



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 020 Anna Silver School

Elementary School M020

**166 Essex Street
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Carmen Colon

**Date of review: February 3, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Caron Martin**

The School Context

P.S. 020 Anna Silver is an elementary school with 631 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 9% Black, 50% Hispanic, 4% White, and 35% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 6% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 93.0%.

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	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	Celebration	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	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	Focus	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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, pedagogy is aligned to the curricula and demonstrates a shared school-wide belief about how students learn best, informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and discussions at the team and school levels. Teaching strategies reflect strategically provided multiple entry points, supports and extensions to the curricula.

Impact

Unit plans, lessons and the delivery of instruction demonstrate coherence through the instructional focus of “leveraging student conversations,” ensuring that all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, are appropriately engaged in higher level thinking tasks based upon their individual needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s articulated and observed belief that is that, “every child can learn at higher levels through differentiated practice,” is delivered through instructional strategies such as close reading, strategic student groupings and multiple strategies to increase students’ spoken and written dialogue.
- Across all classrooms visited, visual supports and multiple representations of content were observed and utilized through the delivery of instruction. In the dual language kindergarten class, students engaged in an exercise, facilitated in full Mandarin by the teacher, to sing, dance, utilize the interactive white board, lead the group and read vocabulary. On the interactive white board, students were able to choose the written Mandarin text, a picture accompanied by the text and/or a stand alone picture which they would then match corresponding text. Additionally, on the vast majority of students’ written work, rubrics and checklists with a mix of picture representations or text in Mandarin were provided to guide the students’ completion of the given task.
- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers utilized student grouping to deliver Common Core-aligned content through multiple teaching strategies. Students were consistently observed discussing the content, working independently, with partners and guided groups with teachers. All students were engaged in using text to guide discussion or utilizing written responses during literacy and math lessons. In all classrooms visited, student groupings were observed with coherence to content while still providing differentiation to instructional strategies. For example, one group used manipulatives to build new vocabulary while another group searched for the words in context with a partner.
- In two collaborative team teaching classrooms, teachers were delivering the same content through a parallel teaching model while students with disabilities were provided additional modeling opportunities and guided practice with the co-teacher.
- In order to ensure curricular alignment, instructional focus and effective teaching practice, teachers are supported in classroom practice with the Danielson Framework for Teaching with special attention to how component 3b can assist teachers in developing and sustaining high level discussions in their classrooms through the employment of Webb’s Depth of Knowledge Level 3 and 4 questions.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations in a variety of ways. The staff consistently informs families of ways to ensure student progress and while communicating the content knowledge and skills students are expected to attain.

Impact

The school has established a culture of learning through structures for identifying, analyzing and communicating student needs and overall teaching and learning expectations. However, there is there is uneven practice amongst teachers about how often and how much information is communicated to parents and families in order to support students to progress to the next level, leading to missed opportunities for building a sense of mutual accountability for student success among all members of the school community.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal writes a weekly newsletter to staff in which she sets and reinforces instructional expectations while also celebrating areas of success and supporting effective pedagogical practice through the Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- While parents overwhelmingly expressed their gratitude with the level of communication and openness of the school community, they were unable to express or acknowledge understanding of the Common Core implementation other than a meeting notice being sent home and taking place the previous year. Parents stated they have been encouraged to be part of the school community although they were not able to articulate how they are involved in decision making processes.
- Parents stated the teachers utilize Wednesday mornings to meet with them or speak with them about student progress and where their children need to improve or where they are excelling in their academic programs. Some parents stated they receive weekly letters stating the week's academic expectations and providing ways for parents to contribute to the progress at home.
- Students described their work as both easy and hard and that they receive feedback from their teachers in a variety of ways. While students stated their teachers tell them in class what they must do to succeed, "work hard, try their best, ask questions", during most classroom observations, the expected learning outcomes for specific content areas were observed on white boards, interactive white boards or post-it chart paper. In the vast majority of classrooms, there were visual posters with either pictures, texts or checklists, illustrating the expectations of "good readers", "Is my story good? Is my story great?" Students also engage in "How Am I Smart" self-assessments. Some students stated they know how well they are doing in their classes because their teachers inform them, both in writing and through conferencing, when they hand back their work. Three out of the six students present were able to identify areas they needed more help in to academically improve and stated they could ask their teachers for assistance when they get stumped.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Through teacher team work, the school community follows cycles of curriculum review and revision using student work products to align curriculum to the Common Core Standards while assessing proficiency of those work products.

