



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

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2014-2015**

**Daniel H. Williams**

**Elementary School K307**

**209 York Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11201**

**Principal: Roberta Davenport**

**Date of review: December 18, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Barbara Freeman**

## The School Context

Daniel H. Williams is an elementary school with 407 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 62% Black, 29% Hispanic, 4% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 28% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 4%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 90.3%.

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

## Area of Celebration

<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

All teachers are engaged in professional collaborations that support and strengthen teacher capacity. The school has structures to develop, support, and retain teacher leaders.

### Impact

Data-driven inquiry teams have led to school-wide instructional consistency and led to increase student outcomes. Teacher leadership plays a vital part in school decision-making having a positive impact on student progress and performance.

### Supporting Evidence

- Grade level teams use protocols to review student work consistently during the 80-minute professional learning time and during scheduled common prep periods. Teachers engage in discussions and analysis of performance tasks and common assessments. This has made teachers more reflective on their curricula adjustments and instructional practices. For example, the Grade 4 team rewrote several lessons to include re-teaching lessons to support targeted students based on student work analysis. The next samples of student work are used to continue to refine units of study.
- The Children are Reason Enough (CARE) team collaborates with school counselor to discuss students' social/emotional behaviors coupled with student work samples in order to provide strategic and deliberate supports. The team uses a protocol to frame conversations about students and cases are managed and tracked in order to monitor progress. The team discusses preventive strategies in order to strengthen modifications and accommodations for students so they are more successful in the classroom. Data collected has impacted and refined teacher practice and lesson planning the student needs are addressed. For example, based on, behavioral referral data, common assessments and academic referrals, grades deliberate individualized support such as including additional auditory and kinesthetic opportunities in lesson to address the learning styles of all students.
- The school has created multiple pathways in order to exercise teacher leadership. Grade leaders support the instructional core work of the teachers on common grades. The professional development team supports the consistent and strategic professional learning opportunities for teachers on a consistent basis. The resources of the network and outside vendors are vetted and utilized to support the schools professional development plan, classroom observational data, and the schools instructional goals. Teachers given the opportunity to attend national conferences in order to "become experts" and are responsible for providing turnkey training to targeted staff.
- School leaders rely on staff to provide suggestions on their needs and supports. Teachers suggested that there needed to be a coherent way vocabulary was taught from grade to grade. This resulted in staff leading professional learning with the Flocabulary program, school wide protocols and incorporating the math text *Number Talk* in the adjustments of math lessons and units of study, and incorporating parent workshops and parent curricula nights in order to support families in understanding the more rigorous curricula and their child's progress.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

Teaching practices in most classrooms are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and school beliefs about how students learn best. Student discussions demonstrate high levels of student thinking.

### Impact

The school provides opportunities for all students to participate in student discussions that reflect high levels of thinking and participation however, teacher dominated practices lessens students' ability to lead their own learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school believes classrooms should be predictable. As the principal states, "order proceeds learning", therefore classrooms are organized with a focus on students' academic strengths, skill deficits, and social needs thereby addressing "the whole child."
- To support curriculum materials, common instructional practices include whole group/explicit teaching, small groups based on common assessment data and student interest, technology assisted workstations, opportunities for student voice and for students and teachers to utilize questions to further classroom discussions.
- In mathematics, the school has chosen to use Exemplars. In reviewing student work samples with a teacher team, teachers explained their instructional practices in "walking" students through the word problem. Students are presented with the problem with scaffolds from the teacher. Students have to identify what's being asked, and pertinent information that will help solve the problem. Students are encouraged to use multiple strategies, peer support, and preplanned questions to guide their thinking and determine the best way to solve. Students are also required to describe their process in written form to justify their answers. Teachers have received professional learning opportunities in order to use scoring rubric effectively determine students strengths and next steps.
- In most observed classes, instructional practices tended to be teacher dominated. For example, in grade 2 the teacher asked what have we learned? What am I learning about the topic? The teacher stressed, "let's go back and check the text" and provided explicit instructions for independent reading time. Some students had limited opportunities to discuss with each other or lead conversations to further their understanding of assigned tasks.

## Additional Findings

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

Curricula aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and state standards. Rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills are embedded in curricula.

