



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

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

# Quality Review Report 2013-2014

**Public School 096**

**Elementary School 096**

**130-01 Rockaway Blvd  
Queens  
NY 11420**

**Principal: Vivian O. Eweka**

**Dates of review: May 14 - 15, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Michele Lloyd-Bey**

## **Part 1: The school context**

### **Information about the school**

P.S. 96 is an elementary school with 322 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 27% Black, 14% Hispanic, 2% White, and 40% Asian students. The student body includes 9% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 93.70%.

### **Overall Evaluation**

**This school is proficient**

## Part 2: Overview

### What the school does well

- The school implements the Core Knowledge program that is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) with integration of the instructional shifts so that a diversity of learners are cognitively engaged. (1.1)
  - Across all grades, the school has adopted a Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) based curricula that includes all subject areas deeply aligned to the Core Knowledge programs' curriculum maps and pacing calendars. The science cluster teacher serves all classes and integrates content areas, utilizing the New York State Science Scope and Sequence, providing students with a rich inter-disciplinary instructional program. The school further enhanced its science program by offering early grade students hands-on experiences by engaging them in a science, technology, engineering art, and math (STEAM) program, thereby seeking to strengthen the school's interdisciplinary approach to learning and deepen students' engagement opportunities. Literacy maps were adjusted to include applications of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), big ideas, essential questions, and assessments. Teachers work collaboratively in teams, and other professional collaborative groups with the leadership and is supported by the school's Network team to meticulously evaluate the school's new CCLS aligned literacy program, and make adjustments that include rigorous tasks, and higher-order thinking questions, integrate guided reading, the instructional shifts, including text-complexity, ensuring that all grades and classes have ample opportunities to engage in a range of genres. Furthermore, teachers employ close reading strategies and annotations, citing author's craft and structure of the text so that students have a deep understanding of author's purpose and support claims using multiple sources of text-based evidence. In math, teachers adjusted the pacing calendar of the math program and aligned it with New York State's Scope and Sequence, resulting in students having learned all concepts by the time that they take the State math assessments. The school's well-aligned standards-based instructional program begins in pre-kindergarten, serves as a foundation for the, primary grades where students utilize a theme-based literacy program and a plethora of resources, such as books, songs, and thematic units of study. As a result, students' thinking has been expanded so that all learners make more real world connections, and are exposed to a variety of learning opportunities leading to college and career readiness.
- Teaching practices are grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching, enabling all learners to engage in appropriately challenging tasks that are reflected in higher-order thinking in student work products. (1.2)
  - Across classrooms, the learning environment is reflective of the school's belief about how students learn best as teachers structure lessons that enable students to engage in peer discussion, critical thinking based on higher-order questions, and evidences respect and cooperation for learning. Furthermore, multiple entry points that reflect tiered tasks, checklists, rubrics, and graphic organizers as valuable support resources,

were utilized across classrooms. For this school year, the entire school is centered on Danielson Framework for Teaching, with a focus on questioning and discussion. During my observation of a grade 5 math lesson, the teacher engaged students in a higher-order thinking lesson that integrated math and literacy. The teacher captured students' attention as she integrated the explorations of Henry Hudson in her math lesson about longitude and latitude. Students utilized the Smart board and worked in small groups in which the teacher provided scaffolds for all learners. Students participated in "team talk questions", such as, "How did prior explorations pave the way for Hudson's journey?" Students created a coordinate grid and provided text-based evidence and reasoning for their thinking. Consequently, a school wide focus and attention to continuous improvement in teacher practice result in improved student engagement, discussion, and student work products for all learners.

- The principal strategically aligns resources to the school's instructional goals, and data-driven student programs and teacher talent prepare students for the next level. (1.3)
  - Teachers are programmed so that they have optimal time to engage in professional collaborations, such as in inquiry work. Teachers use their time to analyze data, evaluate student work, adjust curriculum maps, and prepare CCLS align lessons that support the new instructional programs. Since technology is embedded in the majority of the school's instruction, the principal allocated RESO A Technology Grant funds, provided by the school's local elected Councilman, to upgrade the SMART boards, computers, laptops and desktops utilized in all classrooms, facilitated the wiring of the building for high-speed connectivity, thus furthering the improvement in student work products in all subject areas. Partnerships are a welcome commodity in the school, and well thought out in order to provide students with opportunities that link to their specific needs. Therefore, students participate in a college tour experience; attend museums such as the Guggenheim, while music and dance collaborations provide assembly programs and afterschool opportunities to the diversity of learners. The school's Out of School Time afterschool programs are data-informed and offer homework support to students performing at the lowest third in the building. Student progress is closely monitored, and students not making sufficient progress receive additional support from academic support staff who push into classrooms and work in small differentiated groups. Project Boost, supports grade 4 youngsters who lack experiences, by including them in visiting historical sites across the City to align with grade 4's social studies curriculum. Visiting Gracie Mansion in New York City, promoted educational learning opportunities that improved students' academic language and enabled them to produce meaningful work products.
  - The school works closely with its Network, which provides ongoing professional development in all areas that support the school's goals in literacy, math, and special education. All teachers, including teachers of students with disabilities, have deeply benefitted from training sessions, evidenced in a special education multi-grade classroom where students worked individually and in groups on measurement, data, and geometry, to discuss and actively engage in tasks about polygons. The school's

