



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Lyndon B. Johnson

Elementary School K151

**763 Knickerbocker Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11207**

Principal: Jayne Hunt

**Date of review: March 25, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Lillian Druck**

The School Context

Lyndon B. Johnson is an elementary school with 332 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 20% Black, 72% Hispanic, and 8% White students. The student body includes 21% English language learners and 27% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 92.0%.

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	Additional Findings	Developing
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	Additional Findings	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	Focus	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	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
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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 principal communicates high expectations through newsletters that are emailed electronically to staff on a weekly basis. Via this structure, the principal reinforces the school's instructional expectations affording teachers opportunities to meet and engage in professional discourse on school initiatives. For example, the enrichment science teacher conducted two professional development sessions demonstrating the use of classroom materials and manipulatives for teachers to incorporate into science lessons and project based learning activities within the current curriculum.
- The principal provides professional learning sessions on the Danielson Framework for Teaching with a focus on questioning and discussion, based on feedback from classroom observations, professional development reflections from teachers and suggestions from the staff development committee. The principal's systems for accountability for the school's high expectations during individual conferences and bi-weekly feedback cycles include statements such as, "Have students invite comments from classmates during discussions to challenge one another's thinking."
- Parents learn about the school's high expectations through monthly activities conducted by the staff on topics related to college and career benchmarks. They participate in workshops that provide information on topics such as math numeracy, science inquiry, and interventions that support targeted grades and subjects. Parents also engage in school-wide events including Literacy Night, Read across America, and New York State assessment information sessions.
- Teachers use a parent communication log to document outreach to parents and supports provided to improve student progress in meeting grade benchmarks. During interviews, parents stated that teachers are available at dismissal, during preparation periods and on Tuesday afternoons, during family engagement periods to discuss and follow up on the behavioral and academic progress of their children.
- During parent interviews, families stated that the daily Social Emotional Learning (SEL) period which is part of the school schedule, encourages their children to practice the highlighted behavior of the week at home and in their daily lives. Parents stated that this valuable school component supports the adoption of behaviors and values such as empathy, self-awareness, responsibility and perseverance, which their children will need as they move toward college and career readiness.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Developing

Findings

The school's use of common assessments to measure student progress toward goals and to adjust curricula and instruction is emerging across grades and subjects. Assessment practices are inconsistent in their implementation to reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment rubrics across the school.

Impact

The use of common assessment results and ongoing checks for understanding to make effective instructional adjustments to lessons lead to missed opportunities to maximize the learning potential of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Adjustments based on common assessments such as running records, unit tests and writing rubrics to address the varying levels of language proficiency of English language learners were evident in some of the lessons observed. Although data for English language learners (ELL) indicated that students spoke different languages and were at different levels of English proficiency, lessons for ELL students during push-in English as a second language (ESL) periods in math and English language arts (ELA) reflected few adjustments to curricula and instruction to meet the needs of all students. For example, in math, adjustments included translations in Spanish. However, students who spoke another language did not have access to translations. During an ELA lesson, all English language learners participated in a basic skills lesson that did not reflect specific adjustments based on the use of student data.
- Self-assessment practices include student checklists and rubrics generated by teachers. Some student writing products include peer assessment rubrics to promote student feedback. However, peer and self-assessment tools were introduced in December and are currently in the emerging stages of implementation.
- In some classrooms, students worked independently while teachers provided support to small target groups. A review of the Venn diagrams that students were completing independently indicated that students were unclear about how to use the graphic organizer to record similarities and differences when comparing two stories. Teachers in these classrooms did not circulate to the students working independently to check for their understanding in order to make the necessary adjustments to instruction to meet their needs.
- Thumbs up, exit slips and color coded self-assessing cups are used for ongoing checks for understanding. The use of color-coded cups was observed with three groups across classrooms. In one classroom, students were unclear on how to use the self-assessment strategy as they had four different color cups and did not know which two colors to use to show whether they agreed or disagreed with a peer's response.

Additional Findings

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

The majority of teachers engage in inquiry-based, common planning sessions to support curricular alignment with the Common Core Standards and findings across grade levels. Teacher teams examine student work and analyze assessment data of subgroups, including students with disabilities, English language learners and other high needs subgroups.

Impact

The school's professional collaborations foster teacher reflection, improve instructional capacity and identify effective instructional strategies that focus on improving student learning outcomes and promoting the school's goals.

