



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

PS 326

Early Childhood School K326

**1800 Utica Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11234**

Principal: Colleen Ducey

**Date of review: February 6, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Julia Bove**

The School Context

P.S. 326 is an early childhood school with 212 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 2. The school population comprises 72% Black, 18% Hispanic, 1% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95.1%.

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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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	Celebration	Well Developed
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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching to the staff and create a culture of mutual accountability. Furthermore, school leaders and staff effectively communicate high expectations and partner with parents to support their children's progress.

Impact

The staff's awareness and accountability for school-wide instructional expectations further advances student outcomes. Parents are able to support their child's progress toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate high expectations to staff through professional development, guidance through the informal and formal observations and data conferences with teachers to discuss assessment results recorded in Google Docs.
- A system of mutual accountability enables teachers to conduct inter-visitations and provide their peers with verbal and written feedback. Additionally, when teachers visit each other's classes, they complete a reflection sheet to document three things learned and two ways to implement what they learned.
- The school partners with parents and communicates high expectations through parent and staff led workshops on topics such as Common Core Learning Standards, curricular expectations, academic tasks, discipline, and fire safety. Moreover, the school provides a Saturday Academy Program for parents of English language learners (ELLs) where they receive various resources to support their children at home.
- Resources such as parent monthly newsletters, a parent handbook, the school website and monthly progress reports keep parents apprised of curricula expectations and their children's academic progress. Additionally, parents have access to a lending library and several reading programs that allow them to work with their children at home on specific reading skills. Parents reported they could e-mail or meet the teachers to discuss their questions about the curricula and their children's strengths and struggles. One parent said, "This school provides parents with lots of resources and my kindergarten child is talking about college and a career". Another parent said, "The school has a trustworthy environment and regardless if your child is in a teacher's class, every teacher and administrator knows each child by name".

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Pedagogy provides consistent scaffolds, questioning and instructional supports. The use of strategic extensions that foster student work products that reflect higher order thinking and active student participation is consistent across the classrooms.

Impact

Pedagogy evolves from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, is engaging, and meets the needs of all learners. Students produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms visited, tasks promote higher-order thinking and teachers provide multiple entry points into the curricula. Teaching strategies include high-quality supports and extensions into the curricula. During one second grade English language arts (ELA) / science lesson, a group of students copied facts about walruses on graphic organizers but did not make deep connections between the text and assigned task.
- Conversations with students indicate that they work in flexible groups and they use rubrics and graphic organizers with challenging tasks. Across classrooms visited, multiple entry points were available for students with disabilities. In the pre-kindergarten class of students with disabilities, the teacher and paraprofessionals introduced the five senses through different experiences and modalities.
- Across classrooms visited, displayed posters encourage student discussions and learners actively engage in partner and group discussions. In a second grade integrated collaborative teaching class, students worked in groups to develop higher-order questions about community workers who helped New Yorkers after September 11. Student-led discussions and student ownership of their learning was consistently observed across classrooms.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that Common Core Learning Standards aligned curricula strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Teachers embed curricular and academic tasks in an interdisciplinary and coherent manner across grades and subjects.

Impact

The coherence across grades and subjects enables all learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, to access the curricula, thereby promoting rigorous habits. The interdisciplinary curricula incorporate the instructional shifts and the connections to the real world, thus cognitively engaging all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers collaboratively design the school's interdisciplinary curricula, which blends research-based programs, student needs, and the instructional goals of the school. The units are thematic in nature as they incorporate the standards of science and social studies into the reading and writing. Art is a vital component in the interdisciplinary units. These curricular units engage students in creative and reflective inquiry and incorporate questioning and real world connections across grades and subjects.
- The curricula reflect learning objectives that stimulate student problem solving and critical thinking for all learners. In one unit, the students constructed a scale model of the Statue of Liberty. The teacher asked students to consider the actual size of the statue and create a model. To demonstrate the actual size of the Statue of Liberty, the students measured a piece of string that would be equal to the finger of the Lady Liberty. Students were able to problem solve and make the real world connections.
- Every unit provides learning objectives and academic tasks that promote college and career readiness and emphasize academic vocabulary in literacy and across content areas. Written problem solving explanations are routinely required in the units of study.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Teachers on each grade level create common assessments, tasks and rubrics and provide students with actionable, meaningful feedback. School leaders and staff consistently and meticulously analyze data to make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

Impact

All students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, are fully aware of their next learning steps and targets through teacher feedback. The adjustments in lessons lead to continuous improvement in student performance and progress.

Supporting Evidence

- An elaborate collection of data is available through Google Docs, capturing the curricula-aligned assessments, unit benchmarks, Fountas & Pinell levels, assessment results, Myon Online Learning Program outcomes and student class work. School leaders and staff monitor data to provide the necessary targeted assistance for all students. School leaders consistently meet with teachers for data conferences, teachers adjust the curricula, and their lessons based on data conference outcomes. For example, the school noticed that ELLs were making progress in the ELA unit assessments but not making as much progress in the math unit assessments.
- Teacher teams discussed specific math skills they would revisit in their lessons to address findings from the data analysis. Teachers across the grades use self-assessment strategies. Students are able to self-assess and check for understanding and completion of tasks using checklists. In one class, students had a checklist to self-assess the writing task. The questions included "Did I use a capital letter at the start of a sentence?" and "Did I use vocabulary words in my writing?"
- Across the vast majority of classes and the displayed student work, the use of peer-evaluation provides each student with meaningful next steps by a classmate. Students were able to refer to the rubric and give actionable feedback to their classmate.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Teachers and school leaders engage in collaborative inquiry-based professional study sessions. Teachers’ voices are prominent in key decisions involving curricula and programs designed to improve pedagogy and student outcomes.

Impact

The collaboration in the teacher teams has resulted in strengthening the coherence and alignment of curricula across all grades and subjects. The teaching staff is empowered to participate in all decisions that affect student performance and progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has a culture where every teacher is a leader and every teacher has a voice in instructional outcomes. Teachers were instrumental in making the decision to adapt Balanced Literacy, aspects of Ready Gen and thematic units in the literacy classes. The teachers were empowered to collaboratively plan and refine curricula. Teachers modify the thematic interdisciplinary units to emphasize the instructional shifts across all content areas and implement their curricular decisions across the school.
- The administration encourages peer classroom visits among the staff. The teachers who desire to strengthen a skill or acquire new knowledge initiate many of these visits. Among the second grade teachers, there is one who is very skilled in the use of Smart boards. Many teachers on and off the grade visit her to learn and explore the various uses of the Smart board. These inter-visitations enable teachers to share ideas with each other that build school-wide instructional coherence.
- The staff members participate in study groups to strengthen their knowledge of a variety of topics. For example, two teachers chose to study about students who have sensory issues. In this collaborative study, the teachers analyzed the work products of several students who possess these sensory issues. The teachers use and share reflection sheets when they plan and execute a professional learning opportunity for a group of colleagues or the staff at large to enable them to explore incorporating new skills into their own practice.