Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Eastwood School
Elementary School Q095
179-01 90th Avenue
Queens
NY 11432

Principal: Kim A. Hill

Date of review: October 27, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Lenon Murray
The School Context

The Eastwood School is an elementary school with 1,504 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 12% Black, 45% Hispanic, 2% White, and 41% Asian students. The student body includes 29% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.2%.

School Quality Criteria

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
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### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
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<tr>
<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>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings
School leaders communicate high expectations continuously to the whole staff based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching with job-embedded training and messaging. Administrators and teachers partner with parents through workshops, conferences, and meetings while expounding a path to college and career readiness.

Impact
The communication and support structures that disseminate the school’s high expectations build accountability and collaboration among the staff, students, and their families. This approach facilitates high parent participation and engagement and a clear path to college and career readiness for students.

Supporting Evidence
- Monthly parent newsletters, regular parent workshops on the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and parent links to educational technology on the school’s website promote clear communication to families on school expectations and culture. Parent meetings and the School Leadership Team are well attended. Parents feel their voices are heard and 99 percent of parents responded to the School Survey which is the highest in the district.

- The school leaders engage in frequent classroom observations and use the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the rubric that defines accountability for high expectations in classroom practice. Staff members visit each other’s classrooms and provide feedback as critical friends. The leaders provide individualized feedback on professionalism, instruction, and interpersonal communication. Expressed satisfaction by teachers on the School Survey is well above both the district and city averages and upwards of 96 percent. New teachers receive a thorough induction through new teacher orientation meetings and mentorship.

- Parents explained that they are extremely satisfied with the emphasis the school places on college and career readiness which culminates in an annual career day. Many alumni regularly return to the school to encourage current students to study diligently. Teachers send consistent progress reports by email, phone, and in written form in addition to report cards.

- The school has a trained Positive Behavior Intervention (PBIS) team that collaborates with parents to support the social emotional wellbeing of each child. Parental suggestions are incorporated into cultural assemblies and intervention procedures. Parents communicate freely with their children’s teachers both in asking questions and providing guidance about how the Common Core is impacting their students’ progress. The teachers at this school invite parents into their classrooms frequently for writing celebrations and class projects and inculcate the feedback into future efforts.
### Area of Focus

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

While teaching practices provide instructional supports, including questioning and discussions, the multiple entry points that support all learners particularly ELLs and SWDs show some variability across the school.

**Impact**

Across classrooms, students are engaged in challenging tasks that are appropriate and that demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, yet there are quiet, well-behaved students who are passive in their engagement. Teachers provide opportunities for all learners including ELLs and SWDs to show higher-order thinking skills in their work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In all the classrooms visited, teachers utilized a workshop model of teaching in which students turned and talked to their partners during the lesson delivery. At other times in the lessons, students answered questions posed by the teachers. Students posed at least one question of their own in 50 percent of classrooms that were seen.

- Students portfolios in the vast majority of classrooms visited contained evidence of increased student writing compared to last year and a heavy utilization of text-based evidence to justify their positions in their essays.

- In each classroom, ESL teachers push into the regular lessons at certain times during the day to provide additional support to English Language Learners. This is in addition to pull-out sessions that work on the development of academic vocabulary and its application to academic tasks.

- During a grade 5 integrated co-teaching class, students were assigned to groups based on their aptitude with the division lesson and not their subgroup classification. The small group instruction included use of the SMART board, math manipulatives, teacher modeling and graphic organizers.

- In a kindergarten class, students were divided into five groups during an English Language Arts activity. While the teacher provided instructions that required some explanation to other groups, one group of three sat quietly for several minutes looking at their trays and their picture cards without attempting to gain the teacher's attention. In a fourth grade classroom that was using poetry to analyze figurative language, when students in groups disagreed with each other their protocol left the disagreement unresolved.
Additional Findings

| Quality Indicator: | 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings
The whole school community ensures that all the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), while seamlessly integrating the instructional shifts. The school leaders and faculty emphasize rigor and higher-order skills in their curricula and academic tasks inclusive of ELLs and SWDs.

