



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report 2013-2014**

**Granville T. Woods**

**Elementary School 335  
130 Rochester Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11213**

**Principal: Karena Thompson**

**Dates of review: May 5-6, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago**

## Part 1: The school context

### Information about the school

Granville T. Woods is an elementary school with 386 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 82% Black, 15% Hispanic, 2% White, 1% Asian and 1% multi-racial students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 90%.

### Overall Evaluation

**This school is proficient.**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school has aligned the curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in order to promote rigorous instruction and academic achievement for all students. (1.1)
  - The school elected to continue to use balanced literacy for English Language Arts (ELA) and 'Math in Focus' for math. The teachers use the teacher team meeting forum to align the curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and create curriculum maps in all subject areas for greater coherence. Key standards identified for school-wide focus include increasing the use of higher order questions and discussions using the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) rubric and developing academic vocabulary in all subject areas. In addition, the school stresses finding text based evidence to support a position and the integration of citywide instructional shifts in lesson planning. These are evident in most classrooms across the school. For example, in an ELA class the students were asked to "grow their ideas" by making inferences from the books they were reading, using "specific text based evidence" to support their findings. In a lower grade science class the students made predictions about plant growth when using seeds that were dry and seeds that were soaked in water, vinegar and soda. Students discussed their hypotheses with peers basing their claims on observations and prior knowledge of how plants function. The students used science vocabulary, such as "seed embryo" and "examine" during their discussions. In a math class, students were given opportunities to discuss with their partners, the steps for finding the area of composite figures and worked together to complete task questions. These interactions promote academic language usage and deepen the levels of thinking and discussions that generate greater student participation, including students with disabilities and English language learners (ELLs), and challenge all students with more rigorous and engaging activities to accelerate learning.
- Teachers design differentiated lessons aligned to the Danielson Framework that support students to demonstrate high levels of engagement and consistently motivate them to increase their performance. (1.2)
  - The school uses the workshop model and the Danielson Framework across classrooms that reflect the school's belief on what effective instruction looks like. Teachers plan lessons that engage all students, including students with disabilities and English language learners, in high level task assignments aligned to the CCLS and provide a range of entry points that meet the various needs of the students. For example, during a mini-lesson in an ELA class the teacher had students think, discuss with a partner and jot down the "big ideas" in a story that was read whole group using evidence from the text to support their ideas. The students then worked individually at their desks while the teacher worked with selected students in a group for a strategy lesson to provide additional support in completing the task. In another class the teacher provided individual assistance to students in need of support while the class engaged in in-depth discussions regarding the elements of mentor texts and memoirs.

During a math lesson the teacher used the SMARTboard and color coded manipulatives to illustrate the concept of fractions and in several classes paraprofessional worked with groups and individual students to facilitate the learning and ensure that all students were able to participate in the challenging assignments through individual demonstration at the students' reading levels. This has yielded higher student success as measured by benchmark assessments and student work products that provide teachers specific feedback on individual levels of student learning.

- The principal has made targeted organizational decisions that include scheduling, in efforts to support school-wide instructional goals and increase levels of student achievement. (1.3)
  - In efforts to address the school's priority goals to improve instruction and increase student performance in literacy and math, the school has maintained two literacy coaches who work with lower grade and upper grade teachers and purchased an additional thirty workshops conducted by consultants on balanced literacy. The school has also maintained a math coach who works with all teachers to support best practices in math instruction as well as two lead teachers who conduct workshops for teachers monthly. Through funds received from a Rezo grant in the amount of \$68,000, the school purchased two additional laptop carts and upgraded the computer lab to further increase the use of technology as a tool for teaching and learning. In addition, the school has scheduled a ninety minute block period in ELA and a one hundred minute block period in math to increase students' instructional time in these subject areas. To facilitate professional collaborations, the principal allocated common planning time, a minimum of twice weekly, for teachers to work in teams to continue to align and refine curriculum, review assessments and student work products and plan instruction for students identified in need of instructional support. Teachers also use this time to share best practices to improve teaching. For example, in one team meeting a teacher described the difficulty a student in her class was having with organizing thoughts and ideas in writing. This led to team members suggesting next steps and strategies that included increased teacher modeling, using post-its, rubrics and graphic organizations to address the student's need. In another team meeting teachers discussed lack of volume in writing for an identified group of students. Suggestions for improvement included more modeling and conferring with the students and increasing vocabulary usage. These interactions are enhancing teachers' repertoire of strategies to improve teaching and learning resulting in students making gains as measured by benchmark assessments in literacy and math.
- Relationships across the school are warm, supportive and inclusive of students, teachers and families, who feel valued in having a voice in the school community for a safe environment, which supports students' academic and social learning. (1.4)
  - To further realize the school's motto of "A Village That Cares", the school applied for and received a United Federation of Teachers (UFT) grant award to become a 'Community of Learning School' that focuses on tapping community resources and providing targeted academic and health services to students and families. The school has a full time nurse

