

# Quality Review Report 2012-2013

**Park Slope Collegiate**

**School designation K464**

**237 7th Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11215**

**Principal: Jill Bloomberg**

**Dates of review: April 11-12, 2013**

**Lead Reviewer: Tamika Matheson**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Park Slope Collegiate is a secondary school with 361 students from grade 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 38% Black, 45% Hispanic, 6% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 84.0%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school makes purposeful decisions to cohesively align and refine its curricula to key State standards across grades and content areas, to prepare all learners with college and career readiness skills. (1.1)
  - School leaders and faculty design curriculum maps across grade levels and content areas aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the citywide instructional shifts. The school has continued to integrate standards based writing across grades and content areas with a focus on the use of textual evidence, claims and counter claims. Curriculum maps include essential questions; enduring understandings identified by teachers and common core aligned tasks that are scaffolded to meet the needs of diverse learners, such as English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWD). Teacher teams plan and modify units of study, learning objectives and tasks, using student work, exit slips, data and student feedback, around levels of task complexity and difficulty. Teachers have embedded tasks aligned to the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) shifts in ELA, social studies, science and math. For example, students in middle school and high school social studies classes use graphic organizers to compare and contrast textual evidence. In addition, high school science students researched articles on genetic testing to take a position and constructed persuasive essays. High school math students applied mathematical concepts to construct a ramp. As a result, students are engaging in rigorous common core aligned tasks, and as per the principal, returning graduates share how prepared they were for college course work. Furthermore, the school successfully submitted two twelfth grade courses, “Brooklyn History” and “Core English 8”, for approval as college ready by the Department of Education (DOE), as evidenced in the 2011-2012 Progress Report College and Career Preparatory Course Index. Consequently, the school’s targeted focus on argumentative writing, along with adjustments in tasks and the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners, has prepared all students with college and readiness skills, as reflected in the school’s college readiness index which increased from 17% (2010-2011) to 72% (2011-2012) and students’ current class work, are evidence that students are postsecondary ready upon commencement.
- Teacher practices reflect a core set of beliefs aligned to curricula and instructional strategies that enable students to produce meaningful work products. (1.2)
  - The school values a collaborative approach to learning and employs instructional practices across classrooms that result in increased learning opportunities for all students. Teachers continue to strengthen teaching practices such as cognitive skill development, small group instruction and targeted priorities informed by the Charlotte Danielson Framework for teaching. Teachers consistently utilize higher order questioning and graphic organizers across content areas as observed during classroom visits. For example, in most classrooms questions were aligned to Webb’s Depth of Knowledge, in order to push students’ critical thinking. Middle

school and high school students engage in seminar discussions around essential questions such as, “How can we use literary elements to strengthen our analysis of complex texts?”, related to literature across English Language Arts (ELA) classrooms. Student essays and writing assignments incorporate academic vocabulary, textual evidence, claims and counter claims. Students have multiple opportunities to self-reflect based on teacher feedback and self-evaluation opportunities. Additionally, the science department conducts learning environment surveys to identify learning strategies to best meet the needs of a variety of learners. In math classrooms, teachers create opportunities for students to explain mathematical processes and conceptual understanding in their own words using content vocabulary. In a middle school ICT math class, students worked in small groups to construct a ramp wing using paper, tape and a ruler. Project instructions were also provided in student’s native language. Thus, these strategies are resulting in students being able to produce high quality academic work and engaging in high levels of academic discourse around various topics.

- School leaders make strategic organizational decisions based on instructional goals and student needs, to positively impact classroom practice and student outcomes. (1.3)
  - School leaders’ strategic use of resources strengthens the school’s academic programs to support school wide instructional goals. The school has established partnerships with the Urban Memory Project and the Atlantic Theatre Company (ATC) which provide students with opportunities to participate in real world activities. Reso-A grant monies are utilized to design course curriculum, in order to offer elective courses aligned to the CCLS, socio-emotional learning, purchase class libraries and technology, such as Elmos, SMARTboards and computers. All 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade ELA classes work with an English teacher and an ATC resident artist to write a script and perform an ensemble piece with common core alignment. Classroom libraries across ELA, social studies and science classes include high interest leveled texts to enhance students learning. The school has established a college office with a full-time college advisor who meets weekly with 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders to guide and monitor students through the college application process. Furthermore, to maximize instructional time and improve student outcomes, the school decreased the faculty to student ratio in classes from an average of 30 or more students to an average of 25 students in core courses. The principal revamped teaching assignments so that over two-thirds of the faculty now “team-teach” classes. The school has also reduced the number of self-contained classes, while increasing the number of integrated co-teaching classes (ICT) to offer students with disabilities greater access to rigorous curriculum. Co-teachers are strategically paired and placed across grades and content areas to augment learning opportunities for all students, including ELLs and SWDs. Additionally, the school increased the length of class periods to 55-minute classes in a seven period day to provide time to increase student engagement via group discussions, collaborative learning models and to allow students more time to produce meaningful work products. Common planning time is built into all teacher schedules, such that most teacher teams meet twice per week in department and grade level teams to identify priorities, collaboratively design and revise curriculum maps,

share assessment data and engage in professional development. These structures increase teacher accountability for student growth and for achievement of school wide instructional goals to increase student achievement.

