

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

I.S. X318 Math, Science & Technology Through Arts

Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 12X318

**1919 PROSPECT AVENUE
BRONX, NY 10457**

Principal: MARIA LOPEZ

Dates of review: Mar 14, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Myrna Rodriguez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. X318 Math, Science and Technology through Arts is a Junior High-Intermediate-Middle school with 385 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 34% Black, 6% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 26% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 89.5%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders and faculty align curricula to state standards emphasizing reading and writing across the curricula in all subject areas which promotes college and career readiness in all grades. (1.1)
 - Curricula has been aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and is evident in the use of non-fiction text with writing tasks demonstrating references to the text, and appropriate academic vocabulary. For example, in the 7th grade students were given a choice as to if they wanted to write an argumentative or opinion piece on the varied effects on health and civic freedoms after reading various texts on the medicinal use of drugs that at one time were deemed to be dangerous or unlawful. During class and group discussions students referred to their texts and made connections to their own experiences. As result, student work products throughout the school demonstrates high levels of student engagement and writing products show understanding of subject matter. In addition writing protocols and use of grade appropriate text to respond to questions that go beyond recall prepares students for college and future careers.
 - Across all classrooms there are Ells, teachers plan their lessons so that all English Language Learners (ELLs) achieve the learning objectives through the use of computer programs such as ACHIEVE 3000, and ACCESS, laptops, dictionaries, and materials in their own language in order for them to engage in the work and be able to do the task. In addition during group work ELL students work with a learning buddy that they are assigned. As a result of this planning, use of differentiated strategies and instructional tools all learners are able to produce meaningful work products.
- Teaching practices are aligned to a coherent set of beliefs which is based on the Danielson framework that meets the needs of diverse learners so that they produce meaningful work products. (1.2)
 - All teachers believe that students learn best when lessons are taught using the point of entry model (POEM) whereby students have varied opportunities to work independently and in groups to produce meaningful work. The school prioritizes teaching strategies such as the use of depth of knowledge (DOK) questions to raise the levels of student discussions using accountable talk. Specifically, they use content vocabulary and text to argue or prove that what they have learned and validate opinions with evidence from the text. These strategies help a variety of learners including Ells and SWDs by engaging them in extensive vocabulary building and allowing them to participate at their own level throughout lessons. For example, in some classes students had to prove a mathematical theorem. Students worked in groups using various strategies based on readings from some texts. Additionally teachers use various questions to help ELLs to derive correct answers. As a result, all students were engaged and producing work products that show high levels of thinking, regardless of their entry point due to the strategic use of questioning.
- The leadership makes strategic organizational decisions that align to the school goals and structures the school's schedule so that teacher teams meet regularly, which improves student achievement. (1.3)

- The school strategically uses its resources to provide varied technology, reading and writing programs and materials that aid teachers to meet diverse student academic needs. Additionally, all teachers have laptops that they use to collect student data and analyze at weekly teacher team meetings. Skedula, a student class work and assessment tracking program that allows parents access to their child's assignments, grades and projects is also used to improve timely communication with parents. This has helped to improve student achievement as evidenced in periodic, unit and monthly assessments. All ELL and SWD classes have laptops and programs such as ACCESS and ACHIEVE 3000 that target the needs of these diverse learning groups. All students have access in school and at home to a mathematics program, IXL, which allows students to work at their own pace, with incentives for improvement. As a result of these decisions regarding resources, teachers and students feel greatly supported by the leadership and the impact on teaching and learning is evidenced in the high levels of student engagement and quality of student work products.
- Teacher teams meet weekly to analyze data on student work products to revise and improve delivery of instruction. Teacher teams use the CCLS tasks to engage students in challenging tasks to meet the school goals to increase rigor in all subject areas, with an emphasis on developing writing stamina in all subject areas. For example, in the bilingual class students were studying the history of PI in math using the same tasks as the English language math classes, but with the use of varied text in Spanish. As a result, the bilingual students have access to the same curricula which is a result of the teacher collaboration on tasks within the teacher teams.
- Teacher teams use on-going assessments and grading practices to analyze performance data to inform their teaching at the class and team level which results in increased student academic outcomes.(2.2)
 - Teachers develop common assessments in all subjects and students are assessed every month. Teacher teams share the data with the leadership to analyze school and class progress towards goals. The leadership uses the data to provide actionable feedback for teachers and students regarding achievement of goals. As a result teachers revise their teaching strategies, methodology and activities in response to areas in which students had difficulties or targeted instruction is needed, and student goals are revised to reflect these changes.
 - Across classrooms teachers periodically check student work, ask questions, and have students explain their understanding of a topic or instructions to ensure that students are on target. In many classes, students were giving feedback to peers, revising student work and reflecting on their own work using rubrics and checklists. As a result, teachers use checks for understanding and peer reviews to adjust tasks, instructions and the delivery of lesson so that all students learning needs are met.

What the school needs to improve

- Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults to increase impact on teaching and learning. (1.4)

- The school maintains a culture that is safe and its approach to building an inclusive culture includes allowing students a voice through a student council. However, there have been few meetings and students do not own many decisions made this year, such as keeping silent while going from class to class escorted by their teachers. As a result, although students are compliant when being watched, there is no ownership or self regulation as the theory of action to meaningfully involve students in decision making to lead school improvement efforts is not fully developed in collaboration with adults.
- Every student is well known by several adults, and the school has an "adoption" program whereby students are invited to ask an adult that they trust to "adopt" them. The principal and assistant principals have several students who specifically asked for them. This program has helped to improve student behaviors, and improved student work products, because the adults help them with homework and studying. However, attendance has improved only slightly despite the close attention being offered to students. Although the school has attendance procedures and incentives for perfect attendance, the school's goals to improve student achievement to higher levels is hampered by current attendance levels.
- Ensure that the school's goals are informed by data driven needs assessments to achieve high levels of student learning and social-emotional growth (3.1)
 - The school has a short list of clear school level goals and action plans which are imbedded in the Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), which includes high level regents' courses for eighth graders. However, high achievers are not targeted in the other grades with clear action plans that are long-term or interim to ensure that this group of student learning is accelerated for this group.
 - School leaders involve and communicate with teachers, families and students regarding school improvement processes, however, data shows low attendance rates for the majority of students which impacts progress towards goals. All learners are affected by low attendance which impacts student achievement.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: I.S. 318	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