



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Coy L. Cox School

75K369

**383 State Street
Brooklyn
NY 11217**

Principal: Rudy Giuliani

**Date of review: February 5 and 6, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Ketler Louissaint**

The School Context

P369K is a special education school with 660 students from grade K through grade 12. The school population comprises 59% Black, 30% Hispanic, 7% White, and 3% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 83% of the students enrolled and girls account for 17%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 87%.

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	Additional Findings	Well Developed
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	Focus	Proficient
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	Additional Findings	Proficient
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	Celebration	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

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

Teacher teams across the school consistently meet to review and analyze student academic and behavioral data to identify gaps in student learning and refine their instructional and behavioral approaches. The established structure of distributive leadership empowers teachers to make decisions that improve their student learning.

Impact

The vast majority of teachers are involved in inquiry work that strengthens practice and instruction on a school-wide level and results in improved student behavior and increased student outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- The school views inquiry as an imperative component in supporting student achievement. Teacher teams across the school consistently meet to review and analyze student academic and behavioral data to identify gaps in student learning and refine their instructional goals. Meeting agendas and notes and artifacts reviewed confirmed that Teachers teams have spent many meetings discussing how to incorporate the CCLS and the Instructional Shifts in their lessons.
- Empowered by the administration, teachers have taken on leadership roles that have improved inquiry and collaboration. During the teacher team, a teacher reported that they have as much freedom as appropriate to make decisions regarding their instruction and their professional growth. In meetings, elementary and middle school teachers have identified foundational reading skills as a major deficit for many of their students. To address this need and improve students' decoding skills, both speech and classroom teachers have taken the initiative to create a reading club based on students' reading deficits. They monitor student progress through BOY, MOY, and EOY reading assessments.
- Teacher teams afford teachers an important medium to have professional conversations and discuss instructional ideas about the students they share. During the teacher team meeting, participants used the *Peeling the Onion* protocol to review and analyze behavior modification data from 2 teacher classrooms. One teacher presenter asked, "How can I address student A's tantrums without neglecting the rest of the class?" Ultimately and in accordance with the protocol, each member of the team gave her feedback and recommendations on the matter.
- Teachers across the school frequently collaborate and share information about students they share or know. They support each other's practice through conversations and inter visitation. "We are not only co-workers; we are friends. We help each other and collaborate a great deal", one teacher stated. Through collegial inquiry, teachers have identified a positive behavior modification program called "The Bucket Filler". Teachers in meetings debated the appropriateness and effectiveness of the existing PBIS program on their younger students with autism. The "Bucket Filler" has proven to be flexible enough to be adapted to individual children across the autism spectrum and impact the behavior of those with the most profound disabilities.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, the school uses common assessments and a variety of standardized and alternate assessment tools to monitor student progress. Teachers use rubrics and other forms of assessments to gain a clear understanding of students' performance and adjust their instruction accordingly.

Impact

Teachers use multiple means to assess student academic and behavioral progress. They use a variety of assessments to track student progress. However, a lack of specific feedback and analysis in a small number of classes results in missed opportunities for both teachers and students to create a clear picture of mastery of goals.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a weekly Individual Educational Plan (IEP) tracking form to monitor students' progress toward their IEP goals. All goals are tracked for mastery. New goals are quickly created for those mastered, thus keeping student progress constant. In a second grade class, both the teacher and the paraprofessional recorded students' performance on the tracking form. In another class, a 1st-2nd grade teacher was observed taking data during her conference with a student.
- Teachers use school-wide, curriculum-embedded and task-specific rubrics to evaluate student work. Additionally, in many classrooms visited, teachers also used open ended, DOK 2 questions to create a clear picture of student progress. Teachers across the school provide students with actionable feedback on their work. The majority of feedback observed was actionable and meaningful as teachers gave students clear instruction to guide their progress. However, upon analysis, some feedback provided students with limited instruction to meaningfully inform their next learning step. In some cases, feedback was limited to "Good job. I can tell you paid attention. Try a little bit harder next time."
- The school uses SANDI and FAST to assess their alternate assessment students. The results of these assessments are used to create student IEP goals. Standardized assessment students are assessed through a variety of curriculum embedded and module assessments. Across the school, both alternate and standardized students are regularly assessed as well through end of unit assessments, mid-unit quizzes and performance tasks. Teachers integrate assessment results into their unit planning and vice versa, through backwards design. However, as evidenced by the 2014 NYSAA results for ELA, not all sub-groups have demonstrated increased mastery as a result of these practices.
- The school-wide holistic rubrics are posted in all classrooms. They prepare students for holistic grading practices at the end of the units. At both the elementary and the middle school levels, teachers utilize curriculum embedded assessments, including unit quizzes, critical thinking assessment and performance tasks to evaluate student learning. Expanded questioning and discussions have afforded teachers valuable data about their students and have prompted them to make the necessary adjustments to their instruction. Teachers have discovered that students were struggling to cite textual evidence and analyze text. To support students, teachers have integrated many more text dependent questions into classroom activities.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school uses a variety of curricula that are aligned to the Common Core State Standards to address the needs of its students with disabilities. Extensions and adaptations ensure higher-order thinking, rigorous tasks and access for all students, regardless of their disabilities.

