



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Patrolman Robert Borden School

Elementary School 345

**111 Berriman Street
Brooklyn
NY 11208**

Principal: Wanda Holt

**Dates of review: March 3-4, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Joyce Stallings-Harte**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

The Patrolman Robert Bolden School is an elementary school with 668 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 46% Black, 46% Hispanic, 2% White, and 6% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 9% 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 91%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is developing.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- School leaders allocate resources and make decisions aligned to the school's instructional goals that promote student achievement. (1.3)
 - Evaluation of data revealed that students required more support to ensure growth of literacy and math skills and the principal considered alternative ways to increase instructional time. For example, item analysis of students' data across multiple assessments, including the New York State ELA exam, indicated the need to develop students' phonemic awareness skills in order to accelerate growth in reading. The school implemented multiple reading programs based on specific student needs including Lexia for phonics and Reading Counts, both of which utilize a technology-based approach to target reading strategies that improve reading levels and provide a real-time data tracking system. Review of Lexia data indicates that students have made consistent progress in reading level growth over the school year. As a result, students are able to read higher-level texts and make progress toward reading standards.
 - School leaders make meaningful decisions in scheduling student and teacher time to maximize learning opportunities and teacher collaboration time for planning and evaluating student work. Schedule adjustments were made to ensure teachers have a minimum of three common planning periods per week. The principal added an additional grade 4 class in order to reduce the student-to-staff ratio and give students more small group instructional time. The principal added a science cluster to give students increased time reading science non-fiction text and engagement with in hands-on science activities. This programming gives students' increased opportunities to gain understanding and knowledge using literacy skills in content-specific domains. In science for example, grade 3 students had ample time to read two articles on the Earth and polar bears and used text to state and defend their opinion on global warming's effect on polar bears. Evidence of student work showed students were able to use a rubric to craft writing that is more cognitively challenging and demanding. These opportunities allow students to make progress in reading and writing and increase student achievement.
- School leaders communicate high expectations and provide supports so that all members of the school community can support increased student achievement. (3.4)
 - During faculty conferences, grade meetings, school leaders offer training on the Danielson Framework for teaching. After observations, administrators and teachers discuss areas of strength and next steps for improvement based on the rubric. For example, based on classroom observations, the monthly faculty conference notes indicate a focus on using assessment results to guide instruction. A video on formative assessment practices viewed offered ideas such as think-pair-share, thumbs up/thumbs/down and exit tickets. The group activity provided a time for reflection on current teacher practices as teachers discussed and planed for integration of formative assessment practices to guide

instruction during lessons. As a result, these systems hold teachers accountable to meet students' needs and meet professional responsibilities.

- Parents report that the various methods the school uses to communicate expectations include family newsletters, monthly calendars, and workshops for parents. Workshops address how they might support their child in such areas as Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and positive behavior. Additionally, before each quarterly report card, parents receive a progress report to advise them of their child's performance including Lexile reading levels, Fountas and Pinnell reading levels and content area grades. This concurs with the 2012 Learning Environment Survey which reveals that over 96% of parents agree that the school keeps them informed about their child's academic progress in major subject areas including science and social studies and communicates on a regular basis. Parents report that these progress reports help them know what their children are doing so they can get the help needed to improve if necessary. Parents report that the school is there for students and parents. One parent noted that when her child was out ill, the school facilitated at home tutoring which helped her child meet the standards. As a result, school leaders and families work together to understand student needs and share responsibility for student progress toward these higher expectations.
- School leaders conduct frequent observations and develop professional plans that promote professional growth and reflection. (4.1)
 - School leaders use an observation protocol as a tool to address individual teacher needs and to inform professional development offerings. After each observation, leadership meets with teachers to discuss observations and develop an improvement plan, which may include attending a Lunch and Learn, inter-visitation or ARIS Learn opportunity. All conversations are centered around the Danielson Framework in order to norm practices across classrooms. For example, based on the schools stated focus of using higher order questions and classroom discussion, feedback included improving questioning by planning higher-order questions prior to the lesson and noting open ended questions and prompts in the lesson plan to challenge students cognitively and advance higher-level thinking and discussion. Observation notes indicate teachers use the feedback sessions and are making progress in some domains. Feedback to one teacher recommended giving students opportunities for turn-and-talks and think-pair-shares to gauge their understanding in addition to a recommendation to view Learning Objective #124 on ARIS: Engaging Students in Higher Order Thinking to strengthen practice. This process allows teachers to refine their pedagogy and provides school leaders with information to support teacher development.
 - The principal uses the guiding principle 'inspect what we expect' to drive the professional learning for teachers. The principal has developed a Professional Development Strategic Action Plan informed by teacher observation data that shows a needs analysis, established goals, action plan, professional development topics and objectives, the target audience, progress monitoring and artifacts that provide evidence of achievement. For example, the needs analysis indicated lack of consistency in development of a professional learning community and

