

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

The Vida Bogart School for All Children

K-8 75X352

**1330 BRISTOW STREET
BRONX, NY 10459**

Principal: LOURDES MENDEZ

**Dates of review: Feb 27, 28 and March 1, 2013
Lead Reviewer: Barbara Joseph**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Vida Bogart School for All Children is a K-8 school with 478 students from grade K through grade 8. The school population comprises 52.9% Hispanic, 39.3% Black, 3.8% White, 2.1% Asian students, 1.3% American Indian and .2% Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander. The student body includes 18.2% English language learners and 100.0% special education students. Boys account for 77.2% of the students enrolled and girls account for 22.8%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 88%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Curricula, academic and functional tasks, provide rigorous, relevant and coherent instruction across content areas that are refined to accelerate learning outcomes for all students. (1.1)

The school uses the Unique Learning System, a Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) aligned curriculum for students with intellectual disabilities and a coherent set of CCLS aligned Units of Study for students in standardized assessment programs. In addition, it also utilizes standards driven rubrics, appropriately adapted for students with cognitive diversity to drive rigor. Students' thinking and work products are reviewed and measured to determine adjustments of tasks and teaching strategies. The rubrics provide the ability to assess learning across a continuum of cognitive levels for skills that are aligned or connected to grade level CCLS. During collaborative meetings teachers analyze student work and data against these rubrics in order to refine instructional tasks and to determine next steps for increased student learning. As a result, teachers report that students are performing at increasingly higher levels and tasks are being modified along a continuum of rigor. The impact of this work has been an increase in communication, speaking, listening, reading, and writing and math skills for students in standardized and alternate assessment programs. This steady movement in closing the achievement gap is evidenced by a 5% increase in communication skills and a 13.6% movement from level 1 to level 2 in ELA in all testing grades and a 12.4% movement from level 1 to level 2 in math across all testing grades with an additional 6.7% increase in level 3 and a 2% increase in level 4 in math, across all grades.

- Teacher practices reflect a coherent belief system on how students learn best by providing multiple entry points into curricula, reflected in student work and participation, and leading to increased learning. (1.2)
 - There is a deep understanding that there is a continuum of students' abilities across the school community leading to a consistent belief that students require multiple entry points as informed by Danielson's Framework for Teaching (FFT), in order to provide access to rigorous standards based tasks, while maintaining the integrity of each student's Individual Educational Plan (IEP). The workshop model is an integral part of the school's structured learning environment. This model, along with the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communicatively Handicapped Children (TEACCH) methodology is well suited for 75% of the student population which are on the autistic spectrum, as well as students in standardized assessment programs with emotional challenges. This structured learning environment engages students in a variety of whole class, small group instruction and independent work, which moves students along a continuum of independence, while teaching both functional and academic skills as per each student's IEP. Across classrooms students are provided supports such as visual symbols, objects cues, and sentence strips. In addition every non verbal student has a communication system which is used across settings and

disciplines to promote peer to peer interaction and access to all curricula. This structure promotes the differentiation of instruction and rigor seen across classrooms. The administration promotes the integration of all related services within this structured classroom environment to improve collaboration across stakeholders. This collaboration is leveraging critical communication strategies across the organization for both teachers and paraprofessionals. During push-in periods speech providers and classroom teams utilize a Joint Action Routines (JARs) to improve language and early literacy skills. As a result there has been an increase in speaking and listening as evidenced by the Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) assessment data for students with alternate assessment IEPs. Consequently, student written work products have improved along a developmental trajectory beyond what even staff report they thought their students with intellectual disabilities and severe emotional challenges were capable of producing.

- The school is a safe place where students and adults are engaged in learning and value the extensive level of support they receive for their personal and academic development. (1.4)
 - The school promotes a variety of behavior support strategies resulting in a learning environment that is clearly entrenched in positive social-emotional learning; it's built in. The positive learning environment is evident in the tone at each school site, within classrooms and during transitions. Students are respectful to one another, to the adults and adults to students. The school utilizes a universal behavior tracking system that employs point sheets to help students monitor their behavior. Sheets are sent home and signed by parents on a daily basis. Students are able to explain the point system as well as communicate specific behavior goals. One student stated that he is working on managing his anger. Entire school rallies provide an opportunity to celebrate students' accomplishments. Students with severe psychological disorders in the Astor Agency Program at the X352 site spoke openly about the strong relationships they have with the clinicians as well the teachers. The Astor clinicians and X352 guidance counselors work collaboratively with teachers to promote positive personal behavior throughout the day and in the community around specific targeted goals. Teachers maintain communication notebooks with parents to keep them informed of student progress and the principal and her administrative team purposefully make time to frequently call parents to discuss progress being made and concerns that need to be addressed. Parents reported that the school's communication systems has created a trusting, working relationship that is benefiting both parents and students by providing tools and strategies for families to use at home to promote social, functional and academic progress. The impact of the school's culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes is evident in the Learning Environment Survey's 8.9 score for Safety and Respect, a 3% increase in attendance over the past two years, a significant 23% decrease in incidents reported in OORS from last year and an impressive 20% of the students articulating at the end of this school year to a less restrictive environment outside of District 75.
- School leaders maintain a supportive culture for learning that conveys high expectations with a vision toward shared responsibility by all stakeholders for the continuing achievement of all students. (3.4)

