



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report 2013-2014

Corporal Allan F. Kivlehan

Elementary School 006

**555 Page Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10307**

Principal: Cynthia DiFolco

Dates of review: March 26-27, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Mary Barton

Part 1: The school context

Information about the school

Public School 6 is an elementary school with 757 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 1% Black, 11% Hispanic, 84% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 23% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 94.6%.

Overall Evaluation

This school is well developed.

Part 2: Overview

What the school does well

- Curricula, purposefully aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrating the instructional shifts, offer a wide range of rigorous experiences that are accessible to all learners. (1.1)
 - The school makes purposeful decisions around curricula and resources to ensure alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). The instructional shifts for English language arts and mathematics are reflected coherently. The school selected five focus standards each in English language arts and mathematics that teachers would hone in on in their units and lessons. These focus standards reflect, by grade level in grades 3, 4 and 5, the five areas that students performed the poorest on in the 2013 New York State assessments. The school looked at their resources, including the Teachers College Reading and Writing project, to address these gaps. In addition, school level and sub group data revealed that there were needed modifications such as ensuring that the text complexity of books and other literature were rigorous. Members of the Children First Network team (CFN) worked with teachers around facilitating the close reading of sufficiently rigorous text and providing scaffolds around text. The school adopted NewsELA, a resource for current non-fiction text, which enables text to be assigned by lexile level. Knowing that students need a rich vocabulary, the school continues to use Wordly Wise, enabling students to be exposed to complex text and vocabulary. The school adopted Engage New York modules as the major resource for their mathematics units of study and use ThinkCentral resources. The modules stress conceptual thinking rather than algorithmic thinking. DOK level 3 and 4 questioning and activities have been woven into units to enable students to be exposed to higher order thinking and to acquire rigorous habits. For example, in a fifth grade unit, students solve word problems using fraction and decimal multiplication and show their thinking both mathematically and in writing. Problems are around real world application. Scaffolds and supports are provided to those students needing them. For instance, videos from Learn Zillion are used to introduce concepts so that students see the concept, helping them to understand it. Picture cues are used to help students master math language. Students with disabilities and English language learners solve the same type of problems as other students with modifications and share their strategies. This work in mathematics has resulted in increased student achievement as well as in progress toward college and career readiness. Students in grade 3 showed an average increase of 38% in the five focus standards assessed from January to March. Grade 4 and 5 students showed a 32% and 22% increase on the five focus standards respectively during the same period.
- Teaching practices across the school reflect a common belief about student learning and consistently provide strategic supports to meet varied student needs. (1.2)
 - Well informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching, the majority of students are engaged in learning and there is a strong belief that students

learn best when they are assessed often and take ownership for their success. With teachers using the workshop model to provide direct instruction, classroom visits reflected students working in pairs and small groups on tasks planned based on data to complement student needs and interests. Peer and team discussions were viewed as well as students use of tactile and visual materials to deepen their knowledge of content with teachers checking in with students to assess learning. In one classroom, fifth grade students were working on problem solving around fractions with one group of students being asked to convert ingredients of a cookie recipe to yield $\frac{1}{2}$ of the recipe, and then twice and three times. Another group was asked to look at a more complex cookie recipe but to convert the recipe to $\frac{1}{2}$ of it and then to 12 dozen. A third group, needing support, was asked to work on a salad dressing recipe and to convert it to serve six. All students showed their thinking by drawing a model and writing about it. In a third grade classroom, students were learning about the concept of identifying and representing shaded and non-shaded parts of one whole as fractions with students working in groups on application problems. Students drew models and wrote their thinking. Problem solving checklists and manipulatives were used by student groups as they worked on problems planned for them based on data from the day before. Unit plans, created by teacher teams, show a consistency that students are met at their entry point based on assessment information and are required to share their thinking. In a first grade classroom, students learned ways to get through “tricky words” so that they could be in charge of their own reading. With the teacher modeling how to work with words in context, students then used this strategy to read and write examples on post it notes of how they got through the “tricky words” so the teacher could assess students. Students, who needed further support, were pulled in a small group. Classrooms consistently had purposeful charts around current units of study with “retired” charts in a location for students to reference as needed. Word walls for specific content areas are also available. Most teachers have word walls with overused or “fried” words, prompting students to use more engaging vocabulary with suggestions provided. As a result, discussions and student work reflect higher order thinking opportunities and students work on rigorous tasks with supports provided to students when they require it.

