

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Juan Morel Campos Secondary School

Middle School K071

**215 Heyward Street
Brooklyn
NY 11206**

Principal: Eric Fraser

**Dates of review: May 20, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Janice Ross**

The School Context

Juan Morel Campos Secondary School is a Middle school with 692 students from 6 through grade 12. The school population comprises 15% Black, 80% Hispanic, 3% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 23% English language learners and 33% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 88.2%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core

<i>To what extent does the school regularly...</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.	Additional Findings	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	Proficient
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	Proficient

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.	Celebration	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:

3.4 High Expectations

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations that are connected to a path of college and career readiness and offer ongoing and detailed feedback to help families understand student progress and prepare students for the next level.

Impact

Teacher teams establish a culture for learning by utilizing existing resources to promote college and career readiness and ensure that students understand the paths toward mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- There is a full time college counselor as part of the College Bound Initiative CBO. There is a college week, a career week, and alumni days where alumni sit on panels in the 6-12 classes. Parents are invited to go on college visits. Starting in 9th grade, CBI organizes the students for the college process, and gets them on track for the SAT and the application process, including how to visit colleges. Students display work at a gallery opening as part of the school's partnership with the BRIC program. Professional artists come in and do art with students and parents.
- The school prioritizes school communication to parents. Parents get feedback through the school-wide use of the Engrade program. Parents, students and teachers communicate with each other through the system. One of the teachers sends out a parent newsletter with notes from the principal, and the PTA. The school uses a phone messenger system, in addition to a family outreach time that meets two times a week before and after school to give out testing reminders, and ELT program reminders. During the parent meeting, the parents emphasized how frequently the teachers communicated with them about their children's progress through phone calls and emails.
- During the student meeting, the students felt highly respected by their teachers, feel highly challenged by the work, and agreed that teachers were always willing to help them if they needed tutoring, after school or during lunch. They characterized the school as "small and friendly, where kids get along." They said their school gives them challenging work to prepare them for college. Students noted that they frequently used rubrics in class, which they found helpful in preparing them for the expectations of the assignment. The students feel supported by the school's counselors, and by the student mediation program. They expressed that they wanted more afterschool sports and dance. The teachers give them feedback on their papers and encourage them to revise their work and give them next steps. They receive notifications through Engrade, but not all of them check it regularly.
- The parents were highly appreciative of the principal and teachers. The parents said they were familiar with the mission and vision of the school and feel that the culture of the school shifted under this principal. "I have seen a lot of change since Mr. Fraser has come. The kids are more focused about going to college. Before him, the goal was just to finish school. I have two kids here and they are very into their future, in planning for college and having a better future." Another parent said that her whole family had come through Juan Morel, and that her children are "more respectful and intelligent coming out of here. My mission was to keep him here. I know he will go to college. We have a good college person here and her mission is to get them into college. My son, a 9th grader, is taking 10th grade classes, and he had a choice to go to another school, but I encouraged him to go here." One parent noted that her son, who has special needs, did not want to pursue college, but because of the supports at the school, he was interested in transitioning to a career. The parents agreed that the principal has raised the level of expectations at the school, and one parent noted that the work her child brought home was college level, as she too, was attending college and could assess the quality of the work. She said that her child has been challenged, she has visited his classes and that the teachers push the students to work hard and do their best.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Across classrooms students were engaged in rigorous student centered tasks that promoted student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- In the PERC Living Environment class, a student, in her TAS role, led the class, asking questions, and soliciting responses from the students, pushing their thinking, and facilitating the discussion with accountable talk, such as "Can anyone help her..." and "Do you want to define it or pass it to someone else?" The student was reminding the class about the key words. The class had general education, SETSS and a student from District 75, and all students were engaged and on task during the visit to the classroom.
- The AP English class was structured, but teacher centered. Students were led through a series of questions and activities that were a mixture of high and low level. For example, the teacher had all of the students create a T-chart to organize their work, which was not a rigorous activity befitting an advanced placement class. The teacher read instructions to students, and they engaged in a turn and talk, and were asked to discuss the difference between a classroom in the 1950's and a 2012 classroom. As a do now, students were asked to write letters to professors explaining what they expected from them, and what the professors could expect from them as students. The teacher modeled samples of what his experience was like in college and how he addressed his challenges. Their lists were meant to serve as a pre-writing activity in preparation for the letter writing the next day. Although the topic was real world and aligned to college expectations, the task was not rigorous. The students at this level are capable of more autonomy and a more sophisticated writing assignment.
- In the 6th grade English language arts class, students were peer assessing each other's projects on disabilities. This was a Common Core aligned lesson to promote student collaboration via presenting their work to each other, and assessment. On the exit slip, students had to examine feedback received from their peers and reflect on the quality of the feedback, and respond to it. This classroom had numerous ELL's and SWD's students so they were given conversation starters to ensure that they could communicate their ideas about their project during the gallery walk. Students were required to communicate verbally and in writing about their topic and project.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data so that a diversity of learners, including ELLs and SWDs, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged, and are aligned to CCLS with integration of instructional shifts.

