

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

Dr. Evelina Lopez-Antonetty Children's Learning Center

Elementary School 277

519 St. Ann's Avenue

Bronx

NY 10455

Principal: Sagrario Lila Jorge

Dates of review: May 14-15, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Yolanda Torres

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Dr. Evelina Lopez-Antonetty Children's Learning Center is an elementary school with 466 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 25% Black, 71% Hispanic, 2% American Indian, 1% Asian, 0.5% White and 0.5% Multi Racial students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 92.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and teachers use a variety of assessment data to make informed instructional decisions to meet all students' learning needs. (2.2)
 - Benchmark assessment data serve as a starting point during one-on-one meetings between the principal and individual teachers as well as teacher teams to identify school-wide instructional trends and classroom-specific needs in support of positive student outcomes. The analysis of formative and summative data has led to a systematic focus on key standards in literacy and the strengthening of the math program. Additionally, the purposeful focus on language development permeates through the variety of activities from the morning message when individual students across grades share “juicy words” with their definitions; print-rich bulletin boards and hallways decorated with tier 2 and tier 3 words written by students; and listening to students as they “turn and talk” by agreeing, disagreeing or adding to their peers' comments. Students speak in complete sentences using the learned vocabulary as they discuss complex texts or the processes of solving multi-step mathematical problems. This dialogue provides teachers with opportunities to perform ongoing checks for understanding during class time resulting in instructional adjustments to continue to meet students' needs. The development of end-of-unit assessments in math and rubrics in science provide students with other ways of self-assessing their work and engage in peer-to-peer evaluation discussions leading to increased evidence of students taking ownership of deciding their next steps to take them to the next level of learning.
- Instructional practices are informed by a research-based framework that provides students with learning experiences that encourage higher order thinking and student-led discussions. (1.2)
 - The use of a research-based framework by teachers through inquiry has developed a culture of learning and strengthened teachers' set of beliefs about how students learn best. As teachers visit, each other's classrooms, develop a common language and provide feedback on their low-inference notes with each other, they think through the “how to” of effective instructional practices that can meet every student's needs through a scaffolded process with layered thinking activities or performance tasks for increased academic achievement. This articulated belief system is evident in the majority of classrooms that works and teaches to the needs of students based on the analysis of student work and the use of protocols to identify next steps for improvement resulting in increased academic outcomes.
 - Teachers lead many discussions around student work and classroom projects that are student-centered. Students label their work and articulate through the use of rubrics where their work stands in terms of the Common Core expectations as well as their next steps towards achievement. This has led to students conducting peer-to-peer feedback where students articulate their observations using sophisticated vocabulary words with deep and complete thoughts, thus triangulating the

school-wide emphasis on language and high levels of thinking and participation with the use of rubrics and peer work products.

- The school leader effectively uses all resources to promote school-wide instructional goals and deepen student learning. (1.3)
 - The principal's comment: "*Teachers cannot do their work without resources*" is evident in the purchasing of non-fiction books and the variety of professional development opportunities provided to teachers for their growth and student improved outcomes. Some of these sessions support phonics awareness, mathematical conceptualization, guided reading, small group instruction, and differentiated instruction from network-provided support. Before and after school, extended day academic interventions are purposefully structured to meet the needs of struggling students, specifically English language learners and students with disabilities, and thoughtfully provide scaffolded instruction. Teachers meet regularly and beyond the structured times for inquiry and for planning, thus demonstrating an authentic interest in the improvement of instruction and student engagement in tasks that require deep thinking and thoughtful conversations. Performance tasks are key to their work during weekly planning time where teachers challenge each other by thinking and justifying the rationale of these tasks and how students will benefit from them. Furthermore, the purchase of laptops iPads, and SMARTboards serve as a breakthrough towards students' interaction with technology to support their learning in spite of the school building's antiquated internet structure in dire need of actualization. The school has secured students' exposure to the arts by hiring artists from a variety of companies so that students experience the different mediums of artistry for exploration and discovery. Lastly, the principal's creativity in building a strong partnership with parents to deepen student learning has drawn more parents to a variety of hands-on activities such as monthly "*Café con Libros*," Family Math, Literacy Night, Family Fridays, and others. Parents indicate that these scheduled activities send a big message of being welcomed to a school where children are celebrated and that parent partnership is important for students' overall academic and social emotional achievement.
- School leaders and teachers use a common research-based framework to define instructional expectations and identify needs that promote improvement in pedagogical skills. (4.1)
 - The use of low-inference observations via a research-based framework provide school leaders with important information around the structuring of their professional development for teachers. School leaders and teachers have viewed classroom videos in order to record their low inference notes and calibrate their observations. As leaders use the framework as a feedback matrix with teachers, a team of teachers has adopted this framework to support their learning as they visit classrooms of their colleagues in order to continue building capacity as well as a common language on effective practices. This school-wide practice has created a risk-free learning environment where teachers welcome the feedback from school leaders and their colleagues with much respect and great expectation for improvement. This system has led to teachers understanding the Danielson Framework, hence demonstrating

improvement in their instructional practices and developing a common language leading to coherence and consistency in teaching.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure Common Core curricula alignment across all content areas so that all students are consistently engaged in cognitively rigorous tasks. (1.1)
 - Students' access to higher level vocabulary and delving into complex texts has afforded some students with opportunities to cognitively engage in rigorous tasks in literacy and math. Subsequent lesson planning in literacy and math with aligned teaching points are evident in most classrooms. The major emphasis on math developed in students' awareness of deciphering multi-steps problems using appropriate mathematical language. However, the lack of other content area units of study such as social studies and science with differentiated interventions lead to inconsistent evidence where all students, inclusive of English language learners and students with disabilities, are cognitively engaged in rigorous tasks equitably across all content areas.
- Continue to purposefully evaluate the instructional practices in order to meet the learning needs of students and the CCLS expectations. (5.1)
 - School leaders consistently analyze observation data and student assessments for school-wide trends. As they meet with teachers, they work together using a rubric or matrix to focus their lens of discussion. These discussions may lead to a shift in practice or a structure change resulting in systemic or classroom-specific reorganization or adjustment. However, there is inconsistent evidence where this practice modeled by the school leaders is not consistently followed from classroom to classroom. Thus, this inconsistency leads to a breakdown in the continuum or cycle of learning and reflection, hampers opportunities for ongoing improvement toward goals.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Dr. Evelina Lopez-Antonetty Children's Learning Center	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