- The principal’s thoughtful school organization and the effective use of resources supports school wide instructional goals and the learning needs of students. (1.3)
 - The principal has prioritized the use of the budget for this non-Title I school as well as the resources of the school’s partners to support the school’s instructional goals. In knowing that the work of teachers is critical to student success, the school applied for and committed to a partnership with United Federation of Teachers in bringing in a UFT Teachers’ Center and funding the salary of a coach who provides support around mathematics instruction, unit development and lesson planning. The coach works with teachers around their pedagogy, specifically in changing mathematics instruction to be more conceptual and to structure student dialogue around problem solving so that students share their thinking and teachers see and accept multiple pathways to solutions. Teachers spoke to the “invaluable” support they receive having the coach and the center in the school. The school, knowing that they wanted to keep the Teachers College Reading and Writing program, struggled with

how they would be able to pay to remain in the program which includes the services of a staff developer for 20 days and participation in 30 calendar days. The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) was asked to consider helping to fund the school's participation and, after teachers presented information about the importance of having Teachers College (TC) remain as the main resource for the school's reading and writing curricula, agreed to fund \$20,000 of the cost for the 2013-14 school year. The school funds the remaining cost including per diem days for teachers to attend professional development at TC and/or at the school. Student reading levels using the TC Assessment Pro show that students have increased reading levels. 58% of self-contained students had a gain of at least two reading levels between the November and March assessments. 85% of third grade students and 83% of both fourth and fifth grade students had a gain of at least two reading levels during the same period. The PTA also funded part of the cost of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program (PBIS), particularly the K-coin store, new this school year. Knowing that arts education is essential, the school recommitted to having students experience arts in a variety of ways. In addition to having a full time visual arts teacher, the principal hired a full time music teacher. Arts residencies include the Shubert Theater group for fourth and fifth graders funded by a grant from Arts Connection, Carnegie Hall for students in grades one and two and a puppet making and performance partnership for kindergarten students. Students in kindergarten, grades 1 and 2 also perform in assemblies to which parents are invited. The use of technology by students and teachers is a non-negotiable. Students use iPads in multifaceted ways including research. They are used to support students at their entry points with particular apps and web sites. Teachers use document cameras and smart boards using student work as springboards for instruction. As a result of this purposeful use of school resources, student informational and argumentative writing consistently reflects evidence from text and mathematics problem solving reflects students' steps and written rationale.

- In reviewing the item skills analysis from the 2013 New York State assessments in English language arts and mathematics, the school created plans to work with those students who needed additional support. In ensuring that instructional time is used strategically, the Extended Day program was departmentalized so that instruction is implemented in cycles around particular standards and differentiated to meet students' needs. General education students in grades 4 and 5 who scored a level 1 receive support from an Integrated Co-Teacher. These teachers each work with a consistent group of students three periods a week providing Tier 2 and Tier 3 intervention services through a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. The progress of these students is monitored every 6-8 weeks. In studying the results of student work, 37 out of 45 identified students have made progress as measured by school created assessments. Those students who are not making progress may be referred for additional intervention services. Students' progress is discussed at bi-weekly Pupil Personnel meetings. Minutes are shared with the entire faculty so that all staff working with particular students has the same information to use into their planning. This work has resulted in an 8% reduction of students who are referred for IEPs from this time last year to this year. Additionally, a second Integrated Co-Teaching class was created in the fourth grade to support students with the teachers of

one of the two classes having looped with a majority of the students from grade 3. With new structures for Extended Day and RTI, teachers share information about student progress regularly and have a shared accountability along with administrators for student success. This work has resulted in students making progress in English language arts and mathematics as evidenced through students' work portfolios and individual learning goals.

- The school promotes a safe environment that supports collaborative relationships, good attendance and appropriate behaviors, which enable students' academic and personal growth. (1.4)
 - The school has worked diligently to build a culture of true collaboration among the faculty and to enable students to acquire academic and personal behaviors that will enable them to be college and career ready. The school community's belief system is that if students name and own the behaviors they develop then students will achieve and move towards college and career readiness. Teachers, being fully aware of and working toward meeting the school's goals, work as grade level teams to plan lessons and units of study, look at student work using this information to add to their tool box of practices. Study groups, led by the UFT Teacher Center coach, have taken place around the reading of the professional book, Differentiation in Practice. In recognizing that the school needed to raise the level of awareness for students of the academic and personal behaviors needed for college and career, students also have been encouraged to develop specific behaviors around self-regulation, persevering through complex text and problems and building stamina in reading. One student spoke to the fact that she knows that she has built stamina in her reading because she can read "longer and stronger." In looking at ways the school could improve discipline and to enable students to fully own their behaviors, the school, in partnership with the PTA, adopted the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) program. With input from the members of the school community including students, the school, with student input, has created a rubric with behavioral expectations for students displayed in the school. With an emphasis on respect, safety and showing responsibility, students earn "K-coins" which they use to redeem rewards at the school store. The school also has a new motto, developed this year, "P.S. 6: A Community Where We Are Respectful, Responsible and Safe." Students and adults have also written two PBIS songs, one of which is sung by all students at the start of the day as a part of the morning announcements, written and led by students. Through this work, student on-line occurrences have decreased by 25% to date. Students are recognized monthly through student of the month, and school spirit awards with expectations for those awards shared around the school. Students spoke to enjoying the opportunities they have to show exemplary behaviors and love collecting the "K-coins". One student said, "I love being rewarded for my good behavior." Students also stated how they are known and cared for very well by staff members. A full time guidance counselor meets with students and the school has brought in assembly programs and a Substance Abuse Prevention and Intervention (SAPIS) worker from a local middle school to work with fourth and fifth graders around good decision making and preparing for middle school. Members of the School Achievement Team interact with students during their lunch periods to support students who need an adult to talk to. Students are greeted daily by them as a

check in at the start of the day. Students have the opportunity to take on leadership roles in student council. Students make suggestions to administrators through the use of a suggestion box around school issues. Student council members meet with the principal to discuss matters important to students such as PBIS, and how to spend money raised through Penny Harvest. Through this consistent focus around academic and personal behaviors, students are able to speak to and act on what they need to do to be college and career ready.

