

# **Quality Review Report 2012-2013**

**P.S. 150 Christopher**

**K-8 23K150**

**364 SACKMAN STREET  
BROOKLYN  
NY,11212**

**Principal: Pamela Bradley**

**Dates of review: March 14, 2013  
Lead Reviewer: Maria Robustelli**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

P.S. 150 Christopher is a K-5 school with 239 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 66.0% Black, 32.0% Hispanic, 1.0% White, 1.0% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 0.0% Asian students. The student body includes 13.0% English language learners and 21.0% special education students. Boys account for 57. % of the students enrolled and girls account for 44. %. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 91.7%.

### Overall Evaluation

This school is Proficient.

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school leader makes informed, strategic decisions in support of the school's instructional goals resulting in improved student outcomes. (1.3)
  - The school conducted a School Curriculum Readiness Audit (SCRA) at the end of the 2011-2012 school year which revealed gaps in the curriculum, including a focus on student centered lessons, lack of authentic text and real life learning experiences. As a result, the school leader in collaboration with school staff and other stakeholders secured funds to purchase research based programs, Making Meaning/Being a Writer and enVisionMATH Common Core, that support the school's instructional goals to increase positive social interactions and shift instruction to a student centered approach while deepening the alignment to the rigor of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). In addition, the school has partnered with their network and an AUSSIE consultant to support student achievement in both math and English language arts (ELA). Teachers indicated that the new programs have led to student growth on school based assessments as well as an increase in student engagement as evidenced by the levels of questioning and discussion during classroom observations.
  - Teacher schedules are structured so that each grade level has a common prep period every day. Teachers are also programmed for weekly team meetings that focus on lesson planning and analysis of data from assessments. These structured meetings have teachers use protocols to examine student work, identify gaps in student learning and adjust curriculum and instruction aligned to the CCLS. For example, during the fourth grade team meeting, teachers analyzed grade 3, 4 and 5 Fall 2012 benchmark assessment data to identify gaps in student learning, such as solving multistep word problems and using measurement tools, and used the information to revise lesson plans and units to include strategies, such as peer support, verbal and written prompts and additional practice using measurement tools in small groups. In addition, there are instructional leadership team meetings across grades for inquiry based professional development to ensure that instructional practice is cohesive throughout the school. Teachers have also been selected on each grade as instructional leads to provide instructional support and grade level planning. These structures have led to cohesive planning and high levels of teacher accountability resulting in high levels of critical thinking and an increase of student outcomes across classrooms as evidenced by student discussions during observations as well as their ability to articulate their learning during student meetings.
- The school provides a safe and respectful environment that fosters high expectations with well coordinated supports that result in effective student academic and personal success. (1.4)
  - The school has developed support systems and action plans to promote an orderly environment that enhances student and adult learning and supports the school-wide focus to improve school climate and culture as evidenced by a 50% reduction this school year in Online Occurrence Report (OORS) data compared to the same period in the 2011-2012 school year. For example, a school culture coach provides teachers with training and support in classroom management strategies. Students participate in character education workshops weekly to develop social skills and self esteem and address specific issues, such as bullying. In addition, they receive "VIP"

coupons for demonstrating outstanding behaviors, such as demonstrating a new skill during a classroom activity or helping a classmate. These behaviors are reinforced by the daily reciting of the school motto at the beginning of each day, “be respectful, be responsible, be rewarded” as well as bulletin boards that recognize students “doing good.” The curriculum also includes a social component that focuses on positive interactions. Student leaders meet regularly with administration to initiate, guide and lead meaningful school efforts. One such example is that school leaders take responsibility daily for working with younger children in the cafeteria during lunch. “Blue Ribbon” awards are also given to staff for behaviors such as seeking support, lesson plan development and outstanding work with parents and are displayed outside rooms in the hallway. As a result, teachers and students are well prepared to handle conflicts and make good decisions resulting in improved academic achievement and personal outcomes for students as evidenced by teacher made assessments and a 7% school-wide increase in levels 3 and 4 in the 2011-2012 math exam and a 2.1% overall increase in levels 3 and 4 on the 2011-2012 English language arts (ELA) exam.

- The guidance counselor is available daily to meet with students to provide advisement and support social-emotional learning. Attendance calls are made daily to parents and a home visit is scheduled after three consecutive absences. An attendance board reviews attendance data daily and strategies have been developed to support individual students, such as individual meetings with parents. Attendance is rewarded with a monthly recognition program through bulletin boards and announcements as well as incentives such as backpacks containing classroom books and materials. As a result, the current attendance is 1.6% higher than last school year at 92.17% and the number of lateness has significantly decreased. The school has also developed a “Big Brother” program in conjunction with the Brownsville Youth Association to support the academic success and social-emotional development of at risk students. As a result, the school has implemented structures that include targeted supports and interventions that foster academic and social-emotional growth as evidenced by fewer incidents, increased attendance rate and increased student outcomes on state tests and teacher made assessments.
- The school regularly uses a variety of data to identify trends and determine student progress toward goals resulting in timely adjustments to curriculum and instruction that support student outcomes. (2.2)
  - Across grades, teachers work in structured team meetings to create and analyze common assessments and rubrics aligned to the CCLS. In addition, teacher teams and individual teachers supplement periodic assessments with both formative and summative data, including pre and post unit assessments and conference logs to track student progress, identify strengths and needs and adjust instruction. Teacher College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) assessments are administered four times per year and results are entered into a Google online document that is accessible to all teachers and administration. The information is used during instructional team meetings, inquiry meetings, weekly professional development sessions and one on one conferences with the principal to measure interim progress of students and implement data-based modifications to support concepts and skills where mastery has not been achieved. This plan also enables teachers and administration to monitor the school’s Response to Intervention (RTI) plan which is reviewed every three weeks and to make timely adjustments to individual student action plans and strategies to address continuing areas of concern. In addition, during team meetings, teachers are analyzing results from the 2011-2012 state exams to identify questions where students achieved less than 60% in order to provide

additional support for specific skills and concepts. These structures and supports allow teachers to adjust plans for individual and groups of students in order to address student academic needs in a timely manner. These strategies have led to positive student outcomes as evidenced by progress notes and assessment data for all students.

