

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 128 Audubon  
Elementary school M128

560 WEST 169 STREET  
MANHATTAN  
NY 10032

Principal: Rosa Argelia Arredondo

Dates of review: March 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

Lead Reviewer: Elsa Nunez

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

P.S. 128 Audubon is an Elementary school with 724 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 4% Black, 95% Hispanic, 1% White, 1% Asian students and 0% other students. The student body includes 31% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 93.6%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school promotes a culture of collaboration and mutual respect that supports adult and student learning. (1.4)
  - o The school has developed a guide for teachers delineating expectations for student behaviors, including signs that teachers should look for that may indicate that intervention is needed and a ladder of referrals. All teachers receive training about how to effectively document student behaviors so that they can accurately identify “at risk” behavior provide appropriate early intervention. Administration reviews teacher anecdotal records, guidance referrals and incident reports to assure that student behavior is adequately addressed and an orderly school environment maintained. The principal has established a safe, risk-free environment by setting clear expectations for students through a student contract that must be signed by the students and parents. Parents expressed being aware and supportive of the school’s discipline policy because it enables students to focus their attention on academics. Students’ social and emotional needs are closely monitored and supported by the guidance team, assistant principals and by two clinicians from Columbia Presbyterian Healthy Schools and Healthy Families program. Their collective work helps lessen distractions from learning and this contributes to the social and academic progress of students.
  - o The school calls the homes of students who are absent and family workers visit those that have persistent attendance issues. Assistant principals review family workers’ logs and meet with them regularly to address issues. Parents report that school staff is always available to address issues affecting them or their children and view the school as a “second home.” The guidance team, who works closely with the parent coordinator, monitors students’ social-emotional needs and tracks how this affects their academic progress. This allows the parent coordinator to support parents and the school in addressing students’ academic needs.
- The school integrates support services with outside partners in order to enhance the personal and academic growth of students. (4.4)
  - o Staff is trained to identify behaviors that indicate a student may need support beyond what is offered by the classroom teacher. The guidance team works closely with the school-based support team, clinicians from Columbia Presbyterian and family workers to provide support to identified students. All information is logged and shared with the administration and the parent coordinator to assure that all parties are informed and may provide further input regarding the needs of students. Student achievement is celebrated through recognition of perfect attendance and student of the month awards. The principal reports that because of their “team” approach to dealing with students’ social-emotional issues, they have experienced great success in being able to adequately help students. As demonstrated by the results of the School Survey, an overwhelming majority of staff and parents believe that the school is a safe, nurturing place that supports students’ academic development.
  - o Teachers closely monitor student progress through analysis of student work, reading levels and interim assessments. Referrals are made to the guidance team if concerns regarding academic and/or social well-being arise. In addition to individual counseling, the guidance team also conducts whole class lessons. The school’s collaboration with clinicians from Columbia Presbyterian allows

them to provide additional counseling and support to targeted students. In addition to working with parents, the Healthy Schools, Healthy Families program provides students with physical activities and relaxation techniques so that they can focus on academic tasks. Other programs, such as “Judy and Magic” and “Book Pals” support literacy development in subgroups of students. Extracurricular programs such as the Caring program, Fresh Youth Initiative and Dare provide support to students through the arts, sports and dance. Participation in these activities is dependent on students fulfilling all requirements of the instructional program and the discipline code, which motivates students to excel academically so that they may participate in these engaging activities.

- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions that support school goals in order to improve student outcomes. (1.3)
  - o The principal has used her budget well to support her identified goals for school improvement. In order to work toward the goal of improving writing, administration hired consultants to support teachers. The principal also uses the Network to provide professional development for teachers of English language learners and students with disabilities. Results of standardized testing have highlighted the need for additional support in math, leading to the purchase of supplemental materials for classroom instruction and a reorganized schedule that requires all classroom teachers to schedule an additional period for math instruction every week. Teacher teams meet weekly and include cluster teachers and service providers in order to assure that all staff members are involved in helping students meet the school’s instructional goals. Knowing that her senior assistant principal is retiring at the end of the school year, the principal hired an additional assistant principal so that the transition is seamless. This assistant principal also has been made the point person for students with special needs so that next year, when all schools are required to implement the special education reform, she will be able to adequately support this process. As a result of careful planning and strategic allocation of funds, the school is well positioned to achieve the school’s goals of improving outcomes in English language arts and math as evidenced by the quality of students work as a result of rigorous tasks.
- Teacher teams analyze meaningful formative and summative data in order to adjust instructional decisions for all students, including key subgroups. (2.2)
  - o Teacher teams consistently use student work to guide curricular and instructional decisions. They focus on standards that require students to read and write for information and formulating opinions and have done extensive work to map their curriculum in a way that assures students are prepared to meet grade level standards. Teacher teams also develop tasks to gauge student progress towards meeting these standards. In addition to end of unit tasks, teachers use results of predictive assessments, reading levels, classroom observations and conference notes to assess student growth. Student work is central to the efforts of individual teachers and teacher teams in aligning curriculum and tasks to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Teachers use results of the reading and writing portions of the New York State assessment to measure English language development and to identify specific needs of students who are English language learners. Teachers identify strengths, areas of improvement and next steps for all students to assure that they are providing every pupil with the skills to produce work that meets grade level standards.
- School leaders provide a consistent message of high expectations, resulting in increased support for the school’s mission to increase student learning. (3.4)

- o The principal spreads a message of high expectations by ensuring that all teachers and staff understand the performance trends of students and end of year goals for each grade, and these goals are shared with students and parents. The principal believes that all staff members need to have a clear vision of end results and plan backwards to assure that curricular units adequately prepare students. Activities such as career day, middle school tours and college spirit day convey to students that they can achieve the school's high academic goals that will assure that they are prepared for middle school and beyond.
- o The school holds an orientation session for all parents at the beginning of every school year to acquaint parents with school and grade level requirements. Parents are then invited back to a presentation by the classroom teacher to review grade and class expectations. Parents report being aware of the demands of the CCLS, state that the instruction that students receive is much more rigorous than in the past, and believe that this effort will yield better results on standardized exams. Parent workshops are scheduled throughout the year to address school-wide topics such as adoption of CCLS and promotional and testing requirements. The parent coordinator also schedules weekly workshops for parents so that they are adequately prepared to help students with academic tasks at home. As a result of parental awareness of the academic expectations of the school, these workshops are well attended and parents report that this has improved their ability to support their children in meeting their goals.
- School leaders regularly evaluate the effectiveness of teacher collaboration to promote professional development, resulting in increased support for the school's mission to increase student learning. (5.4)
  - o The principal collects agendas and minutes from teacher team meetings in order to keep informed of their progress. Decisions to provide support or redirect focus, if needed, are made with the input of teachers and coaches. Student work from student subgroups is also reviewed to gauge alignment of tasks to the school's curriculum. Teacher teams are supported by the coaches, who are part of the principal's cabinet and facilitate regular communication between the principal and teams. The administration also sits in on team meetings to support and assess the team's progress towards meeting school goals. Teachers report that the administration's consistent feedback has resulted in a more cohesive curriculum across grades, leading to improved student engagement.
  - o Teachers complete surveys three times a year in order to provide feedback on the progress of individual and school-wide goals. Analysis of survey results assure that the professional development offered to teachers is relevant and differentiated. The principal also uses data gathered from observations to group teachers into triads based on expertise and areas in need of improvement so that they can support each other in the development of effective teaching strategies that are aligned to the school goals. As a result, teachers have an opportunity to become mentors and take on leadership roles, which has led to greater support and understanding of school-wide goals as evidenced by teacher discussions.

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

- Deepen teachers' knowledge of effective teaching strategies so that they provide engaging and differentiated lessons that lead to higher levels of student work. (1.2)
  - o Teachers regularly plan for differentiated group activities based on various sources of data and were able to articulate the data used to group students, how they would measure if the instructional goals of the lessons were met and how to

use questioning at various levels to help students in the acquisition of content. In most classes, students were organized into small groups for targeted instruction. However, across classrooms, questions and teaching methods were not always differentiated in order to provide a point of entry and promote engagement of all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, thus limiting opportunities for all students to benefit from curricular units.

- Further develop structures for providing teachers with frequent feedback, related to a research-based framework, in order to improve teacher practice. (4.1)
  - o Administrators provide suggestions for improving classroom practice as a result of learning walks, informal snapshots and formal observations. Data gathered from classroom visits and review of student work is used to identify teacher strengths and areas in need of improvement. The school has provided all teachers with professional development around the school's chosen competencies from the Danielson Framework and teachers know that questioning and engagement are used as a lens for learning walks. However, teachers could not articulate how often they receive feedback and feedback provided is not yet fully connected to the competencies chosen by the school, leading to uneven implementation of effective teaching strategies school-wide.
- Increase the consistency of rigor within the implemented curriculum to ensure that all students are challenged in order to increase student outcomes. (1.1)
  - o The school began aligning their curriculum maps to the CCLS last spring and continued working throughout the summer with a goal for tasks to require students to explore key concepts deeply. In order to do this, they used the Depth of Knowledge matrix to assure that tasks engage students in higher level skills, like creating and criticizing. The school also carefully reviewed student work along with the instructional bundles developed by the Department of Education to guide their work on task development. Teachers identify students who are high achievers as well as those who are struggling and closely monitor their progress in order to gauge how accessible units of study are for all students. However, the tasks are not yet sufficiently differentiated to engage all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities and, as a result, not all students are working at their maximum potential as evidenced by student work.
- Increase consistency and quality of feedback provided to students in order to promote independence and self-monitoring of progress towards learning goals. (3.3)
  - o The school creates a data profile for each class based on results of standardized testing, reading levels, baseline writing and math assessments and specialized needs of students. This data profile is used to establish Comprehensive Education Plan goals, Principal's Performance Review goals, grade level goals and individual student goals. The principal sets up meeting dates three times throughout the year to review class data profiles, assess progress and, if necessary, revise student goals. This consistent data analysis enables goals to be revised throughout the school year and enables the school to share interim progress reports with parents so they are informed of student achievement in a timely manner. Teachers use rubrics to assess and provide feedback to students in the various content areas. However, feedback provided was not always connected to the rubric used and did not offer students specific next steps to support them in mastering key concepts. As a result, there are missed opportunities for feedback and/or rubrics to guide students when they are working independently.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: P.S. 128 Audubon</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 as evidenced by meaningful student work products?			<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, use on-going assessment practices and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level?			<b>X</b>	
2.3 Use grading policies and tools to enable school leaders and teachers to organize, aggregate, and analyze student performance trends to inform instruction and curriculum?			<b>X</b>	
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress toward school and class expectations?			<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 staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?			<b>X</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.**

<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	
1..4 Integrate child/youth development, guidance/advisement 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, with particular attention to the CCLS?			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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