



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Michael E. Berdy

**Elementary School 188
3314 NEPTUNE AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY, 11224**

Principal: Frederick M. Tudda

**Dates of review: February 27 - 28, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Isabel DiMola**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Michael E. Berdy is an elementary school with 540 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 51% Black, 34% Hispanic, 9% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 87.1%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The allocation of resources and organizational decisions provide students with opportunities to make progress toward reaching instructional goals. (1.3)
 - School leadership believes that students need to have exposure to the tools of the twenty-first century in order to develop students' readiness and success for college and career. Therefore, a priority of the school has been to use resources to increase and sustain technology within the school. Each classroom has a Smart Board and laptops that increase student access to resources for differentiation and the purchase of software such as I-Pebble and Raz Kids supports research and comprehension skills. For example, in a self-contained grade 3/4 bridge class, the teacher met with a group of students at the Smart Board where they were able to use digital manipulatives to assist them in problem solving, while other student groups were using programs on laptops to access information that guide them in developing mastery. Students in this class demonstrate at least one level of progress in developing key math skills and 50% of this student group has progressed at least two levels in their reading scores as measured by Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessment. Additionally, the school has made a significant investment in Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) work, and has built a partnership with Lego and a district middle school and high school. Collaboratively, students work with robotics using technology and math to engineer and program Lego-based working robots. As a result, students across grades are given access to STEM education, have been recognized by the community for their accomplishments, and a majority of participating students shows evidence of carrying over their skills into their regular classrooms by making progress in math as measured by school assessments.
 - To build opportunities for collaboration vertically and across grades, school leaders use a programming model that allows for four periods of common preparation weekly and two periods of scheduled professional time for inquiry to ensure that teachers have the ability to collaborate toward reaching the school's instructional goals. During inquiry periods and team meetings, teachers study student work to understand student learning and to collaborate on strategies to help students progress toward reaching learning targets. Teachers also work on creating units of study and tasks that are Common Core aligned. Their work focuses on crafting questions to spur higher levels of student cognition and to provide opportunities for rigorous discussion. As a result, teachers are building strategies for meaningful collaboration and sharing of best practices, developing units of study and assessments that address the Common Core Learning Standards, and providing students with tasks to promote academic improvement.

- School leaders place a priority on building a school-community that supports student social-emotional growth resulting in an environment that is conducive to learning. (1.4)
 - All students have a teacher mentor that is responsible for coordinating the social-emotional and behavioral aspects of the student's learning. Each mentor reviews the attendance of their assigned students, communicates with parents around attendance or behavioral concerns, and frequently discusses the student with his/her classroom teacher to monitor progress. There are clear processes in place to refer students to the Response to Intervention team when current supports prove to be ineffective in supporting student academic or social-emotional growth. Upper grade students serve as student peers for younger students providing academic and social supports. This year, fifth grade students who are working with first and second grade students considered at-risk have been trained in aspects of Foundations, a phonics program, to assist their peer students to make progress in their reading. The early grade students receiving the support are demonstrating improving behavioral outcomes as well as academic outcomes as measured by a reduction in the number of behavioral incidents for this group as well as making gains in reading as measured by school-based assessments.
 - As a school in a community that was devastated by Super Storm Sandy, there is a true focus on promoting the well-being of students and their families. As a Community Learning School it strategically aligns professional development for staff with community supports, including counselors and health professionals, and family engagement opportunities including Common Core workshops and family fun nights that ensure that students have the help they need to be academically and socially successful. There are multiple partnerships with medical psychological and social work professionals on-site to address the needs of individual students and families and to inform the community about the path of education leading to college and career readiness. Parents are assisted in helping themselves to build their own path to college and career readiness with a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) program. Students and parents express that this resource is helping build a greater understanding of how education puts students and families on the path to college and career readiness, thus benefiting individuals and the community at large. The school's professional development plan includes on-going ways for teachers to identify and address concerns that may be interfering with student progress enabling staff to address matters before they become a distraction that interferes with academic progress. The school attendance rate has made a 2% gain overall thus far this school year and students across grades are making progress in their reading levels as measured by the Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessment.
- School leaders support pedagogy through evaluation of instruction aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching resulting in improving teacher practice across the school, positively affecting student learning. (4.1)

