

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Entrada Academy

Middle School 384

**977 FOX STREET
BRONX
NY,10459**

Principal: JAZMIN RIVERA POLANCO

**Dates of review: March 25 - 26, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Myrna Rodriguez**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Entrada Academy is a middle school with 312 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 11% Black, 87% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 38% English language learners and 22% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 93.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions that support the schools instructional goals effectively supporting student access to learning opportunities that lead to college and career readiness. (1.3)
 - The school provides curricular and extra curricula activities to meet the needs of English language learners and students with disabilities by scheduling the mandated extra 37 ½ minutes for tutoring during the day to ensure that all students receive targeted intervention in all subject areas, and offers enrichment courses or classes after school and on Saturdays. As a result, student subgroups receive targeted support that meets their instructional needs. Furthermore, the leadership organizes the school resources using data from State and benchmark assessments in English and math to provide professional development to staff in all core subjects, uses the Network achievement coach for targeted support for staff members, and allocates per session monies to schedule Saturday classes. As a result of the analysis of the school's Learning School Survey, the principal increased family engagement using Title 1 funds for various parent meetings and workshops, such as a three-part Parent Forum on high school, college and career readiness, Core curriculum, and meet and greet with teachers. As a consequence of utilizing the budget to support teacher professional development, after school programs, and family engagement, teachers are delivering improved instruction, students are producing meaningful work products, and families are engaged in their children's learning.
- Safety, tone and climate are positive which promotes mutual trust and respect among all constituencies, resulting in an encouraging learning environment for adults and students. (1.4)
 - The new principal effectively used the data from the Learning Survey, student attendance, and incident reports, to set, review, revise, and monitor identified goals. As a result of clear messages of high expectations and promotion of positive behaviors thorough the Entrada Bucks system, which rewards good actions, and behaviors, the environment of the school has been transformed. The school has data that students are demonstrating a steady upward trend in various assessments, including reading, writing and across all core subjects.
 - Parents, and students agree that they are well known by many of faculty and staff, including the parent coordinator, assistant principal, and principal. Students are observed having respectful conversations with faculty and staff, and being addressed by their name which is what several students stated made them feel that the school was improving in relating to them. Teams of staff who have received professional development help to coordinate social-emotional, interventions, and special youth supports through the Positive Behavioral Intervention System (PBIS) have resulted in improved student behavior as evidenced in the decrease in students suspensions compared to last year. The school's tracking of the academic progress of students who were targeted for behavior modification and the results show steady growth in reading and core subjects, such as English, math, social studies, and science.

- Leadership uses the Danielson Framework for Teaching and analysis of school data to provide effective and timely feedback and targeted professional development to raise instructional practices and meet teachers' needs. (4.1)
 - School leaders are very supportive of their teachers providing professional development and resources to improve teaching and learning. The principal and assistant principal observed all teachers together to ensure that teachers received feedback to improve their instruction aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school has a system of reflective practices which is helping to improve teacher pedagogy. Teachers feel supported because they are encouraged to visit other teachers, to go out of the school for professional development, and receive in-class modeling from Network consultants and the principal. A teacher stated that even though she received a developing in many areas when observed by the leadership, she felt supported because the focus of the school is for everyone to improve in a risk-free environment. New teachers are mentored by the leadership and veteran teachers and they have targeted professional development through the Network liaison. As a result, the majority of teachers are showing marked improvement over the course of the year as validated by the data in the frequent observation reports showing teacher movement from ineffective to developing and effective.

What the school needs to improve

- Ensure that curricula consistently integrate academic tasks that emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills across grades and subjects and for English language learners and students with disabilities. (1.1)
 - The leadership and teachers are making great strides in aligning their English language arts (ELA) curricula, Code-X, and their math curricula, Connected Math Project 3(CMP3), so that students experience multiple, purposeful non-fiction reading and writing units across grades and aligned math tasks respectively. Additionally, a great proportion of the social studies and science content is from the Common Core Library. Across some classrooms, the school is infusing strategies for English language learners in the curricula, such as directing teachers to use hands-on manipulatives and visual aids such as, color coded charts, content related vocabulary word walls in several languages, and teacher exemplars to support cognitive engagement in academic tasks aligned to their needs. However, the school is still developing its curriculum maps and units so that additional resources, strategies, and supports for use with English language learners and students with disabilities are defined and consistently accessible to teachers across all grades and content areas. As a result, the absence of visual, kinesthetic, and audio supports infused within the curricula and unit plans, limits opportunities to cognitively challenge relevant sub-groups and support academic improvement according to their needs.
- Further develop teacher pedagogy that aligns to curricula and the school's instructional focus so that all students are engaged in challenging tasks and meaningful discussions. (1.2)
 - The school emphasizes in its goals that academic vocabulary acquisition and higher order thinking skills are what will allow students to be college and career ready. The school uses Word Generation which provides teachers with assessments, rubrics, and strategies, for students' acquisition of academic vocabulary. There is evidence in the school's

data that students' levels of reading are improving as a result of the emphasis on vocabulary acquisition. However, although the school is steadily developing academic tasks, lesson planning, and targeted professional development to improve instruction in these areas, so that rigorous habits and higher-order skills are consistent across grades and all subjects for English language learners and student with disabilities this is not yet evident across all classes. Questioning, scaffolds for diverse learners, providing multiple entry points into the curricula so that all students specifically ELLs and SWDs are engaged in high levels of student thinking is inconsistent. As a result, in some classes students are more engaged in higher thinking discussions than in other classes. Furthermore, bilingual students and students with disabilities are not able to demonstrate a great degree of confidence in reading and writing as evidenced in class and work products.

- Improve teacher assessment practices to consistently evaluate student understanding and learning throughout lessons. (2.2)
 - Although teachers use quick, on-the spot checks for understanding during a lesson to determine the level of student understanding of a concept being taught, this is an inconsistent practice across some classrooms. The lack of on-going checks for understanding prevents students from knowing what needs to be done when left to work in groups or independently and leads to missed opportunities for teachers to effectively adjust their lessons ensuring that all students' learning needs are met.
 - Teacher teams use assessments and rubrics from the ELA and math curricula, Word Generation, and Common Core Library to inform instruction and to analyze student achievement of goals. However, rubrics are inconsistently used by students, and in some classes students indicated that though the teachers used rubrics to grade their work, they (the students) had never reviewed another student's writing or used a rubric to inform their work. Thus, this prevents students from effectively evaluating and owning their own work.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Entrada Academy	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