

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

The William Lloyd Garrison School

Elementary - Middle School 031

**250 East 156th Street
Bronx
NY 10451**

Principal: Jayne Hunnewell

Dates of review: December 11-12, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Yolanda Torres

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The William Lloyd Garrison School is an elementary middle school with 601 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 24% Black, 72% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 19% 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 90.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school is developing structures to build a sense of community where the voices of staff, students, and families are honored leading to unified school improvement efforts. (1.4)
 - School staff, students, and families are emerging as a community focused on school improvement. Students share that they feel safe in school and that their teachers listen to their academic and non-academic issues resulting in a positive rapport. Parents, for the most part, indicate that they are content with the administration and staff because of the welcoming atmosphere and the ongoing communication with teachers. Staff acknowledges that the school-wide promotion on the importance of community and a purposeful learning environment across all constituencies is beginning to evolve. The principal's open-door policy provides teachers with a one-to-one moment to share and/or discuss topics of concern or interest with the leadership resulting in collaborative partnerships and increased communication to support school growth.
 - The social emotional well-being of students is discussed during faculty conferences and one-on-one meetings to ensure that students' personal growth is addressed appropriately. School leaders focus on the social emotional domain via professional development opportunities. For example, the implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program engages students in assemblies and provides teachers with the pertinent tools needed to ensure individual students' successful performance. Parents participate in school activities and workshops around effective academic and social emotional techniques that can followed up at home leading to positive behaviors. As a result, students and adults are beginning to exhibit growth in academic and social behavior.
- Teacher teams meet regularly and engage in professional collaborations to analyze student work, identify trends and agree upon strategies to improve student learning. (4.2)
 - A vast majority of teachers engage in collaborative meetings looking at student work using the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) as the lens for discussions. Cross-content conversations around student work afford teachers the opportunities to identify instructional trends and strategies in support of student academic progress and other goals. Teachers learn from each other in a risk-free learning environment where they contribute ideas, share artifacts and protocols implemented in classrooms, leading to some instructional improvement as evidenced by student work products brought back to meetings for in-depth discussions.
 - Teacher leaders plan agendas and facilitate regularly scheduled meetings to discuss the instructional challenges their students face and decide on the scaffolded instruction needed to help them overcome the obstacles that impede their improvement. Teachers agree on next steps and/or

strategies to plan for immediate implementation with the expectation of sharing outcomes at the next meeting. As teachers analyze student work vis-à-vis the Department of Education bundles as well as rubrics, they compare and contrast trends in order to make informed decisions on next steps to improve the delivery of instruction to accelerate students' academic progress.

- School leaders conduct short cycles of classroom observations that are used to provide feedback in support of professional development and teacher growth. (4.1)
 - As part of the Teacher Effectiveness Program pilot project, school leaders conduct cycles of observations which are uploaded to ARIS Learn. The use of the Danielson Framework elicits conversations around practices that help teachers refine their planning and instructional delivery. Ongoing mentorship to teachers provides support to build rigor in lesson planning and delivery. Mentors provide the leadership with written information of teacher progress and next steps towards improvement. Collegial inter-visitations and changes in teacher assignments are examples of structures being developed to ensure teacher growth for future decisions on teacher tenure and/or evaluations. School leaders, in consonance with teachers, are developing the understanding of this process as part of sound practices to promote teacher reflection and implementation of new instructional strategies.

What the school needs to improve

- Revisit the alignment of the curricula with key standards to ensure coherence and rigorous tasks across all content areas to promote higher order thinking for all learners. (1.1)
 - Teachers participate in ongoing workshops and professional development on the Common Core Curriculum framework in order to align curriculum maps to the CCLS and the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE). School leaders have made a concerted effort in providing teachers with supplemented resources, leveled libraries and digital assessments that help develop students' intellectual ability and self-monitoring of academic progress to reduce the achievement gap. However, there is a lack of consistency in developing rigorous lessons and tasks across all content areas. Consequently, all students do not have access to curricula that emphasizes higher order thinking skills.
- Improve teaching practices to ensure that all students receive instruction that consistently offers them multiple entry points into challenging lessons, resulting in high levels of participation in learning. (1.2)
 - Classroom visits consistently show teacher-directed lessons with scarce student participation. Teacher lecturing, asking low level questions and, use of different worksheets with no purposeful meaning, fail to provide students with scaffolded opportunities to learn at their entry points. This practice adversely impacts students' opportunities to engage in authentic discussions and/or inquiry that can lead to ownership of learning. Also, a lack of differentiated instruction to address the needs of all learners,

especially English language learners and students with disabilities results in uneven levels of intellectual engagement of all students.

- Ensure that all students receive detailed feedback based on the outcomes of all assessments, rubrics, and grading policy so that they have a consistent understanding of next steps to take towards academic progress. (2.2)
 - The school has invested in computer-based programs for formative assessments in English Language Arts for grades 3 through 5 and all core subjects for grades 6 through 8, where students are scheduled short intervals of lab time to complete tasks. Results help teachers monitor students' individual progress while providing students with information on their performance. After results are analyzed, teachers organize small groups for targeted instructional support. Students and parents are able to access these results at home, thus gaining feedback on student performance. However, the feedback received is not authentic and explicit in identifying students' weaknesses and strengths. As a result, there is inconsistent student understanding of next steps to improve their learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The William Lloyd Garrison School					UD	D	P	WD
Overall QR Score						X		
Instructional Core								
To what extent does the school regularly...					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								
To what extent does the school ...					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								
To what extent does the school ...					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	