



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Frances E. Carter

Elementary – Middle School K384

**242 Cooper Street
Brooklyn
NY 11207**

Principal: Phyllis Raulli

**Date of review: October 30, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Lillian Druck**

The School Context

Frances E. Carter is an elementary–middle school with 695 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 16% Black, 81% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 23% English language learners and 8% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 93.2%.

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	Proficient
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	Celebration	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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

**3.4 High
Expectations**

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Schools leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through the Danielson Framework for Teaching and professional learning sessions. Family engagement sessions help parents understand their children's progress in school and communicate expectations connected to college and career readiness.

Impact

The staff is well aware of the school's goals to improve classroom practices and accelerate student achievement, and families understand what their children need to accomplish to be successful at their next level of learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Weekly professional development sessions and teacher team collaborations engage staff in discussions and ongoing training pertaining to the four domains of the Danielson Framework for Teaching related to planning and preparation, learning environment, professionalism and classroom instruction.
- The staff handbook highlights the citywide instructional expectations and reinforces the importance of preparing youngsters for college and career readiness. Feedback from supervisors following classroom visits promotes accountability for the expectations of the teaching framework. For example, observation reports and lesson snapshots promote teacher accountability in fostering high levels of student performance, in alignment with the expectations of the Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- The guidance counselor hosted a high school articulation session for grade 8 families. Parents shared that the workshop was informative and very helpful in preparing them for the high school application process.
- Parents stated that family engagement sessions held on Tuesdays offer opportunities to learn about their children's needs and how to help them make progress toward course benchmarks and school expectations.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Classroom practices reflect the use of instructional strategies such as student groupings, varied levels of questioning and daily routines. However, strategic scaffolds and high quality multiple entry points into the curricula vary across subject areas, particularly for English language learners and special education students, and provided few opportunities reflecting student ownership in discussions.

Impact

Some students are not challenged to work to their full potential thereby limiting opportunities for them to engage in academic tasks that further promote higher order thinking skills and ownership of learning.

Supporting Evidence

- In visits to two co-teaching classrooms, although students were seated in groups, teacher directed lessons did not offer different pathways to promote student discussions. In addition, although there were two teachers in the classroom, targeted instruction for English language learners and students with disabilities was not observed in these classrooms.
- In classrooms with English language learners, student desks were arranged in groups to encourage peer support and participation. For example, in a science class, English proficient students translated for Spanish speaking peers and in a first grade class, students turned to their partners to respond to teacher's questions. However, high quality extensions and supports such as visuals, manipulative materials and native language resources were not widely available to further engage English language learners and students with disabilities in their learning.
- Across classrooms, students participated in small group activities matched to meet their needs. For example, in a high performing class, small groups of students discussed their responses to questions presented on varied graphic organizers in preparation for a group project. It was observed that as groups completed their tasks, they waited for teacher approval before moving with the next steps of their projects.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and teachers align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), integrate the instructional shifts and consistently utilize multiple resources to emphasize rigor in their learning tasks.

Impact

The school's standards-based, coherent curricula offers a range of learning experiences that support student learning, foster critical thinking and promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Lessons and academic tasks include the integration of the instructional shifts across subject areas. For example, in English language arts, lesson plans reflect strategies to build academic vocabulary, including the use of word walls across subjects. Student work posted on bulletin boards reflects higher order tasks requiring problem solving, creativity and text-based writing products.
- The Ready Gen reading program in grades kindergarten to 5, Code X reading program in grades 6 to 8, Go Math in grades kindergarten to 8, and the use of pacing calendars in science and social studies provide vertical and horizontal alignment across subjects.
- The school offers accelerated coursework in math and science for high performing students in grade 8. Students in the advanced programs use resources such as Barron's Let's Review Biology and Go Math Integrated Algebra to acquire a strong foundation and effective preparation for high school Regents credits.

Findings

The school uses common assessments, performance based rubrics and grading policies aligned to key standards to gain a clear understanding of student progress toward goals.

Impact

Effective curricular and instructional adjustments and actionable feedback lead students towards the advancement of goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams use the New York City Performance Assessment Writing Rubric to identify students' strengths and struggles in writing. Teams share their findings and discuss strategies such as the use of graphic organizers and the Four Square Model to assist students in stating clear opinions supported with text evidence in their writing.
- The third grade teacher team uses a progress monitoring chart to track the growth of students in the school's bottom third subgroup. The team members share the results in order to plan specific classroom interventions as well as additional supports during after school programs to improve student learning.
- Students shared work products that included rubrics and teacher feedback requiring them to include text based evidence in their writing and details for clarity in their writing. Students compared earlier writing to more current pieces and explained how the feedback from the rubrics helped them improve their writing. For example, students explained that they are adding more details, writing more complex sentences and using text evidence to support their claims.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Grade level and vertical teams analyze student work and assessment data of students in the school's bottom third subgroup. Representatives across grade levels and core subjects share inquiry team findings and support CCLS alignment.

Impact

The school's professional collaborations foster reflection, enhance the instructional capacity of teachers and contribute effective instructional strategies that focus on improving student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Professional learning sessions on Monday afternoons engage teacher teams in inquiry cycles to examine student work. During the third grade inquiry team meeting, teachers used the New York City Performance Assessment Rubric to identify the strengths and struggles of low performing students. Based on their findings, they generated a list of strategies to address students' learning gaps.
- The teacher team observed used the resource titled: *Four Square Writing Method*, to identify strategies to improve the writing structure and development traits of their subgroup of students. They created a list of strategies that included the use of highlighters to find text evidence, peer assessment checklists, and the use of post-its to help students gather information from texts to support their writing.
- A group of teachers and an administrator participate in the Teacher Leadership Program to support the school's teacher teams. For example, they share resources and provide guidance in promoting student engagement, planning multiple entry points, and monitoring student progress toward goals.