



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Quality Review
Office of School Quality
Division of Academics, Performance, and Support
2013-2014**

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Susan B. Anthony

Middle School Q238

**88- 15 182 Street
Queens
NY 11432**

Principal: Peter J. Leddy

Dates of review: October 21 – 23, 2013

Lead Reviewer: Lenon C. Murray

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Susan B. Anthony, IS 238 is a middle school with 1588 students from 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 45% Black, 23% Hispanic, 2% White, and 27% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 93.2%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is proficient.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- The school leadership facilitates the use of curricula that are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and content standards to offer a range of learning experiences that provide rigor to all students. (1.1)
 - The school leadership selected Scholastic CODEX for English language arts (ELA) and Pearson Connected Mathematics Project 3 (CMP3) for math to provide materials that are more closely aligned to the CCLS. Due to delivery and logistical difficulties, the school is beginning the school year with units of study that were recently aligned to CCLS including the instructional shifts in ELA and math. Social Studies and science units continue to become aligned with an emphasis on academic vocabulary and evidence-based writing. Lesson plans reviewed across grades and subjects reveal an emphasis on curriculum which is coherent and areas of growth have been identified. There is an intentional effort to close the gaps for all students including English language learners and students with disabilities. For example, the first two units in English language arts are aligned to social studies. The social studies teacher team is developing assignments which focus on close reading of texts. Students with disabilities receive a guided orientation to the required tasks in small groups. In an eighth grade class, students were interrogating the text as they studied nineteenth century businessmen like Carnegie and Getty and their impact on the national economy at that time. Additionally, curriculum map documentation and performance task planning in mathematics focused on measurement showed alignment across grades with an emphasis on real life problems. An eighth grade math class analyzed and graphed data to create positive and negative scatter plots which revealed identifiable trends. Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) tool is used to increase the rigor for tasks assigned particularly to English language learners and students with disabilities. These students were observed analyzing multiple meanings of rigorous material, specifically the poems "The Road Less Travelled" and "Call me Maria". The school is also an active participant in the Middle School Quality Initiative which is strong on CCLS literacy across all content areas. As a result, student work demonstrates evidence of extended thinking and increasing mastery of content.
- The school's teachers utilize various forms of assessment and consistent grading policies to monitor student progress and adjust instructional strategies in response to learners' needs. (2.2)
 - Teachers across the school routinely utilize a range of summative and formative assessments such as Progress Reports, Quality Review, State Report Card data, Acuity and unit tests to assess student needs. Now they are working actively on the Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) and the benchmarks associated with these measures. Information gained from the analysis of these assessments is used to group students, plan lessons and adjust curricula. For example, in two integrated team teaching classes, teachers were able to explain how data impacted their flexible grouping. Grading policies have been streamlined across the

school. Teacher teams engage in the analysis of student work using customized rubrics. Teachers provide specific next steps for students as often as needed. Grades are placed online and are available to students and families. Teachers track student progress with a range of classroom-level data including unit tests according to their school-based assessment calendar and the new curriculum materials. Progress is monitored within specific skill areas and across a range of formats including academic vocabulary, literacy level and math performance assessment tasks. Additionally, teachers examine trends across subgroups at least three times a year and use their findings to inform instruction to strengthen areas of weakness and facilitate small groups. As a result, the school has shown increases in math and literacy progress compared to the same time last year.

- The proactive principal makes informed and highly effective organizational decisions that promote the school's goals and support improvements in student learning evidenced in superior work products. (1.3)
 - The principal has assigned an assistant principal with the responsibility of overseeing the special education and English as a second language instruction. This assistant principal promotes a shared path to success in which students with disabilities (SWDs) are fully integrated into the mainstream educational pathways of the school. Team teaching is rampant in the school and struggling students receive individualized support during the regular teaching of the lesson. Special Education teachers meet with their subject area and grade level colleagues at least twice each week to collaborate on improving instruction and maintaining the rigor in academic tasks. In a social studies teacher team meeting, the participants expressed gratitude for the progress made over the past two years in increasing the challenge of their assigned tasks. As a result, student work (even this early in the school year) shows a marked improvement over last year when measured by the same rubrics.
 - Students utilize classroom computers as well as literacy and math software products to support them in meeting their classroom goals. Some interactive white boards are used by teachers regularly. The school has four peer instructional coaches who are instrumental in the full integration of the Danielson Teaching Framework into all classrooms. A teacher effectiveness coach visits regularly from the cluster team. This effort has resulted in improved instruction as indicated by the Danielson rubric.
- The school implements frequent classroom observations and actionable feedback using the Danielson Framework for Teaching and analyzes learning outcomes to improve teaching strategies and practices. (4.1)
 - School leaders have already completed the initial planning conferences for the teaching staff. They are committed to formal and informal classroom observations fully aligned to the Danielson Teaching Framework. Classroom inter-visitations, often facilitated by peer instructional coaches, along with learning walks support teachers in improving their professional growth. Teachers who are probationary or developing receive increased attention commensurate with their needs. The majority of teachers have requested informal observations with

discussion and feedback from administrators. A review of student work is included in teacher supervisory communication with leadership. School leaders focus on collaboration and customized professional development. Feedback is precise and expectations are clearly articulated in each teacher's observation log. A teacher effectiveness trainer from the Cluster works with the teachers to unpack the Danielson rubric on their behalf. Teachers plan with school leaders and review data in their teams. A social studies teacher said, "This is the clearest idea I have had about how and what to teach in the past four years". As a result, teachers continue to volunteer for and participate in professional development leading to increased growth and reflection as evidenced in teacher team minutes and agendas.

What the school needs to improve

- Refine teaching practices to ensure that teachers provide multiple curricular entry points for all learners including ELLs and SWDs to produce quality work products. (1.2)
 - Teachers are clearly expressing in discussions and team meetings a cluster of beliefs grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching. For example, they are asking questions using the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels. Teachers plan and use scaffolds to facilitate instruction in direct response to students' performance and interests. Grouping strategies are purposeful to increase learning. Several classrooms demonstrate careful planning and sequencing of lessons like the eighth grade English language arts class where the teacher showed a video clip to reinforce a strong lesson about a homeless student who worked her way into Harvard. The school believes that students learn best from mini-lessons followed by guided practice before independent practice and assessment. This has led to higher order thinking skills as demonstrated in writing displayed in classrooms and student workbooks. However, the vast majority of student work, notebooks and portfolios do not consistently show evidence of tiered support that facilitates the greatest student progress. This is particularly the case for English language learners and students with disabilities. This has led to academic under-performance among student subgroups as measured by the most recent baseline assessments.
- Further develop the structures that regularly evaluate and adjust the policies and processes driving the coherence of CCLS integration. (5.1)
 - The teacher teams that were visited had an established practice of documenting and reporting the material that was covered at each meeting. These documents become available to the administration and faculty. Teacher teams work with each other to review student work and develop ideas on adjusting units to more fully implement the CCLS expectations. A talent coach from the cluster works with peer instructional coaches to enhance the necessary instructional shifts. However, the teacher teams visited were not always clear about what teachers need to learn to support student mastery of the CCLS. As a result, administrators were not always able to adjust the use of organizational resources including per session resources and supplementary texts to rapidly improve teacher learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Susan B. Anthony IS 238	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