



# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Teunis G. Bergen**

**Elementary School K009**

**80 Underhill Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11238**

**Principal: Sandra D'Avilar**

**Date of review: January 15, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Lucia Perez-Medina**

## The School Context

Teunis G. Bergen is an elementary school with 799 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 49% Black, 12% Hispanic, 26% White, 5% Asian and 5% Multi-racial students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 93.0%.

## 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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Celebration</b>	<b>Proficient</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 leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

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

The school consistently conveys high expectations and works with students and families toward achieving school goals related to college and career readiness.

### Impact

Staff and students are accountable and along with families are well supported towards progress in meeting school expectations and parents understand the schools expectations for their children.

### Supporting Evidence

- The entire staff was provided with a clear expectations document at the beginning of the school year that outlines and thoroughly shares the expectations in instruction and classroom environment for the school year. The principal's newsletter is used to provide expectations across the board to the entire staff. There is always an instructional focus for the week, and a professional development outline and opportunities within the document. The administrative staff continuously provides the staff, students, and parents with information on high expectations. The *Words of Wisdom* are read daily to the entire school community and provide a precise focus and a set of high expectations for all members of the school community.
- The school presents parents with an annual curriculum night where they are provided with the school goals for the year, an inside view of the curriculum and the clear expectations for the school year. They also share five tenets which govern the work they do in order to set high expectations for their students and to focus on the whole child in the process. Staff shares how they align the work they do each year so that the tenets of *safe, healthy, engaged, supported* and *challenged* are embedded within their work.
- In an effort to communicate high expectations to all the school's constituents, the school website, student/parent handbook, and notices provide parents with information on upcoming events, including insight into Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, ongoing memoranda to staff provide school policy relative to family engagement.
- During the parent interview, parents stated that the school communicates expectations for their children and that they receive a monthly schedule of parent engagement events scheduled across the grades on Tuesdays. One noted that the school informs each parent about their child's progress in meeting expectations for learning during parent conferences. Parents also praised the school for providing enrichment opportunities, multicultural activities and workshops, including a math workshop where families learn strategies to help their children with assignments.
- Teachers create curriculum letters for parents, outlining the learning outcomes for each unit of study across the content areas so that parents are aware of the learning and know how to support the students in meeting those expectations.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

### Findings

Pedagogical practices across classrooms do not consistently provide multiple entry points to meet all learners' needs. Work products did not consistently reflect higher order thinking and participation among students varied across the classes visited.

### Impact

Across classrooms, there are inconsistent opportunities for all learners to engage in meaningful discussions and produce meaningful work products. High performers are not always challenged to their full potential, thus limiting opportunities for all learners to engage in higher order thinking tasks to accelerate their learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- While school leaders and teachers highlight their core beliefs of utilizing assessment data to adjust curriculum and scaffold instruction to ensure high levels of engagement for all students, evidence of these core pedagogical practices was observed in two classes.
- In three out of seven classes visited, lessons included low-level questions and limited student engagement. For example, in one class, the teacher asked *Depth of Knowledge* level one questions and solved basic math problems on the board while students passively observed with no opportunities for hands-on manipulative experiences or student to student conversations. Additionally, in another class, the teacher directed lesson on recording data using a thermometer provided limited opportunities for student discussion.
- In the majority of classrooms visited, all students worked on the same task and most teachers did not provide extension activities for advanced learners. For example, in one classroom all students had to multiply two digit numbers by one digit numbers without regrouping. Nine students completed the task and waited for the teacher for further directions.
- Several lessons were teacher dominated, with students quietly listening to the teacher or to responses from a few peers who were called upon to answer predominantly low level, short answer questions that required very little thinking. For example, a class of fifth grade students spent over ten minutes listening to the teacher read excerpts of a text, pausing frequently to ask questions such as, "How many of you have seen a sign before?"; "Who were the Rosen's?"; "Why was Peter visiting?"; "What does torment mean?" As a result of the nature of the questions, the students responded with brief answers such as, "yes" and "a family", respectively, rather than engaging them in higher order thinking skills.
- Teachers in a few classrooms engaged students in challenging tasks, such as reading texts to cite evidence and using academic vocabulary to explain solutions to problems. For example, in one class students worked with a partner on fluency and problem solving in mathematics. Models and manipulatives were available for English language learners and students with disabilities to demonstrate various ways of multiplying numbers to solve the assigned problems. However, in other classrooms tasks were of low demand, including an upper grade classroom where students were asked to read short excerpts of texts to complete writing their idea in a graphic organizer and no additional supports were available for students who struggled with the task.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The school aligns its curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrates the instructional shifts by utilizing resources that are all standards based and building instructional coherence.

