



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

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2014-2015**

**East Flatbush**

**Early Childhood K361**

**3109 Newkirk Ave.  
Brooklyn  
NY 11226**

**Principal: Tiffany Frazier**

**Date of review: April 17, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Julia Bove**

## The School Context

East Flatbush is an early childhood school with 594 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 2. The school population comprises 80% Black, 13% Hispanic, 2% White, 2% Asian students, and 3% Other. The student body includes 15% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for xx% of the students enrolled and girls account for xx%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 91.2%.

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

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**2.2 Assessment**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula. Teachers' assessment practices include checks for understanding and student self-assessment opportunities and results from common assessments determine student goals.

### Impact

Teacher assessment practices provide actionable feedback to students. The school uses information from student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school issues progress reports three times per year. Progress reports are informed by a Data Inventory that the school created. The inventory outlines which type of data will be collected, when and why it will be collected, and what will be done with it. For example, Fountas and Pinnell levels are assessed in September, November, March, and May. The purpose is to support small group work and gauge comprehension. Data are used to plan for student groups, and create new data trails such as miscue analysis.
- The school has a stated philosophy about rubrics: Rubrics are for adults; checklists are for kids. More specifically, since the school is an early childhood center, the philosophy is that the language of rubrics is to inform the adults, while a checklist takes the ideas of rubrics and distills them into an easily readable format for students. For example, a first grade rubric for informational writing contains an item, "The writer stated his/her topic in the beginning and got the attention of readers." The rubric has four levels and is two pages long. The corresponding student checklist has simpler language, "I named my topic in the beginning." The student rubric also has illustrations next to each item and is scored as not yet, starting to, and yes.
- Teachers use formative assessments during the literacy block by taking low inference notes with guided reading groups. These notes also include future strategies. For example, the guided reading notes from a kindergarten class included observations such as, "mistook 'w' sound for a 'y,'" and "student was stuck on the word, 'us.'" Next steps included review long and short "u" sound and reteach strategies for "decoding difficult words."
- In a kindergarten class, students were self-assessing using strategies for encountering tricky words. One student was referring to a tricky word chart for help. Another explained that he was using his "super powers." These are strategies that students use when they self-assess. For example, "Eagle Eye" is a "power" where students look at the picture and beginning letter of a word, and "Stretchy Snake" reminds students to slowly stretch each sound together.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

Across classrooms, student work products, including the work of English language learners and students with disabilities reflect uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills. As a result, there were missed opportunities to engage students.

### Supporting Evidence

- In a first grade classroom, students were unevenly engaged. The teacher was conferencing with one student while the rest of the class was reading independently and writing on post-it notes. One student articulated that as she took a picture walk of her book on Ponce de Leon, she noticed that the word “poisoned” was in bold. She stated that she did not know what it meant even after she looked for context clues, so she used the glossary. Another student was writing “I learned that this book is special” but could not articulate why.
- In a second grade math class, after reviewing the use of measuring tools, the teacher passed out a worksheet that asked students to use measurement to build a ladder the size of a sports car. The problem was read out loud and students were sent back to their seats to work. The worksheet was identical for all students, and with the exception of a small group using centimeter blocks, the tools and the process used were identical for all other students.
- In another math class, student discussion was limited to skip counting in a choral fashion. Turn and talk discussions were limited to students deciding between measuring tools that they had previously learned how to use.

## Additional Findings

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

Across grades and subjects, curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills inconsistently for English language learners (ELLs) and special education students. School leaders and faculty are in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards, integrating the instructional shifts, and refining tasks using student work and data.

### Impact

School leaders and teachers inconsistently ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects that result in inconsistent accessible for a variety of learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- Some units and lesson plans show evidence of accessibility to tasks that emphasize rigorous habits, while others do not. For example, a second grade writing unit on poetry had individualized activities that included visual aids, working with a partner, and sounding out words. It also included scaffolds for pictorially creating metaphors. A first grade reading unit contained a variety of strategies; however, there was no evidence as to who would use each strategy or how a variety of learners would be engaged in rigorous tasks.
- A first grade science unit showed that teachers annotated the existing unit to fit their needs, however these notes were more teacher reminders than adjustments in planning: “elaborate on this,” or “don’t make the chart in advance.” Curricula modifications that showed strategies for a variety of learners were not evident in unit plans reviewed.
- A first grade social studies unit on families contained numerous elaborations and strategies. Where the unit stated “families have cultural similarities and differences,” teachers added, “religion, holidays, beliefs and customs,” and included strategies such as creating a Venn diagram, using family photos, and student debates. This lesson on sorting objects contained no evidence of differentiation or modifications based on student work and data.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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**Findings**

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

**Impact**

School leaders have a system of accountability for those high expectations. School leaders and staff expectations connect to a path to college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The administration communicates high expectations through feedback on observations. For example, one observation report commended a teacher: “ You continually seek out your colleagues and administrators in professional conversation about teaching practice.” Another stated, “Classroom expectations are well known and contribute to an atmosphere that reflects educational importance of the work that you and your students are doing.
- Through Teachers College and with the support of an instructional coach, school leaders engage teachers in regular professional development in literacy instruction as a way to communicate instructional expectations. Teachers provide feedback on sessions and are given the opportunity to suggest future activities. A teacher evaluation form for a professional learning community on guided reading showed what was discussed (giving non-readers visual clues), how it impacted teaching (“I see more confidence in students when they select books), a suggestions for future professional development (conferencing). Other feedback sheets verify that the suggestions were taken.
- The school holds regular sessions entitled, Parents as Learning Partners. Parents are invited to the school to sit in on their child’s class and learn side-by-side. Parents then have an opportunity to speak with administration about how they can continue to support their children at home with what they learned while participating in the lesson. Parents state that these sessions allow them to see high expectations.

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

The school engages in structured professional team collaborations that inconsistently use an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on student learning. Teacher teams analyze assessment data and student work.

**Impact**

The work of the teacher teams does not typically result in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students. Distributed Leadership structures are developing to include teachers in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Some teacher teams engage in the inquiry approach to looking at student work. One teacher stated that when she saw her colleagues commenting on the work of their students, she received ideas that then helped her look at her own students’ work differently. She stated that she could change her practice. This professional collaboration has improved the quality of published writing pieces from September 2014 to April 2015. An examination of lessons, units, and student work products do not support that this happens in a majority of classrooms.
- Teacher teams look at student work, however this does not always result in actionable next steps. For example, teachers in a writing team were analyzing a sample of work in which a student designed an experiment and wrote up the results. The student hypothesized that if she dropped a six-sided die into a container of water, the die would sink. The writing indicated that she conducted the experiment and recorded her results : “The die sank.” Teachers engaged in a collaborative discussion of next steps and followed the inquiry protocol, however, the nature of the assignment—hypothesize and conclude— did not allow for a rich discussion.
- While the school employs a literacy coach who provides support for the teachers, there is yet to be a structure of distributed leadership. For example, after a meeting with the coach or after observing a model lesson, teachers are given a reflection log that they can use to comment about what they learned, ways they can use it in the classroom, and questions or concerns they have about the observed lesson. However, these logs are retained by the teacher and are not shared with the coach in one-to-one meetings or at teacher team meetings. There are missed opportunities to share best practices as evidenced by a lack of documented feedback for teacher reflection or coach’s input.