teacher goal setting systems. The action plan indicates that teachers write professional goals based on the Danielson Framework and a self-reflection that incorporates next steps in development. Professional learning opportunities are then structured to address the specific teacher goals such as Lunch and Learns with a schedule posted outside the main office. The monthly Professional Development Plan notes a Lunch and Learn for multiple entry points and the teacher professional development plan to address the need for more teacher support in engaging all learners in rigorous and challenging tasks. Leadership reviews school-wide pedagogical needs on a monthly basis and based on observation notes has determined that the focus of professional development for the Month of March will be using formative assessments in instruction with teacher inter-visitations. This targeted support derived from observation data meets teacher needs and promotes development of pedagogical expertise.

What the school needs to improve

- Deepen curricula aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and content standards in order to increase the rigor of tasks that engage all learners. (1.1)
 - The school is in the process of developing curriculum maps using Rubicon Atlas to develop coherency across grades in English language arts and math. The school uses a scope and sequence guide and curriculum map templates that reflect multiple design elements including big ideas, essential questions, content, skills/strategies, key terms/vocabulary, assessments, learning activities, differentiated instruction and resource. However, curriculum maps vary widely in development and depth as maps for content areas are in the beginning stages of alignment to the Common Core and instructional shifts. For example, one grade has plans that address only a few of the school's curriculum map elements while another provides detailed notes on most elements and while most maps observed include Common Core Learning Standards, they lack integration of the instructional shifts. This unevenness noted in the curriculum maps is borne out in lesson plans as in one upper grade lesson plan outlined how students would work in book groups based on Lexile levels and discuss answers to questions from assigned task cards while a lower grade lesson plan showed all students would complete worksheets that either required little cognitive challenge or student effort to finish. As a result, inconsistent curricula and tasks hinder the ability of all students to engage in challenging work across subjects and limits student progress.
- Promote instructional teaching strategies that represent the school's beliefs about student learning so all students are engaged in cognitively demanding tasks that increase achievement. (1.2)
 - The school believes in small group instruction with the teacher as facilitator who prompts students to engage in discussion and ask questions following the citywide instructional shifts. School leaders expect teachers to record student learning and thinking through note taking on student conferences or the use of post-its, and use this data to develop lessons and attend to individual student needs. Observation of teacher practice shows inconsistency in instructional practice that

engages students in high levels of discussion that promote critical thinking. For example, in one class, all students were asked to discuss an addition problem that some students had previously mastered. Students merely completed the worksheet in compliance with teacher directions and were not engaged in discussion or questioning aligned to the instructional shifts. In another class, students discussed a text and were asked to provide textual evidence that supported their answers. While the school's focus is annotating text and teachers are working to record student response, neither structure was being utilized by student or teacher. The inconsistency in practice limits students' ability to engage at higher levels and potentially limit student progress towards meeting standards.

- Deepen the use of assessment results to analyze student learning and make instructional adjustments that improve student outcomes. (2.2)
 - Teachers use baselines, benchmarks, unit assessment rubrics and exit slips as common assessments to measure student learning. Assessment results are collected and maintained in teacher data binders for use to inform instruction. Checks for understanding such as exit slips and post-its are used in some classes. While some assessments are administered on a more consistent basis than others, none are consistently used to make instructional modifications to target identified gaps. While each grade is responsible for discussing the results of the assessments, this is not a steady practice that targets student misunderstanding to make meaningful adjustments. For example, on the benchmark test 70% of students received zero credit in one strand and leadership and the data specialist discussed what instructional shifts and strategies were necessary for student progress. After administering the pre and post assessments for Envisions, some teachers use the technology component to offer students additional practice but this is not applied across grades. In addition, the data generated is not consistently analyzed to gauge instructional impact on student improvement. The inconsistency with which data is analyzed and data-based strategies are implemented hinders the effectiveness of instruction as well as student progress.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Patrolman Robert Bolden	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