



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**P.S. 006**

**Elementary School K006**

**43 Snyder Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11226**

**Principal: Ellen Carlisle**

**Date of review: December 12, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Debra R. Lamb, Ed.D.**

## The School Context

P.S. 006 is an elementary school with 750 students from Kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 73% Black, 24% Hispanic, 2% White, 0% Asian, and 1% Other students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 92%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>Focus</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are Common Core-aligned, integrate the instructional shifts, and are planned and refined using student work and data.

### Impact

Across grades and subject areas, there is coherence, access, and cognitive engagement by all students in the curricula and in tasks that promote college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- Decisions regarding P.S. 6's English language arts (ELA) and mathematics curricula were informed by data highlighting the strengths and focus area identified for each grade level. The school's instructional focus statement is: "Students will develop their (a) skills in using evidence to support arguments in discussion, which will lead to stronger opinion writing in literacy and problem solving in mathematics; and (b) communication and collaboration skills in support of college and career readiness."
- "We basically instill the following elements in our curriculum...it should (a) be challenging, (b) be aligned to the Common Core, (c) be customized for individual students, and (d) have scaffolded instruction," said Principal Carlisle. "Through professional development and other means of communication, we make sure that everyone understands this. It's not about giving students more work...it's about getting students to think deeply and to be college ready. Previously, the school used *Everyday Math* (University of Chicago) for mathematics. "When the Common Core began we used *EngageNY*. However, we needed materials in the school, not just accessible online," said Principal Carlisle. "We went with *GO Math!* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt), which we felt was aligned to the Common Core. For many years we used *StoryTown* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) for literacy, which students loved. *StoryTown* had rigor and it was something we could monitor. We went with *ReadyGEN*<sup>™</sup> (Pearson), which has complex text and a balance of fiction and non-fiction. However, we felt the need to enhance phonics, so we invested in Pearson's phonics program. Teachers attended workshops about the positive changes made to *ReadyGEN*<sup>™</sup> last year, but we're still looking to strengthen it in the early grades." As *ReadyGEN*<sup>™</sup> did not come with a lot of support for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs), the school found it necessary to supplement with visuals, graphics, and interactive support from outside sources, such as *SuccessMaker*<sup>®</sup> (Pearson), *EngageNY*, *WiDA*<sup>™</sup> (formerly World-class Instructional Design and Assessment), and *Ready*<sup>®</sup> *New York CCLS* (Curriculum Associates). Teachers also mentioned a plan to use *Foundations*<sup>®</sup>.
- "Revisions to the curricula are an ongoing work-in-progress," said a fourth-grade teacher. "The first thing we discovered is that we teachers were talking a lot...the children were not talking because the material is very scripted. We now use *EngageNY* to support our lessons because *ReadyGEN*<sup>™</sup> doesn't necessarily support ELLs and students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). The anchor texts are above the levels of some students, which is done intentionally for rigor. The SETTS' (special education teacher technology specialists) classes use components from *ReadyGEN*<sup>™</sup> to intervene with mandated and at-risk students. As a scaffold and multiple entry point, we have enabled students to listen to the text with audio through the SMARTboard."

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

### Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts, as well as by discussions at the team and school levels.

### Impact

Teaching practices reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership.

