



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Philippa Schuyler

32K383

**1300 Greene Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11237**

Principal: Jeanette Smith

**Date of review: January 7, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Lillian Druck**

The School Context

Philippa Schuyler is a middle school with 915 students from grade 5 through grade 8. The school population comprises 53% Black, 38% Hispanic, 2% White, and 7% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 7% special education students. Boys account for 43% of the students enrolled and girls account for 57%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95.3%.

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	Celebration	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	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	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:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

The alignment of curricula to Common Core Learning Standards and content standards strategically integrates the instructional shifts, promotes rigor and embeds academic tasks that foster critical thinking in a coherent manner across grades and subjects for all learners.

Impact

Common Core aligned academic tasks, rigorous interdisciplinary studies, and student choice foster higher order thinking skills and connect all students to a path toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers across content areas and elective courses access professional resources such as scope and sequence and Engage NY documents to ensure CCLS alignment and the implementation of instructional shifts. For example, lessons focus on arguments, claims, evidence and analysis across subjects.
- Elective offerings include Robotics, Technology, Public Speaking, African American Studies and Medical Studies. Honors classes are offered in math and ELA across grades 6-8. In grade 8, students have the opportunity to take Regents in Integrated Algebra, Living Environment, Earth Science and Foreign Language Proficiency exams in Spanish or French. Program offerings also include a high school certified English course for advanced students.
- Teachers use the Depth of Knowledge Tool to plan lessons and academic tasks that emphasize levels 3 and 4 higher order thinking skills. Across content areas, students use the Depth of Knowledge Tool to formulate their own questions during small group discussions and debates.
- Elective courses foster experiences connected to college and career readiness and the performing arts. For example, during the student group meeting, students stated that they have the opportunity to perform with professional musicians from Lincoln Center, Swing into Jazz and Little Kids Rock.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Strategic entry points in lessons and high quality supports for former English language learners, students with disabilities and higher performing students vary across classrooms. Student discussions that lead to ownership of the learning process are not fully embedded across all subjects.

Impact

Some lessons did not fully demonstrate the ample refinement of instructional strategies to ensure strategic multiple entry points into the curricula in order to further promote ownership of learning in student work products and discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- Multiple entry points, scaffolds and instructional strategies for learners include the use of flexible grouping based on data, opportunities for small group discussion, use of rubrics for self-assessment, differentiated learning tasks, and some students formulating questions during small group conversations.
- In an Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) class, a group of higher performing students created charts about to support or refute claims. However, the activity did not engage all students in higher order thinking nor promote high levels of participation.
- In a science class, most questions required the recall of information and although students worked in small groups, the teacher facilitated the activity while some higher performing students were cognitively ready for higher order questions and deeper discussion of the topic at hand.
- In some classes, there were missed opportunities in releasing accountability to students during discussions that required them to connect ideas, make inferences and challenge each other's' thinking as teachers remained in a mediating role.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school uses common curriculum-aligned assessments, performance based rubrics, and coherent grading policies to attain a clear understanding of student progress toward grade benchmarks.

Impact

Teachers across classrooms make effective adjustments to curriculum and instruction. The aligned assessment practices provide actionable feedback so that all students make progress towards meeting their academic benchmarks and goals.

Supporting Evidence

- In ELA classrooms, teachers used a skills tracker and observation notes to check if students mastered the skill of making claims and analyzing evidence in their writing. Based on their findings, they adjusted their lessons by re-teaching, adding scaffolds or grouping students for skills-based instruction.
- In a social studies class, exit slips required students to respond to the question, “What stuck with you?” In a math ICT class, students’ exit slips informed the teachers whether they “got it” or “kind of got it.”
- Students use exit slips to reflect on their understanding of a lesson. For example, in a social studies class, students provided written feedback on green, yellow and red exit slips to indicate their progress in using evidence from an assigned text to make claims and arguments.
- Rubrics include “grows” with comments such as “elaborate on what the quote means” and “glows” such as “great connection to claim.”
- Teachers use information from formative assessments including class work, quizzes, and the review of exit tickets to revise plans for the next day’s lesson, for upcoming lessons or to group students based on learning needs.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders utilize a wide array of strategies and provide effective supports that exemplify a culture of mutual accountability for the school's high expectations. The school fosters positive partnerships with families and engages them in supporting their children's progress.

Impact

High expectations communicated through verbal and written school-wide systems support an inclusive learning environment where accountability is reciprocal among all members of the school community. Families participate in a culture of high expectations that enhances their understanding of college and career readiness skills so that they actively support their children in achieving success.

Supporting Evidence

- Weekly family engagement time is used for pre-scheduled meetings with parents of students deemed academically or socially at risk. Meetings include all of the identified student's teachers so that parents receive a well-rounded, informed picture of their child's academic and social performance. Parents stated that the pre-scheduled conferences with all the teachers help them better understand how their children are performing in school and how they can help with next steps in their learning.
- Weekly Instructional Thoughts are published on the white board in the main office and emailed to all staff. Instructional strategies are based on Danielson Rubric 3D: Assessment, in alignment with the school's instructional focus. Teachers use the recommended strategies in their classrooms and reflect on their successes and challenges in meetings with school leaders.
- The Pupil Path System is used for ongoing communication with parents and students. Teachers post grade updates as well as behavior anecdotal notes, including both positive outcomes and areas for improvement. Parents stated that the information keeps them informed and guides them in supporting their children's progress.
- Parents stated that the school's staff considers them to be a resource and a partner in the children's education. They stated that school leaders and staff constantly reinforce college and career expectations. One parent stated, "The message that college is a must, not an option, is always reinforced at meetings with parents."

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

Teachers across the school participate in inquiry-based collaborative teams that use highly effective protocols to analyze classroom practice, examine assessment data and assess student work.

Impact

The school's positive culture of professional collaboration promotes shared leadership, strengthens teacher capacity, and contributes to school-wide instructional coherence and mastery of goals for students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams organize their daily meeting time for planning, analyzing formative assessments such as exit slips, examining student work and adjusting lessons based on data from student work and class data. Inquiry teams analyze student work and monitor the performance of student subgroups reflecting the lowest progress and the highest gains in ELA and math according to summative assessments.
- The majority of teachers chose common planning for their contractually required professional period. Common planning time is scheduled during the school day to promote collaboration with departments and grade level teams. Teachers report that having time to plan with colleagues each day supports the work of aligning common core curriculum, developing common assessments, promoting high expectations and tracking student progress.
- During the math department team meeting, teachers reviewed student work to surface misconceptions, identify gaps in understanding and discuss implications for teaching. At the conclusion of the team meeting, teachers identified common mistakes of students in solving equations. Teachers agreed on revisiting with students solving one-step equations and providing students with visuals, strategy charts and "do now" equations requiring them to use equal signs.
- ICT teachers stated that department team meetings help them acquire a better understanding of the struggles of higher performing students, and help them plan ahead for independent work and targeted instruction to help students acquire pre-skills leading to the skills they need to acquire.