



Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S./I.S. 163 Bath Beach

Elementary – Middle School K163

**109 Bay 14th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11214**

Principal: Jessica Riccio

**Date of review: May 20, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Debra R. Lamb, Ed.D.**

The School Context

P.S. /I.S. 153 Bath Beach is an elementary – middle school with 618 students from Kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 0% Black, 33% Hispanic, 37% White, and 29% Asian, and 1% other students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.8%.

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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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	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	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:

Well Developed

Findings

Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks and are embedded in a coherent way across grades and subjects. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

All learners, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs), demonstrate their thinking. Individual and groups of students, including the lowest- and highest-achieving students, English language learners (ELLs), and students with disabilities (SWDs), have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- The school embraces a balanced literacy approach, with the workshop model and guided reading. Currently, the school uses *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP)* and Pearson's *ReadyGEN™* program in Kindergarten through grade 5. Each grade decided whether the *ReadyGEN™* program serves the needs of its students. Teachers believe *ReadyGEN™* is aligned with the school's social studies and science curriculum. Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) teachers of grade 2 preferred *ReadyGEN™*'s books however teachers of grade 3 were concerned with the program's rigor. Additionally, grade 5 teachers were not happy with the program's writing components and decided to return to implementing elements of the Writer's Workshop. Teachers of the school's ELL and SWD populations reorganize the curriculum in order to meet the demands of the next grade.
- In grades 6 through 8, the school uses Scholastic's *Common Core CODE X™* program for English language arts (ELA). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's *GO Math! Program* is implemented in the elementary grades and *Connected Mathematics Project 3 (CMP3)* in the middle grades. Teachers infuse content from the state's EngageNY website as well as online programs such as *MobyMax* (www.mobymax.com) and *myON®* (<https://myon.com/>), which personalizes books for students based on reading level and interest. Students also participate in book clubs. The school ordered leveled *Rigby® PM Books* from Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for guided reading in Kindergarten.
- Teachers embed high-interest, hands-on learning activities within the curriculum to engage students. For example, grade 5 students learned about Ancient Greek and Roman mythology, by dressing in costumes of the Nordic people and participating in a mythology performance. Afterwards, students presented their research projects on Norse gods and goddesses. The co-teachers of this class, one of whom has an acting background, wrote a School-wide Enrichment Model (SEM) grant to get materials to incorporate in the unit's culminating activity.

Area of Focus

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. Although teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding, student self-assessment practices lack strategic application.

Impact

Actionable feedback is provided to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Although teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs, students are not aware of their learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's instructional focus for 2014-2015 is assessment practices, which was identified based on feedback on observations of pedagogical practice using the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school uses Curriculum Associates' *Ready® New York CCLS* program for performance-based assessment and *i-Ready Diagnostic & Instruction* to predict student performance on New York State assessments. Teachers administer running records on a monthly basis. The running records conducted in October and May are used as the Measure of Student Learning (MoSL). Students receiving English as a Second Language services were exempt from these MoSL assessments. Teachers tier students in ELA based on their Independent Reading Level progression from September through April. Teachers also record student performance on unit assessments, performance tasks, and projects. Student progress reports are distributed at the end of quarterly marking periods. The progress reports have a clear explanation of grades, including performance levels in each subject and Independent Reading Levels. Rubrics, including the one used in a grade 8 class to assess student mastery of specific Common Core Standards, are commonly used.
- Through the use of checklists, teachers capture anecdotal information about student academic progress and behavior. For example, during guided reading, a Kindergarten teacher used a checklist to note students' ability to retrieve information, pointed to words, stretched words, and used pictures. In the early grades, teachers maintain daily reading logs of students, including the book title, author, and time spent reading.
- A student checklist entitled "Did I do it like a Kindergartener?" provides an opportunity for learners to self-assess their writing, particularly their use of detail in pictures and words, elaboration on the importance of the topic, organization, ending, transitions, lead sentence, and overall opinion about a topic or book. The principal asked a grade 8 student working in a group in the geometry class, "How do you know if you're successful at this task?" The student responded, "We asked our teacher." The principal shared that professional development for this teacher is focused on student self-assessment.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices strategically provide multiple entry points and high-quality supports and extensions into the curricula. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation and ownership.