math cluster teacher and the Reading Recovery/Core Knowledge Facilitator provide direct support to students and teachers. These support teachers are members on teacher teams, and bring their expertise to deepen their colleagues' analysis and evaluation of student work, identify areas of strengths, challenges, and next steps. Furthermore, cluster teachers support their colleagues with the CCLS and the instructional shifts, sharing formative assessment results, and the collegial observation of teacher practice. All staff, including those assigned to the school for a short while hold themselves accountable for students having access to college and career readiness.

- The principal has well-organized systems for monitoring the development of teachers to ensure that effective feedback and next step guidance utilizes the Danielson Framework to improve pedagogy and student outcomes. (4.1)
  - The principal strongly emphasizes the Danielson Framework for Teaching and has established a transparent system so that teachers receive ongoing and direct feedback of clear expectations regarding their practice. Due to the high priority and attention that is given to the observation of teacher practice, the principal provides teachers with constant professional development relative to Danielson and effective feedback, conducted face-to face, verbally, and/or in a written document follow-up that serves to inform the teacher of what was observed, and to foster a professional dialogue regarding pedagogy. Cluster teachers, experienced staff, and staff from the Children First Network (CFN), all play a vital role in supporting teachers improve their pedagogy. The principal maintains a calendar of observations, and a trend analysis identifies the areas of strengths and challenges in teacher development that is used to coordinate professional development. Teachers maintain their own collection of observation artifacts that are used in the evaluation system, further enabling the leadership to facilitate focused and informed discussions. Based on the principal's analysis of teacher growth, teachers have improved in planning assessment and questioning and teachers utilize professional learning opportunities such as Teaching Channel and Engage NY to refine their craft. To ensure that the entire school is centered directly on the Danielson Framework model, teachers observe each other and provide actionable feedback to peers, such as the utilization of graphic organizers, and rubrics. As a result, the school's determined consistency in pedagogy that reflects clear expectations for teacher practice supports teacher development.

### **What the school needs to improve**

- Refine the use of assessment practices in order to make effective adjustments so that all students, including English Language learners and students with disabilities, demonstrate increased mastery. (2.2)
  - The leadership and teachers frequently collect and analyze a wide range of data, including formative assessments, benchmark assessments, baseline assessments, rubrics, performance tasks, summative data, and data from sources directly aligned with the school's instructional programs. Primary grade teachers create their own assessments aligned with their grade's performance tasks. The principal emphasizes data analysis regarding the performance of English language learners and

students with disabilities. In addition to tracking all students' independent reading levels, staff carefully monitor students' comprehension skills. The school normed the Fountas and Pinnell independent reading assessments by ensuring that all early grade teachers know how to conduct running records in order to produce reliable results in student performance. However, the school is still strengthening its system so that some individual class and subject area teachers working with groups of students are proficient in how they aggregate and analyze formative assessment data that can be shared in order that adjustments are made in a timely manner to further enhance strategic instructional interventions and impact is continued on student achievement.

- The school's goals are intent on improving questioning and discussion across the school. Observation of teacher pedagogy reflected teachers' use of effective questioning during interim periods of class instruction, as a strategy to check for understanding. For example, in a fourth grade class where students participated in a science lesson about simple machines the teacher engaged students by acknowledging their learning styles, used exit slips to assess students' learning, and provided extensions for accelerated learners. However, while the school utilizes various forms of formative assessments, rubrics, and provides reflective processes, such as checklists, teachers do not strategically assess student performance based on the use of the assessment sources thus missing out on aligning goals to each student by grade, class, and subject. As a result, there are missed opportunities for students to be aware of their next learning steps.
- Enhance systems used to effectively collaborate with families to further support student progress towards the expectations of college and career readiness and result in students being prepared for the next level (3.4)
  - The school leader consistently communicates high expectations for student learning. The school ensures that families have opportunities to participate in workshops on topics such as the CCLS. A parent newsletter outlines the Core Virtue of the month informing parents of the character trait that the school will focus on, and encourages them to help their children to reflect on positive behavior. Furthermore, parents are kept abreast of their children's progress via the school's computer generated progress report system that provides students and their families with timely information regarding performance in all subject areas. The periodic dissemination of student progress reports while informing parents of their children's progress in school offers opportunities for reciprocal feedback and enables families to support their children at home. However, the school's efforts to strengthen its culture of high expectations and accountability for academic success, attendance, misses out on engaging some parents, thus hindering some students towards moving to their next learning level.

## Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: P.S.96	UD	D	P	WD			
<b>Overall QR Score</b>			<b>X</b>				
<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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
<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?			<b>X</b>				
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations?			<b>X</b>				
<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?				<b>X</b>			
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?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning?			<b>X</b>				
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?			<b>X</b>				
<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>