

Quality Review Report 2011-2012

P.S. 044 David C. Farragut
Elementary school X044

1825 PROSPECT AVENUE
BRONX
NY 10457

Principal: Melissa Harrow

Dates of review: October 14-15, 2011

Lead Reviewer: Myrna Rodriguez

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 044 David C. Farragut is an Elementary school with 349 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 30% Black, 59% Hispanic, 0% Asian students and 8% other students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2010 - 2011 was 91.3%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has a generally good tone and climate which supports teaching and learning and the socio-emotional growth of all students resulting in higher levels of student and staff engagement in the learning process. (1.4)
 - o The school has a safe and respectful environment and is developing systems using data from the Learning Environment Survey and actual student behaviors to improve behavioral issues, especially with students who have repeated incidences of oppositional and physical aggression who are academically and socially at risk, as evidenced in incident reports, and teacher and parent interviews. As a result more students are receiving targeted supports, including lunchtime interventions with support staff which is showing some improvement in their behavioral and instructional outcomes.
 - o The school is developing support structures and action plans specifically in guidance, which includes a Child Study Team, and attendance teacher. As a result, students and adults are engaging in targeted interventions which are beginning to improve student behavior and academic progress as evidenced in respectful children and adult engagement and in classrooms which is supporting a learning environment where students are able to concentrate and produce higher levels of work which are displayed throughout the classrooms, portfolios and hallways.
- The school has short and long term goals and action plans which are evidenced in the SSEF, CEP and school communications which result in a unified vision of future development that is supported by all constituents. (3.1)
 - o The school has a new principal and together with the assistant principal, teachers and parents developed a short list of goals and action plans during the summer that is promoting efforts to improve student outcomes in reading and writing. The staff receives an electronic communication every week, the Monday Letters, emphasizing short and long term goals and next steps. As a result the school community is informed creating a clear vision of the school's future development.
 - o School goals were developed based on comprehensive data including needs assessments, teacher and parent input, new assessment results using Fountas and Pinnell and analysis of actual instructional and systemic practices. As a result goals and the development of action plans target literacy and are closely aligned to the school's instructional needs which drives school progress as evident in monthly class assessment data.
- School leaders and faculty engage students, parents and staff communicating high expectations and support students to reach their goals which results in improved family involvement and participation in the academic achievement of their children. (3.4)
 - o The school leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the faculty through the development of various communication loops, including teacher leader meetings, and weekly letters from the principal. The school is building capacity through its professional development programs emphasizing high expectations which result in increased levels of faculty and staff professionalism and improved instructional practice.

- o The school analyzes school data attendance, state and class assessment performance and behavior to communicate clear and high expectations to parents and students. A new attendance teacher provides outreach to families about the importance of attendance, and a newsletter for parents advocates high expectations in academics, attendance and behavior resulting in improved family communication and engagement to improve student outcomes.
- School leaders observe teachers and staff, providing feedback and next steps in instructional practices that are aligned to the school's goals, which is developing some improved alignment between pedagogy and teacher and staff development. (4.1)
 - o Teachers receive feedback about their strengths, challenges and next steps, through frequent cycles of informal observations. The school provides professional development opportunities which result in informing teacher instruction so that they can implement next steps.
 - o School leaders have developed a series of thirty professional development opportunities, most on volunteer basis, including workshops with Teacher's College. They are developing systems to manage staff development intended to support decisions about assignments and tenure for teachers and staff.
- The school promotes opportunities for leadership growth and enables teachers to evaluate and revise instructional practices which results in greater teacher engagement in their own learning while empowering them to critically evaluate their work. (4.3)
 - o School leaders provide opportunities for teachers including paraprofessionals to intervisit, attend outside professional development and in-school meetings to analyze instructional strategies and practices as reflected in student work and performance outcomes. Teachers and paraprofessionals are aligning their work as a team examining student work results through the lens of their varied interventions and instructional strategies making revisions where needed in order to improve student achievement.
 - o Grade leaders meet as a team every week with the administration to review, revise, and make recommendations regarding student performance, teacher instruction, curriculum and the new CCLS standards, and this structure offers opportunities for teacher leadership and development of their facilitation skills of teachers.

What the school needs to improve

- Further develop curricula for a variety of learners, which are aligned to key State standards for each grade to support student growth. (1.1)
 - o The school is aligning the new state standards to their curricula by implementing the Teacher's College reading and writing curricula which is aligned with the CCLS. However, even though the curriculum includes some areas with differentiated or rigorous tasks, students are not all fully engaged especially the higher achieving students and subgroups, including Special Education and English Language Learners.
 - o Academic tasks do not typically emphasize rigorous habits or higher order thinking skills in all grades and inconsistently engage a diversity of learners. Tasks in the fourth and fifth grades are similar to those assigned in the lower

grades, and as a result upper grade student work products do not exhibit high degrees of student thinking and performance.

- Develop teacher pedagogy to ensure that it is aligned to curriculum, engaging a variety of learners to ensure that students produce high level thinking work products. (1.2)
 - o Across classrooms teaching strategies, questioning and routines are typically generic and undifferentiated for the lowest and highest achievers. In some classrooms there are additional assignments for advanced students, but they are not rigorous or engage student in higher order thinking or work, resulting in lost opportunities for further academic growth for high achievers.
 - o In many classrooms teaching strategies and questioning do not target low and high achievers as evidenced in student responses and discussions. Across classrooms uneven levels of student participation and engagement are the result of routines and teaching strategies such as questions that elicit low levels of student discourse and thinking.
- Continue to make strategic organizational decisions to assure that instructional goals are aligned to student needs to produce meaningful work products and promote student academic and socio-behavioral improvement. (1.3)
 - o Teacher time is structured so that grade teams meet each week and teachers meet during their prep periods, but there is no alignment or structured process for team meetings, resulting in reduced potential for improving instruction and engaging students in challenging academic tasks.
 - o The school is aligning teacher and staff assignments, such as moving out of classroom teachers into classes, or assigning student groups to out of class support, and the full effect of these changes are only now becoming evident, resulting in uneven student progress in some cases.
- Use on-going assessment practices and analyze student performance outcomes to adjust instructional strategies and practices at the classroom and team level. (2.2)
 - o Teams of teachers and individual teachers use or create assessments and rubrics that are aligned with key standards in English and Mathematics, but not as evident in the other core subjects which results in a limited evaluation of the effectiveness of classroom, curricular and instructional decisions.
 - o Across classrooms teachers assess students through conferencing, class work and tests but inconsistently use ongoing checks for understanding, or student self assessment, to enable teachers to make adjustments in their questioning, assignments and directions to meet student learning needs for a wide variety of learners.
- Engage teachers in an inquiry approach on all team meetings focusing on improved student learning. (4.2)
 - o A majority of teachers are engaged in teacher team meetings at least twice a week, and some even more. However, not all teams use an inquiry approach, and as a result there is uneven analysis of student performance and what next steps are needed in teacher pedagogy and professional development to assure that all students meet their goals and improve academically.

- o Most teams analyze class work, periodic assessments and student work for students they share but there are no consistent protocols which affect the depth of analysis and impacts teacher practices to meet the challenges of a variety of diverse learners which results in work products that reflect uneven academic improvement.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

School name: P.S. 044 David C. Farragut	UD	D	P	WD
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 as evidenced by meaningful student work products?		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		
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>	UD	D	P	WD
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 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?		X		
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?		X		
2.4 Engage families in school decision-making, activities and an open exchange of information regarding students' progress toward school and class expectations?		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>	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 staff, students and families, and support students and families to achieve them?		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, 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

UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed
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