



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

75K771

**1075 Oceanview Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11235**

Principal: Denise D'Anna

Dates of review: March 24-26, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Robin Cohen

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

P.771K is an elementary-high school with 440 students from K through grade 12. The school population comprises 38% Black, 24% Hispanic, 27% White, 10% Asian students, and 1% unspecified. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 77% of the students enrolled and girls account for 23%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 85.0%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Teachers routinely plan and refine their aligned Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) curricula and their units of study, strategically integrating the shifts ensuring student engagement and coherence across grades. (1.1)
 - The school makes purposeful choices about curricula based on past student performance and school-based benchmark assessments. The school purchased Core Knowledge for their K-2 standardized assessment students and Expeditionary Learning for their 3-8 students for English language arts. In addition, Go Math for grades K-5 and Connect Math for grades 6-8 for standardized assessment students. The school also uses the Equals Mathematics curriculum and UNIQUE Learning system for their alternate assessment student, which are aligned to the CCLS standards. Each unit in UNIQUE includes lesson plans providing three levels of differentiated tasks to meet the needs of learners with significant disabilities. To ensure coherence across all grades and sites, the school provides a Program Matrix for both standardized and alternate assessment teachers. This matrix lays out the assessments, teaching methodologies, content area curricula and behavior management programs that are utilized for each distinct population. Additionally, teachers strategically incorporate the instructional shifts across grades, by requiring students to cite evidence from a balance of informational and literary texts in ELA. This was evident in an elementary classroom that was reading “Everything You Need to Know About Frogs”. The essential questions were: “How can I investigate the main idea of a non-fiction text?” and “What do I do to become an expert on ...frogs”? As a result of a coherent standards based curriculum, students are provided access to opportunities for college and career readiness skills.
 - Teacher teams meet regularly to ensure all learners are able to access curriculum through thoughtful collaborative planning based on a thorough review of student work and data. Planning is evident in curriculum maps across grades and results in teachers engaging students in a robust curriculum to develop critical thinking skills and concrete content knowledge through meaningful units of study. The units of study include the primary standard addressed, supporting standard, instructional shift, essential questions (content and comprehension) and the culminating task options which are refined to support students’ academic level in order to access the curriculum. For example, communication, auditory, visual and technology supports are routinely inserted into the curriculum to support students with these specific needs. Teachers report students are performing at increasingly higher levels in instructional performance tasks. This work has ongoing impact in increasing communication in speaking and listening, reading, writing and math skills for students in standardized and alternate assessment. As a result, 71% of standardized assessment students showed an increased in their reading level as evidenced by Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) running records. In addition, students in alternate assessment demonstrate mastery of their individual goals as identified by Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) as evidenced by Discrete Trial Training (DTT) binders in all classrooms.

- The principal makes strategic organizational decisions to support the school's overall instructional goals and meet student learning needs, resulting in meaningful student work products. (1.3)
 - All resources are strategically aligned to the school's overarching goals and key priorities based directly on the data collected from last year's student performance. The instructional focus for this school year is to provide multiple entry points for all students, thereby connecting to Danielson's Domain 3 component of providing access to the curricula. In addition, a major priority is to increase communication skills for alternate assessment students, therefore the school purchased high-tech Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices, such as Quicktalkers and iPads, as well as low-tech supports, through communication boards and picture symbols. The purchase of Achieve 3000, Expeditionary Learning and Core Knowledge supports struggling standardized assessment students in building comprehension skills. As a result of this focus, standardized assessment students show a 37% median growth on the English language arts (ELA) state assessment. Students in alternate assessment are mastering the goals identified by Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) as evidenced in their Discrete Trial Binders. In addition, to support its goal of post-secondary outcomes and student independence, the school has established partnerships with Co-op Tech High School to provide vocational credits to their high school students, preparing them for careers.
 - Through effective programming, the principal schedules time for professional learning communities to meet three times per week to analyze student work, adapt curriculum and plan lessons. Time is structured for teachers to participate in inter-visitations in the use of technology and differentiation of lessons to engage all students in challenging tasks and provide multiple entry points to access the curriculum. In addition, as part of the School-based Option Plan (SBO), students are dismissed early on Fridays, enabling teachers and paraprofessionals to receive professional development developed around Danielson's Framework for Teaching, Citywide Instructional Expectations (CIE) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and its implications for teaching. Teams use the Rhonda Bondie Analysis of Student Work Protocol, creating agendas and writing minutes. Each team submits documents to the principal who provides feedback to the teams. As a result, teachers have many opportunities to improve instructional practice via data analysis, review of student work and development of curriculum and lessons. This has led to the improved student outcomes school-wide as measured by the school's progress report score increasing from a "B" to an "A".
- The highly supportive and mutually respectful learning environment created by the principal and her leadership team ensure a calm, respectful and orderly milieu where the growth of students and staff is a priority. (1.4)
 - The entire school community's theory of action focuses on social-emotional values that ensure students engagement in learning. Highly developed systems of positive behavior intervention supports (PBIS) are well established, clearly understood and consistently practiced in both the behavior and academic environments. The school implements "Power of

