



**Department of
Education**

Joel I. Klein, Chancellor

**Quality Review Report
Division of Accountability and Achievement Resources
2009-2010**

Quality Review Report 2009-2010

A. Philip Randolph Campus High School

**High School M540
443 West 135th Street
New York
NY 10031**

Principal: Henry Rubio

Dates of review: May 25-26, 2010

Lead Reviewer: Janine Caffrey

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

A. Philip Randolph Campus High School is a high school with 1442 students in grades 9-12. The school population is comprised of approximately 65% Hispanic, 31% Black, and 3% White, Asian, or American Indian students. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 45% of the students enrolled and girls account for 55%. The average attendance rate for the school year-to-date is 89.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

A. Phillip Randolph High School has had dramatic improvements during the past few years, which are evident in its stunning gain in its four year graduation rate; from 67% in 07-08 to 88% in 08-09. The faculty is an intellectually curious group, continually questioning and researching to determine how best to move the school forward.

The school includes four learning communities or “houses” known as follows: medical, engineering, humanities, and academic. Each house focuses on attention to careers in their respective areas and includes opportunities for internships, college visits, and recognition for academic excellence. The multi-floor building is strategically used to create smaller overall physical space for each student and faculty member. This limits the need to move more than one floor in between academic class periods. Although it is one of the larger high schools, it has a much smaller feel due to the house configuration.

A wide range of extracurricular activities are available to students including sports, clubs, and the arts. The school has a great deal of energy, yet there is evidence of focused learning for students and adults throughout the school day.

There is a great deal of collegiality among the community of adult learners. A consistent protocol for inquiry has permeated the school's culture, and is seamlessly aligned with student grading periods, allowing continual professional develop

The school is working to increase its connection to families, and to strengthen its youth development programs in order improve achievement. The students are very articulate and have great ideas of what they would like to see in terms of school improvement. School faculty is working with students and families to ensure that the school direction is set by a collaboration of all constituents.

Perhaps the most impressive feature of Randolph is its teacher teams and the protocols used consistently across all teams. The inquiry steps are well-planned and executed during each six-week marking period, ensuring that inquiry is closely aligned with the school calendar. One can readily see how new teams are supported and guided by administrators, and then become self-directed. There is an excellent process for self-assessment in place for the teams, and for the school as a whole. This system of school improvement certainly has led to the dramatic gains in achievement that are occurring at this school.

Part2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's well-aligned curricula, emphasizing links to key standards, is evident across grades and subject areas, in this safe, focused learning environment.
 - There is clear evidence of the embedding of higher order skills in daily instruction across all student groups, resulting in curricula with continually increasing rigor. This is particularly strong within special education. Teachers include small group and individual questions involving the highest levels on Bloom's taxonomy, even with special education students. Student work consistently includes thoughtful responses to this type of questioning.
 - There is a real sense of purpose in the school, with all activities, classrooms and hallways reflecting the well-aligned curricula, resulting in purposeful decision-making on a day-to-day basis.
- Teaching practices are closely aligned to the curriculum, resulting in increases in scholarship and graduation.
 - Administrators and faculty have a clear understanding of how students learn best, resulting in consistent improvements in achievement. All faculty have been involved in a year-long process to identify this and put it into practice. Teacher work posted on walls in multiple locations reveals consistency in this area. Teacher talk during team meetings includes continual conversations about student engagement, higher order thinking skills, and the correlation with Regents exams and periodic assessments.
 - Teachers routinely differentiate instruction in the areas of content, product, and process in ways that are most appropriate in their individual classrooms. Each teacher focuses on one or more of the differentiation areas, included in thoughtful curriculum planning and purposeful tasks across all student skill levels. This has resulted in marked improvements in student achievement.
- Teacher teams, aligned by subject area, "house," grade level, and whole school, consistently follow a strong, coherent set of protocols, allowing for continual analysis of data, closely aligned with school-wide goals.
 - Assessment and capacity-building processes are reinforced through the teacher team structure. Teacher teams become more and more self-directed because of this structure, reducing the need for administrative "management" after less than a year. More mature teacher teams have student achievement gains that are greater than younger teams, which indicate a clear link to learning.
 - There is strong coherence between what is taught and how it is taught thanks to the consistent work of teacher teams across the school, resulting in gains in student achievement.
- School leaders and faculty use and develop a wide variety of tools to aggregate and organize data that provide actionable feedback to all constituents.

