



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Division of Academics, Performance, and Support

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Jesse Owens School

Elementary School K026

1014 Lafayette Avenue

Brooklyn

NY 11221

Principal: Cynthia Celestine

Dates of review: December 9-10, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Jesse Owens School is an elementary school with 288 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 71% Black, 25% Hispanic, 2% White, 1% Asian, and 1% American Indian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 91%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school's curricula, including the arts, engage all students in rigorous learning experiences aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) that result in increasing levels of achievement. (1.1)
 - The school is working on refining the curriculum to further align to the CCLS in English language arts, math and content areas, including the Arts, during weekly teacher team meetings. Teachers develop and use pacing charts and maps to ensure coherence and integrate the citywide instructional shifts with a focus on higher order questioning, supporting a position with evidence from text and increasing writing in all content areas. The alignment is evident in what is taught in the classrooms. For example, in an English language arts class the teacher used the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) rubric displayed on large charts in the classroom to ask questions to push students' thinking and generate discussion using information from the text to guide students in supporting their claims. In a math class, students used questioning to gather information and select the strategy to solve a problem, while in another class the students collaborated with their peers to determine how many squares, triangles and circles were needed to decorate the border of one of the classroom walls using a repeated pattern. In one lower grade class the students used geometric shapes to make animal paintings using photographs of the animals to guide their work. The names of the animal species were included to increase vocabulary in science. Additionally, the art teacher integrates the Arts in the curriculum to extend student learning. As a result, all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners, participate in more challenging and creative activities that require thinking, conversation and engagement to enrich learning experiences and accelerate progress. This is evidenced in student work products that show students are improving their literacy and writing skills.
- Teachers use a common research based framework and multiple entry points to engage students in high level learning activities that motivate them to increase their academic performance. (1.2)
 - The school articulates the belief that effective learning is grounded in small group activities to support student discussions and engagement. This principle is seen across classrooms in lessons that are aligned to the Danielson Framework to support how students learn best. Lessons engage students, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), in task assignments aligned to the curriculum standards that promote participation and higher order thinking. This was evidenced in an English language arts (ELA) class where the teacher integrated a science theme as the context for the lesson and had students work in partnerships to learn about the migration patterns of ocean animals. Students read a science article to gather information to compare various sea animals and used the computer to google questions for further research on the topic. Students used graphic organizers to record information and they shared their findings with peers during share-

out. In another classroom students read excerpts from the story 'Old Yeller' and worked in groups to examine and discuss the main character's feelings, thoughts and actions using the text to support their findings. Teachers integrated multiple strategies to support students' learning such as scaffolds and multiple entry points to meet the varied needs of the students, as evidenced in several classrooms where teachers used document cameras to show printed text and demonstrate lesson concepts and grouped students according to reading levels. In addition, the English as a second language (ESL) teacher and the special education teacher support service (SETSS) provider use a push-in model for selected students to work with them in their classrooms to provide instructional support to maximize their learning. This level of engagement and accommodation for individual and groups of students has yielded higher student success resulting in the school achieving an "A" in progress, an "A" in performance and an "A" on the school's 2012-2013 Progress Report.

- The principal makes budget and targeted organizational decisions around technology and scheduling that support the school's instructional goals to increase student achievement. (1.3)
 - The administration expressed that one of its goals is to increase the use of technology as an instructional tool and a resource for learning. To that end, the principal budgeted funds which provided computers and document cameras for every classroom, IPADs for every teacher and SMARTboards in selected classes to illustrate concepts and promote student engagement. This has led to an increase in student motivation and the use of technology as a teaching and research tool to maximize student learning. In efforts to improve instruction and increase student performance in English language arts and math the school created teacher lead positions to facilitate improvement of teaching practices in these areas. In addition, the school maintains an Aussie consultant who works with teachers to enhance instructional skills in literacy. Furthermore, the school leader has allocated time for teachers to meet at least three times weekly to refine curriculum maps, analyze assessments and student work, plan instruction and share best practices. For example, in one team a teacher discussed the "great progress" that one of her students was making in understanding and completing word problems after implementing the team's suggestions of using exemplars and increasing math vocabulary. The teacher stated that the student was better able to complete examples and show his work with greater accuracy. Time is also provided for teachers to conduct inter-visitations and provide feedback to their colleagues on observations. These interactions have led teachers to express that they feel supported in their professional development and have increased their repertoire of instructional skills and improved their planning of rigorous tasks, resulting in higher student achievement in literacy and math, in support of the school's instructional goals.
- The principal conveys high expectations to the school community through greater communication that supports learning to ensure success and higher achievement for all students. (3.4)

