Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Herman Schreiber School
Elementary School K279

1070 East 104th Street
Brooklyn
NY 11236

Principal: Lorenzo A. Chambers

Dates of review: December 17, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Miatheresa Pate

The School Context

The Herman Schreiber School is an elementary school with 513 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 93% Black, 4% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 94.0%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
To what extent does the school…	**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**	**Proficient**
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**	**Proficient**
School Culture		
To what extent does the school…	**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**	**Well Developed**
Systems for Improvement		
To what extent does the school…	**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:	Well Developed

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff. School leaders and staff are mutually accountable for communicating these high expectations to families connected to a path towards college and career readiness.

Impact
The communication of high expectations to staff and families has resulted in a culture of mutual accountability and a successful partnership with families that support students meeting those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration communicates high expectations for all staff through structures such as the staff handbook, weekly updates to staff, newsletters to parents, a school Twitter account, and voicemail and text blasts. The dialogue between administration and teachers revealed several opportunities for teachers to engage in better understanding the Danielson framework via professional development and pre- and post-observation feedback sessions.

- Parents revealed that the principal engages them in a bi-monthly open agenda discussion called “Principal Talk” in which the principal shares school-wide expectations for students and families. There, parents can share concerns and celebrations around parent fundraising, school wide discipline, and student achievement. As a result of the “Principal Talk,” parents revealed they feel valued and their voice is heard, they are fully aware of school policy, and know what students are learning and what is expected.

- The principal conducts a parent-principal shadow experience where parents have an opportunity to experience the lead administrative position via shadowing for the day. The goal per the principal is to allow parents to better understand the expectations that exist at the school and to see those expectations in action. Parents noted the shadow experience helps them better understand the inner workings of the school and what their child is expected to do daily to move to the next level.

- The school uses a shared online document system to share instructional materials; review observation feedback from administration; communicate assignments and feedback with students; and provide updates to parents. As a “Google App” school, teachers revealed that they are able to share their instructional practices towards meeting school wide expectations with their colleagues and parents as well. For instance, parents noted that they often visit the online “RemindMe” to obtain daily updates from teachers and the school on their child’s record.

- The dialogue with administration and observation of students’ interactions within the building revealed an expectation that teachers model the school’s values for students every day in how they act and speak to each other and with students. The administration revealed a shared expectation that values “Tolerance, Respect and Integrity” (T.R.I.). These values are the cornerstones that help to develop character in students. For instance, students were observed taking their T.R.I. passports to the school store to select their rewards for demonstrating high levels of these three core values.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to reflect an articulated set of beliefs and consistently provide multiple entry points for all learners.

Impact
There is a shared belief about how students learn best which supports students being engaged in appropriately challenging tasks. However, the level of discussion and student choice is uneven, limiting students demonstrating mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration revealed that students learn best through "Wonderment, Inquiry, and Discovery". Teachers ensure that this belief is realized by evoking: curiosity during classroom instruction; inquiry via questioning; and discovery when students find the answers to those questions. For instance, during the observation of a 4th grade literacy lesson, the teacher frontloaded two questions to spark curiosity by having students reflect on why people repeat themselves and what people have to hope, gain or accomplish by repeating things. The teacher then verbally and intentionally repeated herself multiple times – students smiled and laughed stating "… she keeps repeating that." Students were instructed to engage in a close read of text and to answer three questions to provoke inquiry on the lesson focus. Students then used text-based evidence and a partner turn-and-talk structure to engage in a process of discovery to obtain the answers to the three questions. Although this practice was observed in unique formats across classrooms, the incorporation of student choice was not evident across classrooms.

- Teachers across classrooms provided multiple entry points to engage all students in challenging task. For instance, during classroom visits teachers were observed using turn-and-talk and group talk, needs-based grouping, modeling of tasks, and graphic organizers. The use of multiple entry points did not result in the task yielding different possible endpoints so that all students showed mastery of the learning objectives and corresponding standards

- In one 12:1:1 classroom, students were engaged in a math lesson on fractions. Students solved fraction problems on individual dry easer boards, some were called to the interactive white board to demonstrate and explain which model they selected to solve the fraction problem and then explain it to their peers. Students stated whether they agreed or disagreed with the solution presented. A smaller group of students worked with the paraprofessional using manipulatives and fraction circles to solve fraction problems. Opportunities for students to have discussions that promoted high levels of thinking were uneven across classrooms.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices are aligned with the curricula and consistently reflect the use of rubrics and common assessments.

