



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2014-2015**

**PS 38 Roberto Clemente**

**Elementary School M038**

**232 E. 103<sup>rd</sup> Street  
Manhattan  
New York 10029**

**Principal: Mrs. Carlina Santos-Barton**

**Date of review: March 3, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Ms. Alexandra Estrella**

## The School Context

PS 38 Roberto Clemente is an elementary school with 464 students from grade Pre-K through grade 8. The school population comprises 33% Black, 57% Hispanic, 3% White, and 5% Asian students. The student body includes 13% English language learners and 31% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 88.0%.

## 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>Additional Findings</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>Proficient</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>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>Focus</b>	<b>Developing</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

School leaders and faculty communicate and support a culture of high expectations for teaching, professional collaboration, and consistent communication focused on best teaching practices and the advancement of learning. Teacher Teams and broader school community establish a culture for learning, utilizing the Mindset model that facilitates mutual accountability for all stakeholders.

### Impact

Across the school community, professional learning opportunities for all stakeholders conveys a set of high expectations for teaching and learning and ensures mutual accountability for all students to exceed expectations on tasks and Common Core Learning Standards.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leader consistently communicated high expectations for teaching and learning through regular trainings and coaching teachers around best practices aligned to the Danielson framework that are consistent with the development needs of students. This takes place through modeling, in the moment coaching cycles, and daily debriefs where actionable feedback for shifts in teaching practice is provided. The school leader also communicates high expectations to staff through the staff handbook, staff weekly professional development meetings, and through emailing feedback from observations commending positive work and identifying areas of focus.
- The school has clearly defined standards for professional development (including differentiated professional development plans that incorporates staff input) and classroom practices embedding elements of Danielson Framework for Teaching to ensure that learning for stakeholders consistently reflect high expectations.
- The school provides ongoing, clear lines of verbal and written communication (for example, phone calls home, progress reports, emails, text messages, coffee with the principal, parent/teacher conferences sessions and workshops) with families to deepen their understanding of college and career readiness expectations for their children. Parents communicated that information is provided to them through workshops facilitated by the teachers that helps them support their children at home with Common Core Learning Standards.
- Students communicated teachers consistently provide them with feedback on post it's and provide samples of student work that show teacher feedback, student reflections, and student revisions made as a result of targeted feedback provided. Teachers meet with students to create goals and meet with them weekly to check in and monitor progress towards goals. One student communicated she is currently reading at a T- level for fiction, and U- level for non-fiction, but her goal is to be at Z-level. Students also communicated, "Teachers give us a second chance, because they believe in us and won't take less than our best. They make us explain our answer and give evidence because that is what we are going to have to do in college."

## Area of Focus

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

School leadership is developing opportunities for teachers to be engaged in structured, professional collaborations to develop curriculum, analyze student work and plan instruction.

### Impact

The work of teacher teams is beginning to result in improved pedagogy and student progress on assessments. It has also resulted in deeper Common Core Learning Standards integration and strengthening of instructional capacity.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet on a weekly basis to look at student work samples utilizing different protocols. During an observed teacher team meeting, participants were utilizing a protocol to examine and analyzing student data. For example, while observing the team utilizing the protocol, teachers were able to look at student data for students that were reading below their expected level. Teachers determined which patterns and trends emerged that prevented students from mastery, such as an inability to recognize site words, and discussed various strategies to address student deficits. However, the team did not establish an implementation process for any strategies discussed or concrete next steps. It was not stated how they would monitor the progress of a variety of student data and classroom practices.
- Teachers are starting to include modifications of tasks to include scaffolds that support students' individualized needs as evidenced by sample curricula maps. A grade 4 unit on legends and myths from the *ReadyGen* curriculum, displayed strategic modifications to include a scaffolded writing development plan for students and engage the in a structured writing process.
- As the school transitions their work to align to the instructional shifts, some lesson plans emphasize higher order thinking and provide a menu of strategies or leveled resources for from which scholars utilize or choose to better understand the subject matter or content areas. For example, a Special Education bridge lesson plan showed the use of key various instructional materials: vocabulary words, higher order questions, graphic organizers, and documents based activities to support students to build a better understanding of the subject matter.
- Curriculum and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills inconsistently across grade and subject areas for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs). Minimal differentiation and multiple entry points were provided across classrooms, whereby, most students had the same assignment and product outcome expectations with minimal choice options to meet their individual academic needs.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

Instructional practices across classrooms did not consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula with challenging tasks to engage all learners. Furthermore, high-level student work products and discussions were evident across some classrooms.