Supporting Evidence

- During a grade 4 team meeting, teachers presented work generated by students as part of a tall tale unit of study. Each teacher displayed student-made charts which depicted different ways the team used a variety of graphic organizers to improve their understanding of the characteristics of tall tales. Each teacher described targeted activities including video clips, graphic organizers and visuals to meet the needs of students with disabilities and English language learners in their ICT and special education classes.
- Teacher teams present their inquiry cycle data results and best practices to other teams during four sessions throughout the school year in January, March, April and June. These sessions are followed by grade level planning activities with support staff to incorporate specific modifications based on the findings of the teams. Each team presents a power point that covers the following questions: Who are the students and how were they selected? What were the conditions of learning? How will this impact on teaching practices? What are the next instructional steps for the students? In January, a grade 3 team presented on the use of graphic organizers, sentence starters and checklists to build on the teams' repertoire of supports that may be used with low performing students in writing strong introductions and conclusions.
- Teacher teams meet on Tuesdays during the professional work time after school and during common periods to examine student work. During inquiry team sessions, teachers focus on three students, from the bottom third subgroup, for each class on the grade. Twice a month, time is set aside for teams to review student work, plan adjustments such as tiered writing tasks in grade 4 to support identified needs, and select final work products for portfolios.
- The school schedule includes common meeting time for grade level teams to plan lessons and develop units of study. Service providers, including speech, special education teacher support service (SETSS) staff and English as second language teachers, meet with grade level teams once a month to plan academic tasks that provide multiple entry points and differentiated strategies in their unit planning. For example, special education teachers and ESL teachers meet with each grade to identify scaffolds such as graphic organizers as well as visual supports and texts at different Lexile levels to enable target students to meet their individualized educational plans and their language goals respectively.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies including entry points, class discussions, and engagement in challenging tasks to increase student participation and raise the level of student thinking is uneven.

Impact

The demonstration of higher order thinking skills and high levels of participation from students are emerging in their implementation and production of meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- In some classes visited, students used manipulative materials such as base ten blocks, number grids, colored disks and unifix cubes during math lessons. Visual supports such as strategy charts, word walls and graphic organizers were available as references for student use during some ELA activities. In various classrooms, student folders for English language learners included scaffolds such as lists of sentence starters, transitional phrases, descriptive words and translations. However, the availability of such supports was inconsistent across classrooms. For example, during an ELA lesson, students were asked to analyze visuals to determine themes and details but had access to only one visual for such analysis. During math lessons, students in one classroom were observed using counters, slates and tens blocks. While, in another classroom students were limited to the use of visuals projected on the board.
- The display of work products demonstrating student participation and discussion at high levels was inconsistent across classrooms. Student-generated charts displayed in some classrooms depict the contributions made by students during group work. For example, in an integrated collaborative teaching class, work products reflect high levels of thinking in student responses to questions such as, “What can I infer from the text?” and “How does text evidence support the inferences?” Student responses included, “From the text, I can infer that the boy is pretending to be sick so that he does not have to go to school.” and “According to the text, the boy tells his mom he feels better as soon as she tells him that she is going to call the doctor.” In addition, the grade 4 team shared various graphic organizers from the current unit of study that students created to identify and organize the elements of tall tales. However, this level of thinking was only evident in some classes.
- During a teacher team meeting, teachers reported that they are in the process of incorporating inquiry-based instructional strategies to teach students the scientific method. They are also planning to provide opportunities for groups of students to work collaboratively on hands-on activities and student-led inquiry discussions. The school’s initiative focusing on efforts to support student engagement is in its early stages of implementation.

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and faculty have processes in place to align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Units of study and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigor and higher order thinking skills.

Impact

The school curricula are in the beginning stages of promoting college and career readiness and rigor to leverage coherence across grades and subject areas.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses *Ready Gen* and *Go Math!* programs to support English language arts and math instruction. *Foss* science kits and *Houghton Mifflin* social studies texts are used to plan lessons aligned to the New York State scope and sequence in the respective content areas. Several curriculum documents and lesson plans include the learning targets as “I can” statements, with specific Common Core Standards tied to each lesson, as well as essential and text dependent questions such as, “How do the characters’ actions contribute to the events, plot and theme in a text?” and “How is a theme revealed through details and language in a text?” to be considered for group and peer discussions.
- During grade level common planning sessions, teachers are in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards. Although lesson plans and units of study outline essential questions, learning objectives, learning activities and vocabulary for each subject area, curricular decisions to build coherence across grades and subjects are in the emerging stages.
- Under the guidance of the new principal, teachers are beginning to create academic tasks intended to emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills within the units of study. For example, teachers plan lessons incorporating the interactive use of the Smart board and software such as *World Book* to provide students with the same content across subjects at varying Lexile levels. However, lesson plans reviewed indicate inconsistencies in their specificity to reflect rigorous activities designed for ELLs.