- The school continues to use the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FfT) and proactively utilizes the language and critical attributes of the framework to clarify the administration's high expectations for teaching. A "Look For" document has been developed by school teams to support the use of the FfT in relation to the competencies cited in the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE's). It includes language specific to the instructional practices and methods used for students with significant disabilities. Designing coherent instruction is a priority area for the administration in developing professional development (PD) and supports across the five sites for the largely new staff; 50% having 3years or less teaching experience. The administration supports teachers across all sites in engaging them in the collaborative practice of scaffold unit planning to ensure that access to learning is provided for students with varying cognitive abilities. Teachers expressed that they feel very supported by the administration and have benefited in developing their pedagogical skills as a result of their involvement in teacher teams, after school Race to the Top meetings, brown bag lunches, intervistations, school based coach support and District 75 PD. They also have access to resources via the X352 Drop Box and word press blogs established by school coaches and coordinators to communicate best practices, so teachers can access resources for unit planning and knowledge gathering. A lead Instructional teacher at each of the five sites functions as teacher mentors and facilitators in the implementation of the CIE. This system of mutual accountability across the school community has resulted in a culture of learning and high expectations for staff and students which is impacting student achievement.

- In a grass roots effort to from relationships and build trust, all school sites implement a variety of communication strategies to keep families informed of their child's progress, as well as support them in the implementation of strategies at home to ensure continuity and the generalization of skills across settings. Teachers track student progress on a daily basis via the school wide data collection system and have open dialogue with parents on a regular basis to keep them informed of students' progress as well as through communication logs, outreach phone calls, and IEP quarterly reports. The administration and staff partner with parents to ensure the development of skills to prepare students for independence and appropriate post secondary outcomes, including college and career readiness skills, from early childhood and middle school , through the instruction of personal, functional and academic skills in relation to each student's IEP, starting in the early childhood grades. The school and parents are especially pleased with the Parents as Partners Program; provided to the school though a grant which provides opportunities for families and their children to work together with resident artists on a variety of art projects which has impacted student progress in socialization, communication and self regulation behaviors. One parent stated in a letter that her son came to X352 with limited speech and in a few years since he started, he is now speaking in full sentences. The school provides ongoing training and professional development opportunities for families to provide support and guidance in specific skill development areas such as toileting and communication skills for students with autism as well as partnering parents with social agencies to assist families with planning for the future. As a result, students successfully progress both in school and at home in developing more academic, social and physical independence

as evidenced by an increase in communication and on task behaviors at home as reported by parents.

What the school needs to improve

- Extend data analysis practices so that information gathered creates a clear picture of student progress to strategically adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels. (2.2)
 - The school uses a set of common assessments for various student groups across grades based on cognitive ability. Teachers have a layered classroom data system which uses one to one data, workstation data, student portfolios, as well as specific programmatic data across academic, functional and social- emotional skill development to track student progress toward their IEP goals. Analyzing information from SANDI, Acuity, Scantron, Unique and student work samples, teachers make adjustments to their instructional practices based on students' needs. However, a system to capture specific sub skill trends and gaps in learning and skill acquisition is lacking. As a result, this prevents the school from having a clear picture of student mastery thereby limiting opportunities to close the achievement gap, especially for English language learners (ELLs), across classes and for individual students.
 - Across classrooms teachers consistently use a coherent set of CCLS aligned rubrics and student portfolio checklists to check for students' understanding of content and tasks along a continuum of cognitive abilities, which has resulted in a common assessment language and understanding across the organization. However, teachers and teacher teams lack specific rubrics in relation to tasks, so that students can self-assess their own learning. Consequently, effective adjustments to lessons lack data from student reflection in order to address student confusion in moving toward their next steps for all learners.
- Enhance the school's current system for providing effective feedback to teachers that strategically informs next steps to improve teacher practice in order to increase student outcomes. (4.1)
 - The administration has implemented an effective observation and feedback system utilizing Danielson's FfT to support teachers with strengthening their practice. Supervisors conduct a series of "Events" including walkthroughs along with informal and formal observations to assess teaching and provide feedback in relation to specific competencies. Action plans are created that outline clear next steps along with the appropriate supports to achieve them. New teachers benefit from a variety of support, including school and district coaches, instructional lead teachers as well as opportunities to improve practice by participating in collaborative meetings and school based PD to learn teaching strategies, share ideas and resources. School leaders are in the process of using teacher observation data to make informed decisions around the design of targeted PD. In addition, the administration is making informed decisions based on this observation data, such as the identification of eight lead instructional teachers across all sites that support, mentor and facilitate teacher teams. While there is a culture that promotes school wide professional growth, the school lacks clarity in articulating expectations for specific strategies for content

instruction, in order to provide all students optimal access to learning. As a result there are missed opportunities for targeted professional development to support teachers' personal growth in providing all students with specific learning tools to increase their academic learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Vida Bogart School for All Children	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