- The principal uses data from observations of classroom practice to provide specific and actionable feedback for all teachers and targeted support that ensures reflection and elevates professional growth. (4.1)
  - The school leader has communicated clear expectations regarding teacher practice that includes a student centered approach with deep levels of questioning to enhance student discussions and scaffolds, such as graphic organizers, to support learning. All teachers work with the principal to set goals aligned to the school-wide goals and select competencies aligned to a research based framework for teaching. The school leader conducts frequent cycles of observation and provides immediate, actionable feedback with detailed next steps via e-mail, Google documents or in person conversations. Data from observations as well as progress toward goals is continually analyzed to understand areas of strength and growth for teachers and the information is used to develop professional development plans and individual support for teachers. For example, based on observations, the principal has worked with the Aussie consultant to develop a Guided Reading tool to assist teachers in making connections between individual student needs and the CCLS that includes samples of various levels of questioning based on the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) matrix. The AUSSIE consultant also works with teachers identified as instructional leads to build their capacity to support their peers. A CFN coach works directly with teachers in classrooms to enhance their growth by modeling effective strategies and providing resources. An analysis of teacher feedback and observation data in written reports and classroom visits revealed growth in the competency area of using high level, effective questioning that engages students in meaningful classroom discussions. As a result, teacher feedback and strong support for professional growth is moving the entire school toward attaining their overall goals.

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

- Ensure effective implementation of challenging learning experiences across classrooms that result in cognitively engaging student work products. (1.1)
  - Teachers have developed curriculum maps and aligned curriculum to the CCLS in all content areas and grade levels. These are shared with staff during instructional leadership team meetings and weekly teacher professional development sessions to ensure cohesiveness of the curriculum throughout the school Teachers are looking deeply into the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIEs) shifts as evidenced by the school-wide focus to deepen the level of questioning to emphasize student thinking and discussions and encourage students to use evidence from texts to support their arguments and are embedded within the Making Meaning, Being a Writer and enVisionMATH Common Core programs. Lesson plans also include essential questions that are used to guide and support student learning as well as differentiated activities and instructional strategies to support diverse learners, such as ELLs and SWDs. The school has adopted a new math and writing curriculum this school year and teachers work collaboratively with support from coaches and network staff. However, although the curricula is rich in content and observations revealed high levels of student discussions and questioning , there are gaps between unit planning and rigor of academic tasks as evidenced in student work products. For example, in one classroom, portfolios contained handwriting

worksheets and published writing pieces with limited feedback that loosely connected to the writing rubric; while in another room, student work demonstrated various stages of the writing process with descriptive teacher feedback. As a result, all students do not benefit from tasks that provide the cognitive engagement they need to improve their performance.

- Continue to ensure the implementation of coherent pedagogical practices informed by a common teaching framework so that all lessons give students the opportunity to demonstrate higher order thinking skills in student work products. (1.2)
  - Using a research based common teaching framework, teaching practices across classrooms use questioning to support discussions regarding content in lessons and texts. Teachers use the PAR-4 method to encourage students to generate questions about the text based on text features. In addition, throughout the school, during the problem of the day, students are given a mathematical dilemma and use a five step “thinking through the problem” method to process the information prior to solving. This includes a turn and talk with a partner to identify facts, generate possible solutions and discuss why they chose solutions and how they will know if the answer is correct. Teachers and paraprofessionals consistently implement teaching strategies, including flexible groupings, prompts and targeted scaffolds, such as leveled readings and questions to provide multiple entry points for all learners and address individual learning needs for all learners, including ELLs and SWDs. In addition, through extensive professional development and coaching, teachers generate questions at various levels using the DOK model in order to promote higher order thinking skills, such as inference, and provide multiple opportunities for students to participate in meaningful discussions as evidenced by lesson plans and student discussions. Discussions are student centered and through think pair share strategies, students are given time to generate responses and comment on or question the responses of their peers. However, although the school is shifting its pedagogical practices, this focus has not yet been extended to include rigorous and challenging tasks for all students as evidenced by student work products. For example, the majority of math portfolios across classrooms contained worksheets to practice basic computation skills. Consequently, teaching practices do not adequately challenge students to produce high quality work products.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: P.S. 150 Christopher	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score			X				
<b>Instructional Core</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.1 Design engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula, including the arts, physical and health education, 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 that is informed by a research-based, common teaching framework and is aligned to curricula, engaging and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products?		X					
2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels?			X				
<b>School Culture</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				X			
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?			X				
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	UD	D	P	WD			
1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet students' learning needs as evidenced by meaningful student work products?				X			
3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community?			X				
4.1 Use the observation of classroom teaching with a research-based, common teaching framework 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				
5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS?			X				
<b>Quality Review Scoring Key</b>							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed