



Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Ditmas Intermediate School

K062

**700 Cortelyou Road
Brooklyn
NY 11218**

Principal: Barry Kevorkian

Dates of review: November 13-14, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Karina Costantino

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

I.S. 062 is an intermediate school with 1,300 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 26% Black, 31% Hispanic, 13% White, and 30% Asian students. The student body includes 26% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 96%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part Two: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals to ensure the learning needs for all students are met. (1.3)
 - The principal articulates clear goals toward his focus to align to the most recent State math exam by hiring four new math teachers, and increase the instructional time for math from five-six periods a week to eight-nine periods a week. Recognizing the need to continue math instruction during the summer, he developed Summer Slide. This summer program reinforces math skills, minimizes daily classroom interventions for at risk students, and allows all students to engage in higher order tasks. Student work products, such as programming robotics, are indicative of all students exhibiting higher order thinking skills. The strategic use of resources and programs has resulted in an increase of academic outcomes for sub-groups. This is evident by the most recent math assessments where in 6th (30.7/25.7), 7th (22.0/15.1) and 8th grade (19.1/13.5) English proficient students and former English language learners had a significant increase in their academic performance on the State assessments.
 - The principal purposefully aligns teachers' programs and assignments to ensure strategic collaboration between teachers. For example, the English language arts teachers partner with the English as a second language and special education teachers to track students' academic progress and promote college and career readiness. This teamwork affords teachers the opportunity to develop instructional strategies to ensure that English language learners engage in meaningful discussion, and effectively improve academic outcomes. This is evidenced by the most recent New York State English as a Second Language Test (NYSLESLAT) where 42 students moved from the beginning level to the proficient level of English proficiency. In addition, guidance counselors work with classroom teachers to set high expectations for all English language learners and assist in the specialized them with the high school application process, in addition to arranging visits to high schools.
- The principal cultivates a culture of learning that maintains mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and social growth of students. (1.4)
 - The school has three deans, three guidance counselors, and two full time social workers. These staffs are highly visible throughout the building and involved in all aspects of the school community, thus supporting the emotional and social growth for children while offering anti-bullying programs, high school application support, and daily academic interventions. Students interviewed expressed that they feel supported and motivated by the relationships established with their guidance counselors, hence encouraging autonomy to identify next steps when a concern arises. Guidance counselors work diligently with students to prepare high school applications for all sub groups. This is also evidenced on the Learning Environment Survey by 82% of the students' knowledge

that most adults know who they are, and 88% of the students indicate that they have an adult they trust and can go to with a problem.

- The principal strategically decided to create a block schedule for the 6th and 7th grade. Teachers travel from one class to another which has led to an increase of instructional time and an impact on the number of incidents and suspensions in the school. Parents praise the school for giving them access and information about their children's education via the school's website, monthly newsletters, and ongoing workshops. Students' equally expressed that their school is welcoming and safe. Through a specialized program awarded by a grant for 6th grade students, entitled Computers for Youth, students receive free laptops. The school conducts computer workshops for parents to raise technology awareness, thus building strategic partnerships to increase parental involvement in their children's education. Additional parent workshops are conducted throughout the year on the CCLS, high school articulation, Immunization and other academic and quality of life issues. This is evidenced by a significant decrease in principal suspensions, evidenced by 129 suspensions in 2010-11 to 36 suspensions in 2012-13.
- The school supports a culture that embraces high expectations to the entire school community resulting in high student morale which builds a path towards college and career readiness. (3.4)
 - The school offers a number of activities to communicate to students and families expectations about college and career readiness, and students' independence via their interests and abilities. The Ditmas News Network and the Student Council provide students the opportunity to exercise their judgment and work independently on topics of interest. These results in an opportunity for students to develop and present their research studies to the school community, and video news cast on current issues using their editorials skills. Additional courses are integrated in the instructional program to provide advanced curriculum for students who meet academic criteria. In this program, students are able to take advanced placement classes in science and math. In addition, all students have the opportunity use the Software Engineering Program (SEP) to develop computer programming skills. This was evidenced during a class visit where students were programming robots to perform various functions. Parents attend workshops and meetings aligned to the various opportunities provided to their children. They are communicated to through email and the phone system. All of these initiatives push student thinking and result in having 31.5% of the 8th graders earning high school credits.
 - The school offers support to students and their families. Ditmas has three guidance counselors, three deans and three family workers who offer insight and support during school instructional team meetings. Grade leaders who chair teacher teams systemically communicate pertinent information to the Guidance Team regarding student concerns discussed during teacher team meetings, including guidance support. Teachers' conference with students as to their progress. This results in tracking and supporting academic and social pursuits for all students and families, resulting in 90% approval rate on the Learning Environment Survey for "keeps me informed about services for my child, such as tutoring, after-school programs, or workshops at school."

- School leadership observes teachers using the Danielson Framework to analyze learning outcomes and promote school wide practice, thus promoting professional growth and pedagogical expertise. (4.1)
 - The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) teaching model has been implemented and perfected over the past six years, and closely aligns with the 22 competencies of the Danielson Framework. The school community tracks progress for teachers through cyclical observations, inter-visitations, mentoring, and professional development. In addition, new teachers receive feedback from the administration and coaches. This year's focus is seeing assessment drive questioning and discussion during the lesson and professional development is targeting that initiative. Teacher teams are all looking at student work to identify areas of need throughout the year. The school maintains the status good standing on the State report card, thus removing itself from the State priority list two years ago. The success of this work is measured by the A on the most recent Progress Report card. This is evidenced by the school receiving 39.9% out of 60% in the category of making progress, compared to 30.5% out of 60% last year.
 - Feedback to teachers is documented and leads to interim goal setting and improved student outcomes. Professional development is purposeful and is based on the trends observed across teaching practice. In addition, teachers receive guidance from lead teachers, coaches, and the network. Teachers are accountable to develop instructional practices to support and monitor student progress. All teacher teams look at student work and develop strategies that can be used across grades. The administration tracks student work, Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) results and changes in lexile level, accountability reports, as well as formative and summative assessments to set clear expectations for accountability in monitoring students' academic performance. This is evidenced by the school receiving an overall score of 68% on the most recent Progress Report in students' growth, scoring better than 75.3% of Middle Schools in the city.

What the school needs to improve

- Consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula to appropriately engage all learners in challenging tasks or the demonstration of higher order thinking skills. (1.2)
 - Across classrooms visited, teachers inconsistently provide multiple entry points, scaffolds, and extensions into the curricula so that English language learners and special education students engage in higher order thinking tasks. For example, during a social studies lesson students worked in prioritizing the items on The Bill of Rights and preparing for a discussion on what could be eliminated. All students received the same worksheet, not taking into account that there were a number of English language learners in the room who were not participating in the class discussion. As a result, the lack of teaching strategies across the classrooms prevents all learners from engaging in meaningful learning

and discussions, thus hindering students' ability to develop higher levels of thinking.

- Develop consistent use of formative and summative assessments to adjust curricula and instructional decisions to increase academic achievement for all learners. (2.2)
 - Teachers create assessments and rubrics to determine student progress toward course benchmarks across classes and grades. However, assessment data is not consistently used cross classrooms to inform effective revisions to lessons with the purpose of improving identified learning gaps. Most students are not using student rubrics to self-assess and recognize their learning needs during class. In addition, teachers have not established the assessment criteria for student work in all grades according to teacher specified learning objectives, thereby providing feedback to students limiting their ability to work independently and develop their own next steps.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Ditmas Intermediate School	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 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards?			X				
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the 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 supports 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 those expectations?				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 student 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 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection?				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