Choice” and the Emotional Literacy Curriculum which effectively reinforces positive choices and self-regulation. The school is vigilant and highly responsive to how it is implemented, ensuring the maintenance of a strong culture for learning for all students. The school sustains an overwhelming climate of calm and a culture of respect in classrooms throughout the organization. In all classes, students develop the classroom rules and create classroom charters. This allows students to take ownership of classroom expectations for behavior and routines. Students have high praise for the school’s practices of empowering them to advocate for changes within the school community and their own pursuits. Dissatisfied with the lunch, students petitioned for changes to the menu, especially on Fridays. In conjunction with the Office of Food and Nutrition, their request was honored. As a result, at the student meeting there was unanimous agreement that they are empowered to share their voice and are prepared to move on to their future.

- The students stated during the large group meeting that they have specific people to go to when an “issue” might develop. Every Wednesday, the counselors and crisis team meet to address “issues” and follow up on past concerns. This ensures that all students are known by an adult and receive consideration from guidance even when counseling is not mandated on their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Students also stated that their accomplishments are celebrated and evidence of respectful interactions among all stakeholders is clearly and consistently demonstrated across the school community. For example, classroom teachers maintain data collection and analysis documentation such as point sheets and Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP). The impact of this work is evident across the vast majority of classrooms where students are aware of their behavior, take ownership and self-regulate. This is evidenced by their School Wide Information Systems (SWIS) data which shows a decrease in level 4 and level 5 behaviors. During the 2012-2013 school year, there were 13 level 4 and 2 level 5 reports. During the 2013-2014 school year, there were 5 level 4 and 1 level 5.
- School leaders and faculty systematically collect and analyze a wide range of data that successfully identifies the needs of students resulting in strategic instructional adjustments to improve student progress. (2.2)
 - Across the school there is a culture of data collection that uses a range of formative assessments such as, Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI), Formative Assessment of Standards Tasks (FAST) Teacher’s College (TCWRP) running records, Achieve 3000 and Performance Tasks. Summative Assessments include: NYS ELA and Math exams and New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA). The school’s pre-and post-assessments in content areas are analyzed by administration and teacher teams to form student groupings and adapt curricula to address individual learning needs in order to support mastery. Students reflect upon goals regularly during individual and student-teacher conferencing, in order to further refine their goals to address next steps in learning. “Post-it notes” are evidenced on student writing, in portfolios and on student work posted on bulletin boards inside and outside classrooms indicating students’ strengths and “next steps”, according to school-based rubrics. For example, a seventh grade class of standardized assessment students had just finished reading Lyddie. The students were asked to answer questions that were text-dependent. The teacher wrote on the post-it, “great work Devine -

I like how you restate the questions when answering. Next step would be to make a connection between the texts read". In another class of elementary standardized assessment students, the teacher wrote "Kendred – well organized paragraphs. I like the details about the rainforest animals." Next steps would be: "Proofread and use transition words", "make sure to create topic sentences for each paragraph". As a result, this feedback enables students to take ownership of their work and the ability to review and revise their work.

