

# Quality Review Report 2013-2014

**P.S. 067 Charles A. Dorsey**

**Elementary School 13K067**

**51 SAINT EDWARDS STREET  
BROOKLYN  
NY, 11205**

**Principal: Temica Francis**

**Dates of review: May 20-21, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Deena Abu-Lughod**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

P.S. 067 Charles A. Dorsey is an Elementary school with 276 students from PK through grade 5. The school population comprises 50% Black, 38% Hispanic, 2% White, and 8% Asian students. The student body includes 8% English language learners and 24% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 90.3%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is developing.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The principal makes organizational decisions that direct budgetary, scheduling and staff services to reach the school's instructional goals and address student needs. (1.3)
  - The principal works proactively to generate resources to meet the learning needs of students and adults, in order to reach the school's academic goals while providing for the arts and wellness. To successfully integrate the Teacher's College curriculum, the school invested in leveled classroom libraries and additional baggies of books that children can take home to reinforce reading skills. They also invested in the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Literacy Intervention for students attended by the Response to Intervention team. Through outreach to local politicians, the school acquired a new media center this year staffed by a full-time technology teacher. This resource enables students to take full advantage of the online components of Go Math, use online learning platforms such as Imagine Learning for low readers and English language learners, and to learn the keyboarding and research skills necessary to meet the new standards in this area. In addition, there are multiple arts partnerships that enrich student lives. Through Brooklyn Museum of Art, 2nd and 3rd grade students "made their thinking visible" by closely studying particular paintings and writing evocative stories of considerable quality and volume. An Alvin Ailey residency along with the fulltime dance teacher resulted in many productions, including a student holiday production of the Nutcracker Suite. As a result of these initiatives, students have opportunities to produce meaningful writing and creative performances.
  - The school has organized professional development resources and schedules to support implementation of the Teachers College Reading and Writing units and the school's instructional focus on guided reading, conferring and questioning and discussion. Two Teachers College consultants provide in-class modeling and facilitate debriefs with all faculty members each month, so that all teachers can have models of practice to emulate during the 90 minute reading block and 45 minute writing block. In addition, nationally-recognized experts in conferring have provided professional development, resulting in all teachers using a common template to plan personalized attention to each student's literacy needs weekly. In addition, every week at least one faculty member attends specialized professional development off site and has the opportunity to turnkey the material during a weekly 90-minute block reserved for teacher team meetings. This time is in addition to teachers' common planning time conducted three times a week. A new on-site United Federation of Teachers Teacher Center coach, who is specialized in math, provides individualized support to teachers to meet their learning needs. Teacher leaders meet weekly with administrators to get feedback on the quality of the curriculum and tasks, thus ensuring that time dedicated to meetings, leads to improvements in practice.
- The school's supportive environment attends to the learning and personal needs of students, parents and staff, thus promoting positive attitudes and behaviors. (1.4)

- The school's small class size and instructional model ensures that teachers provide individualized supports for student learning that promote positive personal behaviors and scholarship. At the same time, a wide range of afterschool activities, including academic support as well as swimming, dance, Tai Kwon Do, and art reinforce the school's efforts to provide for a well-rounded vision of student growth. Teachers provide the first point of entry and communicate regularly with administrators, the guidance counselor and school psychologist regarding student needs beyond the classroom. Such supports include referrals to community health organizations while the school works to establish an onsite health center. In addition, the guidance counselor has set up a bereavement group for the 20 students who have lost a parent. While the shelter next door is being renovated, the school arranged for busing services so these displaced students could keep up their attendance. These services provide students with the support necessary to remain engaged and motivated by the school.
- The school actively encourages family involvement. Upon arrival, the principal instituted a now annual September community barbeque, inviting families from all three schools that share the building to a celebratory launch of the school year. In addition, the school has established "Family Fridays" where caregivers join children in their classrooms, which helps them learn more about the school's programs and practices. For example, one parent spoke about how she learned how her child built a four paragraph essay out of a seed idea, and then peer-edited his partner's paper. Teachers introduced these practices after receiving professional development as they implement new curricula designed to engage students and foster stronger academic behaviors, thus reducing classroom incidents. Another spoke of how for the science fair, the school "taught us to do the projects with our kids, not for them." All parents agree that they can communicate frequently with teachers and the school and have the teachers' cell phones and emails. The completion of a weekly contract by students in one class serves as a tool for both student goal setting and reflection and for involving parents as partners. Parents appreciate the active parent coordinator who has organized monthly workshops related to curricula and social issues, including the new math program, safety and the Boys Club. Parents attribute the doubling of attendance at parent association meetings to the school's emphasis on a strong family connection, making it a welcoming place.
- Assessment practices reveal consideration of student outcomes in the planning and adjustment of curricula and instruction to meet the needs of all students. (2.2)
  - Teachers use multiple assessments across grades to measure student performance and to inform instruction at the class and student level. On a quarterly basis, teachers from kindergarten through grade five administer the Teachers College Reading and Writing Assessments to obtain an overall picture of students' reading levels, and to select books for independent reading, form guided reading groups and design interventions. The use of this common assessment allows administrators to identify classes where students are making progress, and to reinforce supports in classrooms where progress is lower than expected. Across the school, teachers and students use rubrics to evaluate and improve student work. Dibels assessments reveal specific student literacy needs in the lower grades, and some teachers also systematically assess sight

