

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Jackie Robinson School

Elementary School 375

**46 Mckeever Place
Brooklyn
NY 11225**

Principal: Dr. Marion Wilson

**Dates of review: Apr 8 - 9, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Dr. Buffie Simmons**

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Jackie Robinson School is an elementary school with 514 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 64% Black, 28% Hispanic, 5% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 24% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 91.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school has a coherent curriculum across all grades aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to promote college and career readiness for all students. (1.1)
 - The school community has selected the ReadyGEN and Go Math curricula to cognitively engage students, meet the rigor of the CCLS, and set them on a path towards college and career readiness. Both curricula programs are aligned to the CCLS, focus on the instructional shifts, and include learning tasks that require students to cite evidence from texts to support their answers. Across the school curriculum and unit maps include pacing calendars reflect alignment to the CCLS, the integration of the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) in learning tasks that support rigor, and selected key standards to further develop curricula coherence. In math, for example, learning tasks include solving multi-step problems by using a variety of strategies, thereby developing students' critical thinking skills vital for college and career readiness. Moreover, the use of various math programs across grades levels has required the teacher teams to work closely to identify the gaps in learning, and adjust curriculum to include CCLS and Citywide Instructional Expectation (CIE) shifts. Thus, resulting in school wide instructional coherence and promoting college and career readiness for all students.
 - Across grades teachers meet three periods a week to refine curricula using student data, discuss implications for instruction, and make curriculum modifications to meet the academic needs of student subgroups. For example the kindergarten and first grade teachers analyzed performance tasks and adjusted learning tasks to ensure access for English language learners and special education students. For example, after the first unit teachers realized that some of the academic language and vocabulary concepts needed additional scaffolds and adjusted the curricula by targeting specific skills, modifying the pacing calendars, and re-introducing key concepts so that all students achieve mastery. Similarly, after noticing that students' writing was more advanced than what the curricula task required, the first grade teachers modified the writing tasks by creating more challenging rubrics for the first grade English language arts unit. Teachers also modified curricula with additional fiction and non-fiction libraries that reflect students' reading levels according to Fountas and Pinnell benchmark reading levels. As a result, the school's curricula provide all students with opportunities to engage in cognitively challenging learning.
- Teachers align assessments and grading practices to the school's curricula and use data to provide actionable feedback, thus supporting students' academic achievement. (2.2)
 - Across school, classroom teachers along with Academic Intervention Specialist (AIS), resource room, and English as second language (ESL) teachers use the school's grading policy as well as refine rubrics from ReadyGEN to provide actionable feedback to students around their performance and progress. The principal meets with teachers on a regular basis to check for students' academic growth, identify students' academic progress, and create next steps for academic interventions. For example, data analyses on reading levels of students, facilitated by teacher leaders

determined that Response to Intervention (RTI) needs to be incorporated thoroughly in the school to adjust instruction for targeted students. In addition, the school uses common assessments to track student progress towards school goals across grades and subjects, and adjust curricula and instruction to meet individual students' learning needs. Therefore, teachers created uniform formative classroom assessments to identify strengths and challenges for lower and higher achieving subgroups. For example, teachers conducted an analysis of the data from the end-of-unit assessments to make instructional adjustments. Furthermore, teachers use Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS) and low inference data to develop strategies and supports for student learning. Additionally, all teachers administer a performance task at the end of every literacy and math unit in phonics, sight words, letter and sound recognition aligned to Fountas and Pinnell reading levels to further monitor students' progress. Current assessment trends indicate that in lower grades students need more individualized support with letter and sound recognition. Trends in upper grades indicate that students struggle with fluency and reading comprehension. Consequently, teachers adjusted the curricula and instruction to include additional instructional support for word work on a weekly basis. As a result of effective curricula and instructional adjustments, the data indicates that target groups in Tier 3 decreased by 16%, Tier 2 decreased by 11%, and Tier 1 decreased by 27%, thus increasing students' academic performance.

- The principal uses and analyze data to create a goal-oriented learning community with a vision towards accelerating learning for all students and improve teaching practice. (3.1)
 - The school's short list of clear, focused school level goals and action plans are included in the Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) to accelerate student learning and foster emotional growth. The school administration ensures that goals are tracked and developed through collaboration that includes grade wide preparation meetings, conversations focused on current curriculum maps, assessment data, rubrics, and identifying trends and instructional implications. The school's theory of action and focus is to create a community of readers, thus creating the mantra "Reading Often Achieve Results" (ROARS) to achieve those goals. This instructional focus was shared and embraced by the school community in order to improve reading comprehension at every grade level and for every student as measured by local, city, and state assessments. Hence, the school subscribes to a theory of action that there must be a continuous cycle of improvement for adults as well as students to accelerate learning. As a result, teacher teams focus on examining student work and share best strategies to accelerate student learning, and develop coherence across content and grade levels. Based on the school's trends in math data, it was determined that students needed additional instruction and practice in problem solving and application of math concepts to real world situations. Therefore, the school decided to implement the Go Math program to further develop students' skills to reason abstractly and problem solve. Moreover, teachers also engage in ongoing professional development to connect math practices to the math content and instruction to support the school's instructional goals and learning. Teachers are working closely with the network specialist on using data collection sheets for instructional decision-making. The school community is using the CCLS performance tasks and corresponding rubrics, unit assessments, and teacher observations to capture success towards student progress. As a result, Go Math was included in the action plan along with more rigorous and cohesive student goals for problem solving, thus resulting in improved teachers' practice and students' academic progress.

