

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

John Tyler School

31R045

**58 Lawrence Avenue
Staten Island, New York
NY 10310**

Principal: Christine Chavez

Dates of review: February 11th-12th, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Erminia Claudio

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

John Tyler is an elementary school with 923 students from Kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 21% Black, 39% Hispanic, 33% White, 5% Asian and 2% other students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 93.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school utilizes common assessments, rubrics and grading policies to determine progress towards goals and provide all students and families with actionable feedback to improve student achievement. (2.2)
 - The school uses a variety of assessment, such as pre and post assessments, running records, Acuity and State data to check for student growth and sets benchmarks for individual and cohorts of students that are aligned to school wide goals of fully aligning curriculum to the Common Core State Standards in literacy and math, improving teacher effectiveness, writing across content areas and using data to plan for all students. The school uses pre-assessment data to adjust instruction in all content areas, norm grade level data and make modifications needed for individual class work and to strategically plan for flexible grouping. Teachers check for student understanding through individual student conference, classroom observation, oral and written response, student work samples, assessment data, and classroom discussion. The school developed tracking sheets to warehouse pre assessments and post assessments data for each content area; math, English language arts (ELA), science and social studies. Tracking sheets are monitored by school leaders, individual teachers and teacher teams. Data gleaned is used to drive lesson and unit planning. To support the schools' overarching goal of writing across the curriculum, the school uses Teachers College Writing Continua to monitor students' ability to engage in critical thinking and support ideas with evidence from texts. On-demand student writing has increased across the school with a 5% increase in students writing at or above grade level. Reading levels are benchmarked quarterly; the data is analyzed to check for student progress. For example, based on data collected, a 3rd grade reading unit was modified to support students with main idea and supporting details. A vertical teacher team looking at 5th grade data eliminated a character unit because it was not rigorous enough to support students' reading levels. The results of New York State testing data were analyzed in grades 4 and 5 and correlated to students' classroom performance. In response to progress data, students who did not make expected yearly progress received targeted guided reading. Most notable is the work the school is doing with targeted instruction for students with disabilities (SWD), as evidenced in SWDs performing at Levels 3 and 4 in ELA, increasing from 7% to 22% over two years and in math from 25% to 37% over two years. Students self-assess through the use of student checklists, child friendly rubrics, math online activities and revising and self editing their writing. Parents receive quarterly progress reports, unit assessment data and independent reading levels quarterly.
- The principal uses her budget to give teachers the tools, time and opportunity to support the school's instructional goals and meet learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products. (1.3)
 - The principal's well thought-out use of budget, staff, time and resources has led to the programming of teacher teams, inclusive of the academic intervention teacher (AIS) and special education teachers. Where possible, related service providers work within classrooms to maximize the learning

conditions to meet students' individual needs. The programming of common preparation periods for various teacher teams to meet weekly provides an opportunity for teachers to meet by grade, subject and vertically. Such teams include grade leaders that plan with grade level colleagues and monitor grade level goals, instructional leads that support school-wide achievement of the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE), and a vertical team that supports school-wide planning and cohesiveness across grades. These teams look at student work products, use formative and summative data to set targets and track goals for students through the use of teacher created pre and post assessments that align with the CCSS. For example, the vertical team modified character units and opinion writing units across grades to ensure that the rigor of the CCSS was infused in every grade. As a result, the level of student verbal and written response has shifted to students citing evidence across texts to support their ideas. This is evidenced in student work products and classroom discussions. Teachers shared that the collaborative work they are doing with inquiry and planning on teams has improved their pedagogy. To support early grades and Students with Disabilities (SWD), the principal hired an assistant principal to supervise early childhood grades and special education teachers. The school credits the work that the assistant principal is doing around best practice and intervention strategies for the decrease in initial special education referrals from 5.3% to 1.2%. The declassification rate has doubled from .6% to 1.3% as evidenced in the Special Education Delivery Report. Independent reading levels for SWD are increased from 20.86% in January 2012 to 22.19% in January 2013. This 1.33% increase is significant due to the increased benchmark expectations aligned to the CCSS. Students programs were thought out carefully, special education teacher support service (SETSS) students and ELL students are clustered together on each grade to support a push-in model for all related service providers. Most noteworthy, is the use of integrated curriculum teaching (ICT) teachers that provide SETSS for same grade students. For example, the fifth grade special education ICT teacher pushes into another 5th grade class that has SETSS students. This is a benefit to the students and the general education teachers because the SETSS teacher is fluent with the curriculum and is able to plan accordingly. A comprehensive professional development plan guides the work the school is doing around text complexity, collaborative inquiry and questioning. A literacy consultant supports the work the school is doing around guided reading and has led to 75% of students in grades 3-5 increasing by one reading level.

