



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Juan Pablo Duarte

Elementary School 132

**185 Wadsworth
Manhattan
NY 10033**

Principal: Xiomara Nova

**Date of review: May 11, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Manuel Ramirez**

The School Context

Juan Pablo Duarte is an elementary school with 632 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 1% Black, 98% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 53% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.0%.

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	Additional Findings	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	Focus	Developing
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	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	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

**3.4 High
Expectations**

Rating:

Developing

Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations to staff and are starting to support them towards success in meeting the expectations. Families are provided with information about expectations for their children and the school is beginning to develop systems on how to help their children succeed in meeting those expectations.

Impact

The school efforts in establishing a culture of shared expectations for learning has not yet resulted in all stakeholders working collaboratively to ensure all students meet high expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders make an effort to communicate high expectations to the entire staff by providing each teacher a handbook during the first two days of professional development in September. The handbook delineates expectations for classroom instruction and school environment. Additionally, the leadership uses the Danielson Framework for Teaching to engage in conversations throughout the year in order to promote a common language of effective teaching practice. Additionally, the school has developed “Que Pasa”, a weekly newsletter highlighting best teaching strategies and the feedback given by colleagues on the inter-visitation of the week. Furthermore, the newsletter indicates the school’s core beliefs and the school-wide instructional focus for the year.
- School leaders provide the staff with a unit and lesson plan template that includes the intended outcomes of the unit/lesson, possible misconceptions, essential questions, how to engage students in the learning, cross-curricular connections, strategies, guided practice, differentiation and grouping according to data and assessment. Lesson plans and units of work collected during classroom visitation and shared by the leadership revealed that this is an uneven practice school-wide.
- Parents reported that the school consistently communicates with them through phone calls, parent newsletters, parent workshops and family homework help activities. Additionally, the school provides information to parents on the academic progress of the students during parent-teacher conferences four times per year and utilizing the homework help program, which is an afterschool support for students and families. The school has yet to develop an online system to support families and students in obtaining clarity as to exactly what students need to prepare them for the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Developing

Findings

The school is developing their use of common assessments to measure student progress towards goals across grades and content areas. Across classrooms, teachers' assessments practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

The inconsistent use of common assessments and uneven checks for student understanding result in a lack of effective curricular adjustments that hinder meeting the learning needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school is developing a system to use the unit assessments from the curricula in ReadyGen and Go Math and on-demand writing assessments to determine student understanding and progress and to make adjustments to curricula. The school is in the process of creating an assessment calendar to provide a year-long plan for the administration of reading benchmark assessments, Common Core English language arts (ELA) and math baseline and culminating assessments, Go Math unit tests and New York City Performance assessments.
- Teachers administer Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments three times a year to provide data on student progress and adjust leveled independent reading. Students during the student meeting could articulate the progress they had made this year by stating latest score compared to September. However, students could not articulate if they had made progress in other subjects such as math. Teachers use the State exam item analysis from the prior academic year to determine pacing shifts; however, teachers do not use ongoing formative assessments that provide detailed feedback to students or teachers regarding progress toward State standards.
- The school uses four-point rubrics aligned to the Common Core State Standards adopted from the Teachers College writing units with performance tasks and student work. A review of portfolios during classroom visitation and conversation with students showed evidence of the use of rubrics and feedback given to student; however, rubrics and feedback given to students were inconsistent across classrooms and subjects. For example, a fifth grade performance task on narrative writing included a rubric on structure, development and language conventions. The work indicated with a check the level of writing development for the narrative writing piece. There was no teacher comment to support the student understanding on how to advance to the next level.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school is in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards. Unit plans and academic tasks are beginning to reflect planning to cognitively engage students in learning.

