



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

East Village Community School

Elementary School M315

**610 East 12th Street
New York
NY 10009**

Principal: Robin Williams

Dates of review: April 7 – 8, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Daniella Phillips

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

East Village Community School is an elementary school with 276 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 12% Black, 24% Hispanic, 49% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 25% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 94.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders make thoughtful, highly strategic organizational decisions that preserve core values of the school and promote academic excellence. (1.3)
 - This year, as the school eliminated its self-contained, special education program and adopted a full continuum of integrated co-teaching (ICT) classes, school leaders have been mindful to recruit successfully from the Teachers College Inclusive Classrooms project. As a result, most new teacher hires have a strong foundational and instructional background in effective co-teaching practices, including strategies for working with students with special needs. This school far exceeds city-wide and district averages in progress of students with disabilities on State exams and internal assessments, and this significant progress is often credited to the co-teaching model and supports.
 - The school has held firm to “progressive” values of project-based learning, descriptive and narrative evaluations instead of grade-based scores, and a highly inclusive and collaborative school culture. At the same time, the staff has adjusted organizationally with single grades instead of mixed-age classrooms and rich arts partnerships to optimize arts opportunities for all students. As a result, students’ access to full dance, theater, visual arts, and music instruction strengthens across grades.
- School leaders, teachers and staff nurture a respectful and inclusive culture that results in all students’ academic and social-emotional growth. (1.4)
 - The school has refined structures that promote an inclusive and positive learning environment with teachers and parents all affirming via *School Survey* an exceptionally strong school culture. For example, students across grades meet as “reading buddies” which strengthens academic and personal connections of students. Additionally, students share in school decision making, such as designing and selecting weekly club activities, and they lead school-wide programs, such as facilitating the community sing as part of bimonthly morning Town meetings. There is also a healthy debate and discussion of the school’s homework policy at School Leadership Team meetings which further engages all stakeholders in key decision-making at the school.
 - School staff and parents believe strongly that students’ learning experiences and teachers’ professional development must support students as active, engaged learners. Based on outreach to parents about their preferred arts integration, school leaders have invested in a school-wide drama program that aligns with content from units of study and provides students across grades the opportunity to act out their learning. Recently, fifth graders role-played a United Nations session as they studied countries of the Western hemisphere, while fourth graders assumed roles as immigrants and recorded their points of view in journals

as they studied immigration. Teachers plan collaboratively with a theater artist to ensure all students participate meaningfully in dramatic enactments of their content learning.

- There is deep investment and accountability in teacher teams so that collaborative planning and professional development elevate teaching practices and student progress. (4.2)
 - Teachers and staff assert exceptional leadership in this school over instructional matters, including planning of annual retreat, providing professional development, mentoring of new teachers, and participating in network teacher leader meetings. Two teachers have facilitated for the full staff an initiative on self-directed writing which has included inter-visitations to the grade above and below in order to better understand the writing continuum, as well as regular reviews of student work. Already, teachers note improved student writing across grades from consistent use of explicit rubrics. All teachers voluntarily meet weekly for ninety minutes for professional development and there is community-wide investment in the development of student values and culture through 4Rs Morningside Center and Responsive Classrooms. Furthermore, teacher teams embrace an inquiry approach and shared lesson study protocols so that team meetings are systematic in their analysis of student work which then adjusts teaching practices within and across grades.
- Teachers assess student learning effectively which intensifies their understanding of each child's strengths and needs and then leads to sensible interventions and targeted instructional planning. (2.2)
 - Teachers consistently review students' academic results from interim assessments and authentic student work products and then plan instruction, guided group work, and academic interventions from this data. Staff uses the shared Google Docs platform for tracking student progress in reading levels, word study, math assessments at beginning, mid- and end-of-units, and writing rubrics. Written narratives for each student included detailed and clear information about students' mastery of skills and learning targets, as well as students' own reflections about their learning and goals, which, together, gave a full picture of each student's strengths and needs.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine the school's enriched, rigorous curricula and unit plans with more consistent, detailed daily planning in order to ensure entry points for all learners. (1.1)
 - School leaders and faculty ensure meaningful alignment of curricula to Common Core Learning Standards across all subjects. Teachers receive extra support via coaching in math lesson study cycles and writing inter-visitations across grades, which results in good consistency of high-level tasks being embedded in all unit plans. Additionally, teachers make deliberate efforts to differentiate curricula and tasks for different learners, with extensions and scaffolds that target different groups of students,

including English Language Learners and students with disabilities. This year, teachers have reflected on the school's guiding principles (*"We take care of ourselves. We take care of each other. We take care of our environment."*), and adjusted content curricula to deepen students' understanding and active practice of these values. While grade-level unit plans are thorough and emphasize rigorous expectations, there is a range of daily planning of lessons. Vast majority of lessons include thoughtful planning of leveled questions that then produce discussions and activities that achieve higher-order student thinking, but others do not and the ensuing lessons and teaching points stay at basic levels of student engagement.

- Sharpen already-strong teaching practices with greater differentiation of tasks to accelerate progress of all learners. (1.2)
 - Teachers across classrooms plan for deliberate entry points of all students in class activities and learning tasks. A strong example of the differentiated process was evident in a second grade classroom during writing workshop, as students recorded their observations about different poems on varied graphic organizers and the teacher previewed material with two students before then engaging them in a full class discussion. While scaffolds for struggling learners have been a consistent practice at the school for years, there are now increasing efforts to engage higher performing students in word club, piloting of DreamBoxLearning on-line accounts in math, and several challenging project assignments. These efforts are still fairly new and school leaders acknowledge that including mentor texts as a regular component of instructional practices will further support student achievement and best work products.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: East Village Community 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