

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Maurice Wollin

Elementary School 004

200 NEDRA LANE

Staten Island, NY, 10312

Principal: Marc Harris

Dates of review: Oct 22 - 23, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Teresa Caccavale

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Maurice Wollin is an elementary school with 796 students from pre-K through 5th grade. The school population comprises 2% Black, 14% Hispanic, 78% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 25% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011- 2012 was 95.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has established coherence of curriculum across grade, consistently integrating the Common Core Learning Standards and aligning rigorous tasks into instructional units that connect horizontally and vertically across grades and subjects, supporting the academic needs of all students. (1.1)
 - Curricular decisions that are made with a keen eye towards the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) units of study, the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) and instructional shifts, are evidenced in reading and writing curriculum maps that include lessons on reading realistic fiction and narrative writing. Curriculum mapping incorporates essential questions, teaching points, instructional tasks, and pre- and post-assessments. Students are reading books on their levels, relating to characters, and living inside the world of the story. They identify with characters as they see and experience situations from inside the characters' minds. Additionally, students are growing grounded ideas about characters within and across books as evidenced in whole group read aloud class discussions and during independent reading, guided reading groups, and in students' written work in reading notebooks. Teachers are conferring with students to support students in synthesizing their thinking about their books and characters to develop big ideas that students support with evidence from the texts and connect to inferences they made earlier. In writing students are using rubrics to assess their work as they write fictional stories that have characters with lifelike traits, motivations, problems, and solutions. . As a result students are engaged in tasks to meet their needs.
 - Bi-monthly meetings with the network instructional math specialist support teachers in implementing instructional tasks focused on number sense and operations. Subsequently, teacher teams work together to carefully plan lessons and teaching points around questioning strategies to allow students to think through what is being presented. Teachers are embedding challenging questions into lessons and waiting to allow students to think and formulate answers. To ensure the units are aligned with the CCLS, teachers create monthly math daily planners that are well paced and then evaluate "what worked and what didn't." Collectively, teachers redesign existing curricula through teacher planning and discourse in order to include authentic and rigorous learning tasks that cognitively engage a variety of learners, enabling students to practice deep thinking. As a result, students engage in performance tasks that stimulate applications of number sense and operations, advancing preparedness toward higher learning.
- School leaders make informed and highly effective organizational decisions that support different levels of goals to constantly improve student outcomes and student progress. (1.3)
 - Analysis of summative data results utilized by the principal in consultation with school leaders bring about organizational changes which intensify

the delivery of instruction in English language arts and in math by adopting a new math program for all grades that differentiates lessons through tiered assignments and adapting all curriculum maps to include more challenging assignments. As a result of intentional staffing and organizational decisions, students gain dedicated small group instruction and daily push-in and pullout academic intervention facilitated by in-house experts and groups of teachers who hold themselves accountable for their students' progress resulting in meaningful student work products. In September 2012, a position for an assistant principal for special education was created to support the needs of the vast population of Students with Disabilities (SWD). There is close monitoring of students' meeting CCLS in English language arts and math, and support for teachers to differentiate lessons relative to the needs of individual students. In addition, Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) teachers, as well as the Academic Intervention Support (AIS) teachers, focus on literacy intervention using programs such as *Soar to Success* and LLI to focus on comprehension and fluency. A full time English as a second language teacher insures all mandates are met. Two guidance counselors and a full time lunchroom coordinator work together to implement and support the Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) supporting positive behavior for all students, with an emphasis on those students requiring additional at risk and guidance supports.

