



Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Harriet Tubman

Elementary School M154

**250 West 127 Street
Manhattan
NY 10027**

Principal: Elizabeth Jarrett

**Date of review: May 11, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Roxan Marks**

The School Context

Harriet Tubman is an elementary school with 321 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 60% Black, 33% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 11% 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 90.0%.

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	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	Celebration	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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the whole staff connected to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school provides ongoing feedback to families regarding progress.

Impact

Teachers receive training and there is a system of accountability to share meaningful feedback to families about the progress towards goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders share high expectations with staff through a staff handbook, which outlines instructional, procedural, and legal matters. The handbook includes information on reading behaviors, classroom management, Blooms taxonomy, text levels, Danielson Framework for Teaching, and other useful documents. Professional articles are shared with staff and clear list of expectations are provided to teachers including weekly staff bulletins. In addition, professional development and team meeting calendars were developed which map weekly tasks for teams during professional learning time. The plan aligned to the school's goals, delineates topics covered, deliverables and next steps for teachers. Goal setting allows teachers to develop a goal aligned to Danielson Framework for Teaching as well as identify and provide targeted support for students.
- The review of agendas show work on supporting sentence structure, short responses, creating interim assessments, unit planning, and scoring of benchmark assessments. To support the work around the Danielson Framework for Teaching, the talent coach provided three cycles of support for teachers in using effective questioning. Consultants worked with staff to help teachers improve their skills in providing differentiation. The principal along with coaches, provide support for teachers in understanding the Danielson Framework for Teaching, using the rubric and working on norming activities. There is a system in place to share knowledge garnered during professional development and an action plan for turnkeying strategies, which allows teachers to document specific strategies learned, steps to implement in their classrooms and how and when to turnkey information to colleagues.
- Open houses communicate expectations for curriculum to families as well as the parent handbook that shares the school mission statement, student attendance, medications, homework, discipline, volunteering, and other vital information. School leaders and staff communicate expectations that are connected to college and career readiness. Progress reports are shared three times a year and articulation with parents occurs during the additional time on Tuesdays. Rooms decorated and labeled with colleges and trips expose students to different colleges. Teachers make relevant connections to the real world during lessons including careers, math problems related to computing sale items, writing letters to the local hospital and messages to students that encourage them to attend college.
- Monthly calendars distributed to parents convey details on assessments, school and district events, and other information. Support for families includes family reading nights to provide activities and classes to gain high school equivalency. During the parent interviews, parent shared that they value the open and honest feedback from teachers and the school goes beyond their respective duty to support families.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices inconsistently provide entry points to meet the needs of all learners. Student discussions reflect unequal levels of participation and thinking.

Impact

Some teachers' instructional strategies allowed students to think and talk about learning; however, questioning, discussions, and scaffolds were not consistent in classes, which limited higher-order thinking and student participation.

Supporting Evidence

- School leader shared that all children have the capacity to learn and teachers need to find ways to reach students through access, differentiating, technology and peer support. Close reading, differentiation along with questioning using Depth of Knowledge (DOK) is a focus this year for professional learning time.
- In a self-contained grade 4 and 5 classroom students were introduced to narration and characters. The Smart Board was used and teachers asked questions such as, "Do you recognize this character? Was he a good guy or villain? Which one is your favorite? The questions posed limited discourse among students, the task was not clearly articulated to students, and many of them did not complete their charts.
- In a grade 3 lesson students were on the rug with the book entitled "*Brave Girl*" and were reading aloud from the text. The teacher asked questions and the students responded or turned and talked with a partner. The task did not engage students or provide cognitive challenge and the teacher's tone dominated the lesson. Conversely, in a grade 2 lesson on community, students were discussing ways to improve the school playground. The teachers provided guided questions to support students as they engaged in the lesson. The teacher used a timer as well to restate the goal of the lesson in order to assist students.
- Across classrooms, teachers did not explicitly model for students, there were limited scaffolds created to support the diversity of learners and tasks were not tiered to promote access. There were some examples of questions that promote thinking such as "Why do you say it is an equilateral?" and "How does it show that Edward did not have respect?" However, questions posed in most classrooms were low level and did not provide challenge for student thinking. For example, questions such as, "Was he a good guy or villain?", "Which one is your favorite?", "Who thinks this is a good idea?" Although scaffolds are used by some students, peer discourse, and opportunities for students to interact with each other were limited, with few students engaging in discussions without the support of their teachers.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Rigorous tasks that challenge all students are not evident across most grades and subjects. Planning for engagement and instructional coherence inconsistently provides access into curricula for all students.