### Supporting Evidence

- “There are so many resources here...anytime I go to any of the coaches, they are always available and can help me see what I need to work on,” said a teacher. “We do a lot of intervisitations to each other’s classes,” said a teacher. “Sometimes we may hear each other teaching and just pop in when we hear something interesting going on.” “There’s an open door policy,” said Principal Carlisle. “They seek each other’s help regarding best practices. Two fifth-grade teachers even re-taught a lesson for a fellow fifth-grade teacher. We’ve made changes in some teachers’ assignments based on their strengths. As part of the professional development committee, we compiled a list of topics that we would like to focus on, including a three-week focus on writing, the Danielson rubric, differentiation and Universal Designs for Learning (UDL) to meet the needs of all students,” said another teacher. Professional development has been provided to teachers on UDL.
- Consistent with the school’s emphasis on core instruction, intervention specialists push-into rather than pullout students for services. Some teachers have been trained in Wilson and one of our future trainings will be focused on phonics and decoding. “The school receives on-site professional development from the Center on Response to Intervention (RtI) at American Institutes for Research (AIR) intended to develop a common vocabulary and understanding of the RtI framework. The school provides supplemental activities to increase fluency for second-grade ELLs and phonemic awareness for first-grade ELLs. In January, the school will begin a Title III-funded afterschool program for ELLs in grades three through five. “We do move kids and a lot of our students with disabilities do well,” said Principal Carlisle. A lot of higher performing kids are pulled by charter schools at the fourth-grade level.”
- Fifth-grade teachers shared that they’re focused a lot on the writing process. “We started with text evidence because there was a need to teach kids to cite examples. Now, the next thing is ‘plucking’—borrowing from the text with the intent of going deeper into such areas as author’s purpose.” Third-grade teachers are focused on comprehension and writing. “The writing was missing details, so we’ve had to dig deeper in the writing,” said a teacher. “By the time June comes, we’ll have this.” Kindergarten teachers shared, “Our main concern is lesson planning and assessment. The children are not really getting the math...we have to use a lot of manipulatives. They can count in sequence but not out of sequence. We started off writing one sentence and now they’re up to three sentences.” The gym teacher shared that she incorporated opinion writing in her practice on such topics as sportsmanship. “I incorporate math a lot because we do a lot of scoring in gym. Students learned what BMI (body mass index) is and how to calculate it.”

## Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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### Findings

Teachers use common assessments, rubrics, and grading policies aligned with the school's curricula. School wide and classroom data offer a clear portrait of student mastery and progress towards goals, enabling teachers to track progress and adjust curricular and instructional decisions.

### Impact

Actionable and meaningful feedback is provided to students and teachers regarding student achievement. All students, including students with special needs, demonstrate increased mastery.

### Supporting Evidence

- P.S. 6 began assessment in September 2014 using the Measures of Student Learning (MoSLs)—*mCLASS®:Reading 3D™*—a Text Reading and Comprehension (TRC) diagnostic assessment software in Kindergarten through grade two, and the New York City predictive tests in grades three through five. “We also use teacher-created assessments, e.g., four questions based on the standards following a re-teach to see if students have a better understanding of the standard,” said a teacher. During classroom group work, teachers use checklists to document their observations of students who are meeting standards, approaching standards, and performing below a specific standard. The school also uses assessments embedded in such technology-based programs as *ThinkCentral* and *Soar to Success* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt) and *MegaMath*. Teachers have ongoing training on the use of SMARTboards and every teacher has an Ipad.
- Teachers focus on the bottom third and high achievers,” said Principal Carlisle. “We’ve seen progress with both ELA and mathematics. We look at common trends...looking for weaknesses. We’ve identified a weakness in measurement and data in the third grade. They’re also weak in making inferences...interpreting the graphs and making predictions. Teachers use exit slips, post-it methods, and checklists as formative assessments. Teachers created and use a common standards-based rubric. “I’m actually using data productively,” said a teacher. “I study the data, make groupings, and implement instruction. At fourth-grade, we’re digging deeper. We saw that third graders did not do so well on the state exam. First we needed to figure out the entry points—what did they know and didn’t know? From this, we modified the lessons...if it doesn’t work today, then we’ll figure it out for tomorrow.” A second-grade teacher added, “In ELA, we’ve tried to dig in deep for evidence because we know that we’re feeding the testing grade next year.”
- An upper-grade teacher commented, “The kids are getting used to choice. For example, they learned six different ways to do multiplication through distributive property and partial products. It’s their responsibility to think about it and select what works for them.” A lower-grade teacher added, “We work a lot with math drills to build fluency. Some kids are still counting with their fingers...this should be like breathing—automatic.”

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide training tied to expectations about a path to college and career readiness. The school successfully partners with families to support student progress toward those expectations.

### Impact

A culture of mutual accountability for high expectations exists at this school. These expectations are effectively supported by communications and partnerships within the school community.

