

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**The Herman Schreiber School**

**K279**

**1070 East 104<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11236**

**Principal: Lorenzo A. Chambers**

**Dates of review: January 9 - 10, 2013**

**Lead Reviewer: Beverly A. Wilkins**

## **Part 1: The school context**

### **Information about the school**

The Herman Schreiber School is an elementary school with 555 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 92% Black, 4% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 95.0%.

### **Overall Evaluation**

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- Teachers analyze classroom-level data to assess student progress and identify strengths and areas of need in order to plan instruction. (2.2)
  - Teacher data binders reflect a collection of common assessments such as base-, mid-, and end-line tests, running records, Acuity results, conference notes, Writing and Reading Assessment Profile sheets, M-Class results, and rubrics, which the school uses to analyze snapshots of individual student strengths and challenges. Bi-monthly sessions, facilitated by the principal, lead to collaborative study of student work resulting in teachers, coaches, and the assistant principal, identifying concepts and skills students have not yet mastered and determining strategies to support future learning. Hence, the use of common assessments results in teachers identifying performance norms, making adjustments to instruction for target groups of students, tiered support for pull-out, small group, and extended day, and the identifying of appropriate Response to Intervention strategies.
  - There is an established practice of record keeping evident daily in English language arts and math during teacher-student conferences. During the large group student meeting, students stated they meet with their teachers once a week to conference about their work and receive feedback for improving. A higher performing student noted he does not conference with his teacher as often “because a lot of people need help”. In addition, students use self-checks such as rubrics and peer partners to assess their progress toward learning goals. Thus, teachers’ planning and practices focus on creating opportunities to attain the school-level goal of “80% of students in each class to demonstrate mastery of 80% of grade level content”.
- Students and families appreciate the school's focus on maintaining a safe environment that supports academic and social-emotional growth. (1.4)
  - Tolerance, Integrity, and Respect (TRI) are guiding principles of the school’s value system. During the student pledge each morning, affirmation of these positive character traits set the tone for a safe environment that is conducive to learning. Parents interviewed expressed feeling very comfortable bringing their children to school and reported “bullying is not significantly present in the building”. Consequently, students report they feel safe, secure, and enjoy coming to school as evidenced in prior years’ 94% and last year’s 95% rate of attendance.
  - Parents commend the manner in which the principal knows each student by name. They appreciate the assistance of the parent coordinator, guidance counselor, and school psychologist, in providing information about workshops, trainings, and services in order to address the personal and academic needs of their children. As a result of the school making an effort to recognize the whole child through school-based support services, honor roll, and perfect attendance bulletin boards, and implementation of the Wonderment, Inquiry, and Discovery enrichment

model, students are engaged in their work and the school is experiencing a decline in student infractions compared to last year statistics.

- Inquiry collaborations leverage practices among teachers that result in opportunities to deepen content and pedagogical strategies in an effort to bolster student progress. (4.2)
  - In collaborative inquiry teams, 100% of classroom teachers closely examine Common Core Learning Standards endeavoring to align curriculum in both English language arts and math. On a weekly basis teachers collaborate during common-scheduled preparation periods, lunch periods, and at the end of the regular school day to unpack the standards and make connections to content-driven unit plans across each grade. This work is leading to teachers strengthening each other's practice through trial and error. As such, during grade-level meetings, teachers work in tandem to further their content knowledge, share wonderings and queries relative to student performance on pre-assessments, how best to teach the skills embedded in performance tasks, and they discuss how to spiral back in the delivery of instruction. Thus collegial collaborations and reciprocal professional learning is impacting professional practice and student achievement, as evidenced by students increasingly using text to decode and show their understanding of reading passages. One teacher admitted this was daunting work, but also stated this "new work was invigorating".
  - It is customary for the principal to facilitate teacher team meetings, however during the review process; teachers and the literacy coach assumed the responsibility of looking at student work and analysis of pre-assessments related to a unit of study using text features to learn about New York City overtime. Bi-weekly examination of students' performance via pre-assessments enables teachers to pinpoint what students need to know in order to align their teaching practices. In turn, a school-created Inquiry Data Collection sheet captures student's demonstrated strengths and areas of need and enables teachers to identify individual student performance relative to his/her own proficiency level and for staff to note trends and patterns for all students. Consequently, teachers hold themselves accountable for the forward movement of students performing at high, medium, and low ranges within their classes. This commitment to individual student progress is further evident as colleagues share written plans and next steps for students across the grade.

