

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**Brookfield School**

**Elementary School Q181**

**148 – 15 230 Street  
Queens  
NY 11413**

**Principal: Dina A. Wheeler**

**April 8 – 9, 2013**

**Lead Reviewer: Lenon Murray**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Brookfield School is an elementary school with 408 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 91% Black, 6% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 12% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 94.1%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school has established effective systems for monitoring teaching practice with a clear focus on improving instructional strategies. (4.1)
  - The principal meets with individual teachers three times a year to establish expectations, discuss classroom goals and create an individualized professional development plan with specific interventions to meet their needs and improve their pedagogical skills. The principal has a clear protocol for examining student work with teachers and her professional staff development decisions are grounded in the Danielson framework. The rubric from this research-based material is used to maintain a common instructional lens. The school principal conducts at least two informal classroom visits for each teacher during each semester, and one formal classroom visit follows. These visits provide clear next steps to teachers for improving instruction immediately in their classrooms. For example a third grade teacher learned to instruct students on making arguments with evidence instead of coaching them to merely be persuasive. This intense focus on the observation of classroom teaching has resulted in refined teacher instruction and improved student performance as noticed in student writing evaluated by common rubrics.
  
- The school leadership and faculty utilize a variety of effective strategies to promote high expectations across the school community, resulting in increased student achievement. (3.4)
  - The school leadership clearly and consistently communicates high expectations to teachers, students and families. This is done in daily announcements over the public address system, monthly assemblies and in each parent meeting regardless of its purpose. In the parent meeting parents said they felt that the standard of the school has been raised academically. The school regularly uses calendars, newsletters, notes, emails and sends flyers home to parents to share with them the integration of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) into the curriculum across subjects. The Citywide Instructional Expectations are discussed in faculty conferences and parent association meetings. Workshops, such as English language arts (ELA) and math preparation, maximizing the use of ARIS and reading effectively with your child at home are held bimonthly for parents to become more aware of exactly what their children are studying at school as well as the expectations of the CCLS. The school administration discusses college and career readiness at monthly School Leadership Team (SLT) meetings. They explain the reading, speaking and presentation skills that students will take with them throughout their lifelong learning. One fifth grade parent said, "My daughter is doing very good work. I feel she is better prepared for the next level!" The school leader holds the teachers accountable for a mid-year written reflection on their practice as the basis for adjustments moving forward. This reflection sharpens the common lens through which the school views effective instruction. Individual teachers work with their classroom parents to further explain their children's progress. These approaches of continuous coaching followed by checks for understanding

have led to stronger community support for the practices that inform the school's direction as measured in informal surveys of parents at school workshops.

- The school leader and teachers align curricula to key standards and offer a standards-based, broad curriculum that utilizes multiple resources in order to support learning by all students. (1.1)
  - The school aligns its curriculum to the CCSS by using its scope and sequence guides, curriculum maps and pacing calendars, and modifying them to reflect the required instructional shifts. The school community is currently engaged in robust conversations about the key standards that will promote the greatest progress among the students. They are focusing on Close reading of complex texts, writing to inform, explain and argue with evidence and solving challenging math problems using multiple methods. The teachers have begun to integrate the CCSS units of study adapted from the Common Core library to promote deeper thinking and close the achievement gap. They are making efforts to cover the skills they consider essential to writing with reference to texts and reading with fuller comprehension. As a result, student outcomes have improved as measured by the last two common core aligned tasks.
  - Each teacher uses their common planning time to develop tasks to meet student needs. Some classrooms have rigorous academic tasks, like a fifth grade class where students work on devising and solving word problems involving multiplication and division of fractions. Other classrooms plan for students with disabilities, such as a fourth grade class where the teacher wrote different tasks for different groups and assigned her paraprofessional to work with struggling students. As a result, learning outcomes are generally increased as some students become engaged in the academic tasks as observed across classrooms.

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

- Refine teaching practices to ensure teachers strategically provide multiple entry points so that lessons challenge all students in their learning and result in meaningful work products. (1.2)
  - The school focuses on supporting high needs students such as English language learners and students with disabilities by offering academic intervention services. As such, all teachers have an academic intervention period scheduled into their regular day in addition to the extended day services, and the Danielson framework is becoming integrated into the daily teaching practices. This framework fosters the beliefs that students learn best if they are actively engaged in reading, writing and discussing challenging material. Across classrooms some students are sometimes engaged in stimulating discussion and other times they are passively listening to lectures. However, there is no evidence that teaching strategies are differentiated to support high performing students who are sometimes unchallenged as the current instructional strategies and approaches do not consistently offer meaningful extensions that further push their thinking. As a result, limited

opportunities are available for accelerated students to engage in the critical thinking and analysis to support their cognitive growth.

- Strengthen teachers' assessment practices to include effective feedback that lead to instructional adjustments and clear next learning steps to improve student outcomes. (2.2)
  - Teacher teams and individual teachers use English language arts assessments, such as running records and Developmental Reading Assessment-2, as well as math item analysis, common rubrics across the grade and interim assessments to supplement summative data and feedback to teachers and students. Teachers are able to identify areas where students are struggling and provide extra coaching to support skill development. However, the use of ongoing checks for understanding during the actual lessons and student self-assessments to make quick adjustments while teaching are not fully embedded practices across the school. Consequently, this limits the school's ability to identify and address the special needs of all students, in particular subgroups, in order to consistently modify instruction and curricula to accelerate academic progress for all learners. As a result, instructional strategies and learning tasks are not always revised, thereby limiting the opportunities to meet the needs of all students.
- Increase the alignment between the use of time, resources and the school's instructional goals to meet students' learning needs so that they yield improved work products. (1.3)
  - Common planning time is built into the schedule to provide greater opportunities for teachers to collaboratively plan instructional lessons and analyze student data and work. Teachers focus on students' work in the majority of their planning meetings. The school leadership teams with network specialists to foster ongoing professional learning through bimonthly study groups and voluntary one to one discussions. However, this collaboration has not yet yielded effective outcomes as teams haven't settled on a single protocol and teachers tend to revert to individualism during intense periods, such as the weeks before major high-stakes testing. As a result, the professional resource from the network to support teams during common planning time is a work in progress toward the development of rigorous lessons and tasks to support increased student learning and work products.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Brookfield 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>