- Teams of teachers work effectively to analyze data for planning and adjusting instruction resulting in purposeful support for students. (2.2)
 - Grade- and department-wide teachers have created uniform formative classroom assessments enabling them to examine student progress and identify strengths and challenges for lower and higher achieving subgroups, including SWD's and English language learners (ELL's). During the first grade teacher team meeting teachers conducted an analysis of the data from an end-of-unit assessment. The teachers used low inference data to develop theories and formulate strategies and supports to scaffold students' understanding for mastery. They also analyzed levels of cognitive complexity for math to norm the task, determined the task was of challenging complexity, thus noting that lower level students who found the task extremely difficult needed the entry point adjusted. Thus these practices insure a cohesive and consistent approach across all classrooms to evaluate each lesson, check for understanding, and make immediate and purposeful adjustments to instruction to support all students learning.
- The principal effectively uses analysis of data to create a learning community well focused on student performance with a vision towards accelerating learning for all students. (3.1)
 - The school's short list of clear, focused school level goals and action plans are included in the CEP. One goal; *"By June 2013, the Students With Disabilities will demonstrate progress toward achieving state standards in ELA as measured by a 5% increase in the number of SWDs in grades four and five raising their score on the NYS ELA to the next level and an overall annual increase of 5% in the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project assessment scores for SWDs reading at levels 3 and 4 in grades K-5"* was determined via a comprehensive

summative data analysis. Working from an action plan that includes grade wide preparation meetings, conversations focus on current curriculum maps, assessment data, rubrics, and identifying trends and instructional implications. Hence, the school subscribes to a theory of action that there must be a continuous cycle of improvement for adults as well as students to accelerate student learning. As a result, teacher teams focus on examining student work to share and learn successful strategies to accelerate student learning and improve coherence by grade and across grade levels.

- Based on the school's trends in math data it was determined students needed additional instruction and practice in problem solving application to real world situations. The school is implementing the *Math In Focus* program to increase students' ability to reason abstractly and problem solve. Teachers engage in ongoing professional development to connect the math practices to math content in math instruction. Teachers are also working closely with the network specialist to use data collection sheets for instructional decision-making. The 2011-12 math scores for all students, including SWD's, have evidenced a positive trajectory in this area. The school community is using CCLS performance tasks and performance task rubrics, unit assessments and teacher observations to understand success towards student progress. As a result, *Math In Focus* was included in the action plan along with more rigorous and cohesive student goals for problem solving.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance teacher questioning, student discussion, and use of varied-activities, during the delivery of instruction in order to enrich student participation, thereby increasing opportunities for further development of critical thinking skills. (1.2)
 - In keeping with the school's belief of how students learn best, students engage in partner work, small group instruction, and independent practice. Active participation in hands-on activities, cooperative grouping, and opportunities to demonstrate learning are articulated beliefs about how students learn best. Lesson planning and most classroom activities reflect a school-wide commitment to these beliefs. However, some teachers' understanding of the use of effective questioning and question prompts are not always differentiated effectively and strategically to extend student learning. There are still a number of teachers who rely on close-ended teacher directed questions, limiting students from engaging in higher-level discussions. Additionally, not all activities appropriately address students at their level or their learning style, thus further hindering their learning.
 - Across classrooms, teachers utilize the workshop model as the primary mode of instruction. Instructional coherence in curriculum maps is evident via students' writing samples and math products. The school's focus on increased differentiated entry points is visible and provides for a deepening understanding and evoking thinking by students. SWD's and ELL's participate in small group instruction and teacher facilitated lessons allowing access to learning via guided support. However, high-leveled instructional strategies are not yet evident in all classes, thus impacting

the offering of suitable opportunities for all learners to engage in purposeful, deep levels of thinking and participate in well-matched activities. As a result, some students are not as fully or deeply immersed in their learning, including higher performing students who miss out on deeper challenges.

- Provide teachers with direct and frequent formative feedback that result in recorded professional expectations in order to improve teacher effectiveness, performance, and promote continuous professional reflection. (4.1)
 - Frequent informal learning walks consist of the principal and assistant principals, using a school developed protocol based upon a research-based program. Formal observations by school leaders enable teachers to promptly receive verbal and written feedback on their instructional practice. Support is tailored to meet the needs of specific teachers via onsite professional development and their attendance at off-site conferences. In addition, the school consistently provides professional development through a broad range of opportunities for all teachers both new to the profession and highly experienced. These needs are defined as a result of frequent classroom observations both formal and informal and in line with the clearly defined framework that includes timely feedback. However, the school does not yet have a uniform protocol for recording and tracking the participation in professional development to ensure appropriate follow-up relative to assessing the degree of impact on instruction, thus limiting the administration's ability to adjust support to enhance further teacher and student growth.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Maurice Wollin	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