



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**P.S./I.S. 109 – The Glenwood Academy of Science  
and Technology**

**Elementary-Middle School K109**

**1001 East 45<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11203**

**Principal: Dwight Chase**

**Date of review: February 11, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Julia Bove**

## The School Context

P.S./I.S 109K is an elementary/middle school with 655 students from Kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 80% Black, 16% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 14% 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 93.6%.

## 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>Developing</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 that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Developing</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 has established a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provides supports to achieve those expectations.

### Impact

School Leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff, provide training and have a system of accountability for those expectations. 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.

### Supporting Evidence

- Parents stated that the school provides regular communication on student progress. One parent focused on the progress reports sent home and stated that she found these helpful in her success as a partner in her child's education. Another parent stated that he felt that teachers shared his desire for his child to do well. Parents were in agreement that the school provides ample opportunity for parents to be engaged in their children's' education. Additionally, parents stated that they used Engrade and Dojo online accounts to regularly monitor their children's progress.
- The school maintains partnerships with parents in part through the distribution of monthly newsletters, mid-quarter progress reports, and regular telephone conferences with parents. Telephone logs demonstrate evidence of date and time, topics discussed, and agreed upon next steps.
- Students stated that they often discussed college and career readiness in classrooms and with their parents based on the work they do in school.
- The school administers a vocational assessment consisting of a student interview, a parent interview and a teacher interview. Its purpose is "to connect a path of college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback to families so they understand their child's progress toward these goals.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. In a majority of classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

### Impact

In a majority of classrooms, there is an uneven engagement in challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in student work products, including the work of English language learners and special education students. Student work products and classroom discussions in the majority of classrooms are inconsistently rigorous.

### Supporting Evidence

- In a mathematics class, students were computing the volume of a cone based on the shape of a tree. The students were referring to a formula sheet, and while there was peer to peer interaction, the activity was mainly procedural in nature and focused on the algorithm rather than the higher order concepts. There was inconsistent evidence across classrooms of differentiation.
- In a special education classroom, the teacher was engaging students in a reading activity in which students took turns reading out loud. The teacher also provided answers to students and did provide think time. There was some evidence of differentiation in displayed work. Students were aware of rubrics but unsure of their purpose or how often they were used.
- In a science class, students were working in groups and engaged in higher order questioning as the teacher facilitated. Evidence of differentiation was inconsistent across classrooms. An examination of the lesson plan indicated that there were strategies for differentiation; however the implementation of these practices was not observable.

## Additional Findings

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

Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills inconsistently across grades, subjects, and for English language learners (ELLs) and special education students. School leaders and faculty are in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrating the instructional shifts.

### Impact

The school inconsistently ensures engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects that is inconsistently accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards.

### Supporting Evidence

- Curriculum maps are being aligned the Common Core Learning Standards but inconsistently provide entry points for special education students or English Language Learners.
- A majority of teacher observations reflect inconsistent evidence of designing coherent instruction, and demonstrating knowledge content and pedagogy as indicated in written observation reports.
- A majority of lesson plans did not indicate strategies for a variety of learners. This was evident in lessons for Mathematics, English language arts, and content areas. For example, a science lesson for a special education class identified strategies for differentiation, whereas another science lesson plan consisted of a learning objective, several definitions, and a diagram of the nasal cavity and mouth.
- Unit plans are being aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and pose essential questions. However, modifications and scaffolds inconsistently provide entry points or strategies for special education students and English Language Learners. For example, a social studies unit on Colonial and Revolutionary America is written around essential questions such as, “How does geography influence culture?” and “When is war justified?” Yet, the modifications and scaffolds are not crafted to meet individual student needs.

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

The school is in the process of aligning assessments to the curricula, using on-going assessments and grading practices, and analyzing information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom level.

### **Impact**

There are common assessments in place; however results are inconsistently used to adjust curricula and instruction. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment resulting in inconsistent adjustments to instruction.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers distribute progress reports regularly; however, most student feedback is limited to non-specific suggestions such as "He should continue to improve his comprehension;" "He needs more practice solving multistep problems." Additionally, there is inconsistent evidence that classroom practices are adjusted based on collected data.
- Mathematics benchmark assessments are aligned to the Common Core State Standards; however, the assessments predominantly consist of multiple-choice questions. The constructed responses inconsistently require students to provide an explanation for their answers.
- There is evidence of actionable peer to peer feedback, however that evidence is not consistent across the majority of grades and classes. For example, the student work in an English language arts class showed authentic rubric-based student feedback, while in another class, the peer to peer assessment consisted of a "thumbs up, thumbs down" approach.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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**Findings**

The school engages in structured professional team collaborations that inconsistently use an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on student learning.

**Impact**

Teacher teams analyze assessment data and student work for students on whom they are focused, but this work does not typically result in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students. Distributed Leadership structures are developing to include teachers in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- As stated by the principal and confirmed by teacher teams, teachers have the ability and professional freedom to access curriculum maps and revise them based on student need. However, as stated by the teachers, they frequently do not do this. Observation of conversations in teacher teams, and an examination of lesson plans and maps in use confirm that curriculum revision is absent.
- Teachers have an open-door policy and collaborate as needed, however the school is still developing a formal structure to support collaboration and provide the opportunity to discuss instructional strategies and next steps.
- Teacher teams engage in a variety of professional activities such as Data & Assessment, Looking at Student Work, and Professional Literature Study Groups. However, the evidence of impact on student performance in the classroom is inconsistent.