



Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 24

Elementary School K024

**427 38th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11232**

Principal: Rose Silva Dubitsky

**Date of review: March 23, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Anita Skop**

The School Context

P.S. 24 is an elementary school with 721 students from grade Pre-K through grade 5. The school population comprises 1% Black, 90% Hispanic, 4% White, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 46% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95.0%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
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	Celebration	Proficient
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	Focus	Developing
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	Additional Findings	Developing
School Culture		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	Additional Findings	Proficient
Systems for Improvement		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core, integrate the instructional shifts, and make purposeful decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students leading to curricula and academic tasks that are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

The coherent curricula and tasks ensure that a diversity of learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes the Teachers College Readers and Writers Workshop model which is supplemented by the use of Estrellitas in the dual language kindergarten classes. This year the school undertook two curriculum initiatives, which were to develop integrated social studies and science literacy units by working with the vertical teacher team, the literacy/English as a Second Language dual language coach and Expeditionary Learning curriculum resources. The Monday 80-minute professional development time is used to develop implementation practices for learning impact by providing students with an authentic language experience.
- The mathematics department is implementing Engage NY curriculum. The school has a mathematics coach whose role is to ensure that the program is well implemented by working with the network mathematics expert and grade leaders. The mathematics coach goes on intervisitations to other schools that are completely aligned to the Common Core and using 'TERC' curriculum. The coach recommends adopting the mathematics curriculum practices and then adapting it.
- Because the school has a large dual language focus, meeting the needs of students in two languages is a top priority. Teachers support students using native language arts. Additionally, they have chosen to implement a full Spanish pre-kindergarten that transitions to an 80/20 Spanish-to-English kindergarten, and then finally, a 50/50 Spanish to English dual language protocol in grade 1. Throughout this transition, teachers ensure that students are supported in their home language. The school is working to systemize structures in the curriculum such as differentiation in every lesson plan, grouping students for instruction and supports for English Language Learners with visuals, pre-lesson introduction of vocabulary, word walls and refer-to charts.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies (including questioning, scaffolds and routines) inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula and therefore student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Inconsistencies in teaching strategies lead to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in student work products, including the work of English language learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- Student work and current “refer-to” charts referenced by students were evident in two classrooms. Students worked in collaborative groups in a grade 4 dual language integrated co-teaching class and a grade 5 class. Students in the fifth grade class looked at the math problem from a customer perspective. Their groups were cabinet makers, axe makers, wig makers, newspaper sellers and candle makers. Students had to persuade customers of the quality of their goods and other reasons for their product being a good purchase in a group presentation. Grade 5 students working on making posters or a play about a historical figure in their groups. Everyone in the group had a role and if a student did not know what resource to use, the teacher asked guiding questions such as “What are you going to use then?” “Have you used the Internet before?” in helping students figure out what they need to research and complete their work.
- In two of the classes, students were struggling with decoding. In a kindergarten class students were doing partner reading with charts provided to help with words and the teacher circulated to support student groups. In a grade 2 class, students were completing a sheet on Sunset Park and drawing pictures after turning and talking about what they were going to write. There was evidence of word walls and student-generated charts in that class however opportunities for student engagement across the school were limited.
- Levels of challenge are not yet sufficiently embedded in the curriculum across the school. For example, in a first grade dual language class, students were independently reading from a selection of English and Spanish books in their book baggies. Although there were dual language word walls posted and students were reading independently, as the teacher circulated the room she did not take notes to assess their progress and tier instruction to inform future planning. Additionally, there were several decoding issues in the classroom which the teacher did not address while circulating, though students received “chips” or “Cheerios” from the teacher as they practiced the “ch” digraph.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school is developing in their use of common assessments to measure student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas, and teachers' assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

With the implementation of common assessments still in development, the assessments practices are inconsistent and cannot be effectively used to adjust curricula and instruction to meet students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The use of rubrics and student-friendly checklists is not consistent across classrooms. The review of student work during the small group student meeting indicated that only two of the five students used these tools. Further these were inconsistently seen during classroom visits.
- The administrative team reviews baseline measures to monitor the progress of all students. For example, teachers utilize the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Assessment Pro to enter September/October reading levels. These will then be reviewed again in April to reflect on student progress and growth.
- Checks for understanding were noted in a few classes. Teachers utilize "Thumbs Up for Understanding" signals and one on one reading conferences. Teachers also circulate to monitor student progress.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations, and teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

Families are provided ongoing feedback to help them understand their child's progress toward expectations to ready them for college and career readiness, and students are given feedback and guidance to support their progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Students spoke about the social and emotional learning (SEL) time in the morning during gathering. This structured focus on social emotional support has given students ideas for ways to solve problems and address conflicts. Further, students commented that they have a sense of appropriate action and do not support any kind of bullying. Instead they see themselves as "good," and "are proud of themselves." Another strategy that students have is to reach out to a coach in the yard during recess. These protocols have helped the school to move in a positive direction and are decreasing the number of incidents school-wide.
- Parents are very committed to supporting a strong instructional focus at the school and see the alignment between this support with college and career readiness. They comment that the school works hard to support students and provides programs such as soccer, enrichment, and social and emotional literacy. Further, they shared a clear understanding of the school's Common Core focus and emphasis on writing, and respect the work of the teachers in working to reach these goals.
- Most of the students spoke about getting feedback on rubrics or student-friendly checklists. Students have portfolios that are consistent with the portfolio of a student in another class in terms of student work, feedback including letters to parents, student checklists and evidence of dual language proficiency in Spanish and English. However, in one folder a student's math work was not yet graded and another student's persuasive writing work had limited feedback. One student talked about the structure of peer conferences where students share a "glow" for the positive and a "grow" for what the student can do better.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core (including the instructional shifts), and teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work.

Impact

Teacher engagement in student work inquiry has strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers and their analysis has resulted in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The inquiry teacher teams meet weekly and the vertical grades teacher team meets once a month. The inquiry team engaged in a lesson study cycle facilitated by their network coach. Teachers reflected on a previous lesson and referenced pictures taken during lesson implementation. In the lesson study, teachers reviewed reasons that students gave for their responses and discussed what worked and what did not. Teachers share lessons and plan with one another. Specifically, teachers were referencing pictures taken during a lesson being implemented by a colleague. In that lesson, students were giving reasons for their responses about number order. Some students clearly got the concept of number order and were able to explain it, using post-its to put numbers on a number line. Student partners corrected each other and used manipulatives. Based on their findings from the lesson study, the teachers planned subsequent lessons with differentiated scaffolds to meet the needs of all students by using more manipulatives for those who needed them and revising the unit plan appropriately.
- A major focus of teacher teams is differentiation in math and literacy to meet the needs of all students including behavioral plans. Professional development training in planning has helped teachers to support close reading, explicit vocabulary instruction and word work. Teachers focus on the quality of instruction which was reviewed in the lesson study cycle to determine effective teaching and improvements to raise rigor.
- Since the school adopted Expeditionary Learning, teachers received training in planning the integrated units of study and incorporating resources such as Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and Foundations for vocabulary enrichment. Weekly, teachers review the unit pacing and make adjustments as needed to meet their students' learning pace for depth of understanding.