- School leaders and staff set high expectations for attendance, learning and behavior that are clearly shared with parents and students thus creating a culture of accountability. (3.4)
 - Curriculum Conferences are held in the beginning of each school year to inform the parents of the expectations that the school has for students. Conferences are held in the morning and there is an evening session so that everyone can attend. Parent workshops facilitated by teachers, school leaders and the parent coordinator are ongoing and support parents with understanding the instructional shifts. Parents have resources that help them monitor their children's progress, such as parent assessment letters in reading, math online assessment data, Acuity benchmark data, ARIS, progress reports and AIS progress reports. Parents are trained on how to use these resources to support their children. Middle school information is sent home to keep parents of 5th grade students up to date on any information that they might need to transition the student to middle school.

The school believes that in order to be college and career ready clear expectations around attendance and social behaviors is paramount. The school is judicious about reaching out to families through phone calls, letters and email. There was an increase of 6.44% in the amount of families that were contacted from March of 2012 to January of 2013. Attendance, social emotional learning, guidance and medical factors are considered when identifying causes for students' areas of need. Parent outreach is implemented by appropriate staff; attendance teacher and/or school aide, guidance, social worker, school nurse, and parent coordinator. As a result of the school setting high expectations for attendance and acceptable behaviors the school has experienced an increase of 2% for students with 100% attendance from November 2011 to this November 2012 and a 20% decrease in the number of student infractions. Parents voiced to the reviewer that the school goes above and beyond to help them understand what students need to be successful. Parents feel that the school partners with them to support high academic achievement and believes that the school is preparing all students for the next level.

- Teachers across the school welcome opportunities to participate in collaborative inquiry and professional development and use this to strengthen instruction and raise learning outcomes. (4.2)
 - All teachers participate on at least one teacher team focused on inquiry based collaboration reflective of the instructional shifts in ELA, mathematics, and the Responsive Classroom (helping students stay on task). In the beginning of the year all teachers engaged in a study group that focused on reading Pathways to the Common Core. Through discussion and interpretation school leaders and teachers established a shared lens and language that set the foundation for the shifts needed in the curriculum to support the rigor of the common core expectations. These inform inquiry work and grade- level teacher team planning and have led to school wide instructional coherence.
 - Using the Collaborative Assessment Conference Notes protocol, teacher teams analyze student work samples from various classrooms in order to norm their expectations, develop next steps and inform planning decisions. The 5th grade teacher team looked at student writing samples in which the task was to find the theme/lesson that was evident across two texts. Teachers looked at several students' writing and using the protocol gathered observations, questions, problems in carrying out the task and next steps. One of the big ideas that came from this sharing of student work was that some students can verbally give a response to text, but when they have to write their response they have a difficult time conveying thoughts on paper. Several strategies were suggested to aide students, such as graphic organizers to help support ideas and facts, stop and jots during shared reading to help students capture specific thoughts and what individual student conferences would best support students in comparing and contrasting text. Similarly, a vertical team consisting of 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teachers reviewed student work from a 4th grade performance task in math. Students had to solve multi-level word problems and explain how they got their answer. Teachers looked at several students' work to assess what students did to solve the problem. Teachers agreed that a majority of students were having difficulty explaining the steps they took to solve the problem and some students did not have the correct answer. Using the data from these work samples teachers planned what the following day's lesson would look like

and one teacher shared an organizer she used with her class to guide them through problem solving. Thus, teacher team practices are enabling teachers to meet students' needs leading to improved performance.

What the school needs to improve

- Enhance curricula and academic task to further support academic achievement and cognitive engagement in all subject areas. (1.1)
 - The school has worked diligently to align the ELA and math curriculum to the CCSS. Growth of the curriculum is evidenced through curriculum maps developed over the past four years. Students are exposed to rich text across content areas and student artifacts indicate growth and next steps for individual and groups of students. The school uses Teacher's College Reading and Writing methodology to support balanced literacy. The school has modified mini lessons to ensure a closer alignment in using evidence to support arguments (Shift 4). The writing curriculum aligns to writing standards 1, 2, and 3 (Opinion, Narrative and Informational). The school purchased a new math program and is integrating the CCSS by looking at the sequence of topics and prioritizing them to ensure alignment to the major and minor state standards. Through the use of enrichment clusters students have the opportunity to use technology to access multi-media and research databases preparing students for the expectations in junior high school and beyond. In particular 4th and 5th grade students are introduced to multiple view points in order to discern information and form their own ideas and opinions. However, the school recognizes that curriculum maps in all core subject areas must be continually updated to sustain and ensure the rigor in tasks and student inquiry that promote the demonstration of thinking for all learners.
- Continue to deepen questioning to support multiple entry points so all -learners have opportunities to engage in rigorous activities and demonstrate high level thinking. (1.2)
 - Teachers and teacher teams look collaboratively at student work to evaluate instruction and adjust plans, and have developed a common understanding and practices around targeting instruction to meet the needs of individual and groups of students as observed in some classes which included guided reading and small group support based on identified areas of student needs. Teachers are also beginning to strengthen their use of higher order questions. However, the level of teacher questioning in a few classrooms did not lead to students' higher level thinking. For example, in one lesson, questions were based on direct recall from the shared reading and in another, the motivational question was higher order than the task students actually were required to complete. This inconsistent practice is limiting opportunities for some students to think and respond critically.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The John Tyler 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