Impact

All learners, including ELLs and SWDs, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- A whiteboard in an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) Kindergarten class displayed the following objective: “Students will be able to work in quiet centers during guided reading.” Student groups were simultaneously engaged in differentiated activities offering multiple entry points including working on computers and listening centers, independent reading, guided reading, and an activity called “Stamp It, Write It, Read It” in which students working on word work were stamping letters. Both teachers worked with small groups on reinforcement of sight words and skills using Level C books. Teachers ensured that essential components of guided reading were present, including frontloading vocabulary, labeling pictures, and building background knowledge. Students in one guided reading group used magnetic letters to make words on whiteboards. A form labeled “guided reading lesson planner” was used by each teacher to identify the components of their lesson focused on two different Level C books. Homework was also differentiated for the guided reading groups.
- The learning objective in a grade 8 math class was “Students will be able to combine transformations by matching and representing two-dimensional figures in a given task.” The lesson’s vocabulary included “coordinate plane, two-dimensional, rotation, dilation, translation, reflection, and transformation.” Students worked within three homogeneous ability groupings (two low, three medium and two high groups) on coordinate geometry with transformations. Different colors were used for each transformation. As the teacher circulated, a student shared the task that his group was engaged in: “We’re making a key that represents the color. Green represents the second prime number. Red represents the ‘y’ axis and ‘x’ axis. Pink is the third prime. Blue is the first prime and reflection. Purple is the original prime.” One group of students was given an additional assignment to complete for enrichment, which was to create their own transformation cards. A student from the higher abilities group served as a peer teacher for the lower abilities group.
- A teacher served as facilitator of two groups of students in a grade 8 science class engaged in a whole-class debate about genetically modified food (GMFs). One group was focused on whether GMFs are beneficial to humans and the other group on how GMFs put people at risk for new allergies and other health problems. Students passionately discussed and took ownership of the debate.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide training. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

The school has a system of accountability for high expectations, and provides ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress towards expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- Based on ideas gleaned in discussions with teachers held during past professional development periods, the assistant principal—formerly the school’s literacy coach—compiled a list of possible 2014-2015 professional development activities. Activities included utilizing Depth of Knowledge (DOK), scoring and norming of assessments, aligning resources to the Common Core, higher-order questioning, Danielson Framework components, Universal Design for Learning, and using data to adapt curriculum. In addition, the school surveyed teacher interest in leading professional development for peers. This survey identified three areas of focus aligned to the school’s 2015-2016 professional development goals, including differentiation of instruction, data disaggregation, and student behavior. School administration has also administered a teacher learning style survey to ensure that professional development would be delivered that met optimal teacher needs.
- A variety of activities are held during the year to recognize and celebrate student achievement, expose students to a variety of learning opportunities, and prepare students for high school, college, and career. For example, middle school students can take Regents-level courses for high school credit and participate in a preparatory program for the city’s specialized high schools. Partnerships with organizations like Midori and the Hispanic Ballet expands student exposure to cultural arts. Induction ceremonies for Arista and honor roll recognition activities celebrate student achievement.
- To inspire their students, teachers post the college attended and the degrees earned outside their classrooms.

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

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused. Distributed structures are in place.

Impact

There has been improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students. Teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- The Kindergarten teacher team meets weekly, every Tuesday during second period. During today’s meeting, four teachers identified a trend in the data from the most recent MoSLs. Next, the team reviewed the Level C guided reading books to be used and discussed different words that may be challenging for their students. The team’s prior inquiry project was focused on three students identified at Independent Reading Level A. Two of the students had trouble with letters and sounds, and one student was placed into a 12:1:1 class the following year.
- In March, grade-level teams reflected on next steps in their collaborative work. For example, Kindergarten teachers continued to review their new guided reading books and to discuss how to adapt the materials for ELLs. Next, they share their adaptations with grade 1 teachers. Grades 7 and 8 teachers meet to share their completed curriculum maps in order to ensure vertical alignment.
- Teachers serve on the school’s core instructional team as representatives of the school’s various instructional, student support, and grade-level teams. Teachers also serve the school as data specialists, teacher team facilitators, and grade leaders.