



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**The Barbara Reing School**

**Elementary School K255**

**1866 East 17<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11229**

**Principal: Kelly McCann**

**Date of review: March 16, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Julia Bove**

## The School Context

The Barbara Reing School is an elementary school with 924 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 2% Black, 11% Hispanic, 60% White, 24% Asian, and 2% multiracial students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 12% 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 95.3%.

## 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>Well Developed</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</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>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</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>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

The school has established a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations.

### Impact

There is a culture of mutual accountability for all members of the school community. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families to support student progress.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders convey high expectations through regular meetings, professional development opportunities and thorough feedback in teacher observations. Administration encouraged teachers to sign up for book study groups. One group used discussion protocols when reading What Great Teachers Do Differently: 14 Things That Matter Most by Todd Whitaker. The group shared their best practices with the staff. Teacher observations include comments such as, “students must be provided with authentic learning opportunities,” and “you provide your students with the opportunity to direct their own learning, require them to explain their thinking, and state evidence.”
- At the beginning of the year, the school distributes brochures to all families. These brochures are created by the school and outline what children will learn in each grade, as well as bulleting standards in parent-friendly language.
- Families receive regular progress reports aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. These reports are distributed three times per year. Children are aware of them, and parents state that they find the progress reports very helpful.
- The school has a robust website: [www.PS225.org](http://www.PS225.org). This website is accessible to all members of the school community and provides translated versions of information for non-English speaking parents. The parents and teachers both state that they use the website frequently. The school also provides workshops for parents on a variety of topics. Parents state that the workshops are helpful and provide them with skills that they use when they are helping their children at home.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**2.2 Assessment**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### Findings

The school aligns assessments to curricula, and analyzes information on student learning outcomes to determine progress toward goals across grades and subjects.

### Impact

Across classrooms, teacher-created rubrics are used to provide actionable feedback to students regarding their achievement. Common assessment results are used to adjust curricula and instruction, but are not always used during lessons.

### Supporting Evidence

- Students are regularly assessed. Teacher teams norm the scoring of these assessments. Then assessments are individually scored and results analyzed. Teachers utilize trends noticed to make adjustments to their curriculum. For example, in response to common assessments, the school identified its lowest third. Units were then revised to target students in 8-week cycles. To date, 76% of students served are now at grade level.
- Assessments aligned to curricula do not always offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Student feedback is often limited to comments on handwriting and grammar and does not always provide actionable feedback and next steps.
- Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments are administered three times over the course of the school year and analyzed to track student progress and trends in order to tailor instruction and identify students' strengths and needs. For example, as a result of this benchmark assessment, teachers made adjustments to connect reading and writing and to include visual aids for English language learners.
- Teacher teams analyzed trends and discovered that students in grade 1 and 2 needed support with providing a sense of closure in writing. The school adjusted the curriculum in kindergarten in addition to grades 1 and 2 to address this need but, did not always adjust day-to-day instruction.

## Additional Findings

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

The school ensures engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and plans and refines tasks and curricula using student work and data.

### Impact

School leaders and faculty strategically integrate the instructional shifts resulting in coherence across grades and subject areas. Student work and data are used to refine curricula and academic tasks resulting in individual and groups of students having access to tasks and are cognitively engaged.

### Supporting Evidence

- The principal states that administration and staff collaboratively modified existing learning units in Go Math and Expeditionary Learning. Teacher teams also spoke of this collaboration. For example, an existing unit on the water cycle was modified in the length of time spent on the topic and to add components in informational and narrative writing. This was accomplished based on teacher input.
- Across grades and classes, units, lessons and teacher observations show evidence of rigorous content, higher order questioning, and use of standards-driven material. For example, a social studies unit on Colonial America requires students to write an informational piece on a day in the life of a colonial person. Students choose three topics such as religion, jobs, clothing, and food, and compare these topics to life today. Teacher observations contain evidence that the lesson was rigorous. The intellectual level is moderate/high Depth of Knowledge Levels 2 and 3 for students.
- Units and lesson plans contain revisions to provide access for students who are low and high achieving, including English language learners and students with disabilities. A social studies lesson plan on Dutch New Amsterdam included prompts with student notes for independent work and listed pairs of students to work together on new vocabulary.
- The school participates in the ASD Nest program affiliated with New York University's Steinhardt School of Education. The goal is to provide a therapeutic environment and supports within a grade-appropriate, academic environment for students with autism spectrum disorders. In addition to physical modifications, lessons are modified to include visual aids, simplified tasks, checklists for complex tasks, opportunities for role play, and social interaction activities.

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

Teacher pedagogy is developed from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn and meets the needs of all learners.

### **Impact**

Across classrooms, observed teaching practice reflects articulated set of beliefs. Student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school's instructional focus states that it is dedicated to "meeting the needs of all learners." This is evident in classroom practice. For example, in a grade 5 math class on liquid measurement, students were engaged at a variety of levels. One group was working with the teacher to create a pictorial pint/quart/gallon conversion chart, while another group was converting between English Standard and metric units of liquid measure. There were displayed algorithms to support students who needed them.
- In one classroom, students were working in groups to annotate text. They were engaged in close reading to find details to support what made a character, "The Stranger", strange. Displayed student work contained thoughtful, self-assessed comments, such as, "My goal is to write clearer narratives by putting things in order."
- In a social studies class, students were using timelines to connect key events in the history of baseball and the history of African Americans. Students were assisting each other in decoding words, and there were pictorial aids and anchor charts to assist all students in accomplishing the required task.
- During a math lesson, students were using their prior knowledge of rectangles to solve a real life problem: the student council wants to build a vegetable garden. Which garden plan will give us the maximum amount of square footage with the minimum amount of fencing? Students had to choose between three rectangles of various sizes to plan their gardens.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### **Findings**

Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements such as classroom practice, assessment data, and student work with embedded leadership opportunities.

### **Impact**

Teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school that results in mastery of student goals for groups of students.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams meet regularly and take turns facilitating the meetings and sharing student work and goals. Findings and outcomes of the meeting are shared with the entire faculty through Google Docs. Teachers use this information to obtain baseline data and inform practice. As a result, 63% of students made significant progress in the area of reading. 18 out of 43 targeted students who were far below grade level standards were performing at or above grade level standards as of January. End of the year Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) data will also be analyzed to track growth.
- In a team meeting of fourth grade teachers, teachers were analyzing student work on a mathematics task involving complimentary angles. They decided that the math vocabulary needed to be more specific and that parts of the task might have been confusing. They also decided to modify the task and create their own tasks.
- The school uses a program called Metamorphosis to help teachers improve their practice. This program includes a consultant staff developer. Teachers expressed that they found Metamorphosis and the consultant extremely helpful. One teacher stated, "Metamorphosis gave us permission to move away from what does not work. I had an English as a second language student who was then able to use math language to articulate concepts."