### Impact

All students are exposed to demanding coursework that strengthens academic behaviors and higher levels of thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school has adopted demanding curricula. *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project* (TCRWP) supports literacy, *Go Math* and *Exemplars* for Mathematics, *Next Generation Science Standards* (NGSS) and trade books support science and the newly developed NYC scope and sequence for Social Studies and trade books round out the core content areas. Additionally, the on-line Flocabulary program addresses academic vocabulary and the Foundations and Wilson programs support phonics and word work.
- The school utilizes a “lab site” approach to support faculty in implementing CCLS- aligned curricula. In order to support and deepen teachers’ instructional and content knowledge, time is scheduled to provide professional learning on highlighted standards and skills. Teacher teams view/lead demonstration lessons and have the opportunity to practice learned skills in a collaborative setting with added time to debrief about their learning. School leaders follow up with support throughout the learning cycles.
- To promote higher order thinking skills across grades school has adopted the *Rigor, Relevance and Engagement* rubrics from the International Center for Leadership in Education. The rubrics measure whether teachers plan and provide learning experiences using effective research-based strategies that are embedded with best practices including the use of technology, content knowledge relevance to the learner, and the creation and implementation of an effective learning environment that is engaging and aligned to the learners needs.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### **Findings**

School leaders and teachers use common assessments, samples of student work, and student grades to measure progress towards instructional goals and to track student progress.

### **Impact**

Teachers and students are receiving meaningful feedback and next steps based on a variety of data sources. Teachers are effectively adjusting curricula and instructional decisions in order for all students to show progress towards mastery of skills.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school has an assessment calendar in place with assessment windows in order to have data analysis results in a timely manner. This allows teacher teams the opportunity to review data in order to support planning and necessary adjustments to units of study. For example, a recent review of a common literacy task, found Students with Disabilities (SWD's) continue to need customized instruction to support comprehension. Strategy lessons and targeted small group instruction were included in adjusted lesson plans.
- The school's grading policy was adjusted in order to standardize the multilevel of reporting. For example, performance levels, percentiles scales, letter grade equivalent, and standards are aligned. The online *Engrade* grading system is utilized school-wide to enter student grades. Standard based report cards are distributed to students/families and portfolios are maintained to reflect common academic tasks grade to grade with feedback to students, which include next steps.
- Independent reading level benchmarks have been developed and shared school-wide. The benchmarks correlate to indicators of probable reading success in the current and following grades as well as probable achievement on state reading test. The benchmarks, which occur five times per year, are incorporated as part of each student's assessment for the marking period.
- The school's Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) reflects the school's instructional focus of increasing writing across the content areas. Additional writing assessments have been included in the school's assessment calendar such as on-demand writing samples, pre, mid and end of unit tests to measure interim progress of this goal. School data specialists are also collecting data to support the strong correlation between reading and writing. The school is also focused on problem solving in mathematics and has included four-week benchmark assessments to determine progress in this area. Several students have been identified for additional support through small group instruction based on assessment results. This data has provided teachers with a clear profile of students needs in order to attain mastery levels in targeted skills.

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

School leaders consistently and strategically communicate high expectations of teaching and learning utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching (DfT) supported by professional learning opportunities. The school informs students and families on student progress towards next levels and college and career preparedness.

### Impact

The school has structures to support mutual responsibility for high expectations for students, staff, and families and ensures all are accountable for increase student progress and preparation for the next level on the college and career readiness path.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school's administrative team outlines expectations of teaching and learning based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching. They focus on three questions; what are students learning, what evidence can be captured that demonstrates learning, and how student growth monitored week to week. Staff bulletins, weekly newsletters and updates provide opportunities to express expectations of instruction. For example, a staff bulletin stressed the instructional focus for the month; small group work and conferring. *"Teachers should be using formative assessment data to organize students into small groups across all subjects."* References to prior professional opportunities to support this work included demonstration lessons and modeling. Staff updates include information on afterschool professional learning activities including social emotional learning and school-wide celebrations.
- Consistent formal and informal observations and effective feedback has strengthened teachers' instructional practices as measured by the Danielson Framework. Teachers are held accountable for implementing feedback and learning based on professional development. School leaders monitor adult learning through this process. Additional feedback is provided when necessary in order for all teachers to progress across the framework levels. Reviewed observation reports monitor teacher questioning and student responses. This information is used by school leaders to identify trends from grade to grade and necessary supports if needed and areas to celebrate during weekly professional learning sessions.
- School outlines academic expectations to students and families through curricula nights, progress reports, and monthly letters and calendars. The school utilizes weekly parent engagement time to support communication to parents via phone, face-to-face, and group meetings. Parent workshops have focused on the CCLS, project based learning through the schools Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) magnet initiative, rigorous testing, middle school preparation, and social emotional development.