

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Public School 150**

**Elementary School**

**40-0 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11104**

**Principal: Carmen Parache**

**Dates of review: January 31- February 1, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Dr. Philip A. Composto**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Public School 150 is an elementary school with 1271 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 6. The school population comprises 2% Black, 47% Hispanic, 18% White, and 32% Asian and 1% other students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 95.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Parents and students deeply appreciate the safe, respectful and orderly school environment and the high level of support for the personal and academic development of students. (1.4)
  - The school has an assembly program each month to maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that is appreciated by all students and staff. Character development sessions are conducted by guidance counselors to disseminate and reinforce information with respect to positive social, emotional and academic growth. For example, sessions such as, “Asking for Help from Faculty and Staff” are well received and reinforce student and adult relationships. One student said, “We all care about each other at our school.” Therefore, suspensions have decreased from nine suspensions last year to two suspensions this year. As a result, the school maintains a pointed focus on the academic and personal development of all students and adults.
  - The school’s attendance team monitors and determines effective next steps to improve the attendance of chronically absent students. Guidance counselors meet with parents of students who have attendance issues to review the expectations and importance of coming to school every day. Incentives such as ice cream parties motivate students to meet their class goals for attendance. As a result, each student is known well by an adult and attendance has increased from 94% to 95% as noted in the Automate the Schools (ATS) data.
- The school’s internal supports and strong partnerships with a variety of organizations help meet the academic, social and emotional needs of students and build capacity that improve student achievement. (4.4)
  - The school works well with several community based organizations that use data to provide students and families with many support services during and after school hours. For example, partnerships such as Virtual Y, Chess in the School, City Center and Boy Scouts provide children and parents with academics, recreational, social skills and real world learning opportunities after school. The Sunnyside after school program focuses on literacy and project-based learning. Core values such as honesty, respect, responsibility and caring are constantly emphasized through different activities. The students get homework help and they participate in book clubs. During the day, teaching artists come to the school and work with teachers and students around a performance. The students get to write their graduation song and a song related to an art performance. Consequently, families and students feel as an integral part of the learning community and they truly enjoy coming to school.
  - School leaders and guidance counselors work closely with students and families to promote character education and prepare students for middle school. For example, each month, a different topic is celebrated through assemblies, read-alouds and projects. Some topics covered are tolerance, cultural differences, respect for ethnic/national differences, and

respect for religious differences. The principal stated, “There has been a noticeable decrease in parent concerns and issues.” The guidance counselor offers workshops, assembly programs on the middle school articulation process, and provides one-on-one sessions for parents and students. Therefore, students are on the path to post secondary readiness.

- School leaders and teachers effectively align curricula to key standards and offer a range of positive learning experiences including the arts that support student learning. (1.1)
  - The school strategically uses scope and sequence guides, units of study, curriculum maps and rubrics in all subjects and exposes the staff to Common Core State Standards. Teachers scrutinize the Common Core Math Standards. For example, Everyday Math units are rearranged to provide a more linear approach to content being taught and allow differentiated strategies and lessons to build on each other. This has increased the quality of the curriculum in order to close the achievement gap and prepare the students for middle school, as evidenced by mastery of concepts on unit tests.
  - Teachers regularly analyze student work and unit requirements to assure that the needs of all students, especially students with special needs and English language learners are being met. Student work findings are used to revise lessons and make changes in the pacing of units. For example, the first grade teachers worked on key details in a note taking unit. They use videos, prompt cards and informative checklists to cognitively engage all students. This has led to an increase in students’ understanding and note taking skills as measured by teacher tests.
- Teaching practices and lessons across classrooms are typically differentiated so that students have multiple opportunities to meet their learning needs. (1.2)
  - Teachers across classrooms and grades use data and their knowledge of students’ strengths, needs and interests to group students for learning. Data generated from state assessments, unit assessments and teacher made tests across subjects is analyzed regularly so that activities and student groups are adjusted based on learning outcomes. Lessons engage all students across grades in accelerated, on level and strategic intervention groups that provide adequate scaffolds to improve their learning. For example, during visits to classrooms, students with Individualized Educational Plans, English language learners and high performing students alike work in groups that offer multiple entry points where their strengths are valued and incorporated into their end product. In one class, students used strategy charts, manipulative materials, question and sentence prompts to facilitate learning. In social studies and science, students have choices within the unit of study based on their skill levels. As a result, classroom data shows improved achievement in reading and an increased volume and accuracy in writing across the school, evident in student portfolios, projects displayed around the school and state assessments.