words. Results on repeated assessments of Dolch word lists reveal acquisition of sight words, gained through customized bingo sheets, flashcards, and books with the words each student needs to learn. Itemized analysis of a third party assessment provided insights into the skill needs of upper grade students. Because this assessment highlighted the need to reinforce reading comprehension in January, teachers introduced the practice of close reading, with chunking and highlighting. On the second administration of this assessment, students answered from 4 to 12 more items correctly. Teachers analyze results of varied assessments to create action plans at the class and student level to inform adjustments to instruction that are submitted to school administrators. In an emerging, promising practice, a number of teachers have created checklists indicating the Common Core standards addressed in the unit so they can indicate which students have met the selected reading standards, thus further aligning assessment to the standards. These assessment practices are resulting in deeper understandings of student learning needs that inform instruction at the class and grade levels.

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

- Strengthen the design of tasks and lessons to align these more closely with the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and the instructional shifts, so that students are consistently engaged in rigorous learning experiences. (1.1)
  - The school is in its second year of implementing the Teachers College literacy units, has successfully transitioned to a Common Core aligned math program in all grades, and continues with Foss for science instruction. The school has acquired the materials necessary for successful implementation, and all classrooms have leveled libraries to ensure all students have books on their level. Teachers use the curriculum provided by Teachers College to plan calendars of teaching points, but these points are not fully connected to the CCLS or the instructional shifts. In addition, all units do not reveal thoughtful progressions of skills or careful selections of read-aloud texts and mentor texts to serve the teaching points adequately. For example, in a lesson on author's craft and text features, the text shared with students lacked any significant text features like bold or italic font, captions or headings, or any language indicative of craft that students could emulate. In another class, the read-aloud consisted of two 350 word articles from a Rally test prep booklet that was not connected to the curriculum and read back-to-back without pause or visual support, preventing most students from keeping up or engaging with the text. Students interacted only once at the end, to tell their partner why a filter is important in a pool. In addition, the school has not fully considered how to adjust the writing units to reflect deliberate connections to the reading units. The school's curriculum also lacks defined units and goals in social studies. The inconsistent incorporation of rigorous tasks and higher order skills across the curriculum limits the degree to which students can engage in learning tasks that promote college and career readiness.
- Build upon opportunities provided in the school's model of instruction to cultivate critical thinking skills so that work products and discussions engage all learners at high levels. (1.2)

- The school supports its belief that students learn best when they work at their own level and pace in small settings by scheduling 90 minutes of reading and math instruction daily, as well as 45 minutes for writing. The school's instructional foci on guided reading, conferring and questioning and discussion, align to practices supported by the Teachers College curriculum and the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Across classrooms, students engage in teacher-directed mini-lessons followed by independent work, typically with differentiated tasks and scaffolds such as graphic organizers. For example, in one math class, students received challenging two-step conversion problems based on time, volume or length, while other students worked on grade-level tasks with the teacher. In another math class, coin problems were differentiated by level. Book clubs were also differentiated by level. However, although the school has made questioning and discussion part of its instructional focus, high level questions were asked only in science, where kindergarteners were asked to consider whether a clump of vegetation was fake or real and how it might be important for the fish they were observing. In other classes, there were few opportunities for students to engage in oral processing of information to build comprehension. Students were unable to sustain discussions amongst themselves during a book club period in part because many of the questions on the list from which they could choose were low level, such as pick two facts from the story. In other literacy classes, students were not consistently engaged in written and verbal text analysis. These omissions result in uneven opportunities across subjects and grades to engage in high level thinking and participation in discussions, as evidenced in classroom discussions and student work samples.
- Establish systems to measure coherence of teachers' effectiveness in implementing the Common Core standards and set systemic criteria for skills mastery for all students, to inform curricular and instructional adjustments. (5.1)
  - School administrators are still in the process of aligning their observations and ensuring that all feedback is specific and actionable. As a result, the capacity to analyze school wide data across all components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and evaluate the effectiveness of its professional development efforts and teacher team work in order to target individual, team and school wide professional development more precisely, is hampered. Similarly, the school is in the process of creating plans to meet the needs of sub-group populations in relation to the demands of the CCLS. However, the school does not specify what outcomes it expects to see during the year for each subgroup or grade. This reduces the school's ability to evaluate how much progress each subgroup is making, thus limiting specific data to determine how many students are at the mastery level and whether the school is on track to reach its goals. The school has established mechanisms for teachers to report monthly on student reading levels, data which is already captured electronically in Assessment Pro, and their plans to improve student performance. However, on these and for other content areas, teacher reporting is of variable quality and the school has not established criteria for student success across all grades and subjects. Specifically, the school lacks systems with established criteria to measure mastery in writing, math and social studies to fully inform adjustments in curriculum and instruction, and to evaluate the practices and work products associated with its curriculum, such as writing volume and quality, reading logs, and student work habits to prepare all students with college and career readiness skills.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: P.S. 067 Charles A. Dorsey	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 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards?		X		
1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the 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 supports 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 those expectations?		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 student 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 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection?		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>				
<b>UD</b> Underdeveloped	<b>D</b> Developing	<b>P</b> Proficient	<b>WD</b> Well Developed	