Impact

The school curricular decisions foster coherence in both standardized and alternate assessments classrooms and across student populations. Additionally, they encourage and promote a clear path to general education through inclusion and a smooth transition to college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- The curriculum connects students to the real world and provides them with reading and writing tasks that challenge them and push their thinking. For example, the usage of Scope and Sequence, pacing calendars and curriculum maps have fostered rigor and coherence across grades and subjects. Art, technology, industrial arts and art therapy are used to extend the curriculum and to promote career readiness for all students. All students, regardless of their disabilities, are involved in a variety of vocational and work study programs. These programs increase their independence and effectively prepare them for the world of work.
- Across classes and across sites, the school uses monthly Unit Plans coupled with Backward Design and UDL to extend the curriculum and enrich students' learning experiences. Additionally, unit plans across content areas demonstrate that the school has integrated the CCLS Instructional Shifts in their planning. Rigorous academic tasks push student thinking and student outcomes to the next level. A 6th -8th grade computer science and coding unit asked students to write a series of computer programs in different environments and to complete a maze and a studio based on a coding task. Finally, students were asked to create an app which they can share with the younger grades in a "Buddy Gallery Walk".
- The Ready Gen curriculum used at the school's elementary sites places a great emphasis on complex text and academic vocabulary. Additionally, although in its early years of implementation, the CMP3 curriculum has advanced students' mathematical understanding. Extensions and additions made to the curriculum increase student learning. In a 7th grade science class, the teacher uses *Flocabulary* (a program that uses hip hop rhymes to help memorize words and lines) to help students make greater connections with the topic and learn concepts faster.
- A variety of extensions and adaptations are used to support student learning. Response to Intervention (RTI), supporting libraries, and text pairing are among some of the extensions used to help students access the curriculum. Furthermore, academic tasks are constantly reviewed by teachers to ensure coherence and rigor. Despite their learning challenges, Cohort C classes learned about multicellular animals and the functioning and interactions of the major organ systems in the human body. For example, all the classes in Cohort C participated in a three week science unit that culminated into dissecting a frog to better understand the systems of the body, their functions and how they work together to keep our bodies running.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school's articulated beliefs that students learn best when provided with opportunities to connect learning to experience, ensures that high quality supports and instructional groupings are used in the vast majority of classrooms. Instruction is aligned to the tenets of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and reflects the school's commitment to effectively educate all students.

