

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

P.S. 330Q
86-37 53rd Avenue
Elmhurst
NY 11373

Principal: LaShawonna Harris

Dates of review: May 9-10, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Madelene Chan

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

PS 330 is an elementary school with students from kindergarten through grade 2. The school population comprises 1% Black, 92% Hispanic, 2% White, and 4% Asian students. The student body includes 42% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 94.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school leader and staff effectively align curricula to key standards and offer a range of learning experiences in order to engage students and support their progress. 1.1
 - Teacher designed curricula is coherent across the grades and purposefully integrates the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). In addition, the school embeds key standards into curricula including descriptions of how the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information exist in a text, as well as asking and answering questions to demonstrate understanding of a text. Furthermore teachers can pinpoint curricular resources and explain how the materials are aligned to ongoing assessments and how they have been modified to meet students' needs. As a result of closely aligned assessments to curriculum students' informational writing pieces have shown improvement.
 - Curriculum and academic tasks highlighted in the teacher designed units of study reflect improvements in students' reading and writing that has shown results of building students' conceptual understandings over time. In addition, the refinement of curricula and academic tasks has aided improved student outcomes. For example, careful analysis of the Teachers College Continuum for Informational Writing indicated that a stronger assessment was needed if high expectations were to be sought. An introduction to a student checklist helped students begin to self-assess their work and the work of their peers. This process of analyzing instructional strategies to better meet students' needs has yielded improved levels of focus and comprehension in the work of kindergarten and second graders.
- The school leader prioritizes the use of resources in order to make strategic and effective organizational decisions that are well aligned to the school's instructional goals. 1.3
 - To assist students attain the school's instructional goals a strategic decision was made at the mid-year to support students' needs in math. After a careful analysis of student data in November, results indicated that additional teachers were needed to support professional practice and intervention services, resulting in a collaborative decision to collapse a class, departmentalize Grade 1 and create a coach/academic intervention specialist position. As a result of these transitional changes, first graders are showing improvement in all subject areas. Based on the Fountas and Pinnell (F & P) assessment and running records, 46% of first graders met the yearly benchmark in English Language Arts with an expectation that in May the rest of the grade would do the same; and 49% of the grade met the yearly benchmark for math. Students with disabilities increased from 33% to 50% and English language learners (ELLs) increased from 7% to 13% in benchmark attainment. In addition, the infusion of technology into the school day has afforded kindergarten students the ability to identify reading strategies and video their peers expressing their

strategies using student designed posters. This practice has increased engagement, communication and allowed students to compile their own library of reading strategies which can be referenced as needed resulting in the creation of meaningful work products.

- Academic intervention staff, who are responsible for groups of students, meet weekly to collect and share information, as well as reflect on and modify plans based on students' results. Three intervention programs are assessed regularly so that students can be transitioned in and out of targeted instruction, thus effectively utilizing three teachers who work with small groups of high needs students four days per week using the F & P Leveled Literacy Intervention. The emphasis of skills including word and letter recognition coupled with the comprehensive analysis of difficult text has resulted in 48% of targeted kindergarten students currently at a Level 3 or 4 in reading according to the F & P Assessment, and 50% of the group in Grade 1 has moved four to seven reading levels since September. Additionally teachers posit that improved student outcomes are an outgrowth of four data days that are scheduled for the staff throughout the school year. During these full day sessions class data is analyzed and targeted instruction is designed collaboratively by colleagues and coaches. First grade ELLs have benefitted from this practice evidenced by 73% of students were at a Level 1 in January and as of March, 33% of these students have attained a Level 3 or 4.
- The school community appreciates the safe, respectful, and orderly school environment that supports the personal and academic development of students.
1.4
 - The school's formula for developing and maintaining a strong culture is part of the tapestry of their core values messaged as BEST (Brilliance Experience Success Teamwork). Students agree that this plan of action helps them keep an eye on outcomes. Students are also joyful that their voice is meaningful in the school through opportunities to share ideas and offer suggestions to improve daily schedules and lunch. One idea was celebrated and now students enjoy student facilitated performing arts shows during lunch. In addition, staff, students, and parents unanimously agree that the school's climate results in an environment that is conducive to asking questions, taking risks and learning about concepts that are interesting to all learners.
 - Parents and staff think highly of the trusting relationships, family-oriented school culture and meaningful involvement of stakeholders in regular decision-making. This is clearly in evidence as all families are well known, the environment is welcoming, and teacher to student rapport is honest and nurturing. Students' academic success is impacted by their eager participation in collective areas of learning including the arts, which highlights their areas of strength. The school is once again the recipient of the PS Art Award and has had the second place winner for three years, whose work will be displayed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Furthermore, in order to support guidance and advisements to families the school created a family room where families can spend time volunteering and planning events. The school also purchased School Messenger access for the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) so that communication could be increased since families do not live near this overflow site. The school reports that since these systems have been in

place 75% of parents have attended two or more school functions this year, an increase of more than 50% from last year.

