



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**The Andrew Jackson Elementary School**

**Elementary School K145**

**100 Noll Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11206**

**Principal: Linda Malloy**

**Date of review: April 29, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Lillian Druck**

## The School Context

Andrew Jackson is an elementary school with 783 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 4% Black, 94% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 23% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 92.5%.

## 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 that promotes shared 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

Schools leaders convey high expectations to staff through the Danielson Framework for Teaching and professional learning sessions facilitated by internal staff and off-site training. Family engagement sessions help parents understand their children's progress in school and communicate expectations connected to college and career readiness.

### Impact

School leaders communicate high expectations regarding professionalism and student achievement with the entire school community, creating a system of accountability for those expectations and guidance to prepare students for future academic endeavors.

### Supporting Evidence

- The staff has access to all school communications including the teacher handbook, professional development agendas, teacher team information and administrative bulletins outlining the school's expectations for instruction, professionalism, and the elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching through Google docs. Teachers engage in collaborative practices that support a culture of accountability for the school's high expectations, including planning professional development cycles, participating in inter-visitations to observe effective instructional strategies in colleagues' classrooms and to enhance their practice by discussing and implementing effective practices observed in their classrooms.
- Monthly family literacy theme nights provide opportunities for parents to engage in learning with their children through hands-on projects tied to the literacy units of study. For example, in March, the school engaged parents in a read aloud of *A Chair for My Mother* in Spanish and English. Following the read aloud, parents worked with their children on art activities that incorporated language development and literacy skills. During the parent meeting, parents stated that these activities help them learn about the monthly literacy themes covered at school, provides strategies to help their children with reading comprehension, and gives them an opportunity to spend quality time completing a literacy based fun craft activity as a family.
- A monthly newsletter titled, *The Excelsior*, is created by the student council. The newsletter is available in English and Spanish and includes information about current school events, activities for family engagement, educational websites and classroom highlights. Parent workshop topics such as "Expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards in Math and ELA," "How to Support Children at Home," and "What Students are Expected to Do," inform parents of the school's expectations for students to acquire college and career readiness skills. On Parents as Partners Tuesdays families are invited to work with their children on computers using the RAZ-Kids reading program. The program can also be used at home or at the public library to strengthen students' reading skills.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

Teachers' pedagogical practices including the use of questioning and discussion techniques, scaffolds and extensions are evolving. Student work products indicate uneven levels of thinking and participation.

### Impact

Across classrooms instructional strategies to prompt high levels of thinking inconsistently support student learning, thus limiting a variety of students from demonstrating their thinking and taking an integral role to their learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- In some classrooms, teachers use scaffolds such as sentence starters, writing prompts, graphic organizers, tiered activities and vocabulary charts. Particular to some classroom settings were experiential charts, content area word walls, meeting areas, classroom libraries and varied resources. Some students were observed working in pairs or in small groups. Teachers were also noted working with student groups in some classrooms. For instance, in a dual language class students were instructed to use a video note catcher to record information related to a video segment on simple machines. While in an Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) class, students engaged in a skills lesson requiring them to use verbs to describe the actions in a picture, the use of the single image utilized did not afford opportunities for students to identify a range of verbs to support the lesson's language objective which was to "articulate what was happening in the image." Students' responses demonstrated limited understanding of the task.
- In several classes, teachers integrate verbal, procedural and instructional scaffolds for English language learners and students with disabilities within their lessons. For example, some students have access to word banks at their tables and opinion starters such as "I think..., I prefer..., and I believe... Additionally, students in a kindergarten class were observed using a neighborhood chart, laminated pictures and self-portraits that illustrated numerous landmarks in their neighborhoods. However, in a self contained special education class, the lesson was teacher-led and dependent mostly on the written explanations and limited visuals provided in the *Go Math!* workbook.
- In some classes visited, students were not observed using manipulative materials and visual supports such as strategy charts, word walls and graphic organizers. Moreover, the availability of such supports and progress of class work were inconsistent across classrooms. For example, a review of work folders in several classrooms included student work products that were not dated and that reflected uneven levels of student progress. Also, there were inconsistencies across classrooms in student artifacts that demonstrated high levels of participation and thinking.

## Additional Findings

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

The use of common assessments and assessment practices is uneven across classrooms providing limited actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and Instructional adjustments.

### Impact

Teachers use assessment strategies providing actionable feedback to students, and teachers make instructional modifications to lessons; however, these practices are inconsistently implemented across classrooms, hindering a diversity of students from accelerating their learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- Students use the Danielson for Kids rubric to self-assess and to increase participation and discussion in class. The rubric is available in two versions, one for the early childhood grades from kindergarten through grade 2 with grade appropriate language, and for grades 3 to 5 with identified target areas including questions, discussion techniques and participation. Teachers stated during a team meeting that the rubric motivates students to participate and take a more active role in classroom discussion. However, reference to the rubric was observed in one class during group work and in another class to assess a peer's explanation of a math problem. In the latter classroom, peers focused their attention on rating the presenter, which distracted them from the target areas on questioning and discussion referred to in the rubric and from the rubric's purpose to provide feedback to students and teachers regarding participation and discussion.
- Teachers administer running records five times a year across classrooms, including English and Spanish in dual language classes, to attain feedback regarding student achievement in reading. However, a review of book baggies in a grade 4 class indicated that books were not matched to students' readability. For example, book baggies for students at reading levels "P" and "R" included stage two primary books which are beginning chapter books that are at a low interest level.
- Students in grades 3 through 5 participate in ELA and math baseline, mid, and end-line mock assessments. According to teachers, the data from mock assessments is used to identify trends across grades and to determine lesson modifications. During class visits it was noted that although common assessments such as mock ELA and math assessments, Fountas and Pinnell running records and end of unit assessments are administered, the data is inconsistently used to make adequate adjustments to meet students' learning needs.
- Self-assessment practices include student rubrics generated by teachers, teacher check-ins and teacher checklists. Some student writing products include peer assessment post-its to promote student feedback and teacher feedback based on rubrics. However, peer and self-assessment tools were recently introduced and are currently in the emerging stages of implementation.