Impact

Students are provided with curricula that ensures access for diverse learners to ensure rigorous tasks that promote higher order thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a variety of curricula across grade levels, since did not adopt the Core Curriculum. For example, they use Engageny.org curricula for English Language Arts, a Peer Enabled Restructured Classroom curriculum for PERC science classes, CMP3 for math in the middle school and Code X Common Core aligned curriculum for English Language Arts in the middle school, and the new scope and sequence for their social studies classes. Advanced Placement courses followed teacher designed syllabi that are College Board approved. The science curricula had tasks from Engageny.org.
- Rigor in the curriculum is ensured through a revisit of the school's instructional focus of providing actionable feedback by students to each other, and from their teachers, in a student centered classroom, and a revisit of the school's mission and vision, and how they capture those beliefs. They explore how students learn best, which is through a balance of supports and challenges. The rigor is evaluated based on the diverse learning needs of the students. At the beginning of the year, the school reflected on the mission and vision, and how they define rigor and these responses are aggregated to see if the staff is aligned in their understanding of rigor.
- The school has a high percentage of Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners. The principal has increased push-ins to ensure that curriculum modifications are implemented. The school increased its offering of ICT classes. The teachers plan for grouping based on the needs of students with special needs, curricular materials are modified, such as putting them in the students' native languages for access. Regardless of the level of reading and writing they enter into school with, they are still expected to write arguments with supporting evidence, answer essential questions, and are challenged with higher order questions to promote critical thinking.
- In the Teaching Assistant portion of the PERC program (TAS), the student acts as a teaching assistant and will translate the materials into Spanish, but challenge the students to respond in English to explain their thinking. TAS are trained through a special elective curricula to ensure that they are prepared to carry out their responsibilities. Lesson plan templates in use by the majority of the teachers emphasize "process" and "product" for purpose of differentiation.
- To ensure alignment of curriculum to instructional shifts, and to ensure college and career readiness, there are coaches in all core content areas to work with teachers to align, design, and revise curricula to ensure it is Common Core based. The school created a graphic organizer for each grade to show what standards are emphasized in each map, and they conduct a gap analysis to ensure alignment by grade, horizontally and vertically. In addition, the teachers submit unit, task, and samples of student work to the network, and they review it and give feedback to the teachers with a rubric to show task alignment.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula, thus providing actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment so that teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

Impact

The school analyzes alignment of assessments to CCLS to ensure that students understand the expectations of mastery of these standards. This involves communication within the entire school community to ensure ongoing improvements are made to assessment practices.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses assessments to drive their inquiry efforts. The school uses common assessments, such as the NYC Performance Assessments, and they have an inquiry calendar to evaluate the results. The grade teams double as inquiry teams. There is a group of special education teachers who only work with self-contained students that meets regularly. Each team has a teacher team leader. The ELA coach is the inquiry facilitator. There are nine professional learning communities, run by the assistant principals, lead teachers or instructional coaches. The grade teams are released from their C6 once per week to meet during the day to conduct inquiry. The inquiry is designed to look at the top ten literacy and math skills that they want to focus on per grade. The coach aggregates the data and the cabinet examines it. They then have monthly grade meetings with the grade team leaders to examine the data from inquiry.
- Rubrics are used in a variety of ways in the school. The teachers use exit slips and have a rubric to examine the student work on the exit slips. Bulletin boards throughout hallways and classrooms display student writing products with rubrics, tasks, actionable feedback in the form of next steps, which supports students in outlining their progress towards mastery. Teachers utilize rubrics in class for students to assess their work, and their peers' work. Some of the rubrics were designed by the students. The art teacher used a co-created rubric to assess work habits, as well as content. The TAS uses the exit slip to see what their groups were able to understand, and reteach based on this data. The lesson supported student-centered learning where students took ownership of the process; however the questioning was not high level to promote deeper engagement in the topic.
- The school utilizes an assessment map to ensure that the Common Core standards and essential questions that are outlined in units are being addressed in the unit with the appropriate assessments, beginning with a baseline.

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

School leaders and faculty have a process in place to regularly evaluate and adjust curricula. Distributed leadership structures are in place so that teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Impact

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of CCLS (including the instructional shifts), strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers.

Supporting Evidence

- The school created a professional development plan aligned to the PFQR Areas of Improvement, goals and recommendations from the prior year. The plan is organized by format of the PD which includes the various professional learning communities, faculty conferences, department meetings and coaching and CBO partnerships. Determination of need based on data from the prior and current school years, overview and purpose, the target audience, evaluation, additional support and follow-up. For example, grade team meetings are to ensure that teachers receive adequate training in aligning instructional strategies to student groupings in support of their pedagogy. Team leaders meet monthly with the principal to provide qualitative and quantitative feedback about inquiry cycles and their impact on instruction. Classroom observations assess the growth of common practices across classrooms.
- During the 9th grade team meeting, teachers conducted inquiry through an analysis of student work; in particular, the results of the day's exit slips, which they used a rubric to assess. They conducted an analysis that describes the performance and learning needs by performance level, in particular the ELL students.
- Teachers expressed that they felt supported by the coaches, one of whom is an English teacher. They felt bound together through being a renewal school, and were highly supportive each other, which was "the best thing about working here." They felt being a renewal school pushed them to do more, to dig deep as professionals, to push themselves and each other.
- There are eight professional learning communities that meet on Monday once per month, and these PLC's are aligned to the school's goals. The AP's look at their maps to provide feedback on the inclusion of the instructional shifts, text complexity and Lexile levels in particular, which they can discuss and revise with their teams.
- The principal presented a distributed leadership chart that shows the use of grade team leaders, and inquiry facilitator, instructional coaches and partners, grade and inquiry teams, and support teams, all with the goal of improving student achievement.