- Professional learning is embedded in the school's culture through frequent, systematic observations using a research based framework in order to promote growth among teachers. 4.1
 - School leaders use low inference evidence and formal observations aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide feedback that captures the strengths and challenges of teacher pedagogy, as well as clear suggestions for next steps. Teachers posit that their classroom inter-visitation experiences have been helpful in learning about different strategies in reading and math to support struggling learners. Differentiated peer support is based on student outcomes and assessment data, and results in the careful matching of teachers with peers who model positive teaching styles. As a result of this supportive practice, students in one second grade class advanced from 21% at Level 4 in November to 42% at Level 4 in March according to the Teachers College Writing Continuum.
 - Utilizing an individual professional development plan teachers develop annual and short term goals that are referred to frequently during observations. Teachers are able to articulate how and why goals were created and their connection to school-wide goals. In addition, teachers are held accountable to determine whether or not goals have been achieved based on student work and data results. This process has gleaned growth of teachers over time with transparent reflections and evidence of improved student outcomes. For example, since participating in the school's Teacher Effectiveness Program improvement was shown in the Danielson competency 2b indicating increased communication on the part of the teacher regarding the importance of learning and hard work leading to student success. In addition, one class of first graders exhibited increased levels in math proficiency evidenced by 27% were Level 3 and 21% were Level 4 in the fall, which improved to 32% for Level 3 and 24% for Level 4 in the spring.

What the school needs to improve

- Expand instructional practices to consistently provide multiple entry points and appropriately challenging tasks for a diversity of learners in order to promote high levels of student achievement. 1.2
 - Most classroom teachers incorporate a variety of teaching strategies and routines to provide access to lessons for students; however, currently the school does not yet provide ample support and extensions to ensure that every student, in all classes and subjects, has access to curricula according to their instructional level. Although differentiated approaches were provided during small group work, struggling students, including ELLs and students with disabilities (SWDs), required additional supports, while several higher achieving students required extension activities, as they were capable of accomplishing work beyond the task. In these instances, pedagogical approaches and questioning strategies did not fully meet the needs of the students, resulting in missed opportunities for higher levels of learning and limited engagement.

- Most teaching strategies and routines lead to uneven levels of student engagement and thinking. Additionally, student work products revealed varying levels of depth and rigor. In some classrooms the turn and talk method is engaging a number of students, but others are not involved in meaningful conversations, thus limiting engagement by all learners through opportunities to process learning verbally in order to solidify concepts. Furthermore, students have difficulty articulating their teacher's suggested next steps for learning and making connections between the skills they have accomplished and those yet to be developed. As a result, there are varied levels of student engagement and thinking as learning opportunities inconsistently meet learners at their ability levels, which hinders high levels of participation.
- Strengthen teachers' assessment practices to reflect effective feedback resulting in instructional adjustments and clear next learning steps to improve student outcomes. 2.2
 - Teachers collect and analyze a myriad of assessment data reflecting student progress in reading, writing and math and review student work that is aligned to the curriculum, however, the feedback given to students is not providing clear next steps for action at this time. In addition, teachers offer suggestions to students about how writing can be improved, but at times the offerings are related to writing mechanics and not the underpinnings of strong writing strategies such as the recounting of a well elaborated event using facts, ideas and feelings. As a result, students are not provided with actionable next steps to strengthen their writing across the genres, limiting improved outcomes.
 - Throughout the school there are different methods used by students to demonstrate review and revision of their work such as the use of rubrics and checklists. Students are beginning to assess their work using an evaluation method as teachers check for understanding, however, at this time there are inconsistencies between the way students are determining their progress and instructional modifications being implemented to meet their needs. This has resulted in inconsistencies to make effective instructional adjustments based on assessment practices.

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| School name: 24Q330 | 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 |