and through a partnership with New York University students receive dental care services twice monthly. The Community of Learning School resource liaison has begun to form partnerships with hospitals and health clinics as intake centers for family and student referrals. The school also offers 'Cook Shop' classes for parents and students to promote healthier food choices for better health and nutrition. In order to ensure that all students are well known by an adult, the school has assigned a guidance counselor to the lower grade classes and a second guidance counselor to the upper grade classes to work with teachers, students and parents to provide guidance supports for social- emotional concerns. Additionally, the school's "open door" policy encourages students to approach teachers and school staff for needed assistance and to address issues that may arise. One student described the quick response from the guidance counselor to intervene when he informed her of a planned altercation between two students thus, avoiding the confrontation between the students. Furthermore, the school applied for an 'Attendance Improvement Dropout Prevention' grant in the amount of \$50,000 to provide additional services to the school in the form of programs and outreach to parents to increase student attendance. These efforts have led to an increase in student attendance of approximately one percent and a decrease in incidents over last year, resulting in students expressing that they feel safe in school and parents stating that the school offers a nurturing environment for their children.

### **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)
  - The school hired a consultant to work with teachers to help identify reading and math skills that are in need of improvement based on State assessments. This has led to the development of instructional goals for teaching and reinforcement of skills in ELA and math. Teachers also maintain binders to gather a variety of data that includes unit tests by content area, formative and periodic assessments and rubrics. Teachers also use information from baseline Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) and student writing in all subject areas to ascertain levels of student learning and plan and adjust instruction accordingly. In addition, students provide teachers information on their own learning through exit slips and student questioning during lesson activities. Student goals are created via feedback from assessment results and conversations between students and teachers. Furthermore, analysis of some of the assessments has led several teachers to focus on increasing volume in student writing in order to have students elaborate on their thinking to fully support their positions. However, in a few classrooms, the analysis of student data does not include information on student subgroups including students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs). This limits the use of data to inform curricular and instructional strategies for all students including students with disabilities to support increased learning opportunities.

- Extend communication of high expectations to parents and community that support learning to ensure success and higher achievement for all students across all content and grade levels. (3.4)
  - The school provides on-going training and assistance to teachers on the expectations of the Danielson Framework with support from school leaders, instructional specialists, the network and consultants. School leaders conduct daily walkthroughs and formal and informal observations using the Danielson Framework rubric with verbal and written feedback to teachers to support and ensure high levels of effective instructional practices across all classrooms. Teachers send home calendars, monthly by grade level, to parents that include CCLS topics to keep families informed of curricula expectations and support a path to college and career readiness. Additionally, teachers send home progress reports quarterly to inform parents of their children's progress. Furthermore, school staff and the guidance counselors provide students and families, information on the expected outcomes for student success at the next level during one to one conversations, parent workshops, student support meetings and "principal chats" on a monthly basis. However, while the school offered workshops during curriculum night in the fall on strategies to support CCLS at home, some parents express that they haven't received information on how they can support their children's academic development with the CCLS at home in all subject areas. This lessens opportunities for parents to impact their children's progress across all content areas.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Granville T. Edwards School	UD	D	P	WD			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			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>	<b>Underdeveloped</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>WD</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>