

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**The Sunrise School**

**Elementary – Middle School 138**

**251 – 11 Weller Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11422**

**Principal: James Mc Enaney**

**Dates of review: October 22 – 23, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Lenon Murray**

## **Part 1: The school context**

### **Information about the school**

The Sunrise School is an elementary - middle school with 856 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 89% Black, 6% Hispanic, 2% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 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 94%.

### **Overall Evaluation**

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Professional learning is embedded in the school's culture and frequent, systematic observations within a framework as well as student outcome analysis lead to professional growth among teachers. (4.1)
  - The principal and assistant principals maintain a portfolio for each teacher that includes Teacher Data Reports (TDR), informal observations, their professional goals sheet based on self-assessment and formal observation reports. These data sources are combined with student data and work products to inform decisions about teacher evaluation, tenure and retention. This portfolio coupled with a careful analysis of learning outcomes is used to provide feedback to teachers and next steps for their professional growth. The ten percent of teachers who are new receive immediate actionable feedback based on low inference notes and data trends. This has led to professional growth since the beginning of the school year as indicated in teacher team meeting written feedback.
  - The school is using Charlotte Danielson's research-based Framework to inform teaching, articulating clear expectations for instruction and learning. All teachers utilize the rubric for self-reflection and to engage in common language when discussing professional growth with school administrators. Supervisors provide teachers with written and verbal feedback within one week of a classroom visit. To deepen this process, teachers also view best practice videos through a PD 360 online teacher-support system. As a result, mutually agreed upon individualized support is provided to teachers in the form of coaching, inter-visitations, mentoring and targeted professional development that improves teacher practices as indicated in low-inference administrator notes.
- The school leadership has a shared instructional vision that is reflected in its data-based goals and results in improved teacher practice across classrooms. (3.1)
  - Based on the analysis of a broad range of data, the School Leadership Team has developed goals that are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that target student writing and math fluency school wide. These targets are addressed through the infusion of academic rigor, increased writing-on-demand using text-based arguments and instructional shifts around math fluency. Additionally, the school is working to push in targeted assistance for struggling students. The data and progress related to the accomplishment of the goals is carefully tracked and shared with the school community. Interim assessment results show improvements in English language arts in grades 4, 5 and 8. Improvement in math has been observed in grades 4 and 5. As a result of these efforts to accelerate student achievement the school is sustaining its initial progress.

- Teacher teams play a central role in helping to establish school goals through an analysis of a broad range of data. The administrators meet with the grade leaders of each collaborative teacher team to ensure that there are continuous adjustments and refinements in meeting the school goals. Parents have stated that they are aware of the mission of the school, understand the goals and support the educational vision. This collaborative approach has resulted in buy-in from the school community. As parents increased support for their children's study habits, this has led to improvements in baseline assessments this school year.
- The majority of teachers at the school are engaged in teacher inquiry teams that enhance teacher leadership and promote student progress. (4.2)
  - A vast majority of teachers consistently refine their instructional practices through inquiry-based work. Teachers work in grade level teams; analyze data including the results of CCLS integration, and the evaluation of student work products. They make implementation decisions for their grades and work to align units of study to CCLS levels. As a result, tiered performance tasks and defined scaffolds gradually increase student performance and build teacher ability.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Increase the rigor and alignment of the curricular to State standards including the arts for the whole range of learners to improve student performance. (1.1)
  - Across classrooms and content areas there is inconsistency in designing academic tasks that promote rigor and higher-order thinking skills to engage a diversity of learners. In some subject area classes teachers delivered inaccurate content discussing elements, mixtures and compounds. Conversely, in other classes the teachers used a Native American legend to develop a theory about their culture. The school is in the process of determining the key standards they will focus on as they begin to integrate the CCLS units of study and the CIE instructional shifts. Consequently there is a discrepancy in implementation of state standards aligned and rigorous lessons among different grades and teachers leading to an uneven quality of student work throughout the school.
- Build upon the effective development of teaching practices from a defined set of beliefs that are informed by a framework, aligned to curriculum and promote student achievement. (1.2)
  - Teachers use the workshop model that includes a guided question, a jump start activity, tasks with scaffolds and a structured close. The teaching strategies are inconsistent in their level of challenge and their provision of entry points for students. For example, students in a social studies class were examining artifacts in a robust discussion of 19<sup>th</sup> century voter suppression after the American Civil War. Whereas in a seventh grade English language arts class, students were reading different texts and attempting to answer questions about internal and

external conflict that were not clearly defined. The school is beginning to refine their beliefs about quality teaching based on Danielson's framework and Hess's Depth of Knowledge web. The levels of questioning and discussion techniques are not yet uniformly challenging. As a result, students report a low level of difficulty in assignments that do not push their thinking thus, contributing to consistently low student progress.

- Expand the alignment of assessments to your curricula and the consistency of grading practices across the school to adjust instruction to increase student progress. (2.2)
  - In efforts to align its curricula with the emerging standards the school uses rubrics particularly in the areas of literacy and mathematics. These rubrics are based on four performance levels and are loosely aligned with the CCLS standards. However, the application and use of these rubrics is not consistently reflected in student work products across the school as evidenced in student portfolios and notebooks, thus leading to uneven levels of student engagement and critical thinking.
  - Teacher teams develop common assessments based primarily on units of study in core curriculum areas. These assessments are usually administered at the conclusion of the units. During daily instruction teachers inconsistently use checks for understanding based on their initial guided questions. Student self-assessment varies widely and some teachers actually make adjustments to meet the individual student needs. The consistent practice is insufficiently embedded in the entire school community. This limits student engagement and restricts the opportunities to improve student outcomes.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Sunrise School	UD	D	P	WD			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>		X					
<b>Instructional Core</b>							
<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					
<b>School Culture</b>							
<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				
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<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 <b>inquiry approach</b> 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					
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>