



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2014-2015**

**School of Business, Finance and Entrepreneurship**

**Middle School 385**

**125 Stuyvesant Ave  
Brooklyn  
NY 11221**

**Principal: Ann Marie Malcolm**

**Date of review: February 4, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Santiago**

## The School Context

School of Business, Finance and Entrepreneurship is a middle school with 113 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 72% Black, 23% Hispanic, 2% American Indian, 2% Asian, and 1% White students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 38% special education students. Boys account for 59% of the students enrolled and girls account for 41%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 90%.

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

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Teachers analyze assessment outcomes during team meetings and school leaders provide opportunities that promote teacher leadership and input on key instructional decision.

### Impact

Inquiry-based teacher collaborations are building teacher capacity leading to increased student progress. Distributive leadership structures support staff teamwork and enhance pedagogical skills to improve student learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet weekly by subject and grade level focusing on the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and use protocols for looking at student work to plan lessons and improve classroom practices. For example, after analysis of student writing samples that required the use of text evidence to support a position, teachers noted that a few students needed additional support with the assignment. This resulted in teachers planning to provide more modeling and exemplars of high level writing and having students use graphic organizers to gather and organize information.
- Teachers agreed to share the impact of the suggested strategies on student learning at their next meeting.
- School leaders support teachers at team meetings and encourage professional collaborations to share strategies and best practices to improve instruction. In addition, teachers take the initiative to engage in inter-visitations and share best practices.
- Teacher leaders regularly meet with school leaders to develop and plan professional development opportunities and to discuss growth towards improved pedagogical practices aligned with the expectations of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. For example, based on the need to promote higher level thinking among students, emphasis on domain 3 and writing became areas of focus for professional growth.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

The school has begun to align pedagogy with the Danielson Framework for Teaching and some instructional supports are provided. However, developmental lessons that emphasize higher order thinking skills and provide multiple entry points that would promote in-depth analysis, deep student engagement, and rich class discussion are inconsistent.

### Impact

Teachers have begun to align practices to the curricula and provide academic supports to yield meaningful student work products. However, opportunities for all learners, including student subgroups, to engage in high level discussions and create meaningful work products are not evident in every classroom.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school's beliefs on how students learn best are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the elements of an effective developmental lesson that include modeling of expected lesson outcomes. In addition, the school expresses a belief in students working in small groups engaged in peer discussions and sharing to deepen the level of thinking. However, these practices were not implemented consistently across classrooms. For example, in some classrooms observed, student engagement consisted mainly of reading articles and textbooks and completing a related assignment in notebooks or worksheets with few opportunities for students to engage in meaningful discussions and analysis to extend the learning. In other classrooms lessons did not consistently include modeling and demonstrations of expected learning outcomes.
- Suitable scaffolds for student subgroups were not evident in some classrooms. For example, in an English as a second language class observed, the presentation was conducted whole group and consisted mainly of having students read articles on famous missionaries. This was followed by the teacher directing the students to write questions about something they "really want to know about missionary work" and discuss in groups with little time provided for students to practice, discuss, and share the learning with their peers. Several students did not complete the assignment.
- Although bulletin board displays in the halls contained samples of student writing and learning in content areas and students' notebooks and folders included some work in English language arts (ELA) and math, several student work products consisted mainly of tasks that did not reflect high levels of thinking. For example, some math samples reflected exercises completed in isolation of application or problem solving contexts.

## Additional Findings

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

While the school has aligned curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards, there is inconsistency in the use of data analysis and planning rigorous tasks for all learners, including English language learners (ELLs) and special education students.

### Impact

Although the school's curricular planning is beginning to promote coherence to ensure that all students are college and career ready, tasks across grade and content areas do not consistently emphasize higher order thinking for all students, hindering a high level of cognitive engagement for all learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school has developed curriculum maps that integrate the Common Core Learning Standards in English language arts and math. In addition, teachers are in the process of refining maps to include standards from the New York City Scope and Sequence in science and social studies respectively to support the school's goal of college and career readiness. However, tasks that promote rigor were not evident in several classrooms visited. In one special education classroom, the teacher limited lesson activities to students reading a social studies textbook and answering a few questions from a worksheet thus, lessening opportunities to further deepen students' understanding and learning.
- Although lesson plans reflected Common Core based curricula topics, teacher planning for the use of scaffolds that might support the learning for ELLs and students with disabilities (SWDs) was inconsistent across the school. Some plans included only the tasks with little evidence of entry points to meet the diverse needs of all learners.
- Teachers use summative and formative assessment data to inform curricula decisions. However, there is inconsistent use of language development data for ELLs and information contained in students' Individualized Instructional Plans to ensure access to the curricula and lesson tasks for all students.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### **Findings**

The school is beginning to use common assessments and classroom checks for understanding to track student progress towards goals, gauge student understanding, and inform curricula and instructional adjustment.

### **Impact**

The school has implemented structures to measure learning progress through data analysis and during instruction. However, these practices do not consistently inform adjustments that meet students' academic needs therefore, hindering student mastery of learning objectives.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school uses a range of common assessments that includes results from State tests, Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) and unit tests in ELA and math. The analysis of assessment results have led to the development of instructional goals for teaching and the targeting of skills in ELA and math. But, the school has not yet gathered information from these assessments to monitor individual student progress in all content areas for all learners.
- Although teachers gather data that includes formative assessments and student work to determine levels of student learning in ELA and math, the use of data to inform and adjust instruction is not consistent across classrooms.
- Ongoing classroom checks for understanding such as questions and answers and student self-assessments do not always lead to instructional adjustments that support all student subgroups including ELLs and SWDs.

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

The school communicates high expectations to staff via professional development activities aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School-wide communications and student performance updates keep families informed of their child's development towards college and career readiness.

### **Impact**

The school's structures for communication and systems of support result in staff and families working towards a clear path of higher student achievement and college and career readiness.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to inform classroom instructional practices and communicate expectations to teachers and staff at meetings, and professional development workshops led by the school and network specialists.
- The principal holds staff accountable via formal and informal observations and provides feedback during one to one conferences. Feedback to teachers has included discussions on the need to use of higher order questioning to deepen the levels of thinking among the students.
- The school provides information to families on the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards via monthly calendars indicating the curricula topics of focus for the month in all content areas. In addition, parents expressed that the school staff is caring and nurturing and makes them feel welcome at all times via the school's "open door" policy. Furthermore, the school maintains ongoing communication with families that includes phone calls, conferences and progress reports to keep them informed of their child's performance in school.