Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Ronald Edmonds
Middle School K113
300 Adelphi Street
Brooklyn
NY 11205

Principal: Dawnique Daughtry

Date of review: December 4, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Barbara Freeman
The School Context

Ronald Edmonds is a middle school with 718 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 72% Black, 20% Hispanic, 1% White, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 91.4%.

School Quality Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Culture</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td></td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems for Improvement</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Findings
All teachers participate in professional collaborations and are responsible for analyzing student work and common assessment data.

Impact
Teachers are making more appropriate decisions concerning curricula adjustments and its impact on their instructional practices.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers participate in grade/content teams. They are responsible for adapting and revising curricula with a focus on improving literacy through writing. Special attention is given to the arts, technology and other enrichment opportunities to support student learning. Discussions have involved in the delivery and adjustments necessary to support the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) curricula, Tier 2 and 3 academic vocabulary associated with units of study and student behaviors in different content areas.

- The school has been strategic in utilizing additional professional development and parent engagement time to support weekly common planning time to discuss student work, specific strengths and struggles of students, and the quality of work being produced. For example, the grade 8 team noticed students’ difficulty with elaborating on cited text based evidence. The team collaborated to develop a list of key transitions to help students expand on phrases or words to use when citing from text.

- The school utilizes a protocol to standardize all team meetings. Teachers expressed the use of the protocol allows them to focus on student work/data and its implications in their practice. Teachers stated “inquiry teams have allowed a more collective and collaborative discussion enabling us to plan, strategize and share.” This attributes to the increase in students’ performance on Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) assessments.
### Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

#### Findings
Teaching practices are aligned to the CCLS, performance tasks and demonstrates student thinking across most classrooms visited.

#### Impact
Teaching strategies that provide discussions and high levels of student participation somewhat limits all students being exposed to challenging tasks and opportunities to demonstrate higher order thinking.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The school’s philosophy is that students learn best by interacting with their peers and receiving feedback from multiple sources as outlined in the highly effective indicators of the Danielson framework for teaching. A focus of classroom instruction is the frequent opportunities for student discussion, self and peer assessment and the use of rubrics. However, observed classrooms remain teacher dominant lessening the opportunities for all students to engage in peer-to-peer discussions.

- Students utilize discussion prompts and protocols. The principal notes that there are increased opportunities for student talk, more students self-assessing based on rubrics and checklists, and building on classmates responses however, these structures were not pervasive in the vast majority of classrooms lessening the impact of quality structures schoolwide.

- Utilizing graphic organizers, student organization, solid essay writing, and increasing academic vocabulary are several of the instructional strategies that have been promoted across classrooms. Emphasis has been placed on how time is utilized. For example, limiting do now’s to five minutes, measuring time on task, and providing questions and tasks sustain practice phases of lessons but observed lessons did not provide students with ample time to practice learned skills limiting their ability to demonstrate mastery.

- Teachers have been encouraged to facilitate and support students in leading discussions and push in each other’s thinking. Teachers stated they are more comfortable with promoting high levels of rigorous discussion. In grade 8 Social Studies, parameters for students to use the accountable talk stems were discussed enabling students to take ownership of the discussions. However, it was not a persistent practice schoolwide.
### Additional Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**  
Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and supported with the inclusion of higher order thinking skills.

**Impact**  
Students are presented with demanding programming that requires demonstration of higher level thinking skills.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school uses Scholastic’s Codex for English Language Arts and Connected Math (CMP3) and are both CCLS aligned. Other content areas utilize state scope and sequence to ensure units are demanding and rigorous. Professional opportunities are offered to support in lesson planning. Teachers have been provided opportunities to visit The Department of Education (DOE) showcase schools to support their deepening work in lesson planning and strengthening differentiated and tiered tasks.

- The school approaches integrating college and career readiness skills by ensuring that they are embedded in developed tasks. An emphasis has been placed on being explicit in the describing academic behaviors stress grade to grade. For example, persistence with challenging material has been a “spotlight” skill of emphasis based on the instructional shifts and complexity of material.

- Teachers rely on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies incorporating technology which allows them to present content in a multitude of ways as well as provide options to support the more rigorous standards. For example, the use of the SMART board to show short videos was used to support a grade 8 social studies lesson on the Industrial Revolution.

- The school promotes higher order thinking skills across grades and subjects through the use of the Depth of Knowledge (DOK). Lesson plans reflect conversation prompts, differentiated tasks to provide multiple pathways of access for targeted students such as Students with Disabilities (SWD’s), and multiple forms of questions to address all types of learners. Teachers also using “thinking maps” in order to support students in organizing their thoughts and to respond to preplanned questions. For example, a grade 7 English language arts (ELA) teacher used the map during a poetry lesson in order for students to organize their thoughts to support their written literary responses.
Findings
Teachers use common assessment data in order to measure progress towards school goals.

Impact
Teachers are providing meaningful and effective feedback to students based on data sources. Teachers are effectively utilizing data to measure student progress and progress towards school goals.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a variety of common assessments determined by MOSL selections, pre-and post-unit assessments, mid-unit checks, and created teacher performance tasks. State data was shared the faculty across content and at faculty conferences to highlight areas where students were close to meeting state targets. Those students are targeted for additional support to accelerate learning in order to increase the number of students meeting performance standards. Current data has revealed that students struggle to elaborate on evidence cited from the text. This instructional challenge was shared in inquiry teams and lessons were geared to supporting students with this skill. The data has also revealed an adjustment on how double block periods are utilized. They now include more time for strategy groups, peer to peer discussions, one to one conferencing and project based work.

- Teacher-Eze, an online program, communicates student progress, test data, and homework submissions enabling students and families to access real time information about a child’s performance in all classes. Parents have the option to be notified via text messaging to address teacher concerns immediately.

- The school has concentrated on other types of data teachers collect between common assessment administrations. Teachers are reviewing quizzes, exit slips, and do now’s to ensure what is being asked is leading to mastery. Student misconceptions, mistakes, and clarity of questions are also reviewed in order to provide students with assessments that measure what has been taught but also identifying instructional practices that need to be adjusted.
Findings
Administration and teachers constantly convey high expectations, offers support, and provide necessary feedback to families, students, and staff about student progress.

Impact
The school has strengthened reciprocal communication between all school constituencies enabling the school community to focus on the expectations of student achievement and progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal has an open door policy which allows parents to travel with their child’s from class to class. Parents also encouraged become active members of the Ronald Edmonds Learning Center (RELC) and to attend regularly scheduled meetings. Parents also receive information via teacher email notifications, student progress reports, quarterly report cards, and website updates.

- Weekly professional learning and parent engagement provides an additional opportunity for school leaders and teachers to communicate expectations of the school community regarding high-quality curricula and instruction and student progress towards state standards as they progress on the college and career readiness continuum.

- Through observations based on the Danielson Framework, teachers receive feedback on instructional practices. Observation reports reveal teachers receive feedback on questioning, designing coherent instruction, and using assessment in instruction. When necessary teachers are provided with learning opportunities in order to strengthen pedagogy.

- The school has focused on several student initiatives in order to provide feedback. Some of those include student government, student of the month, annual college tours, and academic and personal behaviors services. This is proved effective in constantly reminding students of the expectations academically and behaviorally.