Impact
The school’s thoughtful decisions build school-wide coherence across grades and subject areas while consistently promoting college and career readiness for all students. Rigorous habits, critical thinking and challenging academic tasks push student thinking.

Supporting Evidence
- The content area units of study integrate the CCLS instructional shifts and include the Arts and technology. In the math framework, it is now more important for students to provide an explanation of their math reasoning than to merely provide an accurate answer. In English language arts documents, students are expected to provide evidence from the text for all their main and secondary ideas even in narrative writing.

- Curricula maps indicate that the school utilizes and develops rigorous academic tasks through the resources available from Engage NY, the Department of Education’s Common Core Library and the New York City Social Studies and Science Scope and Sequence. In Science curricular documents, students are to write about experiments in various types of lab reports that require careful observation. In Social Studies, students defend evidence-based opinions on topics that include Columbus’ explorations and the impact on native peoples and the role of robber barons on America’s economy.

- Lesson plans were available in all classrooms visited. They all included some higher order and critical thinking essential questions and intentional strategies for supporting English Language Learners, special education students and struggling readers.
Findings
The school uses common assessments, rubrics and grading policies across the vast majority of classrooms that are aligned to their curricula and provide accurate and actionable feedback to students and teachers. The common assessments provide a transparent picture of student progress including ELLs and SWDs.

Impact
The school’s systems that utilize data analysis are used continuously by teachers to provide feedback to their students and make instructional decisions about teaching emphases. The curricular and instructional adjustments have led to student improvement across the school including ELLS and SWDs.

Supporting Evidence
- The entire school uses grade level rubrics for all writing and performance tasks. These rubrics are refined on teacher teams and explained to students so they can use them to assess their own work. Students were able to discuss their current level of performance and their next steps for improvement. For example, a third grade student explained that she needed to include more details to make her writing stronger and reach level four proficiency.

- The school uses common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress. Weekly Pearson Reading Street and Go Math mid-unit and end of unit assessments identify students’ strengths and areas of need. Fountas and Pinnell tracks students’ reading levels, comprehension and fluency. Teacher-made quizzes and questioning facilitate mid-lesson adjustments. For example, in a fifth grade team teaching math class, one teacher introduced a strategy of drawing diagrams when students experienced difficulty with the procedural division method being taught.

- English Language Learners are assessed at the beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of their language mastery. Special Education students are continuously measured with their Individualized Education Plans. These students are also tracked through web-based programs like Achieve 3000 which monitor their literacy improvement. More than fifty percent of students on these programs increase their reading levels in eight weeks.

- The school uses Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) assessments as a baseline in the fall. They conduct after-school and Saturday Academy programs to prepare students in their bottom third for promotion to the next grade. Performance is these programs are carefully monitored.
Findings
The vast majority of teachers consistently engage in inquiry-based professional collaboration on teams. These teams work on all major aspects of teaching including classroom practice, assessments and student work products.

Impact
The work of teacher teams has resulted in expanded teacher instructional capacity and more complete implementation of CCLS leading to increased student achievement. The improvements in teacher practice have enhanced student mastery of individual and group goals.

Supporting Evidence
- Teachers expressed that they have greatly increased their expertise in the CCLS and have the standards on their desks or prominently displayed in their classrooms. They now begin their planning with the appropriate literacy or math CCLS and then utilize their text materials rather than starting from the text. Throughout the first weeks of the school year, students in grades three through five have demonstrated improved scores on each subsequent unit assessment that was administered.

- Teacher leaders meet weekly with the administrative cabinet to discuss professional development and pedagogy. They talk about groups of students with whom they are practicing academic interventions. They focus on specific strategies to teach writing because the materials they have purchased have limitations in that area. Teacher teams are constantly devising methods to facilitate more robust classroom discussions particularly for their English language learners.

- Teacher team meetings review results from formative assessments, student work products and unit planning and develop a repertoire of skills which they use immediately in their classrooms. Teacher teams were able to speak to strong implementation of Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) on a daily basis. The teams meet informally up to five times a week on their prep and lunch periods with no formal directive from administration. They are self-motivated and self-sustaining. ESL and special education teachers are seamlessly integrated into the teams. The coaches are utilized as a resource for teams of teachers and individual teachers.