### Impact

The school's curricular decisions across grades and subjects expose students to curricula that promote college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school uses the *Teacher's College Reading and Writing Units* of study, the *New York Social Studies Framework* and the *NYC Scope and Sequence* in science and social studies along with trade books to improve student comprehension, fluency and ability to demonstrate a balance of informational and literacy text complexity. In addition, science curriculum includes *Full Option Science System* (FOSS) material and some resources from Harcourt Brace.
- The English language arts curriculum units are shared with the intervention specialist, the resource room teacher and the English as a second language teacher, who then align, plan and support instruction. Curriculum and scheduling adjustments are made so that the academic core is suitable and attainable by most students.
- Teachers review the major foci of each unit in literacy and mathematics, infuse the work throughout each unit and modify the units to fit the needs of their students. In an effort to provide the children with a comprehensive curriculum in mathematics, the school uses the curriculum outline from a *Story of Units* from Engage NY. *Singapore Math* and *Math Exemplars* serve as supplementary materials the current curriculum.
- Unit maps illustrate tasks that require students to engage in complex processes such as a fifth grade mathematics unit activity that requires students to "solve real world problems involving multiplication by using visual fraction models or equations to represent the problem".

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

Teachers create and use assessments aligned to the school's curricula, yet students do not always receive actionable feedback across subject areas. Furthermore, teachers inconsistently check for understanding and provide limited opportunities for students to self assess their work.

### Impact

As a result of the limited actionable feedback, teachers' instructional approaches to increase student achievement are hindered. Additionally, missed opportunities to adjust lessons based on formative assessment impede diverse learners' awareness of their next learning steps.

### Supporting Evidence

- Baseline, midline and endline assessments are created at the beginning of the school year in mathematics. These assessments are aligned with the math content that is to be taught across each grade as outlined in the *Story of Units Framework. A Math Measures of Student Learning (MOSL)* assessment was administered in kindergarten through fifth grade for the first time this year. MOSL running records are done at the beginning of the school year and in the spring. Regular running records are conducted to match the benchmark window as outlined by Teachers College Assessment Pro. On Demand Writing and other unit assessments are done according to the writing units.
- Each grade determines the project-based work that will be assigned to match the social studies unit being taught. The project-based work is often done within the *Independent Investigation Methods (IIM)* framework. Students produce an end product and present it to their class. These projects were observed in various classrooms visited, however the IIM rubric was not used to grade the projects and no feedback was provided to the students on their projects. The principal stated that the projects are an end product to the writing displayed.
- Teachers utilize the *Teachers College Continuum* checklists and rubrics to check for understanding. Students are expected to use their checklist to self check for understanding as they engage in their work. They also utilize the math process embedded within the exemplars to check for student understanding. This is a quick way for teachers to check for student understanding and to plan the next step. However, this practice was only observed in one out of seven classes visited.
- Two out of seven lessons observed reflected a closure or those students would complete an exit slip at the end of the lesson. However, across some of the visited classrooms there were minimal opportunities for students to reflect on their learning. For example, during the end of a reading lesson, the teacher stopped the students and stated "We are going to stop right here, put your piles on your desk". During a second grade word study lesson, students were finishing their sentences using high frequency words, and the teacher said "Remember these are words that you use every day, put your notebooks away and line up".
- Some writing samples in students' folders included rubric-based performance level scores with teacher comments on post-its while others had only checkmarks with no comments. For example, across classrooms math folders had student work products with a score or checkmarks with no feedback or next steps to accelerate student learning.

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

Teacher leadership structures promote the school goals through ongoing collaborations using school data and work products to regularly focus on the improvement of student outcomes.

### Impact

School-wide team and decision making structures empower teachers to assume responsibility for collectively improving teacher practice and student learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet on a weekly basis to look at student work. The student profile sheets, which track student progress, are among the common tools used to analyze student work across the grades. Teachers look at what the data is revealing about the various sub groups and individual students. The schedule allows time for teacher collaboration across the grade, conversations among teachers and clusters, and among teachers and support staff.
- There are many opportunities for teachers to be part of the administrative distributive leadership effort. Each teacher is a content facilitator. There are a variety of teams throughout the school and various teachers have opted to be members of these teams. Six teachers are part of the Learning Partners program. They meet every other week, attend inter-visitations outside the school and within the school, and then they turn key information and best practices to their peers across the grades.
- The whole child network team takes care of facilitating the information about the five tenets and their impact on the staff and the parent body at various times throughout the year. The care team members are instrumental in ensuring that the children are provided with the services needed to support their academic, social and emotional needs. Teachers within the school implementation team ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are met, and they also serve as advocates for this population of students. With the various distributive leadership structures, teachers stated that they are provided with many opportunities to develop their leadership skills and that they are empowered as leaders.
- During a teacher team meeting, teachers discussed reading strategies for the targeted subgroup of students. Data results indicated that students struggled with three skills: recalling facts and details to support a main idea, envisioning, and making inferences. For example, as a next step, the presenting teacher was offered suggestions to improve the quality of students' comprehension such as focusing on prompts using post-its stating "The most important part is..." and the students would fill in the blank.