- Thoughtful observation, feedback and professional development systems aligned to the Danielson framework and specific needs of teachers support professional growth throughout the school. (4.1)
 - Knowing that the instructional practice of teachers is critical to student success, school leaders support not only the development of new teachers but of all teachers based on their particular needs. All teachers set instructional goals around particular competencies of the Danielson framework which are followed up on through the observation process. Teachers review the progress of their goals mid-year and can modify goals, adding new ones where it may be appropriate based on observation reports to date. For example, one teacher has a goal around improving her daily assessment practices in mathematics. Through feedback from supervisors and the support of the coach, this teacher now uses a daily exit slip. Her work toward this goal has been reflected in her observation reports. Supervisors strategically review student portfolios in English language arts, and mathematics in addition to viewing the execution of lessons to provide targeted feedback and actionable next steps to teachers. Teachers have received five cycles of observations to date. Often teachers are directed to a video from ARIS Learn or a professional article that will help with future lessons. Teachers spoke to the observation process and feedback being supportive and propelling them to improve to effective and/or highly effective practices. One teacher, initially, was still the dominant figure in dialogue in the classroom and was not assessing students for their understanding on a daily basis forming two goals for this teacher for the year. With feedback over several observations and support from classroom inter visitations, the teacher has now released control of discussions moving from always whole class to students having discussion in groups and in pairs. The teacher has also developed checklists and conference protocols to assess student mastery. Professional development is customized for teachers based on the support needed. Supervisors have a professional development plan that speaks to the support given to each teacher. Professional development ranges from teachers participating in inter visitation of classrooms of teachers who have exhibited exemplary work around particular Danielson competencies as well as around curricula and assessment practices. For example, two new special education teachers who are assigned to teach Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms have visited another ICT classroom to view parallel and station teaching. This focus on actionable feedback, next steps and support has resulted in improvements in instructional practice as measured through observation reports and data from Advance which indicates that currently 85% of teachers are rated effective or highly effective in competency 3b using questioning and discussion as compared to 54% earlier in the year and 75% of teachers are rated effective or highly effective in competency 3d

using assessment of learning as compared to 57% earlier in the school year.

What the school needs to improve

- Build on the tools used to determine student progress across sub groups so that results are used to further adjust curriculum and instruction. (2.2)
 - In reviewing student data from the 2013 New York State assessments and using the item skills analysis in English language arts and mathematics, the school determined that the five areas that the students performed poorest in would serve as five focus standards this school year. Unit planning and lesson planning is adjusted based on this work. With that said, teachers have fashioned assessments in mathematics using resources from Engage New York to assess student progress three times this year on these five focus standards specifically, separate from regular unit assessments. Additionally, data was broken down so that specific sub groups were identified such as the bottom 1/3, the “push” group who had scored between 2.5 and 3.25, high achievers and special education students. With this focus in mathematics instruction, students in the bottom 1/3 in grade 4 had a 13% increase and special education students had a 17% increase in their score on the 4th grade focus standards from January to March. Fifth grade students in the “push” group had a 22% increase in the five focus standards in their grade. In English language arts, the school assesses students using the Teachers College Assessment Pro three times yearly. Students are also given on demand writing assessments at the start and end of a unit of study in writing. Traits from the measures of student learning data (MOSL) are also studied. Information from these literacy assessments are used to adjust units and lessons. At this time, there is not as clear a connection with the results of these literacy assessments as there is in mathematics to the progress students are making on the five focus standards. As a result, there is an incomplete picture of mastery for students in literacy hindering instructional and curricular modifications.
 - Across classrooms, teachers are articulate in their assessment process in order to capture ongoing summative and formative data to measure student progress. Teachers use data binders to gather and evaluate student assessment information including common assessments, MOSL benchmark data, conference notes, and unit assessments. Teachers use this information along with daily exit slips and/or conference information to then group students who are in need of remediation or enrichment. Students reported that teacher feedback is very clear to them via rubrics written in student friendly language. This feedback along with the self-assessment they participate in using checklists focuses them on the goals they are working towards. For example, students in a grade 1 classroom could speak to the use of a checklist in writing and why it was important. Report cards have been revised to reflect the grading policy. Grades and feedback are tied to the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards. With that said, it is important for all students to be able to speak to their next steps. In some cases, they could not. Although assessment practices for routinely checking for understanding are consistent across classrooms, there are missed opportunities for some students to take on full ownership of their learning.

Part 3: School Quality Criteria 2013-2014

School name: Corporal Allan F. Kivlehan	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