- The school uses classroom observation and the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school wide instructional practices and professional growth. (4.1)
 - The school community has embraced the Danielson Framework as an evaluation tool enabling them to have a shared and common language to discuss effective instructional practices. Feedback to teachers that accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development. After analyzing observation data and students' performance, the school administration and cabinet agreed to focus feedback and professional development support on Competencies 1b, 1e, 3b, and 3c, thereby supporting teachers' practice and the school's instructional goals. For example, observation reports include feedback such as, "Identify the high, medium and low groups of students and develop lessons that are appropriate to their learning styles and ability (1b)," and "incorporate the various learning styles, interests and varying abilities of your individual students when developing, implementing, and reflecting on your lessons (1e)." Based on targeted feedback and next steps, supervisors identified a need to focus on instructional areas that provide multiple access and entry points. Consequently, this emphasis has become an area of discussion and teachers have increased their own repertoires to plan activities that provide multiple opportunities/entry points for all students to engage in higher order thinking. As a result, school wide teaching practice developed to include modeling and demonstration to clearly and explicitly show students what is expected of them. Teachers are also gradually releasing the responsibility of learning to students who are becoming independent learners. Furthermore, in order to support lesson planning and preparation as required in Domain 1, the school administration organized professional development opportunities throughout the year to further support teacher development in planning. The school's instructional team also monitors and ensures the implementation of the curriculum by providing support at grade level meetings, faculty conferences, and during the citywide professional development days. Teachers also discuss their personal goals and reflections on their performance across the domains during professional development sessions. As a result, school leaders established a system for managing professional development and instruction that provides targeted support for teachers' growth.

What the school needs to improve

- Strengthen instructional practices that use higher order questioning and learning tasks with multiple entry points to strategically engage all learners in higher levels of thinking and participation. (1.2)
 - Across classrooms there is a culture for learning and respectful environment to support teaching and learning, which is evidenced by how teachers prepare grade level lessons aligned to the CCLS and the components of the Danielson Framework. The school has a shared belief particularly in the areas of planning, curriculum maps, preparation, and classroom environment to increase learning. For example, classroom routines were evident in both the English language arts and math programs as teachers used questioning and discussions techniques in each lesson to increase engagement. However, although teachers are encouraged to use discussion questions to push student thinking through cognitively engaging tasks, teachers were not strategically asking higher order questions or using discussion techniques such as turn-and-talk to purposefully engage students in rigorous discussions.

Furthermore, special education students and English language learners participated in small group instruction while the teacher facilitated the lesson by using scaffolds and guided support to increasing access. However, although some small groups received differentiated activities, higher achievers were not provided with meaningful challenging extensions to push their thinking and learning. As a result, across the vast majority of the classrooms, teaching strategies did not always provide strategic multiple entry points to engage all learners in rigorous and challenging tasks, thus hindering students' abilities to demonstrate higher levels of thinking and participation.

- Build school structures to increase student attendance and parental involvement to support the academic and personal growth of students. (1.4)
 - The school developed support systems and action plans to promote an orderly environment that enhances student and adult learning that supports the school-wide focus to improve school climate and culture. The central location of the school to transportation, restaurants, and other schools effect students in being caught in the community's crossfires and negative influences. For example, during the student meetings, students expressed that a classmate was bullied outside the school at a nearby eatery but was never bullied in their own school. Parents and students, during the meetings, shared the school focus on continuing to build a safe and orderly environment, and are reinforced by the daily reciting of the school motto at the beginning of each day. For example, during the 2012-2013 school year, there were 99 incidents of which 18 were behavioral related to issues that took place in the classroom and 9 were behavioral related issues that took place in the bathroom. The school adopted the Afterschool Detention Program for students whose behavior is contradictory to the school's goals for excellence. Moreover, the school addressed these concerns by establishing better bathroom procedures, and the integration of the Attendance, Behavior, Class-work, and Dress Code (ABCD) program to motivate students to strive and achieve high behavioral and academic standards. However, although the school continues developing structures to support positive academic and social-emotional behaviors, students' attendance and parental involvement continue to be an issue for the school community, thus impeding efforts to consistently increase students' growth.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Jackie Robinson 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