- Throughout lessons, teachers monitor student understanding in a variety of methods such as: exit slips, writing checklist from Teacher's College and the use of electronic student devices/assistive technology. In addition, students use an editing checklist to help self-regulate and develop academic behaviors geared towards college and career readiness skills. Unit assessments linked to the school-wide literacy and math programs are refined via use of teacher conference notes, extensive use of rubrics, a school-wide grading policy, student self-assessment and self-reflection. The data collected by the teachers are shared and analyzed with the school community in various venues such as instructional /collaborative team meetings. The result of this enables teachers to adjust instructional supports and resources and provide ongoing feedback to students. Consistently, as observed in classroom visits, teachers provide students with time to self-monitor and partner with peers to review and revise work using the school's rubrics that are student friendly with the inclusion of icons and pictures and are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. This has resulted in increased student ownership with elevated rigor in reading, writing and math assessments, based on the daily collection by the teacher, paraprofessionals, student self-assessment and individual case study analysis during teacher team meetings. These comprehension checks inform teachers' revisions to instruction and the curriculum. As a result, 100% of the inclusion students go on to college.
- School leaders consistently use evidence from classroom observations to provide teachers with focused meaningful feedback, leading to improved teaching practices. (4.1)
 - All teachers, in collaboration with administration, identified their areas in need of development based on the components of Danielson's Framework for Teaching. Through the lens of the Danielson Framework, the administration conducts focused and frequent classroom observations to provide teachers with meaningful, consistent and timely feedback with targeted next steps. For example, feedback to a new teacher stated; "Time management is improving...continue to work on it to be highly effective." "Have work and materials pre-cut for quicker use." Administrators review and determine where the strengths and challenges are among the staff. This purposeful collection of evidence determines the type of support needed for individual teachers. The review of the data allows administration to make strategic decisions in offering targeted and tiered professional development for teachers. In addition, the school-based coach mentors the new teachers by visiting classes and providing immediate feedback. For example, during a fifth grade English language arts lesson, the teacher read the book "Long Ago and Today". The lesson was differentiated to meet the needs of the students who participate in alternate assessment. The coach's feedback for this lesson was, "Use a Venn diagram for your low group and try to encourage the middle and high group to do some authentic work".

These combined effort results in student growth as reflected in work products contained in student portfolios. The strategic use of the observation process has increased teacher self-reflection and resulted in improved teacher practice. Teachers expressed that they, “understand how changing their practice has a positive impact on student performance”.

- Several patterns and trends have emerged during an analysis of the principal and assistant principal observations. Specifically, there is a need to increase the use of Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) high level questions by staff and where applicable, by students. Due to this need, further training and modeling by the school-based coach was added. Professional development is offered through faculty conferences, Friday professional development sessions (as per SBO), arranged inter-visitations with colleagues and the school-based coach. Teachers generated goals, based on the Danielson Framework and are updated three times per year with support of administration. The impact of this work is evident in the teacher observation data (Advance) which shows the vast majority of teachers (new and veteran) have improved in “ratings” since their first observation. Most of the staff chose “Questioning and Discussion Techniques” as one of their professional goals. Due to the focus of this Danielson component, teachers are beginning to implement strategies like question cards, group discussion prompts and pair-share to increase student achievement. Consequently, 70% of teachers showed a one level increase on Danielson’s rubric: 8% moved from Ineffective to Developing, 55% moved from Developing to Effective and 6% moved from Effective to Highly Effective.

What the school needs to improve

- Continue to enhance teacher questioning during the delivery of instruction in order to enrich student participation, thereby increasing opportunities to further develop critical thinking skills. (1.2)
- The school’s belief that students learn best when lessons are functional, hands-on, differentiated with multiple entry points and tasks that challenge learners, providing supports only as needed. Across classroom observed, lessons were provided that are consistently organized according to the workshop model with clear mini-lessons that connect learning to previous concepts and engage students in guided and independent practice. Hands-on activities, the use of manipulatives, scaffolding with the aid of tools such as, graphic organizers and the use of technology to present information and provide assessment opportunities were evident in classrooms visited. Differentiation was noted in various forms including leveled texts, differing rubrics and tasks for student groupings. For example, in a K-2 classroom, the teacher modeled how to “read” a story through a picture walk. She then asked the students “What animal is this?” “Where does the animal live?” Although the school has provided professional development on Webb’s Depth of Knowledge, in some classrooms teachers used basic recall questions, which did not give students opportunities to expand on concepts, thus limiting the level of discussion. As a result, some students were not challenged to meet high levels of thinking as evidenced by the use of questions across classrooms.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Public School 771	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