



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Parkway School

Elementary School K167

**1025 Eastern Parkway
Brooklyn
New York 11213**

Principal: Marc Mardy

**Date of review: January 14, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Clarence G. Ellis**

The School Context

P.S. 167 is an elementary school with 106 students from grade 4 through grade 5. The school population comprises 87% Black, 11% Hispanic, and 2% White students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 23% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 91.9%.

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	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	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	Additional Findings	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	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	Celebration	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

Findings

Across the school, teachers participate in structured inquiry teacher teams that promote teacher leadership opportunities.

Impact

Inquiry-team collaborations that address the instructional focus and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards are building teacher capacity that is leading to student progress. Distributive leadership structures allow teachers to make key decisions that affect student learning across the school and voice within instructional decisions that support student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- During teacher team meetings, team members hold each other accountable as they examine student work products via specified protocols. The process also requires members to document agreed upon next steps. For example, grades four and five were working on reviewing student work products resulting from the weekly units of study. Furthermore, grade teams conducted similar “data-dives”, analyzing student assessment results, at the same time. This analysis created an alignment of teacher and grade teams, ensuring that students are taught the same skills, strategies, and concepts in a coherent fashion.
- The teams also made adjustments to their text discussion approach by developing questions stems that are common core-aligned. These questions stems were incorporated during the literacy block and during science and social studies as well, resulting in student improvement in citing text-based evidence to support their argument.
- During both teacher team meetings, teachers shared that the building leadership fosters a culture that highlights effective teacher practices, and allows teacher teams to contribute to the professional development plans. This structure of teacher team meetings, which meets three times per week, along with weekly administrative interface meetings between teachers and leadership, has created an environment of ongoing adult learning.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Although the school has started to align teaching practices with the, set of beliefs about how students learn best and some instructional supports are delivered the focus upon multiple-entry points lack consistency.

Impact

Since pedagogy is beginning to align practices that focus on the instructional shifts and the Danielson Framework for Teaching, the inconsistencies result in uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks that promote all students' demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in their work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The school believes that students learn best when instruction is anchored by the Danielson Framework for Teaching, including hands-on activities with application of knowledge to real-world situations. Additionally, although the workshop model of instruction is used to provide multiple-entry points into the lesson via guided practice and independent or small group activities in some classes, these practices were not implemented consistently across classrooms. For example, in one fifth grade literacy classroom, the lesson consisted of students drawing conclusions, making inferences, and engaging in spirited discussion while the teacher served as a facilitator. In another literacy classroom, the lesson was teacher dominated, and consisted mainly of student responses to teacher-directed questions that resulted in limited discussion and peer collaboration.
- In a fourth grade science class the teacher conducted a biology lesson as students were asked and able to name the different kinds of beaks of various species of birds. The teacher did not modify instruction to provide extensions when the students demonstrated that they were well-versed on the various types of bird beaks, and how they could be used to adapt for survival. Some students were not engaged and began to talk to their neighbors. Similarly, in a fourth grade math class, the teacher did not provide extensions for early finishers. The students were engaged in a lesson where they would use a standard division algorithm to divide 3-digit numbers by 1-digit numbers. While the teacher supported the guided group and they were on task, the independent group finished early and was not provided an extension activity and they displayed off-task behaviors such as doodling in their notebooks.
- During a fourth grade integrated co-teaching (ICT) class, students were asked to recognize relevant facts and opinions derived from a nonfiction text about Coretta Scott King, while the teacher conducted a picture walk. Meanwhile the co-teacher was circulating and supporting the students as they were writing their predictions on post-its. The class then participated in guided reading of the text to determine if their predictions were accurate. This was a rigorous lesson which required the students to demonstrate high-order thinking. Conversely, in a fifth grade literacy class the students were asked to ascertain information that was not directly stated in the text and required them to employ context clue strategies. However, the lesson was teacher-dominated, and did not afford the students opportunities to exercise higher-order thinking.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Developing

Findings

The school is beginning to employ the use of common assessments and checks for understanding to measure student progress towards goals across grades.

Impact

Although the school has created structures to measure student learning, these structures do not consistently lead to the necessary adjustments that address students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Although the school uses a variety of common assessments, such as periodic assessments, unit tests in literacy and math, Measures of Student Learning (MOSL), and state assessments to track student progress and the results of the data and item analysis has allowed for an inconsistent refinement of teaching strategies and targeting of specific learning skills. The school has inconsistently gathered information from these sources to address individual progress in all subjects for all students. For example, a fourth grade teacher adjusted her lesson to support the use of graphophonemic decoding strategies, the relationship between the sound and the letters, and the use of syntactic cues, as this was determined to be a need based on the formative assessment for literacy. However, another fourth grade teacher did not make a similar adjustment although her students displayed the same area of concern.
- Although teachers and administrators have access to data from formative and summative assessments, as well as, individual student work products, they inconsistently utilize the information gleaned from these sources to make effective curricula and instructional adjustments. For example, the formative assessment results indicate that the students display issues with citing text-based evidence to support their argument, as well as concerns with identifying character traits. A fourth grade teacher provided academic intervention supports for these areas of need during instruction while another did not.
- Across classrooms, teachers' use of ongoing checks for understanding, including asking and answering questions, as well as student self-assessments, inconsistently lead to instructional adjustments that address all learners especially English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. During a classroom visit the checks for understanding for academic vocabulary was the use of the instructional strategy called fist-to-five, where students showed five fingers to demonstrate complete understanding and lesser fingers for lesser understanding. Additionally, there was a mid-lesson interruption for instructional adjustments which entailed pausing periodically throughout the lesson to ensure student understanding. However, in another fourth grade class there were minimal checks for understanding and no instructional adjustments.

Findings

The school has aligned curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards with the integration of the instructional shifts. Critical thinking skills and analysis are consistently emphasized and coherently planned for all learners across grades and subjects.

Impact

The curricular planning promotes coherence that ensures that students are college and career ready. Rigorous tasks across grades and content areas encourage engagement for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Literacy planning units emphasize citation of text-based evidence to support analysis of literary texts, draw conclusions from informational texts, listen and comprehend informational text, develop the topic with supporting details and evidence, provide evidence from texts to support explanations, and academic language acquisition. For example in a grade five unit plan, the long term targets are for the students to draw conclusions and make inferences, and distinguish between fact and opinion within informational text, as well as to determine author's point of view or purpose while analyzing the novel *Anne Frank Life In Hiding*. Likewise, in another grade five literacy unit plan challenged students to draw conclusions, and make inferences while analyzing *George's Secret Key to The Universe*, by Stephen and Lucy Hawking.
- Lesson plans and curriculum maps, which are housed in Google.docs, indicate that the school uses Common Core Learning Standards, its own "Balanced Literacy Structure" supplemented by Ready Gen, Envisions for math, as well as, the New York City Department of Education's Scope and Sequence for social studies and science. The school employs the use of the workshop model across content areas, inclusive of flexible grouping based on student performance, literacy and analytic abilities, as a means to promote student engagement.
- Across classrooms, teacher planning of scaffolds that supported multiple entry points were evident within lesson plans reviewed. For example, scaffolds for students with disabilities included: grouping by topic, graphic organizer, pair reading, higher-order thinking (HOT) questions. Teacher's plans included long-term targets, ongoing assessments, and academic vocabulary focus for each lesson. For example, long-term targets included: creating paragraphs from supporting details, preparing concluding statements, theme analysis, and citing evidence. For example in a fifth grade social studies lesson on "U.S. – Cuba Relations?" The academic vocabulary included: prolonged, successive, detainment, and consolidate. The school has also focused on questioning to ensure engagement and encourages students' thinking. For example, within a social studies lesson plan, the teacher pre-planned questions such as "What are the implications of the U.S. – Cuba Relations?" and, "What has the current Administration done to improve relationships?"

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

The school consistently communicates high expectations aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. There are a number of school-wide communications and frequent student performance updates keep families informed of their children's development towards college and career readiness.

Impact

The school's structures for communication supports staff professional development activities and a system of accountability for those expectations. This support results in families understanding student progress towards a clear path of higher student goal achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The leadership uses the Danielson Framework for Teaching to inform classroom instructional feedback and communicates expectations to teachers and staff at professional development workshops and during one-on-one teacher meetings. Snapshots and formal observations are conducted in order to ensure that students are engaged in standards-based instructional activities that are cognitively challenging. Several of the professional development sessions focused on addressing 3b; questioning and discussion techniques, 3c: student engagement, and 3c: checking for understanding.
- School leadership holds staff accountable via snapshots and formal observations and provides feedback during one-on-one meetings. A review of formal teacher observations demonstrated that the professional development plan supports the observation cycle where teachers are referred to intervisitations, professional development sessions, online sessions and viewing recommended videos in order to bolster instructional delivery.
- Parents expressed that the school staff is caring and works diligently to maintain communication with families, specifically via My On, an online literacy program which allows parents to see what their children are reading and at what Lexile levels. Parent communications vary to include weekly progress updates, phone calls, regular grade conferences, memos sent home by teachers that are back-packed and translated, and parent workshops that focus upon how they can support their children for Common Core Learning Standards assessments. Students partake in the Medgar Evers College Education Pipeline program, whereby they attend classes on the Medgar Evers campus every Friday. This program serves as a direct reinforcement of opportunities that support college and career readiness.