Impact

Teachers and leaders are beginning to make decisions to integrate instructional shifts and are developing a process of refining curricula, resulting in more engaging and coherent curricula.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers meet three times per week in grade teams to examine units of study, design differentiated questions based on Depth of Knowledge (DOK), expand student writing across content areas and re-arrange the units of studies in Ready Gen to align them with Teachers College writing units. The leadership and teachers are beginning to refine academic tasks and unit plans in all content areas to ascertain that the curricula is accessible to all learners, and that tasks are engaging and rigorous for the different types of learners.
- A review of lesson plans showed that the school is in the process of developing academic tasks in all grades and subjects that incorporate the instructional shifts. Some examples are: solving multi-step problems; engaging in close reading strategies; answering questions with text-based evidence during close reading; writing from sources; increase use of non-fiction materials and developing higher order thinking (HOT) questions using DOK levels through some tiered-task activities.
- A review of unit plans demonstrates that teachers are refining the English language arts ReadyGen curriculum to provide English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities (SWD) greater access and ensure all learners are cognitively engaged. For example, a grade 5 unit incorporates teacher notes in the unit plan targeting beginner and intermediate level ELLs. Beginner ELLs would receive small-group instruction while intermediate-level students would work with partners on a task identifying evidence from non-fiction text. However, these types of planned interventions to ensure student engagement were not evident across all subjects including math and science.

Findings

Across classrooms, pedagogical practices inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula and student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

In most classrooms, students were not consistently engaged in appropriately challenging tasks or discussions requiring high levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Although students were working collaboratively across all classrooms visited, ample student-to-student discussion, use of academic language and evidence-based accountable talk inconsistently supported students in demonstrating higher order thinking skills in student work products. In a second grade math class, students were working on addition of three digit numbers by drawing a picture. Students were seated on the rug in front of the Smart Board. The lesson was teacher-dominated, only students that raised their hands were called upon by the teacher and students did not have enough time to reflect or engage in intellectual discussions or to explain their thinking after they answered a question.
- During a third grade social studies class, the teacher was explaining what governments do. During this lesson, the teacher did not provide the students with the opportunity to demonstrate their understanding by justifying or explaining their thinking. Accommodations for the different learning needs of the students were not evident. There was no checking for understanding by the teacher to assess student learning.
- Students in a grade 3 class were engaged in whole class and partner discussion developing a plan of action for the day in working on a persuasive essay on the topic of State testing. Students were able to articulate a plan to add evidence to body paragraphs to support their thesis. For example, one student explained that he would add to his paragraph that students should have more time on the exam in order to have time to check their answers more fully. However, in a grade 1 class students sat in groups during a ReadyGen lesson using a non-fiction text and had difficulty in engaging with the task because of confusion regarding directions and objectives. The lack of a discussion protocol as an entry point prevented students from beginning the group work and demonstrate their thinking.

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

Teacher teams are beginning to analyze assessment data and student work to improve teacher practice and accelerate academic achievement for all students. Distributed leadership structures and inclusion of teachers in key decision making at the school level are developing.

Impact

Although teachers are engaged in inquiry work and professional collaboration, this work has not yet improved the instructional and leadership capacity of teachers in alignment with the school's goals and expectations of the Common Core Standards, thus hindering academic progress for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers' schedules include planning team and inquiry team work a minimum of three times per week. The school also provides teachers with per-session activities to continue the work of planning and inquiry. Teachers analyze student data to monitor progress, adjust the curricula and provide targeted instruction; however, teachers have not yet begun to work across grades and content to collaborate, plan, revise and adjust unit plans connected to the school-wide goals, CCLS and the instructional shifts. Additionally, the work done in teacher teams has not yielded meaningful impact on school-wide instructional practice.
- The school and the staff gather data to look for trends in student work, performance based assessments, conferencing notes and New York State English as a Second Language Achievement to identify school-wide trends. They conduct this analysis three times per year and it indicates areas of strengths and areas of focus for the school. They use this information to revise curricula and to inform teaching and learning. In conversation with teacher teams and school leadership, how the data analysis will be used to adjust teacher practice to meet identified students' needs was not evident.
- During teacher team meetings, teachers reported that the school provides them with opportunities to engage in inter-visitations with colleagues and to receive feedback from their peers. Additionally, teachers are given opportunities to lead professional development activities and to make revisions and adjustments to the curricula. These practices support increased collaboration and leadership capacity among the staff and are beginning to build capacity in data-driven inquiry work.