and a bulletin board featuring students' pictures and names. The Council also meets with the kitchen manager every month to discuss the menus and promote healthier eating with more vegetables and fruits, promoting a caring environment.
 - The school community is very involved in the academic and personal well being of its students and families. As such, there is a monthly Newsletter, backpacked and email blasted, depicting the various activities and learning of each class, and monthly parent workshops that are based on current curriculum and student needs. For example, there was a Welcome Back Fall Festival for parents and children with the school's arts partner, an October Family Math Night, and future plans for Accelerating Level 3 and 4 Students, Building Resilience in Children,

Envision Math, Smart Boards, Bullying, etc. Over 200 parents attended recent workshops. Hence, through the latter activities, effective student behavior and academic achievement are promoted. Additionally, professional development for staff has been related to improvement of student achievement and progress. For example, Writing Rubrics, Understanding Teachers College Running Records, Conferring One to One, Building Comprehension, Text Complexity, Shifts in ELA and Math, Understanding Data, Envisions Math, CCLS, and Book of the Month Values Education have all been attended by staff.

- The school has established coherence of curriculum across grades, consistently integrated Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and aligned rigorous tasks into instructional units to meet the academic needs of all students. (1.1)
 - Curriculum maps for ELA, math and social studies have been revised by each grade to integrate the shifts in ELA and math and to ensure the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) are appropriately planned and implemented. Staff is using assessment data and accessing EngageNY to further plan and adjust instructional alignment with the CCLS, focusing on reading informational texts (including science and social studies), academic vocabulary, and opinion writing. Grade 3 implemented a unit on “Saving the Rain Forest “ that included non-fiction reading of several tiered articles and books with an essay focused on facts and details to support an opinion. A variety of Thinking Maps are used to organize thoughts and provide multiple entry points for all learners, including ELLS and SWD. Depth of Knowledge(DOK) higher level questioning is modeled and encouraged for student use in discussions and writing, promoting rigor. Choice boards have been implemented to encourage rigorous student projects, e.g. 4th grade “I Love NY” tiered, relevant to life assignment with a choice of an opinion letter to Gov. Cuomo, creating a new slogan. Hence, these tasks are examples of closing the achievement gap and preparing students for college.
- Teams of teachers work effectively to analyze data for planning and adjusting instruction resulting in purposeful support for students. (2.2)
 - Teachers are meeting in newly formed vertical teams, grades K-2 and 3-5, to more effectively align the CCLS to instruction, analyzing assessments and identifying gaps in student learning, especially in math using the new Envisions assessments and in ELA using the Teachers College Reading and Writing assessments. The K-2 team was analyzing problem solving in math and realized many students did not understand the mathematical terms used in problem solving in the newly adopted math program. The grade 3-5 team noticed students in grade 4-5 are lacking place value in reading and writing through the billions. Hence, teams have embarked on planning consistently aligned math vocabulary throughout the grades. Rubrics have been created for writing mathematical explanations, including next steps, as in grade 4 where problem solving used technology to illustrate solutions and explanations with diagrams and assessed according to concepts, accuracy of diagrams and solutions. Next steps were listed in errors and reviewed in individual and small group conferences. Teams are also focusing on sharing strategies to provide multiple entry points into lessons so that all students are challenged appropriately. In addition, there is a continuing focus on using DOK higher level questions to stimulate higher order thinking and questioning to promote effective student discussions. A discussion was observed in the 4th grade ELA class regarding the book *Sorry*, where students freely added information to the previous student’s response with the arrow of recitation resulting in student to student to student rather than teacher to student, teacher to student questioning for responses, thereby actively engaging students.

What the school needs to improve

- Provide teachers with direct and effective feedback and next steps from short frequent cycles of classroom visits using the Danielson teaching framework that supports teacher development. (4.1)

- The principal and AP are using a Danielson rubric to provide clear expectations for teacher practice in questioning and assessment with teacher teams looking at student work in mathematical explanations and opinion writing. Although feedback and next steps are provided to improve teacher practice, cycles of additional mini visitations based on specific domains have not been planned therefore hindering improved instruction and student progress since higher level questioning and differentiated planning with supports and extensions were not observed in all classrooms.
- Further develop processes and systems to regularly evaluate and adjust curriculum, instructional and organizational practices to meet learning needs of students and expectations of the CCLS. (5.1)
 - Although the leadership and teams engage in a weekly review of curricular and instructional practices focusing on the instructional core and structures for improvement, a system to regularly evaluate and revise these areas across all grades/subjects has not been completely developed according to the expectations of the CCLS. Lacking this structure, total coherence of practices and policies cannot be fully ensured to maximize student outcomes.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: P.S. 098 The Douglaston 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