

Quality Review Report

2013-2014

P.S. 212
12X212

1180 TINTON AVENUE
BRONX
NY, 10456

Principal: Gloria Ford Anderson

Dates of review: May 13-14, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Myrna Rodriguez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 212 is a K-8 school with 497 students from Pre-K through grade 8. The school population comprises 40% Black, 57% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 21% English language learners and 15% 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 90.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The leadership makes organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs which are helping to improve student work products. (1.3)
 - The new leader uses the budget to ensure that teachers have the resources necessary to support the school's instructional goals, including books, manipulatives, SMART boards, and dictionaries in various languages. The principal is engaging English language arts and math consultants to provide on-site professional development. She is developing teacher leadership capacity in various areas including curricula, student leadership, and professional development by allotting the time for faculty conferences to these activities which are aligned to the school's instructional goals, as evident in meaningful student work products.
 - The staff schedule is structured so that teachers meet in teams every week to support the school's instructional goals of improving reading levels, literacy and the development of writing stamina. In grade and subject teams analysis of writing products and assessment data are used to develop strategies to improve delivery of instruction and challenging academic tasks to improve student achievement. To ensure teacher effectiveness the principal strategically conducts her observations with immediate verbal and written feedback, working with teachers across all grades to develop their teaching practices by modeling best practices and having reflective discussions that have improved teacher ownership of their own learning. For example, after observing teachers, the principal allows time for teachers to reflect about the observation, and recommendations for next steps are elicited by both the teacher and principal demonstrating a conscious effort to use staff time to improve instruction. This is evident in the improvement in many categories, especially in engaging students in challenging academic tasks, which is the number one greatest need among many teachers, according to the data from the Danielson Framework for Teaching that the principal uses to record observations.
- The school is implementing various approaches to support a learning environment that promotes student and adult academic and personal growth, which is evident in most classrooms. (1.4)
 - The school leader is passionate about the alignment of safety, tone and climate with academic achievement and she has inspired adults and students to work as a community, allowing for student voice and an environment where students and adults share mutual respect which is resulting in increased student engagement and achievement. School tone is generally respectful and staff is working on various programs such as the *Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS)* to learn strategies for managing student behaviors. In several classes students were role playing and discussing the effects of bullying on both the victim and bully as part of the literacy curriculum. As a result, of the emphasis on positive behaviors there are less reported incidents compared to last year as measured by the online occurrence reporting system (OORS) which is leading to a positive culture with fewer disruptions in classrooms, allowing teachers and students to focus on academic work and as a result student work is improving as evidenced in writing products and student discussions using accountable talk.

- The leadership conducts professional development and family workshops on conflict resolution and bullying that align to the goal of supporting students to adopt positive and effective academic behaviors. One outcome of these workshops for teachers and parents has been the development of a new student council to allow student voice in decision making, such as choosing themes for assemblies and trips. Consequently, student behaviors have improved and less incident reports have been filed this year compared to last year.
- The principal is establishing a culture of teaching and learning that communicates high expectations to the faculty, students and families linked to a path of college and career readiness.(3.4)
 - The principal is providing supports, such as after school programs, special reading programs and Saturday academies to achieve the high expectations communicated to families that that are directly connected to a path for college and career readiness for all students, including English language learners and special education students. The school is developing high expectations that are driving efforts to accelerate student learning by targeting reading levels using Fountas and Pinnell running records. The school's expectations include requiring students to explain their process for solving multi-step problems in math. Teachers assess student work in grade team meetings and make the necessary adjustments to curriculum tasks and pedagogy so that students meet their goals. Detailed feedback to students and families, through progress reports and weekly updates support and prepare students for the next level of learning, thus high expectations being met. As a result, families and students are aware of the high expectations for their child's academic growth and are preparing to meet the expectations of colleges and careers.

What the school needs to improve

- Develop curricula and tasks in all disciplines that integrate clear and consistent expectations of State standards, to challenge all learners, in order to close the achievement gap. (1.1)
 - The principal ensures that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and content standards, including the arts, but the instructional shifts are not consistently evident across classrooms, such as using textual evidence in writing and discussions, use of academic vocabulary by students and speaking and writing about math processes which impact academic achievement and college and career awareness. The school is developing the English language arts curriculum and aligning it to the CCLS, so that students experience multiple, purposeful non-fiction reading and writing units across grades. Across some classrooms, individual teachers are providing some additional resources to support the large population of English language learners through content related vocabulary word walls. However, at this time, the school has not fully developed its curriculum maps and units so that additional resources, strategies and supports for use with English language learners and special education students and enhancements for high achievers are clearly delineated and consistently accessible to teachers across all grades and content areas. As a result, of the lack of these supports, both visual and audio are planned within the curricula and unit plans, thus opportunities are limited to cognitively challenge subgroups, to support improvements according to their needs.
- Improve teacher pedagogy to ensure that it is aligned to curricula, engaging, and differentiated, so that all students experience rigorous tasks that produce high-level work products. (1.2)

- The school is developing teacher pedagogy from a set of beliefs of how students learn best, shared by most teachers. Teaching practices reflect the school wide set of beliefs that children learn best using the workshop model, where the teacher models expected outcomes, students work in groups to master concepts, and share their learning with the whole class. However, although questioning, scaffolds in English or native language, multiple entry points, and challenging tasks for high achievers, are embedded in some parts of the curricula there is a lack of consistency across subjects and classrooms. These practices, however, are not evident in all classes. In several classes I asked students who had finished their work if they had any challenging tasks to do, and they indicated that they could read a book or rest, and in some lower grade classes, students spend time filling in worksheets and have few opportunities for peer conversations, revisions or sharing of knowledge. As a result, student engagement is limited and there are uneven levels of high quality student work and student improvement.
- The school is developing strategies to address a variety of learners, such as using second language acquisition strategies for vocabulary building for all students, and assigning extension tasks for higher achievers, but it is not yet evident across all classrooms. Diverse groups of students receive the same tasks, regardless of specific needs, which hinder their engagement and success in the work. Consequently, improvement in students' performance and progress is not accelerated as evident in the data from student reading levels, writing samples and unit exams.
- Ensure that all grades have assessments aligned to curricula and that teachers analyze student outcomes to make effective instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels. (2.2)
 - Assessment rubrics and actionable feedback to students and families are being developed. The school is developing teacher assessment practices that reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and in some classrooms students reflect on work, but there is little evidence of peer reviews or the use of rubrics for self-assessment across the grades and subjects. The school is using Fountas and Pinnell as a common assessment for reading. However, in the upper grades results are inconsistently used to adjust curriculum and instruction. Consequently, reading goals for English language learners, special education students and high achievers are not rigorous enough to improve student outcomes. These inconsistencies hinder teachers from making appropriate instructional decisions and adequate adjustments to curriculum, impeding student progress and effective use of student data at the team and class levels.
 - In many classrooms teachers use various forms to assess if students understand the work including hand signals, slates and turn and talk. However, across classrooms teachers inconsistently use ongoing checks for understanding during lessons, and as a result adjustments to daily and long-term teaching or use of appropriate and differentiated materials to meet all students' needs are not evident. In some classes students did not how to respond to questions, and, or activities within a group because instructions were not clear, or they did not understand various tasks, yet students responded chorally that they understood when the teacher asked if they knew how to do the task. The inconsistent use of checking for understanding via informal ongoing assessments precludes teachers from making necessary daily adjustments and results in some student s learning needs not being met.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School Name: P.S. 212	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