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

- Cultivate a collaborative goal setting culture resulting in clearly articulated need assessments, delineated action plans, and targeted monitoring processes to advance student learning. (3.1)
  - The principal develops school-wide goals derived from Citywide Instructional Expectations and mandates. The Comprehensive Educational Plan and Principal Performance Review documents iterate annual leadership goals. However, the Comprehensive Educational Plan is devoid of sharply focused action plans informed by detailed needs assessment of student, teacher, and overall school performance. Currently, there are vague instructional strategies, imprecise professional

activities, and a lack of coherent plans with deliberate benchmarks. Consequently, although the school incorporates teacher teams and teachers show evidence of planning and preparation in their classrooms, there is not yet clear evidence in the Comprehensive Education Plan how the school is addressing adverse trends in the progress of subgroups of students, the overall decrease in academic performance as reflected in recent State data, and a D in progress on the New York City Progress Report.

- The school leader communicates school-wide goals during school-based meetings and in community forums such as faculty, parent association, and school leadership team meetings. In addition, the distribution of newsletters, emails, newly implemented monthly town hall meetings, and the school's website serve as systems for sharing and gathering information. Nevertheless, statements by parents about how the school involves them in decision-making and goal setting revealed limited opportunities for them to contribute to school-level planning. For example, they were not aware of the school's Title I Parent Involvement Policy or School-Parent Compact, which requires parent input. Fifty percent of teachers who responded to the most recent Learning Environment Survey agreed that they do not play meaningful roles in goal setting and decision making at the school or classroom-level. As a result of limited broad based support in setting goals and in making decisions that affect the direction of the school, a culture of inclusive collaboration is thwarted and school wide progress is stagnate as evidenced in the school's overall Progress Report performance for three consecutive years.
- Increase support in the implementation of curricula aligned with Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) leading to school wide student engagement in rigorous tasks and higher order thinking skills. (1.1)
  - Teachers work diligently to create and implement curricula aligned with CCLS and Citywide Instructional Expectations in English language arts and math. This work has energized and unified the staff around planning for rigor, but as it is still in the emerging stages additional support and planning is still a work in progress. Teachers expressed that the limitation of bi-weekly planning time that alternates between CCLS and looking at student work, and a lack of resources, slow their work in meeting expectations for deepening content expertise, aligning units of study with standards, and creating performance tasks that embed opportunities for higher order student engagement toward closing gaps in learning. This is evidenced by the lack of multiple entry points, scaffolds, and extensions incorporated into curriculum maps for English language learners, student with disabilities, and high performing students. In addition, the school does not implement a full arts or computer program. Consequently, groups of students do not yet benefit from an instructional program designed to develop fundamental skills, nurture modes of creativity, and promote essential shifts in curricula toward college readiness.
  - Teachers appreciate the support of the literacy/math coach in understanding CCLS shifts in order to develop continuity in cognitively challenging tasks across the curriculum. The principal reports that instruction is more student-centered, pedagogical practice includes shifts to more non-fiction reading, and there is emphasis on teaching

vocabulary, and multi-step problems. However, the generic distribution of materials, common graphic organizers, the limited use of technology by students, and lack of data-driven groupings, as observed during five out of seven class visits, does not reflect planning of well-matched instruction that cognitively engages all learners.

- Enhance the level of the delivery of instruction so that lessons engage all students in experiences that encourage high-level thinking and active participation. (1.2)
  - There is evidence of teacher modeling, guided practice, and opportunities for students to work independently across classrooms and the school is beginning the work of hierarchical levels of student engagement using the Depth of Knowledge matrix. Currently, the school is beginning to use the Danielson framework to evaluate teacher effectiveness, but does not yet link the prescribed language of City and State performance levels to the rubric. Additionally, lesson plans reviewed do not yet reflect planning to stimulate higher order thinking or thoughtful engagements that activate high levels of participation via good questioning and discussion techniques. During a fifth grade math lesson, students extended one another's thinking, used accountable talk stems, and clarified misconceptions through probing questions and student-to-student interaction. However, uneven levels of teachers' expertise in promoting this high level of student discussion, and the lack of facilitation of peer discussion in classrooms school-wide, leads to students missing out on opportunities to experience and develop high level thinking skills and access learning through active participation.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: The Herman Schreiber School	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 <b>inquiry approach</b> 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>							
<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>