- School leaders make purposeful organizational decisions that are well aligned with the school's instructional goals so that all students' needs are met, resulting in improved learning outcomes. (1.3 )
  - The school uses its resources effectively to improve learning outcomes of all students. For example, English language learners and high needs students are instructed by a push-in English as a second language teacher and an academic intervention teacher while the classroom teacher works with accelerated students. These organizational structures and appropriate use of resources are well aligned to the school's goals and lead to improved learning outcomes evident in student notebooks and folders.
  - The school schedule enables teams of teachers to meet regularly to share best practices and improve instruction for identified student subgroups. For example, teams examine Common Core Learning Standards task bundles to incorporate them into units of study. In reviewing the bundles, they identify skills that are needed by students. They create a pre and post assessments, a checklist to monitor and guide instruction and benchmark assessments throughout the unit. Teachers utilize videos, read alouds, shared reading and trade books to engage students in challenging tasks. This has led students to extract key details from non-fiction books, transfer these strategies into informational books, making connections between different topics and key details, and noticeably using new vocabulary across all subjects, as evidenced by the overall increase in student outcomes on the post assessments.
- School leaders and staff effectively use a wide range of assessment data that guides student grouping decisions and informs planning, resulting in a clear understanding of the performance of learners. (2.2)
  - Individualized teacher and teacher teams effectively use baseline reading data, on demand writing, conference notes, running records, rubrics, unit tests and rubrics for performance tasks that are aligned with the school's key standards and curricula. All subjects include a comprehensive assessment component which guides teachers' instructional and curricular decisions. Teachers use the assessment data to group for instruction and to modify lessons based on their students' academic needs. As a result, student groupings are flexible so that tasks are matched to students' learning needs and academic deficits are met by grade, subject and student subgroup.

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

- Increase professional collaborations that align with individual teacher goals along with monitoring procedures to address the impact of professional development and collaborations on adult and student learning. (4.3)
  - The School Survey indicates that some teachers want a greater voice in decision making and learning. School staff meets to collaborate on sharing best instructional practices around Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), and engage in professional learning groups. However, some teachers indicate the need for a differentiated personal

professional development plan to meet their specific needs. In addition, the school's approach in developing leadership is evolving as noted in the school's newly implemented practice of working with teacher leaders to turnkey information to colleagues on their respective grades. This limits opportunities for these staff members to grow professionally to improve instruction and to align their practices to school goals and student needs.

- Establish systems to evaluate teacher team effectiveness and to build leadership capacity. (5.4)
  - School leaders are in the process of creating systems to evaluate the work of teacher teams. They use the inquiry space to gather information related to the focus, agenda and next steps for the respective teams. However, administrators are just starting to use the data to assess the collaborative inquiry work across the school. Consequently, the school's ability to provide feedback to target improvements in the work of teacher teams and build leadership capacity is emerging.
- Ensure consistency in goal setting by identifying precise short-term goals targeted to meet the identified needs of subgroups of students in order to increase learning outcomes for all students. (3.2)
  - Teachers use data regularly to set students' learning goals across grades and subjects to improve learning. However, some of these goals are broad and lack specific interim benchmarks. Consequently, the use of specific academic interim benchmarks, to enhance instruction through appropriately targeted classroom supports and extensions is not consistent across all grades and core subjects, resulting in some students not meeting their projected benchmarks.
- Enhance the use of classroom observations along with the analysis of student work data to improve professional development and student achievement. (4.1)
  - School leaders offer recommendations for teachers to improve their instructional practice through formal and informal observations and analysis of student work products. The school has adopted Danielson's research-based rubric to articulate clear expectations for teacher practices and use that framework for development of teachers. However, the feedback is not always clear or actionable and lacks alignment with individual teachers' goals. This limits the school's ability to identify teachers' specific areas for improvement to strengthen their teaching craft and positively impact student outcomes.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: Public School 150</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>	

<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, 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?				<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, with particular attention to the CCLS?			<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>