

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Public School 107

08X107

**1695 Seward Avenue
Bronx
NY 10473**

Principal: Katherine Hamm

Dates of review: January 8 - 9, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Timothy Behr

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 107 is an elementary school with 490 students from Pre-K through grade 5. The school population comprises 43% Black, 54% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian and 1% other students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 90.4%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school provides a safe and caring learning environment where students receive good levels of support which promotes their personal and academic development. (1.4)
 - Parents state that the principal has made a “difference” by consistently communicating (verbal/handouts/calendars) with them the monthly learning objectives regarding their child’s progress toward achieving academic and social-emotional goals. Planned meetings with the principal enable parents to voice concerns and to have the opportunity to participate in hands-on workshop activities in order to learn about the school’s instructional and behavioral intervention programs and their impact on students. Additionally, The Caught Being Good initiative which rewards good behavior results in a safe and inclusive learning environment as evidenced by minimal principal and superintendent suspensions. Students are rewarded with coupons which can be exchanged for prizes. This is coupled with an anti-bullying initiative that provides additional support for the school-wide motto which encourages students to use words, walk away and tell an adult. Students in grades 4 and 5 have a voice in choosing an elective during the day to improve content area knowledge and skills in such specialties as art, science, literacy, dance, and music. As a result of these initiatives, parental involvement has improved school-wide, students exhibit positive behaviors and they have voice in choosing an activity to explore. Hence the entire school community is able to focus more on academics and interests in a safe, inclusive environment as evidenced by the most recent Learning Environment Survey results which showed improvement in all categories.
 - Students’ self-esteem as well as social skill development is improved through participation in a positive social-emotional bonding program entitled ROCKETS, that is, Responsible, Optimistic, Curious, Knowledgeable, Enthusiastic, Talented Scientists. Parents celebrate student achievement during monthly learning explorations in which students share poetry, research projects, dance, and song which is centered around monthly school-wide learning concepts. Participation with Stem Gardens, The Audubon Society, and ASPIRA have extended student learning opportunities beyond the classroom. The re-opening of the school’s library and collaboration with the local public library have increased community alliance to develop good work habits and socially responsible learners. These extended classroom learning initiatives has resulted in occurrences being reduced at the school from 46 (September 2011-January 2012) to 22 (September 2012-January 2013). Attendance to date has improved from 90.1% to 91.7%.
- The school utilizes a research based rubric for supervising pedagogy with a transparent focus on improving instructional practice to enhance student outcomes. (4.1)

- School leaders are conspicuous throughout the school, prioritizing visiting classrooms and involving teachers in formal and informal observations. The administration utilizes periodic assessment results to assist with the evaluation of teacher. Feedback informs teachers regarding the quality of their work in designing coherent instruction, questioning, discussion, and using assessments in learning. The administration with network support is beginning to support teacher development in the integration of technology in classroom instruction. The administration is also prioritizing utilizing Universal Design Learning (UDL) to address student learning styles. Learning walks enable teachers to learn from one another and tiered supports are emerging for teachers to address their specific needs. Some teachers need help with technology; others need assistance with addressing student learning styles, and some in implementing small group instruction. Hence, the school is planning future, differentiated professional development to support teachers in improving classroom practice to deepen pedagogical skills to improve student outcomes. As a result of these emerging practices, teacher development is being supported and pedagogy is improving.
- The principal makes informed school-wide decisions to ensure resources are aligned to instructional goals and support improvements in student learning. (1.3)
 - In response to the goal of supporting student learning by incorporating technology, the school is the recipient of grants that have enabled the school to open two state of the art Apple iMac computer labs. Each lab has a seating capacity for up to 28 students. Students are beginning to explore their studies through online programs, such as, I Ready and V Math with deeper interest to research and conduct project-based tasks. The school is fostering via the use of passwords the possibility for on-line learning at home or the public library. Furthermore, the school intends to have the computer labs available for parental use. This developing technology allows for more focused instructional and organizational supports for improved student outcomes and parent participation.
 - Recognizing the need for more focused student support the principal has departmentalized the fifth grade in order to meet the needs of these students. This decision is beginning to ensure that the school acts on its goal of monitoring and improving student progress by empowering teachers to work in their content area of expertise to guide instructional planning. Each teacher instructs in their content area specialty. In addition, block scheduling provides the opportunity for daily common planning so that teachers can review student work to determine and adjust the curriculum as necessary. Daily “push-in” enrichment teachers in grades 3, 4, and 5 prioritize students scoring in the lowest third on State tests, students with disabilities, and English language learners. Hence, the school is beginning to implement instructional assignments and programming strategies that are aligned to instructional goals and impact student performance.

What the school needs to improve

- Improve coherence and alignment of school curricula and the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts to ensure that all students are cognitively engaged and make progress in their learning. (1.1)
 - Frequent assessments, monthly inquiry team meetings, implementation of Common Core aligned tasks in English language arts and math, weekly reflective learning conversations based on Danielson's research-based teaching framework, and a review of school data were implemented to improve instructional coherence throughout the school. I-Ready and V-Math online reading and math programs are aligned to the Common Core curriculum and are incorporated in response to concern regarding student performance, particularly among students with disabilities, English language learners and emergent readers. In addition, the use of Webb's Depth of Knowledge rubric to provide more rigorous and engaging curricula and tasks for all students is not a reliable practice across all subject areas and classrooms. For example all students were completing the same math workbook activity although; the students have varying degrees of ability. Consequently, opportunities for actively engaging all learners including subgroups in cognitively demanding academic tasks are currently inconsistent across classrooms. Hence, most closing the achievement gap sub groups are performing below proficiency in English language arts and math.
- Ensure that classroom instruction and learning activities provide appropriate challenges for student achievement levels to produce meaningful work products. (1.2)
 - Across grades, teachers create specific, Common Core aligned lessons for one subject area. Teachers can state fairly accurately the behavior patterns, learning preferences, and overall needs of the students in their classes. However, not all teachers consistently review lesson plans created by their colleagues before instruction nor do they use the information about their students to efficiently gauge instructional intent and accommodations to address the various student learning styles during lessons. Thus lesson plans lack ownership. Furthermore, teachers tend to group students less strategically in all content areas and, therefore, students were engaged in low level tasks that did not encourage higher order thinking skills. Hence, student learning is not maximized as evidenced by some work having no teacher responses to guide next steps and also by varying degrees of quality in student work folders.
- Expand the collaboration with the various teacher teams and the administration to gather and analyze data on student learning outcomes prioritizing areas of need for classroom, grade, and school level. (2.2)
 - Teachers do not consistently use data to inform instruction for various targeted groups of students. In addition, some teachers are not incorporating data to evaluate the impact of selected instructional resources, adopted to support the curriculum, and teaching strategies on student progress. Consequently, adjustments to curriculum and

instruction are not adequate. Hence, students are not performing to their full potential as evidenced by State test results.

- Teacher teams analyzed their I Ready diagnostic baseline student assessments across grades in a collaborative effort to address the need to teach remedial skills in English language arts and math. However, during classroom instruction teachers are not consistently reviewing student notebooks, or having students complete exit slips to determine skill and content progress and mastery. Consequently, the lack of timely and inconsistent instructional modifications to address the specific and unique learning needs of all student results in students having difficulty with vocabulary, number sense, and operations, thereby, limiting student progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name:	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