

Quality Review Report 2012-2013

P.S. 044 David C. Farragut

Elementary 12X044

**1825 PROSPECT AVENUE
BRONX
NY,10457**

Principal: Melissa Harrow

**Dates of review: Feb 12, 2013
Lead Reviewer: Myrna Rodriguez**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.S. 044 David C. Farragut is a/an Elementary school with 328 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 34% Black, 66% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 15% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2011 - 2012 was 89.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The leadership makes organizational decisions that are aligned to the school's instructional goals using resources to target diverse learning needs, which is evidenced in the development of improved and meaningful student work. (1.3)
 - This year the school has a new literacy coach and new United Federation of Teachers' (UFT) Professional Development Center, which aligns to the school's instructional goals of improving reading and writing. Through the UFT Center, the literacy coach and staff developer are training teachers in the use of various instructional technologies including Smart Boards, Elmos, manipulative and computers in order to improve delivery of instruction through engaging lessons for students. For example, in several classrooms students use the various technologies to show their work, explain their thought processes and get feedback from peers which results in higher levels of student work products.
 - The school places effective teachers with the neediest students, including ELLs and SWDs, and has an achievement coach, English as a second language (ESL) and academic intervention services (AIS) teachers pushing into classes several times a week. This is resulting in improved levels of student reading and writings compared to last year's data and as evidenced in the increased quantity and quality of writing in most classes and grades, especially in the fourth and fifth grades. The school is beginning to close the achievement gap as evidenced in the writing and work products, especially in subjects such as science and math, where ELLs tend to have a better grasp of the material because of the use of manipulatives and prior knowledge.
- The leadership and teachers share a focused vision of school improvement embedded in a short list of data-based goals which are tracked for progress that results in accelerated student learning and improved teacher practices. (3.1)
 - The school's instructional goals are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) anchored in the Danielson Framework for Teaching which results in targeted differentiated professional development plans for each teacher. The school, teacher teams and individual teachers use various data sources including, Fountas and Pinnel reading and writing assessments, monthly benchmark assessments and state exams to develop school, teacher and student goals which are tracked periodically. For example, during a teacher team meeting student assessments and student work demonstrated a lack of understanding of a mathematical concept and the team proceeded to recommend various strategies, such as using manipulatives and technology to have students see the same problem in a different venue. The team leader suggested that professional development opportunities to improve teacher practices in this area be addressed in the UFT Teacher Center. As a result, this ongoing data gathering and analysis of results improves teacher practices across classrooms and helps to target and strengthen the professional development offerings for all teachers.
- School leaders support the development of all teachers using a common framework for teaching which provides meaningful feedback based on

observations and analysis of student work which elevates classroom practices.
(4.1)

- The school uses short but frequent cycles of class observation using specific domains, including the classroom environment, from the Danielson Framework for Teaching which articulates clear expectations for all teachers. Teachers say that the leadership provides feedback from the observations within a risk-free environment which allows them to improve their teaching practices. New teachers are mentored by coaches and lead teachers, and outside consultants provide additional supports. It is evident in many classrooms that teachers are following through on feedback recommendations such as using multiple strategies to engage students in non-fiction texts, reminding students to use accountable talk during group sessions, prompting students to use academic vocabulary when responding to questions and expecting that text references be used during discourse and in student writing products. This results in increased rigor in student work products.

What the school needs to improve

- Further align all curricula to the CCLS and CIE in order to support the school's instructional goals for a diversity of learners, including ELLs, with special attention to the arts, health and physical education to improve student achievement. (1.1)
 - The school aligns English language arts and mathematics curricula to the CCLS and CIE and school instructional goals. However in the arts, health and physical education little alignment has been achieved in order to include literacy as is being developed within the science and social studies curricula. Students are not exposed to high levels of engagement and high order thinking skills in the arts, health and physical education. As a result, the instructional goals of the school are not being evenly achieved across all curricula depriving students of access to rigorous and engaging subjects and improved student social-behavioral and academic achievement.
 - Across classrooms students are engaged in academic tasks from the core curriculum that engage many students. However, in some classes ELL students waited for long periods of time to have translations of the task and in some cases even though the students had partners to help them, the partners were unable to interpret the materials or tasks. As a result, some students have few opportunities for learning and improved academic outcomes.
- Further develop teacher pedagogy in order to meet the needs of a diversity of student learners based on a set of beliefs of how students learn best and that is engaging so that meaningful work products are produced by all students. (1.2)
 - Across classrooms teachers use the workshop model and use various strategies to engage students in the curricula. In some classes students were engaged in high level tasks such as determining facts from opinions, but high achievers and ELL students were not appropriately engaged in the task and curricula. The high achievers were bored after a few tasks because they were not being challenged with higher order thinking tasks and the ELL students had difficulty engaging in the tasks. Learning was at best unevenly

demonstrated by students on both ends of the learning spectrum, producing low levels of student academic progress for high achievers and ELLs.

- Across classrooms student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking for some students. As a result, the school has uneven classroom participation and uneven academic progress. The school is developing strategies to provide teachers with professional development to better engage high achievers in higher order tasks and to help engage ELLs through various entry points to achieve the targeted instructional goals of the lessons and tasks.
- Further align classroom assessments to curricula using ongoing assessment to analyze student progress and achievement of goals in order to adjust teaching practices, and instructional decisions within teacher teams and classes. (2.2)
 - In some classes even though common assessments are used to measure student progress, teaching practices continue to inconsistently make effective adjustments to meet all students learning needs. For example, in several classrooms visited teachers provide ELLs and SWDs with laptops so that they have various entry points into the curricula and tasks. However, this practice was not evident in other classes where students were clearly in need of this teaching strategy and tool, and as a result, data continues to lag in terms of improvement for ELLs and SWDs.
 - Across classrooms teachers' assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding so that adjustment of teaching strategies and activities occur during the lesson to ensure that all students are learning and reaching targeted goals and expectations. Teacher designed rubrics and pre- and post-assessments aligned to the curriculum and school goals are used school wide throughout the content areas. Teachers' comments focus on what students do not know, but do not provide support for student self-assessment or any feedback on how teacher practice can support students' learning. Consequently, teachers are not able to adjust the curriculum effectively to meet students' needs. Furthermore, although instruction is being modified as a result of what teachers are able to compile from students' checks for understanding it is not always transparent if the adjustments are being linked to students' next learning steps.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2012-2013

School name: P.S. 044 David C. Farragut	UD	D	P	WD			
Overall QR Score		X					
Instructional Core							
<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					
School Culture							
<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				
Systems for Improvement							
<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					
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed