



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The New Lots School

Elementary School K213

**580 Hegeman Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11207**

Principal: Stanley Moise

**Date of review: March 5, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Brenda Perez**

The School Context

The New Lots School is an elementary school with 440 students from pre- kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 78% Black, 18% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 23% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 91.0%.

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	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	Celebration	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:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

All teachers analyze data from common assessments and disciplines to track and monitor student progress. Teachers use data information to plan targeted instruction, make instructional decisions and adjustments to curricula.

Impact

The school's use of common assessments results in consistent monitoring of student progress and allows teachers to make informed decisions and adjustments to curriculum at the teacher, team and classroom levels to ensure that students make progress towards meeting their goals. Clear feedback from rubrics and checklists provide actionable feedback to students regarding their academic achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has a yearlong common assessment calendar for all grades across content areas delineating when teachers are to administer the common assessments. During common planning periods and grade team meetings teachers analyze these assessments using a school created corrective-instruction action planning template. The template is used to facilitate what standards need to be re-taught using a different approach, what trends need to be addressed on the grade and class level, and what steps will be utilized to ensure that adequate opportunity for practice is provided to the students.
- The school has a system in place to track the performance and progress of individual students. All classroom teachers identified 10 struggling students in their class and closely monitor their progress utilizing small group instruction, common assessment results, and conference notes. For example, teachers employ student conferences as a way of checking for understanding. Conference notes are taken and analyzed by teachers so that later students can be grouped for targeted instruction. School leaders meet with their assigned grades to monitor and receive updates regarding students' progress.
- Rubrics and checklists are utilized across all grades to check for understanding and assess student progress towards meeting goals. Rubrics describe the performance expectations for all assignments and several students stated that rubrics helped them understand what they have to do to get a good grade. Teachers provide feedback to students using genre specific rubrics and checklists. "Glows" and next steps were noted on all work products. One 2nd grade teacher's glow to a student read, "Super Job XX! Your explanation is very detailed and includes lots of math vocabulary. Next step, use the place values to help in your description. Instead of saying 'the next box' you can say 'in the tens place'."

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Most teachers use scaffolds to provide all students with access to the challenging curricula. However, across classrooms, supports and extensions do not always lead to a demonstration of higher order thinking and participation.

Impact

Inconsistent access to supports and extensions cause some students, not to be challenged to work to their full potential. Discussions, class participation, and efforts to promote thinking are uneven and result in limited opportunities for increased student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Classroom practices reflect the use of instructional strategies such as student grouping and varied levels of questioning. However, adequate supports to promote high level thinking to meet the needs of high achieving students, English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities were inconsistent, resulting in limited opportunities to maximize student learning. In one classroom observed, students were told to write about a community worker of their choice. Although all students were provided with a specific sheet of paper and encouraged to talk to their partners about the community worker of their choice, many appeared to be struggling to get their thoughts on paper.
- Across classrooms observed, class lessons were mostly lectured and students had the same assignment to complete with little or no time for students to work collaboratively in groups. There was inconsistent evidence of multiple entry points into the curricula for all learners including ELLs and students with disabilities so that they were challenged to demonstrate higher order thinking skills. In a 2nd grade class, all students were asked to turn and talk with their partner and discuss what digit is in the tens place and in the hundreds place, what is the value of the 2 digit and, "What is this method called for $200+50+8$?" Once students shared their answers, they worked on a math page. In a 4th grade special education class, all students were asked recitation questions, such as which number is the denominator and they all worked on adding and subtracting fractions with like denominators.
- Teacher assistants participate in professional learning opportunities to support differentiation of instruction through small group and individualized attention based on students' needs. However, during class visits, most were not observed actively engaged with students or utilizing alternate resources or strategies.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school leader communicates high expectations to teachers, parents and students and has created a culture of mutual accountability for these expectations. To support these expectations, professional learning opportunities are provided to all constituents.

Impact

As a result of the professional development, all constituents have a common understanding of the expectations and are mutually accountable for achieving success in meeting school goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders provide professional learning opportunities to teachers around the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Professional development is conducted via staff conferences, grade level meetings, coaching cycles, inter-visitation and teacher team collaborations. Using Advance data, the school outlines in a professional development plan learning opportunities for teachers around the school's instructional foci and teacher needs. Frequent observations are conducted and supervisory conversations and written feedback with specific next steps are provided to all teachers. Staff members are held accountable to meeting the expectations related to instructional and professional responsibilities. As a result, the staff is well aware of the school's goals to enhance teacher practice and accelerate student learning. A 1st grade teacher stated in the teacher team meeting that during one of her supervisory conversations with the principal, he had asked her how she could get her first graders to write more. She stated that they discussed the graphic organizer and modified it to include another bullet to help her students add more volume to their writing.
- The school leader has implemented the Responsive Classroom approach across all grades. This program, associated with better academic and social outcomes, promotes a more positive attitude towards school for elementary school children. Every school day begins with each student being greeted at the door by the teacher and extends to conversations about the night before with the family, homework, or shows the children watched. During the student meeting, students stated that they felt that the teachers really cared about them and the principal reported that incidents have decrease significantly in the school.
- Parents reported that they meet regularly with their children's teachers, sometimes after school when they see the teachers walking to their cars or through phone calls about students' progress in meeting academic and social-emotional expectations. Parents explained that the school uses Dojo, an application that allows teachers and parents to track students' progress. Several parents stated that they met with their child and their child's teacher for a math workshop where they received instruction on how to solve math problems and were surprised at how challenging some of the problems were for them. They noted that they enjoyed that type of workshop because the teachers provided them with strategies that they can use at home.

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

Teacher teams analyze data related to student achievement and discuss instructional strategies to make adjustments to instruction in order to improve teacher practice and student outcomes.

Impact

Professional collaboration contributes to school wide coherence and enhances the instructional capacity of teachers, thereby strengthening classroom practices and improving student outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams follow a protocol to examine student work and share information and revisions on Atlas Rubicon, an online system. Team members post strategies, graphic organizers, checklist and rubrics after adjustments and revisions are made, allowing teachers to share the work. This also allows school leaders to have the opportunity to monitor, track and provide feedback to the work of the teacher teams.
- Teacher teams meet weekly to review and revise lesson plans and to look at student work to determine strengths and areas for improvement. In a grade 4 teacher team meeting, teachers looked at a student’s math work in a self-contained class. The teachers discussed different strategies, manipulatives, visuals, and steps to help the student and others, who were having difficulties, gain a better understanding of equivalent fractions. The meeting ended with the teachers agreeing to try these strategies and one teacher stating that she would revise the math curriculum map on Atlas Rubicon to reflect the changes.
- After reviewing students’ writing pieces, teacher teams took a closer look at ReadyGEN to address gaps between the program and the Common Core. The 2nd grade team, for example, revised their unit on opinion writing to include additional teaching points that included teaching students the importance of voice, supporting details to persuade others to share their opinion, and evidence. Additionally, a student-friendly checklist was created to remind students of the writing development, structure, and language conventions so that they could self-assess their opinion writing pieces.

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school curricula is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and supported by coherent units and lesson plans that incorporate the instructional shifts with resources and program that sustain learning for a variety of learners.

Impact

All students benefit from an engaging standards-based curriculum that fosters critical thinking skills and incorporates college and career readiness for all learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- The adoption and implementation of ReadyGEN and Go Math! strengthens the alignment of the content standards and the instructional shifts. The curriculum is supplemented by Engage NY resources. There is a school wide focus on building academic vocabulary, questioning and discussion and student engagement. This was based on teacher findings between last year's curriculum units and student performance on the 2014 English language arts and math New York State assessments. As a result, teacher teams have developed rubrics to assess writing tasks that require learners to demonstrate skills, such as text referencing, and the use of grade appropriate or advanced vocabulary in their writing. Based on the rubrics used and the lesson learning objectives, students are group for targeted instruction.
- All grades have curriculum maps and common planning time is embedded in the school's schedule to allow teachers to meet weekly to discuss student work and make revisions to the curriculum maps. School leaders are assigned to specific grades and assist the grade teams with developing units that include vocabulary development, reviewing student work and planning next steps. Administrators assist teachers in aligning unit plans with the Danielson Framework for Teaching and Webb's Depth of Knowledge cognitive matrix. Every lesson begins with a learning objective that is revisited throughout the lesson. Student ownership for learning is highlighted at the conclusion of a lesson through a shared discussion and exit slips.
- The school uses ATLAS Rubicon, a system shared and used by all staff members, to inform instruction and make revisions to the school's curriculum maps and tasks. During grade team meetings, teachers analyze a range of relevant data such as formative and summative data and interim assessments in order to understand student performance, identify trends and address learning gaps. A trend that school leaders and teachers identified for improvement was writing. As a result, the school is working towards revising curriculum maps to ensure more writing across the content areas. To further support writing, the school leader has implemented, P.S. 213's monthly writing contest. All students are encouraged to participate in month-appropriate themes such as Peace on Earth, New Year-New Goals, and An Important Woman in My Life. Winners and prizes are announced at the end of each month.