Impact

Across classrooms, teachers utilize a variety of instructional strategies to motivate and keep students focused in learning, resulting in customized and individualized supports that help students in both alternate and standardized assessments increase their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The integration of real-life experiences increases students' interests and challenges their thinking. Students are provided with numerous opportunities to engage in social activities at the school. Teachers use an individualized token economy system and personalized reinforcers to optimize student engagement and motivation. Through the school partnerships with local businesses and organizations such as Trader Joe's, Bath and Body Work, AllState, and Barclay Stadium, students continue to expand their communication and social skills and prepare for life beyond the school.
- Teachers utilize unit planning, Concept Maps, Backward Design, and PLC meetings to help them identify gaps in students' learning and decide on supports and access points. In two different classes, teachers created their own Concept Maps that listed task description, vocabulary, anchor text, supporting texts, enduring understanding, essential questions and task modifications for multiple entry to support the monthly unit. During a 2nd grade math lesson, the teacher had a group of students jump on a commercial plastic number line taped to the floor to solve subtraction problems. In the same class, another more advanced group of students were using manipulatives to solve two digit subtractions. In 5th grade literacy class the impact of natural a disaster, students read Earthquakes by Emily Wortman-Wunder, used graphic organizers and DOK Level 3 strategic thinking to analyze the impact of earthquakes and construct a disaster relief plan and a preparation kit for a disaster.
- Across the school, teachers have chosen to integrate text-dependent questioning into their lessons to increase student learning. Teachers consistently prepared and used a range of questioning techniques to engage students. Lesson plans reviewed incorporated essential questions, prediction questions and questions to promote higher order thinking. In an 8th grade social studies class of students with learning disabilities, students were challenged to make a prediction with questions such as, "Why do you think the U.S. will get involved in World War 1 despite attempting neutrality? Do you think the U.S. was really neutral? Why or why not?" In a 7th grade English class, students discussed why they should be allowed to have cell phones in school. She provided criteria for good arguments and examples and asked students to support their claims based on a previously presented format.
- The leadership stated that the school as a community believes that students have unique abilities and it is their responsibility to meet them at their individual entry point. During the Q & A teacher meeting, a teacher stated that they (teachers) usually spend a significant amount of time aligning curricula and instruction to students' needs. They incorporate Smart Board, I-pads and a vast array of hands-on projects and trips into their lessons to afford students greater opportunities for participation and ownership of their learning.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school is engaged in building a culture of excellence and individual growth for all students. High expectations are consistently communicated to all stakeholders, including the instructional coaches and to all the teacher teams. The school collaborates with parents and provides them with valuable information to help them assist their children at home.

Impact

The school has established a culture of learning that is shared among all stakeholders. Partnerships with parents through a variety of trainings, workshops and other means continue to keep students progressing at school and at home.

Supporting Evidence

- The school provides parents with a variety of workshops to help them support their children’s learning. Related service providers conduct monthly meetings for parents to share information with them regarding their children’s disabilities and available resources. Additionally, parents can access their children’s behavioral data and performance in real time through following their “Avatar” in Class Dojo. At the parent meeting, a father commented that it was an invaluable tool to monitor his son’s behavior in school and address observed issues immediately at home.
- School leaders and staff entertain open and effective communication about expectations and best practices to help parents support their children’s academic, social and behavioral development. The school strategically uses the Parent Coordinator and all related service providers to engage parents in training sessions on a multitude of topics to help them manage their children’s disabilities at home. The school hosts an annual Autism Awareness Day that connects parents with outside agencies by bringing them under one roof to meet and discuss ways parents can receive in-home support for their children.
- The school nurtures the social, emotional and intellectual developments of all its students. Administrators work closely with Instructional Coaches to identify short and long term goals to support student growth. There is an apparent all hands on deck, multidisciplinary approach to educating students in the school. Empowered by the administration, teachers, paraprofessionals and related service staff collaborate to engage students toward the achievement of their goals. Teachers in the teacher team meeting stated that the administration would not ask them to do anything they wouldn’t do themselves. This was also confirmed in our conversation with the UFT Chapter Leader.
- Expectations are clear. “Students are our responsibilities and it is incumbent on all stakeholders to ensure their success,” one of the assistant principals indicated during the interview with the leadership. Weekly reminders are sent to all staff via the school’s newsletter and to families through the daily communication folder. Teachers stated that they know they are important in students’ lives. They inspire and motivate students to recognize their full potential by providing life skills, value and a caring environment as well as providing them with the tools to succeed in the greater community.” Students are challenged to be the best they can be. Through their Level 1 assessment, student interest inventories and career exploration activities, students are tracked for a variety of worksites both in school and in the community that prepare them for the world of work.