Impact

The schools approach to reviewing curriculum, student work products and co-planning across all content areas has provided teachers the ability to build coherence in classroom practice and prepare students for college and career. Across all content areas, instructional coherence is demonstrated in tasks that engage all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs, in higher order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers of the Mandarin Dual Language program are in the process of revising and designing a curriculum for kindergarten through grade 5 that is fully aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Through a grant and partnership with City University of New York-New York State Initiative on Emergent Bilinguals for the 2015-2016 school year, the school will commence a Spanish Dual Language program that will serve and benefit an increased amount of their ELL population.
- The school's instructional focus is evident across classrooms and reflected in the work of the inquiry teams across grade levels, adapted to grade levels as evidenced by curriculum maps. Teachers in the early grades are using a variety of pictures, prompts and written text to engage students in discussions through oral language development for both the general and dual-language programs, while 4th and 5th grade teachers have students using dialogue through written response and informational text.
- The school's instructional focus is to increase conversation and dialogue through text. This was evident in a combined 2nd and 3rd grade self-contained reading class where eight students were building language skills through phonics learning about the "bossy e". Students were required to read words, call upon one another and state the meaning or describe the vocabulary word. In the same class, two students were at a table in the back of the classroom working with the speech pathologist, on the same strategy in a more individualized setting. Students in another 1st grade Integrated Co-Teaching class were answering why and how they came to their answers during a differentiated math lesson.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms teachers use created, shared and individual classroom assessments, rubrics and checklists that are aligned with school curricula. Teachers monitor student progress via student work, conferencing and questioning techniques as formative assessment strategies.

Impact

Through data tracking, item analysis in task completion and curriculum reviews teachers are engaged in reflecting upon student progress and then providing specific and actionable feedback to students. Across classrooms, content is presented at different levels of complexity, allowing students to engage with one another in various ways while focusing on the same conceptual skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers utilize data cycles to adjust student grouping and inform parents of student progress in between marking periods. Fifth grade teachers utilize the same color-coded system to group students so they may engage in both homogenous and heterogeneous groupings both in classrooms and across the grade level.
- Measures of Student Learning (MoSL) performance tasks are utilized as common assessments across grades to provide baseline data and used to inform unit planning. Teachers adapt the MoSL Rubric to connect to their Common Core-aligned unit plans and curriculum maps. Additionally, in speaking to teachers, students and observing classes, it was common to see students first assessing their own products on rubrics and then comparing their self-assessments with teachers findings.
- As evidenced across classrooms visited and hallway displays, students are provided actionable feedback through the use of rubrics and post-it notes. Comments on student work varied from praise, "Good job Chloe! You really showed several ways to solve the problem! See if there are other numbers you can use too for your solution", to asking probing questions such as, "What different kinds of water would you collect and why would this provide us with informative results? What would the different types of water do?", "M, you did a great job making the text-to-world connections. Be sure to include examples of pieces of information from texts...find quotes that support..."

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

All teachers are consistently engaged in collaborative team meetings, unit planning, review and adjustment and grade level-inquiry based work.

Impact

The work and variation of teacher teams provide the vast majority of teachers with opportunities to engage in structures that result in professional collaboration while addressing student progress towards school wide goals. Through systematic analysis of student work during grade level and team leader meetings, teachers are able to adjust their lessons and share instructional strategies through what they call, "Impacts on Teaching" to support improved teacher practice across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- While the instructional focus across the school is increasing student spoken and written dialogue around text-based evidence, teacher leaders have guided their grade level teams to adapt said focus for the specific needs of their students. Kindergarten teachers shifted the focus to first teaching students how to interact with text through oral language development while 4th and 5th grade teachers use Depth of Knowledge Level 3 and 4 questions to support student conversation and written response.
- To support implementation of reading and writing grounded in evidence from text as one of the instructional shifts, one inquiry team decided to film student conversations, later transcribing and analyzing them to identify the needs for prompts or visual supports. As a result, teachers now use a checklist, "Behaviors to Notice and Support," for specific students with observations such as, "Uses picture details to help figure out words, remembers and uses language patters in text."
- While observing a teacher team meeting, teachers were engaged in the Collaborative Assessment Protocol to discuss the progress of an individual student's writing, identifying his strengths, areas of need and next steps for the teacher to implement the next day in class. Teachers reflected as they had previously implemented supports to assist the student in the structure of a paragraph, "He is clearly working on his punctuation now and also shows that he knows he has to support what he's writing. Also, he's got the good hook that we're working on."
- The Professional Development Committee at Anna Silver relies on teachers to determine desired, differentiated professional development topics and design professional development cycles so that all staff are able to engage in and receive support for their areas of need that collectively reinforce shared practices that will improve student outcomes. Professional development topics in one cycle included: Literacy Reading, Quality Individualized Education Programs (IEP)/Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT), Technology & Inquiry and English Language Learners' (ELLs) Day-by-Day Instruction.
- The school schedule supports common planning periods while also providing teachers additional time to meet and discuss curriculum thereby ensuring alignment to the Common Core learning standards and instructional shifts.