

# Quality Review Report 2010-2011

**Harriet Tubman Learning Center**

**Elementary School 154**

**250 West 127<sup>th</sup> STREET  
New York  
NY 10027**

**Principal: Elizabeth Jarrett**

**Dates of review: January 28 - 31, 2011**

**Lead Reviewer: Nina Pitton**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

P.S. 154 Harriet Tubman is an elementary school with 410 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 3% White students, 64% Black students, 1% Asian students, and 30% Hispanic students. The school body includes 13% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the 2009-10 school year was 92.1%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is Proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school offers a safe, nurturing environment that is inclusive of students, teachers, and parents, promoting trust and pride in the school community.
  - The school embraces a positive behavior intervention program, (PBIS), which allows school leaders to convey high expectations for learning and behavior to students and families. The program's design, (offering rewards for desired behaviors that students then redeem for selected items at the school's store), has positively impacted on student attendance rate, and markedly decreased the number of suspensions.
  - Every educator in the building has extensive knowledge of each student acquired from a range of data sources, including surveys, student work, collegial conversations, assessments, inquiry work, and parent and student-teacher conferences. This strengthens the social/emotional support students receive to ensure academic success.
- School leaders and faculty convey high expectations for student achievement, which is reflected in school wide instructional and behavioral goals, resulting in students feeling challenged and motivated to succeed.
  - Teachers' beginning of year communication with families enables them to introduce the curriculum and embedded expectations. In addition, numerous meetings with principal and teachers afford parents an opportunity to ask clarifying questions not answered in the parents' or students' handbook. This results in parents feeling connected with the school as active members of the school community.
  - Parents regular input and participation are encouraged as they partake in every aspect of the school's decision making process, including parent teacher association, curriculum development and revision, goal-setting, inquiry team work, development of the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP), and volunteer work. In addition, parents are supported with academic and interest-based training designed to develop capacity for understanding and assisting with their children's needs.
- School leaders provide multiple opportunities for teacher development that consistently align with school wide goals and student performance data, with the goal of effecting positive change in teacher practices and student outcomes.
  - Professional development is effectively planned based on individual teacher's needs and interests, captured via a needs assessment survey early in the school year that highlights areas seen as related to student performance, with an eye towards addressing students' needs. This results in a collaborative design of the school's professional development plan that is regularly modified to reflect evolving needs and teacher capacity.
  - The administration conducts weekly "learning walks" focused on school wide goals and provides veteran and new teachers with actionable feedback, thus

promoting a culture of high expectations, leading to change in teacher practices such as an increase in the use of technology in the classroom.

- The school developed external partnerships that offer faculty the resources to support the vision of a safe and respectful culture in the school, ensuring student academic engagement as well as real world learning opportunities.
  - A partnership with the Apollo Theater allows teachers to integrate the history of Harlem, black culture, and the Apollo Theater into the social studies curriculum. As teachers receive professional development in this area, they implement the project in their classrooms, aligning the curriculum with the arts and promoting students academic and social/emotional growth.
- Students benefit from an increasingly integrated curriculum, which includes an array of technology resources and is supported by curriculum maps and pacing guides, resulting in a general level of student engagement.
  - The integration of key evolving standards into units of study for every subject, coupled with an increasing inclusion of instructional and assessment software programs, provide a curriculum that supports students' academic growth.
  - The school-wide adoption of the Literacy Café Menu for reading improvement, which centers around four essential components of reading, including comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and vocabulary development, further enriches the curriculum and contributes to the good level of student engagement noted in most classrooms.
- The school strategically aligns its resources by selecting coaches, technology programs, and partnerships to support the school's instructional goals thus, building capacity to improve student achievement.
  - Budgetary allocations include the purchase of support from consultants who provide leadership training and build capacity for the instructional cabinet. As a result, the team regularly reviews processes and practices at the school level and makes necessary adjustments.
  - The school ensures a constancy of common meeting time for teachers to promote collaboration among teachers and sharing of best practices, with a focus on developing highly effective practitioners. Consequently, teachers report feeling adequately supported as they continue to engage in and learn the work around inquiry.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Deepen the work of teacher teams to ensure use of an inquiry-based approach that includes “looking at student work” in order to inform consistent adjustments to curriculum, instruction, assessments and resources.
  - Collaborative teams consistently analyze student assessment data, which results in some adjustments to classroom decisions. However, the school does not yet isolate granular data about targeted groups to provide meaningful feedback to each student as good next steps to improve their

work. This leads to missed opportunities to support teachers in mastering the inquiry process to improve student outcomes.

- Teacher teams are gaining fluency in the collection and analysis of student performance data, as reflected in their discussion of next steps to elevate teacher instructional practices. However, teams of teachers do not have a consistent protocol for “looking at student work” therefore limiting their ability to identify and address trends and patterns in learning that help yield appropriate gains in student performance.
- Expand embedded classroom structures that support differentiated instruction to further challenge students resulting in more rigorous work products across grades and subjects for all students.
  - In several classrooms observed, teaching practices align with the curriculum and reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best, and some students reported feeling somewhat challenged by work that is modified to accommodate their needs. However, teacher practice does not consistently reveal purposeful differentiated instruction that targets higher performing students.
  - Teachers employ strategies and routines that lead to a general level of student engagement. However, some students could not articulate the relevance of current instruction, thus limiting ownership of and evidence of good work.
- Build on the current monitoring of interim benchmarks to deeply measure impact of revisions in action plans and to assure coherence in curriculum, instruction, and assessment.
  - Teacher teams are meeting regularly. However, team members admit that all teams have not yet developed a system that naturally promotes the development of interim benchmarks, so that student progress is regularly measured, and used to inform adjustments in the curriculum, instruction, and assessments.
- Develop systems to ensure that teacher teams regularly evaluate and analyze periodic assessment results to supplement summative data analysis to understand and meet the learning needs of targeted subgroups.
  - Teacher teams regularly evaluate and analyze data from periodic assessments to supplement summative assessment data. However, this data is not consistently used by all teams to set goals and interim checkpoints for their targeted subgroups. Consequently, all subgroups’ needs are not identified and targeted for improvement.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2010-2011

<b>School name: Harriet Tubman Learning Center</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>
<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 <b>Gather</b> 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>	

<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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
3.3 Ensure the achievement of learning goals by tracking progress at the school, teacher team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>				
3.4 Communicate high expectations to students and families, engage them in decision-making, and promote active involvement in the school community?				<b>X</b>			
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...?</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?		<b>X</b>					
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?				<b>X</b>			
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?				<b>X</b>			
<b>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.</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...?</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
5.4 Use data to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of structured professional collaboration, capacity building and leadership development strategies?			<b>X</b>				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
<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>