### Supporting Evidence

- “We have a very caring team,” said Principal Carlisle. “We all come together to support student success and confidence. We have a conflict resolution team...a lot of children go to them when they need a time out. We have a ‘safe haven’—a room where they can come in—on every floor. We cultivate an environment of trust. Incorporated within the school’s academic program are many initiatives for children and adults that promote positive health, social interaction and cooperation, creative thinking, and cultural understanding. These initiatives include but are not limited to Cookshop, crochet, chess, African dance, choir, boy scouts, and Studio in a School. There is also an annual Grandparents Day each October, during which students share their day and stories with grandparents with origins throughout the world. It has become one of the school’s “treasured traditions.”
- “Our career day is held annually in the spring,” said Principal Carlisle. “Last year we had about 50 different careers presented. This year we’re all going to wear our college tee-shirts,” said Principal Carlisle. A letter to potential volunteer presenters for last year’s Career Day held on May 28 states: “Career day is great for elementary kids because it shows them early in their academic careers the importance of learning. We want kids to see the purposefulness of their learning...it allows students to connect education with career success.” The school attracted presenters representing such diverse occupations as director, therapist, driving school operator, frozen yogurt maker, videographer, author, nurse, physician, detective, businessman, film director, model, sanitation worker, army and marine soldiers, attorney, department of transportation worker, dance studio operator, police officers, and postal workers. These presenters talked about their typical work day, working conditions, education and training, job security and outlook, salary range, and related school subjects.
- Every month we select a Student of the Month. These students are recognized for different areas, such as citizenship. We also talk about attendance and how important that is.” Students have goals that they monitor themselves, and engage in both peer assessment and peer editing. “When my teacher knows I’ve mastered a goal, she’ll give me another,” said a student. “Assessment data is communicated to parents by report cards, and parents have an opportunity each Tuesday during the weekly parent engagement time to meet with teachers to discuss aspects of what the data is showing,” said Principal Carlisle. “The progress reports are very easy to read and the teacher’s comments are helpful,” said parents. “We also see the work students are doing in their notebooks. We know the new curriculum is tough for kids but the teachers are very focused. Many teachers spend time after school working with kids who are having difficulty. Our kids can explain to you what they learned.”

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations that have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and promoted the implementation of the Common Core. Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work.

### Impact

There is school-wide instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners. There are shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for student subgroups.

### Supporting Evidence

- “We have certain structures in place,” said Principal Carlisle. “The vertical teams are comprised of grade leaders, who are chosen by other grade teachers and meet once a month and focus on literacy.” We’ve done this school wide for years now...the first and second Mondays are for professional development. We have teachers who serve as ambassadors and turnkey trainings from network meetings. The third Monday is our data meetings and the fourth Monday is for inquiry work focused on our student subgroups.” “When we meet, the teams discuss matters and trainings related to the principal’s instructional cabinet.” said an assistant principal. Teams frequently use protocols downloaded from the School Reform Initiative website ([www.schooreforminitiative.org](http://www.schooreforminitiative.org)). We talk about what our different grade levels are doing to improve instruction and student progress.” Grade-level teams engage in inquiry work weekly and have a common planning period each Friday morning. Each grade has a different time to meet.” A teacher shared that participating on teacher teams has tremendously improved her practice. “I came from a different school with different ideas, so it is very helpful to work as a team in both formal and informal collaborations.” Responsibility is shared within these teacher teams and roles are rotated. Coaches and administrators often participate in the meetings. Many teachers are becoming facilitators and mentors. One of the fifth-grade ELA teachers mentors another fifth-grade teacher in writing and a second-grade teacher with classroom management.
- “We focused a lot on opinion writing because of the MoSL benchmark,” said a member of the fourth-grade teacher team during a meeting. “From our analysis of assessment data on our online SchoolNet system, we concluded that our issue with opinion writing was not only grade wide but also vertically in other grades. We looked at how the writer phrased his/her opinion. My children struggle with transition words. They wrote essays, however elaborating on the details and quoting sources were not done well. They were using fragmented language and the voice was also passive, not active.” “Generally, our students are weak in writing,” said another teacher. “Children had problems with citing information and evidence from text. We’ve provided graphic organizers and asked them to connect with a peer reader. We use OREO (opinion, reasons, examples, and opinion), opinion sentence starters, and transition words. We model for them and use exemplars.” Teachers described how they discuss grouping students that have a common need across classrooms and bringing them together. “We’re looking for ways to get the grades up...we’re trying to think outside the box for things we haven’t done before. “We discuss adjustments based on how students are doing in the classroom. Do we need to skip, skim, or teach deeply?”
- Teachers and administrators are welcome to participate in a teacher-led book club every Wednesday morning before school begins. Participants are currently reading Danielson’s “Enhancing Professional Practice: A Framework for Teaching,” by “Each week, they discuss a different indicator,” said Principal Carlisle. “It’s improving their teaching practice.”