- Teacher teams use tools to develop clear portraits of student mastery in chosen skill areas, resulting in instructional decisions that improve student achievement. This is particularly evident in the use of Scantron to continually adjust periodic assessments and allow for careful analysis of student responses.
- Teacher teams continually redesign tools to address specific questions regarding achievement, resulting in ongoing improvement in inquiry practices.
- Individual teachers and teacher teams are engaged in ongoing professional collaboration and professional development, resulting in an inspiring culture of intellectual curiosity and school improvement.
 - Each newly formed teacher team is led by an administrator who expertly facilitates and coaches the team toward effective collaboration. The result is teacher teams which become self-directed in a relatively short period of time, and a sense of cohesion among the entire faculty.
 - There is a marked growth in each team's ability to manage itself as capacity in effective inquiry is developed among team members. The process of inquiry is embedded into practice at this school in a way that promotes high levels of efficacy in improving student achievement.
- The school's strategic use of resources, reflected in the master schedule, use of physical space, and organizational structure, has resulted in increased graduation rates in a challenging financial climate.
 - Each "house" of the school is contained on designated floors. Student movement throughout the building is reduced through this arrangement, and teachers on each teacher team are in close proximity to each other. This structure allows for better communication across houses and grades.
 - The master schedule maximizes collaboration, resulting in multi-layered teacher teams that have time to work together.
- The school has a strong vision for its future and clearly articulated core beliefs and theories of action that provide the framework for goal setting and action planning.
 - The school administrators have a keen understanding of how students learn best, which is reflecting strongly throughout all of their planning.
 - The school community reflects the understanding of how students learn best, and all are moving in a common direction to improve consistency of instructional practices as reflected in school level and teacher goals.

What the school needs to improve

- Intensify the academic rigor by strengthening academic prowess of incoming students, and the academic culture throughout the school community.
 - Assess key skills of incoming students (including academics and organizational skills), to determine specific areas in need of remediation.
 - Work together with families to improve incoming (new) students' skills in need of remediation (academic and organizational) just before and after the beginning of the new school year. This will result in a clear understanding of high levels of academic expectations for new students.

- Strengthen connections with families and provide students with needed social/emotional support, through a thoughtful use of youth development programming and protocols.
 - Fully implement the new social/emotional support system that was recently developed, and integrate it with academic support.
 - Work with student leaders to more fully engage families in school activities and the educational progress of students. There are a few very engaged families. However, a much larger number of families supporting the school need to be amassed in order to create a community that promotes the importance of high levels of academic achievement.
- Improve the consistency of identified key areas of instructional practice by strengthening the structures for evaluation of assessment practices, and aligning all professional development protocols (including formal observations and walk-throughs).
 - Adjust observation forms to reflect identified instructional practices, allowing administrators to continually monitor and strengthen key practices across the school.
 - Provide protocols for inter-visitation of teachers, allowing all faculty to work together to improve identified instructional practices.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2009-2010

School name: A. Philip Randolph Campus High School	△	▷	✓	+
Overall QR Score				X
Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?				X
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, and ensure that it is: aligned to the curriculum, engaging, and differentiated to enable all students to produce meaningful work products?				X
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?				X
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X
Overall score for Quality Statement 1				X
Quality Statement 2 – Gather and Analyze Data: School leaders and faculty consistently gather, analyze and share information on student learning outcomes to understand school and student progress over time.				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	▷	✓	+
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?				X
2.2 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the team and classroom level?				X
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize and analyze student performance trends?				X
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			X	
Overall score for Quality Statement 2				X

Quality Statement 3 – Plan and Set Goals: School leaders and faculty consistently engage the school community and use data to set and track suitably high goals for accelerating student learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of future development that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are understood and supported by the entire school community?				X			
3.2 Use collaborative and data informed processes to set measurable and differentiated learning goals for student subgroups, and students in need of additional support?				X			
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?				X			
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 3				X			
Quality Statement 4 – Align Capacity Building: The school aligns its leadership development and structured professional collaboration around meeting the school’s goals and student learning and emotional needs.							
<i>To what extent does the school..</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection, with a special focus on new teachers?				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			
4.3 Provide professional development that promotes independent and shared reflection, opportunities for leadership growth, and enables teachers to continuously evaluate and revise their classroom practices to improve learning outcomes?				X			
4.4 Integrate child/youth development, support services and partnerships with families and outside organizations with the school-wide goals to accelerate the academic and personal growth of students?			X				
Overall score for Quality Statement 4				X			
Quality Statement 5 – Monitor and Revise: The school has structures for monitoring and evaluating progress throughout the year and for flexibly adapting plans and practices to meet its goals for accelerating learning.							
<i>To what extent does the school..</i>	△	➤	✓	+			
5.1 Evaluate the quality of curricular, instructional and organizational decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?				X			
5.2 Evaluate systems for assessing students, organizing data, and sharing information with student and families, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school?			X				
5.3 Establish and sustain a transparent, collaborative system for measuring progress towards interim and long term goals and making adjustments during the year and over time?				X			
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?				X			
Overall score for Quality Statement 5				X			
Quality Review Scoring Key							
△	Underdeveloped	➤	Underdeveloped with Proficient Features	✓	Proficient	+	Well Developed