Impact
The use of common assessments and rubrics which are aligned to the school curricula have resulted in teachers providing actionable feedback to students and teachers being able to determine student progress across grades and subject areas.

Supporting Evidence

- The review of bulletin boards across classrooms displayed rubrics that include actionable feedback. For instance, each student work product on classroom bulletin boards had a rubric attached to their specific work with teacher feedback. The rubric reflected feedback such as: "Your story had good facts regarding what life would be like in the Arctic and you used domain specific wording. Had you incorporated more facts and dialogue, you would have scored higher."

- The school uses technology such as multi-level teacher-assigned lessons on i-Ready and Compass Learning, and Lightsail leveled eReaders with built in assessments used for independent reading on iPads. These technologies provide ongoing assessments that teachers can draw from to adjust the curricula and their instruction. These programs are student-data driven, resulting in teachers better determining student progress across grades and subject areas.

- Students are given feedback throughout the daily lessons as well as through formative and summative data. This allows students to reflect upon and monitor their own learning. For instance, student dialogue revealed that they are aware of their next learning steps and cited directly from their class work portfolio that had an attached rubric with their rating level and what was needed to move to the next step via the teacher's feedback.

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
School leaders and faculty strategically adopted Department of Education selected curricula to ensure that they are providing instruction aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and have planned and refined rigorous academic tasks.

Impact
The school's thoughtful adoption of curricula supports school wide coherence and college and career readiness for all students. Academic tasks cognitively engage all students.

Supporting Evidence

- During dialogue with administration and teachers it was revealed that teachers attended ReadyGEN and Math in Focus summer vendor-offered professional development that informed the selections for Common Core Learning Standards curricula in English language arts and math. For instance, teachers engage in small group work with ReadyGEN for strategic support and lesson plan extension development for students who are struggling. Teachers use the New York City Science and Social Studies scope and sequence to ensure they are providing instruction aligned to the Common Core.

- During the observation of classroom instruction teachers ensured that a diversity of learners were cognitively engaged via implementation of tiered academic tasks. For instance, during a reading and writing lesson students were grouped by need into five groups. The teacher then provided different texts and graphic organizers to the groups of students. Each group was assigned a different academic task that required students to engage in a reciprocal reading structure to respond to their specific task leveled via students baseline data, conferring notes and whether or not they were English language learners or students with disabilities. Students engaged in a process of predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing and sharing their responses out to their peers within their ability-based group.

- Teachers engage in ongoing team meetings to plan and refine rigorous academic tasks. Additionally, teacher teams meet with a Center for Educational Innovation-Public Education Association network-provided coach who supports the process of ensuring coherence and the refinement of task so that students are better positioned for the next level on their path to college and career readiness.

- Administration revealed that teachers are required to bring student work, academic tasks, and reflection notes to each post-observation meeting. This allows administration to check-in on school-wide coherence and engage in an in-depth dialogue around academic tasks, instructional practice and college and career readiness.

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

Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry based professional collaborations and there are opportunities for staff to experience distributive leadership.

Impact
The work of teacher teams has resulted in the strengthening of the instructional capacity of teachers and student progress on assessments. Teacher team collaborations have resulted in teachers having an input in key decisions across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- The dialogue with teachers, administration, and the observation of a teacher team revealed that teacher teams have adopted a protocol for looking at student work. This protocol requires teachers, as a prerequisite to engaging in the professional collaboration, to identify the students of focus by citing specific data and noticings, provide a description of sample student work and the academic task, and come prepared with ideas towards moving student learning to next level as well as suggestions regarding the resources needed to do so. During the team meetings teachers shared out their perquisite work. Teachers offered recommendations for instruction and used post-it notes to annotate the adjustments needed in the curricula.

- Dialogue with teachers revealed that teachers have a voice in key decisions. For instance, teachers use student data from i-Ready, class work, pre-assessments, baseline assessments and summative assessments to determine the focus for learning and to develop their formative assessments. In addition, teachers revealed that they determine, design and lead 50% of the professional learning series. Teachers revealed that by designing their own professional learning, teachers have more buy-in and embrace the new learning that develops out of it.

- During their discussion, the teachers stated that the principal's favorite idiom to quote to teachers is "run with it!" This has resulted in teachers having a voice in key decision that impact student learning. For example, the school has an Ethnic and Culture course that is teacher-designed and implemented. The decisions around this course are determined by the teacher and agreed upon and supported by administration.