

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**The Robert Simon School**

**Elementary School M064**

**600 East 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York  
NY 10009**

**Principal: Marlon L. Hosang**

**Dates of review: June 2-3, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Myrta Rivera**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

The Robert Simon School is an elementary school with 325 students from prekindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 22% Black, 57% Hispanic, 3% White, 7% multi-racial, 2% Native American and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 29% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2008 - 2009 was 91.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Students benefit from effective partnerships that support their academic growth and social-emotional development to improve learning.
  - The school sustains a safe and respectful culture and provides academic support to students through partnerships with community based organizations. The Peace First program provides teachers with professional development on the social emotional development of students by planning and conducting joint lessons with trained staff on character education twice a week. As a result, the school enjoys a respectful learning environment with low principal's suspensions and a score of "A" in the Learning Environment Survey.
  - The Partnership with Educational Alliance provides services to students and families through a social worker. These successful partnerships support the development of the whole child and the school's receipt of the UFT Partnership Award. Students conduct community service projects such as "Save this Dog", thereby increasing internal capacity to support students' personal growth.
- The principal and staff work together to provide a safe and respectful learning environment that supports learning.
  - The small school structure with two classes on a grade and many collaborative teaching classes provides an opportunity for students to know many adults in the school. Students benefit from the services of a social worker from Educational Alliance and the guidance counselor who coordinate social emotional learning that impact student's academic success.
  - Students are interested in their learning and want to succeed. A student recalls informing the principal about a bullying incident and he took action immediately with an assembly program and consequences for this action. As a result, students feel comfortable in voicing their opinions.
- The school makes informed organizational decisions that align with instructional goals and support efforts toward improved student progress.
  - Creative programming supports the literacy program by assigning a specialist for two periods daily to push into all classes in grades 3 to 5. Literacy and math coaches also work directly with students in order to support targeted students and model successful strategies. As a result, 72 % of Tier I and Tier II students made gains from September to January in running records assessment.
  - The school makes personnel decisions that support the school's instructional goals. The hiring of an F-status early childhood specialist to support literacy in the lower grades and the additional staff in the

integrated classes provides support to students in need to close the achievement gap of targeted students.

- School leaders utilize formal and informal strategies including student work and data that support teacher development by providing differentiated support.
  - The school shares a common instructional focus using the workshop model, tiered small groups for targeted students and the school-wide use of running records and conference notes as a major assessment tool. As a result, there is a coherent school culture where teachers work collaboratively on teams speaking the same language as they discuss student work and share instructional strategies.
  - A review of written observation reports reveals that school leaders provide feedback to teachers that refer to pre-observation conferences related to how teachers use data to plan student's guided groups, and focus on next steps for improving teaching skills. In addition, there are frequent walkthroughs with immediate advice to teachers and targeted support for teachers identified. This feedback provides clarity of expectations and provides a foundation for effective professional growth.
- Students benefit from a differentiated learning environment that meets their diverse learning styles and supports multiple entry points into their units of study.
  - Teaching strategies and academic task are typically differentiated based on student work and data during literacy and math instruction. There is a three tier grouping system to provide targeted academic intervention to students and differentiated materials or instructions for academic task. This structure supports students' needs to eliminate gaps in learning.
  - In most classrooms, questioning strategies reflect a general level of engagement where students respond to teacher's questions during the mini-lessons. The Content Fair provides an opportunity for students to engage in deep thinking that increases student engagement and interest based on a review of student work products. These strategies enable students to produce meaningful, challenging work products.
- The school provides opportunities for students and their families to understand school and student data so they can measure progress over time.
  - The school provides students and families with feedback on student progress through progress reports given to parents six times a year. These reports include their reading, writing, math and content goals, the grading rubric, running record levels, conduct, behavior and homework as well as the next steps for their students.
  - Student work products provide feedback with comments that can move them to the next level. Rubrics attached to their finished products include both a teacher and student score. Students are involved in their own learning and are able to evaluate their work and explain why they received their score.

## What the school needs to improve

- Refine action planning by developing interim goals and benchmarks to enable the school to modify goals in order to optimize the impact of actions.
  - School leaders develop annual goals as part of the Comprehensive Education Plan. However, there is no long-term multi-year planning based on evidence of student performance. The school develops spreadsheets with student progress using running records data but there is no system for identifying interim goals to monitor progress and make modifications that ensures all students are making progress. This could weaken long-term impact.
- Expand the curriculum to align content knowledge, skills, and assessments across each unit of study in all subjects that leads to rigorous tasks and student work products.
  - The school has not designed a comprehensive standards-aligned curriculum that matches assessments. At this time, they follow pacing calendars from Teachers' College, skill of the week calendars and incomplete grade specific pacing calendars. Consequently, a system is not yet in place for consistent data-driven evaluation and modification of curriculum across grades and subjects. Even though school leaders emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills in questioning techniques in their teacher observations, it is inconsistent across grades and subjects. This prevents needed gains in student achievement especially in math and literacy.
- Create measurable and differentiated learning goals for student sub-groups and students in need of additional support that are meaningful to students and strengthen the instruction assessment cycle.
  - Teachers review summative data to identify students in need of additional support. These students receive assistance through tier I and tier II groupings to provide them with differentiated instructional strategies. Teacher teams also develop differentiated goals for individual students. However, there is no evidence of measurable learning goals with interim goals and benchmarks for these students. Consequently, student progress cannot be measured and could hamper student achievement.
- Develop systems that regularly evaluate and monitor the effectiveness of teacher teams and other professional development opportunities to build capacity and have a measurable impact on student learning.
  - The school provides a variety of professional development activities and school leaders check in to support team discussions by viewing agendas and meeting with coaches. However, there are no strategies for monitoring the impact of these activities. Similarly, a system has not been formalized to measure the impact of how teacher teams build capacity for leadership development. This lack of monitoring affects the ability to monitor and adjust for improved student outcomes.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

School name:	UD	D	P	WD
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>	
<b>Quality Statement 1 – Instructional and Organizational Coherence: The school has a coherent strategy to support student learning that aligns curriculum, instruction and organizational decisions.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous and coherent curricula, including the Arts, for a variety of learners and aligned to key State standards?		<b>X</b>		
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?			<b>X</b>	
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs?			<b>X</b>	
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes toward learning that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>
<b>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.</b>				
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
2.1 Gather and analyze information on student learning outcomes to identify trends, strengths, and areas of need at the school level?			<b>X</b>	
2.2 Align assessments to curriculum and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use or develop tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage in an open exchange of information with students and families regarding students' learning needs and outcomes?			<b>X</b>	

**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>	UD	D	P	WD
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	

**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>	UD	D	P	WD
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

**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>	UD	D	P	WD
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		

**Quality Review Scoring Key**

<b>UD</b>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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