



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Red Hook Neighborhood School

Elementary School K676

**27 Huntington Street
Brooklyn
NY 11231**

Principal: Rochel Brown

**Date of review: January 8, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Anita Skop**

The School Context

The Red Hook Neighborhood School is an elementary school with 217 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 44% Black, 51% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 57% of the students enrolled and girls account for 43%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 89.0%.

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	Developing
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	Developing
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	Celebration	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	Developing
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:

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, and these assessments and rubrics are used to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Results from student assessments and student work are used to adjust curricula and instruction, and provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers school-wide utilize common assessments and unit-aligned rubrics that provide students with an understanding of their level of achievement. The school uses Fountas and Pinnell running records to monitor student-reading levels in six-week cycles. Targeted students have already shown progress and moved up in these levels.
- Across grades, exit questions were seen as a measure of student understanding at the end of lessons. This protocol enables teachers to adjust the instruction for the following day, and was also frequently used to provide upper grade students with a clearer understanding of their personal needs.
- The school uses the ReadyGen curriculum across all grades and as such utilizes the rubrics aligned to that curriculum. This was evidenced during classroom visits where work on bulletin boards contained annotated rubrics, as did student folders. Writing rubrics were also utilized across content areas as was seen during a fifth grade science lesson.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies, including questioning, scaffolds in English and/or native language where appropriate, and routines, inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, and student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Inconsistencies in teaching strategies have led to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in student work products, including the work of English language learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- Differentiated, student-specific scaffolded supports were infrequently evidenced. In a first grade class students worked in small groups but utilized the same worksheet on the letter “L.” Students who had difficulty with the concept of upper and lower case had no additional tools or strategies to enable them to grasp this concept but were still expected to complete the sheet.
- Though students routinely worked in small groups in alignment with the school-wide literacy curriculum, students with disabilities often struggled to work with materials that were clearly inaccessible. For example, in a self-contained class servicing grade 1 and 2 students, students were asked to explain in writing what was happening in an illustration from a portion of a book the teacher had just read. Only one student understood what was being asked and tried to complete the assignment. The remainder of the class was divided into two groups: one working with the teacher, the other working with the paraprofessional. Neither group of students could handle the work, which the teacher stated, had to be done as it was part of the curriculum.
- Uneven levels of student discussion were exemplified by the work in a fifth grade Integrated Co-Teaching class. Students were to be engaged in a science lesson, which required them to look at soil and then plant lima beans. Student discourse was limited to teacher questioning and student to teacher responses, often resulting in one-word answers.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and faculty have selected literacy and math curricula that are aligned to the Common Core and are in the process of aligning the curricula to the instructional shifts, yet purposeful decisions to adjust academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills and provide accessibility to students are not consistent school-wide.

Impact

Though there are curriculum maps from the aligned curricula, learning activities with higher-order thinking skills and rigorous habits are inconsistent across grades, subjects, and for English Language Learners (ELLs), and students with disabilities (SWDs).

Supporting Evidence

- In order to more successfully implement the Common Core aligned ReadyGen curriculum in English language arts, and Go Math in math, the school has initiated block scheduling as an adjustment to the structure of the curriculum in these content areas. Students now have one hour of reading daily and one half hour of writing daily. In addition, the curriculum was revised so that the pacing of the math program provided more time to cover key units to better meet the needs of students.
- Though the curriculum is Common Core aligned, it has not been adjusted to better meet the needs of students. There are no adjustments in curriculum maps that take into consideration the needs of students with disabilities. This has resulted in in early childhood self-contained class students struggling with a materials that are several grades above their readability level, and in a fourth grade students struggling with computation.
- Reflecting on school-wide data that indicated a need to enhance facility in computation through the development of fluency in number facts and multiplication, the school has inserted the use of computational skills boxes as a supplement to the curriculum. These boxes were evidenced across the grades on student group tables and were noted in lesson plans.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and are developing training and a system of accountability for those expectations. This is also evident in the work of teacher teams which has established a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

Though high expectations are communicated there is a need for follow-through with training and system of accountability so that teachers and staff can provide effective feedback and guidance to support students in preparing them for the next level, which has yet to be seamlessly threaded between administration, teachers, staff, students, and families.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal, her assistant principal, and coaching staff, share high expectations with teachers by providing Danielson-aligned feedback to teachers as well as conducting walkthroughs with feedback. Further, the school leader shares a weekly email with teachers and meets to talk to teachers informally. Training from the Network and other consultants has also enhanced the level of expectation especially in the area of exit questions which was seen in upper grade class visits. The enhanced training and ongoing feedback are raising the level of accountability school-wide.
- The school has worked extensively to establish a culture for learning that is changing the expectations of the students in terms of scholastic behaviors and academic achievement. For example the school has moved to the “I can” statement as a behavioral objective and utilizes consistent, unit-aligned rubrics in literacy. In addition, attendance awards and a uniform policy reinforce the expectation that students will arrive prepared to learn and achieve academic success.
- Student feedback is couched in terms of “glow and grow,” so that students are developing a greater understanding of their strengths and needs for improvement. This was evidenced in that students in a number of classes could articulate what they were working to improve. The school’s guidance counselor also supports this understanding by providing outreach to all parents individually to help support students in the articulation process into middle school.

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core through the analysis of assessment data and student work for students on whom they are focused.

Impact

Teacher engagement in these collaborative teams promotes the achievement of student goals and strengthens the instructional capacity of teachers, resulting in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Because the school is so small, it has created two collaborative teacher teams with a vertical structure. The first team consists of teachers from grades pre-kindergarten through grade 2, while the second team is composed of teachers in grades 3 through 5. The teams meet bi-weekly during the Tuesday flextime after the Parent Engagement session. Minutes are taken electronically at each meeting and then shared with the administration. Further, during meetings of the instructional cabinet, team finds are shared across teams and used to strengthen practices school-wide.
- The teams are teacher facilitated and use a defined protocol to review student work. As evidenced by the team meeting writing, the teams are addressing a school-wide focus in line with the goal of improving student literacy achievement. This work has also led to expanded professional development supports that target writing traits, both in- house and externally. External trainings are then turn keyed to the entire staff, positively impacting teacher practice.
- The work of teacher teams has led to changes in teacher practice and curricula implementation. For example, as a result of the item skills analysis of State assessments and formative performance assessments by teacher teams, the school began a focus on vocabulary development and redesigned the literacy block. Additionally, the Measures of Student Learning gap analysis led to the implementation of the “Seven Writing Traits” in consistent alignment with school goals.