- In response to communication issues raised in the annual NYC School Survey, school leaders administered a customized questionnaire to faculty to gather additional information and clarify concerns regarding communication of high instructional expectations. After an analysis of the feedback received, the principal increased opportunities to meet with teachers in groups and individually, using the Danielson Framework to guide the conversations. School leaders have also provided teachers greater access to training sessions on the curriculum and the Danielson Framework, conducted by the talent coach and consultants at the school level and at outside venues. Additionally, the principal and assistant principal engage in daily walkthroughs and conduct informal and formal observations with verbal and written feedback to teachers on effective teaching practices. As a result, teachers express that there is greater clarity of instructional expectations and feel supported and accountable for maintaining the high expectations of the school in their professional learning to support student achievement.

- All families receive monthly reports on their children's progress, while parents of students who are struggling in school receive the progress reports every two weeks, so that both students and parents are aware of the school's academic expectations. In addition to phone calls and one to one conversations with parents, teachers publish and send home a monthly newsletter that is specific to the grade and includes information on curricula topics for the month. This has led to students expressing awareness of learning mandates and parents stating that they are kept well informed of the academic expectations for their children and their progress, which allows them to help their children with school work at home. Furthermore, the guidance counselor and teachers work with families to facilitate the articulation process to middle school for fifth grade students, resulting in smooth transitions to the next level for students.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine assessment data analysis to monitor student progress toward goals and adjust instructional decisions to maximize learning for all students. (2.2)
 - Teachers and teacher teams use binders to gather a variety of data that includes rubrics, content area end of unit tests and formative and periodic assessments. Teachers also use information from baseline measures of student learning (MOSL) and conference notes to document levels of student growth, in order to plan and adjust instruction accordingly. Additionally, teachers receive input from students on their own learning via exit slips and student generated questions. Individual student goals are established based on these outcomes and one to one conversations with teachers. Furthermore, a school wide analysis of some of the assessments has led teachers to focus on higher order questioning to deepen student thinking and to generate extended student responses in both verbal and written formats. However, the analysis of student data does not fully include information for English language learners and Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students with disabilities when

planning lessons, thus teachers have not yet maximized their professional knowledge to adjust the learning for all students.

- Expand systems in place across all content areas to evaluate school-wide initiatives, programs and policies, in order to adjust practices and ensure alignment with the CCLS in all subject areas. (5.1)
 - School leaders examine samples of student work products and meet with individual teachers and teacher leaders regularly to review classroom data and discuss student progress and next steps. The school analyzes assessment results in M-Class, Dibels, running records in reading, unit tests and formative assessments in ELA and math aligned to the CCLS to determine progress at the classroom and school levels. The principal and assistant principal monitor the quality of instructional practices, alignment of the CCLS and use of the Danielson Framework across the school via daily walkthroughs and teacher observations with feedback. In addition, school leaders meet with teachers one to one to discuss identified areas for professional growth and participate at teacher team meetings to monitor and support the teams' work. Information gathered from these conversations and inquiries is used to plan next steps and make the needed adjustments to improve practices. However, systems and structures for data analysis and evaluation of school-wide instructional protocols in social studies and science are not yet fully implemented. Consequently, this lessens opportunities to adjust curricula, resources and practices to ensure student achievement in all content areas.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Jesse Owens School	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 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				
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 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				
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 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					
Quality Review Scoring Key							
UD	Underdeveloped	D	Developing	P	Proficient	WD	Well Developed