### Impact

Across classrooms there a diverse student body, however academic tasks were not scaffolded to engage all learners and, therefore, not all students' work products and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking and participation.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms there were limited scaffolds for various subgroups that did not allow for multiple entry points. In the 5<sup>th</sup> grade math classes, all students were working on a word problem and asked to come up with various ways to solve the problem utilizing visual math. All students were provided the same task that did not support or possess a level of complexity to demonstrate higher order thinking or effective scaffolding for the middle and upper-tiered students. Students were paired together to support each other, but some students completed the problem very quickly and were not challenged.
- In another English language arts (ELA) class, students were purposely grouped, however, all students were expected to complete the same task without scaffolds embedded in the work. All students were asked to make the same T-chart, whereby some students did not need that level of entry. There were opportunities for student differentiated writing yet those opportunities were not taken.
- During various classroom visits, the academic needs and supports of the high achieving learners were not being met or addressed to promote and push higher order thinking. Regardless of the student's academic level, tasks throughout classrooms visited were homogenous and did not challenge students that were with diverse instructional levels.
- In the 4<sup>th</sup> grade Science class students were asked to participate in a marker talk to share what they think they know about magnetism and electricity. The teacher asked a series of Level 2 recall questions that did not represent use of the Hex matrix, "How does a light switch work?, How do you sue electricity?, How would you describe magnetism?" and did not scaffold up to ensure all students, including ELLs and SWDs, had enough background knowledge to complete the task and were challenged.

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

The school's faculty uses common assessments across subject areas to determine student progress toward goals. Across classrooms, teachers use assessments and rubrics aligned with the school's curricula thus providing actionable feedback to students and teachers that impacts student achievement.

### **Impact**

Data analysis is used to inform guided adjustments to units and lessons in order to meet students' learning needs. Teachers are providing students with actionable feedback through their assessments, which allows for student achievement.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers and administrators articulate coherent reasons for assessment choices, (running records, pre and post unit assessments, unit assessments, Fountas and Pinnell, Go Math benchmark assessments) which are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards in curricula. The choices deliver a range of data, some daily, some monthly, and some quarterly to sustain collaborative inquiry and continuously improve instruction.
- Teachers utilize a variety of assessments to monitor student progress in all content areas. For example, teachers utilize running records, conferencing notes, exit slips, and Measures of Student Learning data to modify units to support student needs. This was evident in some of the lesson plans as well as the unit plans. The school administers Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) and Fountas and Pinnell assessments that target students for literacy interventions, such as small group guided reading classes and ELA Intervention classes. However, this common assessment work is focused in ELA and math and has yet to reach science and social studies.
- Teachers utilize rubrics, checklists, Post-Its with feedback or next steps, one-on-one conferences with notes, and exit tickets to monitor student progress and check for understanding during lessons. A review of teachers' conference notes and student work indicated that in some cases, formative assessment leads to instructional adjustments as evident by teacher's running records and lesson plans. Teachers in teams determine important topics to assess with common formative assessments. Teachers unpack the standards and analyze the instructional shift for those topics to identify key concepts and skills students need to know and be able to do. During the Kindergarten team meeting, the team reviewed running record data for non-fiction and began to identify students' strengths and weaknesses to develop a plan of action.

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

Curricula are beginning to be aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers are starting to refine academic tasks using student work and MOSL assessment data to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

### **Impact**

School leaders and faculty are starting to make purposeful decisions to ensure that curricula are Common Core aligned thus promoting college and career readiness for all learners. The school is in the process of making curricula adjustments and modifications to ensure that all student needs are met and that tasks cognitively engage all learners.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers were using units of study directly from *Go Math* and *ReadyGen*, which were only partially aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. The units lacked evidence of the use of student data and modifications tied to specific students or groups of students. As a result, upon the administrative and teacher team's evaluation of the units of study they decided to create new units that were fully aligned with the Common Core. School leaders and teachers are in the process of ensuring that the units are responsive to student data, inclusive of strategies for at risk students.
- Teachers are starting to include modifications of tasks to include scaffolds that support students' individualized needs as evidenced by sample curricula maps. In reviewing original and revised curriculum maps, it was evidenced that teacher teams made modifications based on student assessment data and needs.
- As the school transitions their work to align to the instructional shifts, some lesson plans emphasize higher order thinking and provide a menu of strategies or leveled resources from which scholars utilize or choose to better understand the subject matter or content areas. Teachers embedded higher order level questions within lesson plans and curriculum maps.
- The literacy coach and Academic Intervention Specialist (AIS) teachers work collaboratively with teachers to ensure that academic tasks meet the needs of learners. For example, they support teachers during grade team or common planning periods to modify curricula to be accessible, yet are not rigorous and grade appropriate for SWDs and ELLs. Lesson plans and unit plans did not specify how the needs of SWDs and ELLs were being met.