- The principal sets forth expectations of a positive environment that supports each student's needs and learning styles. To that end, supervisors' cycles of evaluation informed by and aligned to the Danielson Framework of Teaching provide teachers with effective feedback and clear next steps toward improving their practice. Supervisors align professional development opportunities to overall trends uncovered by observation data providing individualized opportunities for teachers with specific needs to engage in activities that focus on their pedagogic areas of need. For example, an analysis of the measures of teacher practice revealed that a vast majority of teachers needed support in crafting and utilizing questions toward providing students with cognitive challenge and opportunities for rich discussion that promotes high level understanding of concepts across content areas. As such, the overarching professional development plan for the school is focusing on the quality of questions and prompts, understanding Bloom's Taxonomy, levels of Depth of Knowledge (DOK), and in planning and using questioning to stimulate discussion. In addition to large and small group professional development teachers participate in individual sessions with coaches and supervisors. Lead teachers and faculty that demonstrate effective and highly effective practices host colleagues in inter-visitations for demonstration of best practices. Consequently, an analysis of informal and formal observation data indicates growing competency among a majority of the faculty in their ability to use questioning to engage students in meaningful discussions, and in provide increased opportunities for students to demonstrate higher order thinking.

What the school needs to improve

- Expand curricula across subject areas to ensure students have appropriate access to engaging, rigorous units of study that provide opportunities for higher order thinking and mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards. (1.1)
 - The school is beginning to develop curricula through creating units of study that address the Common Core Learning Standards in English language arts and math. The plans exist in tandem with the units set forth by the chosen Common Core aligned programs of Ready Gen for English language arts and Go Math for math. Curricula specifies standards to be addressed and outlines a path of skill development, however, there is minimal articulation of access and scaffolds to address the needs of all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. Furthermore, although school leaders share the expectation that curricula will embed rigorous tasks to engage all learners, currently, there are varying levels of rigor evident in unit plans and tasks do not consistently align to the standards being taught. As a result, students are given uneven opportunities to engage in cognitively challenging activities that promote higher order thinking to demonstrate progress toward reaching and exceeding standards.

- Enhance teacher pedagogy to ensure that across all classrooms all students receive engaging, differentiated instruction and tasks that are cognitively challenging that result in demonstration of mastery of the standards. (1.2)
 - School leaders articulate a belief that instruction should provide opportunities for students to demonstrate higher order thinking and independence, with teachers acting as a facilitator to student learning. However, many classrooms evidence a teacher-centered model of instruction and are only beginning to demonstrate aspects of pedagogy that align to the questioning and discussion expectations of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. Most questions posed to students during class instruction focus on repeating factual information and do not give students opportunities to demonstrate higher order thinking or deep comprehension of the materials. There are minimal processes to differentiate learning for the needs of individual and/or groups of students, limiting access to content and skill development. Most tasks require students to engage in the same activity and are only differentiated by level of assistance, whether students completed the task independently, with peer assistance, or with teacher assistance. As such, relevant student groups, including students with disabilities, are not building their capacity in understanding how to complete their tasks independently by making choices as to what scaffolds to use in various learning situations. This results in uneven levels of student engagement with limited opportunities for students to demonstrate high levels of thinking and work product that are relative to the mastery of standards.

- Deepen the use of data to understand school wide, class, group, and individual student progress to effectively adjust curricula and instructional decisions toward improving student outcomes. (2.2)
 - Across grades, teachers use common assessments with rubrics that incorporate grading referenced to the Common Core Learning Standards. However, there are areas of inconsistency in the alignment among the defined standards being taught and the skill and content required to complete the task, and the specific indicators in the rubric measuring student performance relative to the standard. In addition the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment is just beginning in most classrooms. As such, there is limited data collected to ensure real time adjustment to lessons and teaching strategies during instruction to impact student learning. In addition, common assessments across the school and grades result in overarching school data intended to get a clear picture of student progress toward learning targets. However, currently, the data set forth by these assessments has not been disaggregated in such a way to understand learning patterns and areas of progress of individual students and student sub-groups. As a result, the overall use of assessments and data is not used adequate to fully determine the needs of students or to provide information to make the curricula and instructional changes necessary to sufficiently improve student performance.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: P.S. 188 Michael E. Berdy	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