



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**The School for Future Leaders**

**Elementary School 20K310**

**942 62nd Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11219**

**Principal: Yuqing Hong**

**Date of review: November 6, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Karina Costantino**

## The School Context

The School for Future Leaders is an elementary school with 422 students from grade kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 7% Black, 8% Hispanic, 7% White, and 81% Asian students. The student body includes 69% English language learners and 10% 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 98%.

## 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>Developing</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>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>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**3.4 High  
Expectations**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### **Findings:**

The principal consistently communicates high expectations to her staff and purposeful support to achieve those expectations. Moreover, school leaders and staff effectively communicate high expectations to students and their families on a path toward college and career readiness.

### **Impact:**

Through a menu of rigorous, purposeful teacher support, as well as, student and parent supports and participation, the school provides a culture which results in the ability to make parents true educational partners in their child's learning, as well as developing independent student learners.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Each summer, the principal holds a Summer Institute for all of her teachers. Workshops are tiered to meet the individual needs of her teachers preparing them for the year ahead. Planning includes developing student rubrics and checklists based on the Common Core Learning Standards. Across classrooms, student-made dictionaries and organized note taking across subjects empower students to self-direct and determine their next steps.
- The school conducts a series of orientation meetings, curriculum meetings and monthly workshop sessions where parents learn high expectations that are required of their children and the support they can provide at home. The school sends home the item skill analysis from the performance assessments to parents along with strategies and activities to assist them in providing academic support at home.
- The principal, having a strong professional development background, models high expectations for her teachers during workshops. In addition, teachers know that when they discuss their challenges with the principal, they must also reflect on their practice to determine solutions. Teachers indicate that their level of work must be engaging and according to the Common Core State Learning rubric.
- Parents are consistently provided with their child's progress, a suggested reading list, benchmark goals and applicable strategies their children can use to improve their learning. Tri-annual goal setting documents are given to parents and their children to make them aware of their children's progress toward expected goals.
- Of the parents who responded to the Learning Environment Survey, 99% stated "the school keeps me informed about what my child is learning." Across the entire school, 96% of the parents completed the Learning Environment Survey, showing a strong home-school connection.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### **Findings:**

Teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect beliefs about how children learn best. Teachers are in the process of developing strategies to engage all sub-groups.

### **Impact:**

As a result of a lack of engagement for all sub-groups, scaffolded instruction is inconsistent among classrooms.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Although in most classrooms visited all students were engaged, this was not the case in every classroom visited. In one classroom, the teacher was using the same approach with all students. In another classroom where a student was struggling with the definition of the word “jolt”, another child was called upon to provide a definition and explanation. The teacher did not return to the child that could not provide the answer to pose the way the question in another way or use another entry point, enabling the child to feel a part of the lesson.
- In most classrooms visited, scaffolding during the lesson presented a challenge to the teacher. Teachers of English language learners push into each classroom and in those instances the content was differentiated to enable those students to understand the content. However, where there was an absence of a push in teacher, activities were also not differentiated to further engage the high performing child.
- Across classrooms, there was an inconsistency in looking at a variety of ways students used number combinations. For instance, in a second grade math lesson, students were looking at why they use multiplication. Engaging in turn and talk, students were looking at using addition to find groups in the number 16. Students arrived at other combinations, but did not have an opportunity to explain them. Instead, one child demonstrated  $8+8$  to arrive at 16 and the teacher moved on to the next task. As a result, student participation was limited and students did not see that there was more than one way to arrive at an answer.

## Additional Findings

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

The school aligns all curricula to the Common Core State Learning Standards (CCLS) in a rigorous purposeful environment where all students become independent learners.

### Impact:

Through a coherent and rigorous curriculum all students are able to maximize their potential and grow academically

### Supporting Evidence

- The school employs a rigorous set of curricula across content areas that are aligned to the CCLS and supports teachers in shifting their practice. Aligned units in Math and literacy are posted in Atlas, a web-based tool for designing and articulating curriculum, which is then shared across the school with all staff, so coherency is seen across grades and content areas.
- In addition, the school has a School Enrichment Model (SEM) on Friday afternoons which motivates all students through interest in a project based learning environment enabling students to make valuable connections from what they have learned to their everyday world. Examples include Movie Making, Readers Theater, Robotics and Salvadori's Architectural Residency. The curriculum is based on studies incorporating hands-on-learning investigations and research that promotes interdisciplinary connections, critical thinking, cultural awareness and appreciation and language development. 80% of the students, including special education students and English language learners (ELLs) participate in the model.
- The school has a unique foreign language program which is aligned to the National Standards for Foreign Language Education, focusing on oral and written language. The students have the opportunity to study Chinese or Spanish beginning in Pre-Kindergarten to create global competency by helping them become multicultural and multilingual individuals.
- The school provides quality tiered instruction and interventions to meet the needs of sub groups by implementing Response to Intervention (RTI). Three times a month, teachers meet to analyze the data by progress monitoring to review the effectiveness of the ten day lessons that are skill driven.

**Findings:**

Assessment policies and rubrics are aligned to CCLS. Across grades and subject areas, the school uses common assessments to determine progress toward goals.

**Impact:**

As a result of ongoing monitoring of student progress, instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels are providing actionable feedback to students and teachers, enabling them to note progress and adjust curricula and instruction.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across disciplines, the school aligns assessments to curricula using on-going formative and summative assessments which enable them to make adjustments to curriculum design where needed. The assessments chosen by the school are Fountas and Pinnell assessments, guided reading running records, assessment checklists in math and science, teacher made pre and post assessments in math, science and social studies, initial middle and post assessments (IMP) for all writing units. In addition, across most classrooms, students are using student checklists for self monitoring and student exemplars.
- Across grades and subjects, teachers track progress and adjust curricular and instructional decisions so that most students demonstrate increased mastery. All results are then logged into Atlas, so they are shared throughout the school building. During professional development, and team meetings, teachers across grades can effectively pace and adjust curriculum based on these assessments.
- In addition to the variety of assessments used, all teacher teams use school wide protocols to see the challenges students face and academic trends that develop across grades. An example of this is the development of individual dictionaries that each student creates specifically based on their needs to increase academic language.

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

Teacher team work in inquiry based collaborations, using assessments and looking at student work, strengthens their understanding and promotes the achievement of school goals, while building distributive leadership among teachers as they facilitate teams and provide professional development.

**Impact:**

The school structure for teacher teams results in articulating clear expectations around school goals, creating improved teacher practice and providing teachers with a voice in key decisions made throughout the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school has different levels of teacher teams that engage in vertical and horizontal planning. These teams meet regularly to identify challenges, take part in data inquiry to monitor success, engage in pedagogies through collaboration and share promising practices. The Core Instructional Team consists of the principal, the part time coach and grade level leaders who review the overall needs of the school, but also make decisions around planning professional development for the year. In addition, the principal uses these meetings as an effective tool to monitor the progress of the other teams that exist in the building. This team meets once a month to also focus on developing a deeper understanding and a common language of best practices by using Close reading and Danielson’s Framework, promoting consistency and coherence throughout the building.
- Grade level teams meet one period a week to develop differentiated lessons and design effective instructional activities based on the analysis of student work. These teams consist of both veteran teachers and new teachers. They also meet across content areas to develop project based learning units, which engage students in the investigation of authentic problems and developing solutions for challenges, while sharing them with their class community.
- All teacher teams are facilitated by teacher leaders. In addition, the principal has created a mentor’s program, which is a per session activity for common planning on workshop sessions. The teachers that participate in this meet with the principal and assistant principal to share ideas, building leadership capacity in the building.