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

School leaders and teachers align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards, integrate the instructional shifts and consistently utilize multiple resources to promote rigor and higher order skills in academic tasks.

### Impact

The school's standards-based, coherent curriculum offers varied learning experiences that support student learning, foster critical thinking and promote college and career readiness

### Supporting Evidence

- The school uses *Building Blocks* in pre-kindergarten, *Core Knowledge* in kindergarten through grade 2 and *Expeditionary Learning* in grades 3 to 5 for English language arts (ELA) instruction. The *Go Math!* program is used across all grades to support math instruction. Teachers created an interdisciplinary literacy program that incorporates science and social studies topics aligned to the New York City scope and sequence. Social studies and science culminating tasks were co-created with the support of an external curriculum planning consultant. These materials and related resources provide consistency and coherence of instructional strategies that support college and career readiness skills as noted in lesson plans and curriculum maps across subjects.
- Units of study across subjects include performance tasks and integrate the instructional shifts focused on providing students with literacy opportunities that balance informational and literary texts, and promote reading and writing grounded in evidence from text. For example, the grade 4 team implemented an ELA unit of study to address deficiencies in students' writing, specifically in adding details, using content specific vocabulary and incorporating text based evidence to make a claim or argument.
- The school secured the expertise of a dual language consultant to engage the staff in identifying verbal, instructional and procedural scaffolds in the dual language classrooms. Teachers who participated in the series turn-keyed the information to their colleagues and incorporated charts and diagrams in the classroom so that students have access to the scaffolds during lessons for academic language support. The training also introduced the SLOP instructional planning template which helps teachers plan and map lessons that include both content and language objectives.
- Integrated collaborative Teaching (ICT) teachers work with an external staff developer who provides support in modifying and adapting curricula. The staff developer provides ICT teachers with practical instructional strategies to integrate in their planning. For example, lesson plans for kindergarten ICT cite the use of task cards and alphabet charts for the strategic group, sentence starters for the on-level group and adjective charts to support the advanced group in using descriptive words in their writing.
- Lesson plans include questions aligned to the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels and academic tasks that promote higher order thinking. Culminating and performance tasks such as "Comparing and Contrasting Life in Mexico with Life in California" and "The Tropical Rainforest" engage students in learning experiences that enhance reading comprehension, promote vocabulary development, encourage writing in different genres and increase conceptual understanding.

<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 teams examine student work and analyze assessment data of students in the school's lowest third subgroup, which includes ELLs, students with disabilities and students approaching grade benchmarks. Teachers across grade levels and core subjects share inquiry team findings and engage in common planning sessions to support alignment with the Common Core Standards.

**Impact**

The school's professional collaborations foster reflection, enhance the instructional capacity of teachers and contribute effective instructional strategies that focus on improving student learning outcomes and promoting the school's goals.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams meet twice per week during professional work time on Tuesdays and during common planning periods by grade. During their structured time together they use the Surfacing the Gap protocol noting what the students should know and be able to do according to selected Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers also examine student work to surface learning gaps and trends such as adding details to writing and word choice. Subsequently, the team reviews student work in accordance with the Six Plus One Writing Traits rubric, which measures the elements of writing such as organization, central idea, and voice. Looking at a low, medium or high rated student writing samples, teachers discuss the design and implementation of an action plan for students in the lowest third which includes English language learners, students with disabilities and students approaching grade benchmarks. In addition, teachers examine their practices and share strategies such as sentence fluency activities, proposed to attend to the areas noted from the student data analysis.
- The team uses the Collaborative Inquiry Team Progress Tracking tool to memorialize and track student progress. Student data information such as the students' reading levels, baseline results, pre-learning targets and post learning targets are recorded in this tool. The confirmation of end-line results and whether each student has met the goal are available at-a-glance for review by the team and to share with supervisors.
- The grade 2 team meeting followed the Surfacing the Gap protocol to discuss the outcomes of a student's text-based writing response based on learning target post-tests informed by the Reading Standards for Literature. The team discussed the quick-write strategy to engage students in the practice of writing paragraphs and the technique that entails echoing the question to prompt students into focused writing by answering the five "W" questions, who, what, why, where and when? After examining the writing piece, the team determined that the student met the learning target fulfilling the elements of the identified standards by demonstrating understanding of key details in a text, using transitional terms to improve sentence flow, and recount stories to determine their central message. In concluding their meeting the team discussed next steps including providing scaffolds and modifying their unit plans to incorporate specific graphic organizers to assist the student in expanding his ideas and adding personal voice in writing in order to meet the third grade standards.