

# Quality Review Report 2011-2012

**Henry Hudson**

**Middle School 125**

**1111 Pugsley Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10472**

**Principal: Anthony Martin**

**Dates of review: May 10 - 11, 2012**

**Lead Reviewer: Melissa H. Silberman**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Henry Hudson is a middle school with 644 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 15% Black, 57% Hispanic, 2% White, and 24% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 17% 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 91.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Newly implemented school structures maximize opportunities for teachers to meet regularly and focus on improving instruction and engaging students in completing high quality work products. (1.3)
  - The school has aligned resources to support English language learners and special education students by allocating resources for computer-based programs to address learning needs of students. As a result there is already a positive trend in performance of English language learners in subject area courses and on the New York State English as a second language exam (NYSELAT).
  - In collaboration with the union leadership, the principal has created a new teacher schedule that creates space for the entire teaching community to begin common planning time. As a result the principal is tracking positive trends in student performance in history classrooms.
- The principal and his staff develop, collect, and utilize a variety of data that is helping to develop a clearer overview of the school's strengths and areas for improvements. (2.1)
  - The school has begun to gather a range of data including scholarship reports, interim test results, attendance data and teacher generated assessments to create a portrait of the school's strengths and needs. Additionally, this data collection has led the school leadership to adjust academic plans for the coming school year with an eye towards improving interventions available for students.
  - English as a second language instructors utilize interim assessment exams to gather real time data, and based on these results implemented a Saturday tutoring program utilizing Title 3 funds to support English as a second language learners during Spring break. This allowed suitable support for students in preparing for the NYSESLAT exam.
- The principal has a coherent vision for the future development of the school and next steps that are consistently communicated with a sense of urgency to staff. (3.1)
  - The new principal with the support of his cabinet has developed a vision for school improvement that is based upon gathered data, and has implemented a series of actions to build capacity for staff and monitor student achievement. As a result of the principals' focused goals, staff is engaged in developing effective teacher teams that now meet regularly with the intent of accelerating student learning and growth.
- The principal, with the support of cabinet and teacher leaders, is creating a budding practice of teacher collaboration with the intention of improving teacher practice and outcomes for students. (4.2)

- The majority of staff is now engaged in the creation and the development of structured teacher teams, utilizing an inquiry approach to develop differentiation strategies in classrooms. This new structure is already showing results reflected in increased pass rates of special education students in history classes.
- The principal made the decision to begin developing teacher leaders while at the same time creating a culture that includes teacher inquiry. To make this possible, the leadership team has focused on identifying teacher leaders in each department, resulting in almost 25% of the school community being developed as teacher leaders. Thus in one year there has been a huge uptake in opportunities for teacher voice and distributive leadership.
- School leaders and teachers are working together to establish and organize data that is intended to measure progress towards meeting both short- and long-term goals. (5.3)
  - As a result of analyzing test scores for English language learners, staff collaborated with the principal to alter supports for students and purchase the Rally system of data management to improve outcomes for students.
  - At the onset of the school year, the principal led the faculty in analyzing school data in the development of the goals and vision. During staff meetings with the principal on Friday mornings, participants regularly share up-dated information and provide relevant feedback on the progress towards attaining yearly goals.

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

- Further enhance curriculum, pacing calendars and unit plans maps, in order to emphasize key state standards in order to close the achievement gap and promote high school readiness. (1.1)
  - While the school leadership is beginning to make purposeful decisions about aligning the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) with curriculum, there is still not full alignment. The principal sent some staff to summer professional development to learn about the CCLS, and teacher leaders are working on building integration. However the majority of the staff are not yet working towards alignment, thus missing out on closing the achievement gap.
  - Some academic tasks and curricula emphasize higher order thinking, notable in the science classrooms, where students work on problem based coursework and utilize hands-on teaching approach to support high-level thinking. Currently the majority of classes are not yet utilizing a similar approach to support higher order thinking across all grades, thus the school is not yet experiencing success in engaging all learners.
- Refine the curriculum so that academic tasks are engaging, rigorous and offer differentiated learning opportunities across all classrooms for all learners. (1.2)

- In some classrooms teaching strategies are becoming differentiated and the principal is beginning to emphasize the need for multiple points of entry in lessons. Yet there is still a lack of evidence showing consistent differentiation practices, including multiple entry points, for a variety of learners, thus missing out on providing access to the curricula for all students and closing the achievement gap...
- While a few classrooms had evidence of lively discussion, and high-level student thinking such as the upper grade ELA courses, a large majority of classes had uneven student participation and very little work products exhibited. However, strategies such as effective questioning are not yet evident, thus hindering engaging all students in producing high quality work.
- Further develop closely aligned assessments and rubrics to key standards to provide information on the effectiveness of classroom curriculum and instructional decisions. (2.2)
  - While the majority of the staff has begun to meet in structured regular teacher teams, the use of assessments and creation of rubrics in teacher teams are still loosely aligned to key curriculum. Thus, the efficacy of the work of the teams on classroom level instructional decisions are not sufficiently impacting raising instructional practices and in effective classroom level decisions.
  - The staff is beginning to understand the potential ongoing teacher assessments at the classroom level can have on effective instruction as evidenced by some staff using teacher worksheets after post-tests to help students track their strengths and weaknesses and in the planning of next steps for intervention. However, this practice is not frequently used across all classrooms, thus hindering the school from meeting all students' learning needs.
- Convey high expectations by partnering with families and students to support the path to high school readiness for all students. (3.4)
  - While the school has Renzulli systems in place for entering sixth grade students to participate in developing an individualized learning plan to track their academic success, this same level of advisement is not available for seventh and eighth graders. Thus the school misses out on extending high expectations to all students.
  - The school has an active parent-teacher association and school leadership team that have experience supporting the former principal's vision. However, current opportunities for families to participate in the new principal's vision are still developing, It is not yet observable how leadership and families work together to support students in preparing for next steps and post secondary readiness.
- Develop ongoing support for staff with the codification of a clear system of providing frequent feedback on classroom practice that promotes professional growth and reflection. (4.1)

- While the majority of staff are being observed for pedagogical practices, each academy has its own method of observation. Thus, the potential to deepen the cycle of observations school wide across all disciplines is not yet supported by a unified school wide practice and the potential impact of observation reports is yet to be fully realized across the entire school community.
- While the principal is beginning to manage staff development and began supporting staff in creating professional goals, opportunities for regular check-ins to deepen staff goal setting is not yet an embedded practice. Consequently, building capacity and effective practices for teacher growth are hindered.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2011-2012

<b>School name: Henry Hudson</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		
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		

<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>