- A strong culture of respect among students and adults has been established to augment the academic and social emotional development of students and adults in a safe environment. (1.4)
  - The school is committed to creating a positive and inclusive environment based on trust and respect. Student voice is encouraged and expressed via the Student Government Organization (SGO). The SGO meets regularly with school leaders every Wednesday to discuss school concerns such as the budget, curricula and shared space. Further, the SGO was very vocal when the DOE approved a proposal to co-locate a new small school on campus. The SGO's role in this process resulted in greater collaborative efforts among all stakeholders. The school partners with organizations to provide professional development training for teachers around adolescent socio-emotional growth. Administrators and select teachers participate in a collaborative problem solving study with a Massachusetts General Hospital psychologist to examine student behavior, adult response to misbehavior and the impact of thinking skill interventions on social-emotional growth. Grade team teachers use common planning time to analyze student data to identify at-risk students and to schedule faculty intervention meetings with students and their parents. Further, every student is programmed for *Circles*, a class based on restorative practices to support personal growth. *Circle* classes meet weekly and are facilitated by trained grade level teachers who serve as *Circle* advisors. These classes provide students with opportunities to engage in discussions around teenage social issues, such as bullying and conflict resolution and other non-academic topics. *Circle* advisors serve as point persons for students as they monitor student academic progress, attendance and liaise between the school and home. These support advisors and other faculty members communicate with families via telephone and email using Engrade, an online grading system. Parents frequently attend school functions such as, Curriculum Night, Poetry slams and on-stage performances. Parent leaders also participate in school level planning such as the curriculum planning retreat. As a result of these socio-emotional programs and practices, the principal has observed that student removals from class and suspensions decreased by half from the previous year. Thus, students most at-risk spend less time out of class and develop life skills to manage their own behavior. Parents appreciate that the school keeps them informed of their child's progress and opportunities to be involved, and students shared how the school provides them with multiple chances to "try again" and excel in a safe environment.

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

- Deepen alignment of assessment and grading practices to chosen standards in order to strengthen student mastery and achievement at the school level and on standardized assessments. (2.2)

- Across classes teachers frequently use assessments and rubrics to check for student understanding. The school created a grading policy out of “qualitative usefulness” to make data helpful. For example, what does it mean to earn an “85” in a class? The school wanted to shift to the practice of what do I need to learn in order to earn an 85 in class. The school has six marking periods and uses Diploma worksheets for every student to monitor student progress toward credit accumulation and remaining required courses. Additionally, students in jeopardy of not graduating receive Diploma worksheets and “Graduation in Doubt Conference” forms which include an intervention action plan that is signed by the parent and student in question. The school also uses data in ARIS from the previous year, Engrade and Department of Education scholarship reports to plan and adjust curricula. Teachers typically review reports at the end of the semester. However, the alignment between assessment and grading practices to chosen standards, do not yet demonstrate student mastery of targeted skills and key standards as demonstrated by the school’s grade on the student performance category of the 2011-2012 Progress Report, “C” (middle school) and “F” (high school).
- Strengthen tracking of long and short range school goals that are shared with all constituents, in order to monitor progress and adjust ongoing school improvement efforts to increase student outcomes. (3.1)

The school collaboratively works with staff across subject areas to establish long and short range school wide goals, as reflected in the school’s Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP). The school leadership team (SLT) encourages parent and student participation and involvement. However, students and parents indicated that they are not always made aware of school improvement plans. While the school uses data to track some long and short range improvements goals, the results are not consistently shared with all members of the school community. Therefore, the lack of consistent sharing of data –based tracking of school wide goals, limits opportunities for all school constituents to engage in discussions around effective school improvements practices for student success.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: Park Slope Collegiate	UD	D	P	WD			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>				
<b>Instructional Core</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, physical and health education, 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 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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
<b>School Culture</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that support the academic and personal growth of students and adults?				<b>X</b>			
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve them?			<b>X</b>				
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>							
<i>To what extent does the school ...</i>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>WD</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?		<b>X</b>					
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?			<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>				
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?			<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>