Impact

Academic tasks inconsistently promote higher-order thinking, cognitive challenges and access into the curricula for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- School uses ReadyGen and Go Math as core curriculum options and consultants from Generation Ready supports the school in adjusting and re-aligning units to integrate social studies. A focus for the school, this year is on problem solving and fluency in math and designing coherent instruction.
- Unit plan for math in grade 5 lists standards, materials and vocabulary that includes approximately 48 math words; however, this list is rather extensive considering the unit last three weeks. The unit plan focuses on specific math practices and includes essential question and skills students will need to know. The unit contains assessments, however, these are genetic lists of assessments such as chapter tests, chapter performance based assessments, mid-chapter examinations, and exit tickets. Suggested Response to Intervention (RTI) activities are listed, but no examples or tools are developed to support teachers with implementation of strategies. The school also created an instructional pacing calendar that covers content standards listed under each month, as well as social studies pacing calendars.
- A review of grade 2 reading unit shows integration of social studies content. This map includes assessments, which are completely written out enabling teachers to administer to students. Teachers develop writing progressions to show grade specific expectations. The use of DOK to develop higher order questions has been a focus this year. Finding alternative ways through partnerships is another way that the school is promoting rigor. For example, to boost higher level thinking skills, the school exposed grade 1 students to robotics and chess. However, across classrooms, tasks were not rigorous and limited students in developing deep understanding of content.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use and develop assessments and rubrics aligned with the school's grading policy. Assessments track progress of students towards goals.

Impact

The use of common assessments provides teachers with information on progress, is used to inform instructional groups and provides actionable feedback to students on their achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has various systems to collect data and teachers use common assessment to screen, progress monitor and administer interim benchmark tests. The assessment calendar shows monthly windows for administration of assessments with due dates for final analysis. The school uses Accelerated Reading, Think Central, New York City Performance tasks, and Castle Learning to measure progress across grades. Across classrooms, the grading policy is developed and used consistently.
- Class level data charts are used to track levels across grades and subjects. Based on the New York State's data, teachers look at priority standards to determine the areas of need. Teachers shared that based on last year's assessment they noticed that student writing was limited and began to focus on integrating more writing throughout the curriculum. All teachers monitored and tracked data of subgroups. Item analysis for benchmark assessments inform academic intervention supports. Teachers use school assessment binders in classrooms to monitor and support all students, particularly potential holdovers to ascertain if additional support services are required in order to ensure progress and success in learning.
- The teachers use data to identify students that need Response to Intervention (RTI) support. Teacher teams use data to measure student mastery and make adjustments to units and lessons. To determine grouping in classrooms, teachers use benchmark assessments. Teachers have identified at least seven students that they will continually support in order to show growth, for example data shows students struggle with understanding volume and converting measurements. As noted in a special education classroom, the teacher was conferencing with students, however, there was no note taking, or checklist used to record information.

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

The majority of teachers is engaged in structured collaborations that have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and promotes the implementation of CCLS. Distributive leadership affords teachers a voice in decisions.

Impact

Teachers have a voice in decisions that impact learning, the greater community, and their capacity strengthened through teacher team collaboration.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has various teams including, instructional cabinet, grade level, vertical teams, special education, and data/MOSL team. Teachers use protocols to guide their work as they engage in structured team activities. Vertical grade bands consisting of teachers from grades K-2 and 3-5 developed an inquiry question as a focus for their work together. During teacher team observation, teachers reviewed unit assessments and discussed strategies to support student in understanding the value of money. Through the support of the team, teachers created centers for struggling students to expose them to the concepts and strategies. Another team shared they look at students data to identify trends and develop a plan to address the areas identified.

Teachers’ instructional practice has improved through their participation in teams. By helping, each other with strategies and using technology to review data that shows specifically what supports students need to be successful. Working in teams cross grades exposes teachers to the work in other grades and specific standards students may struggle with mastering. Additionally, intervisitations to schools and classrooms support teachers in improving practice by incorporating exemplary models and strategies into their classroom practices.

- Lead teachers attend professional development and share with staff their learning. Teachers conduct workshops for families and share instructional strategies to help students reach goals. The school fosters distributive leadership by rotating teachers leading teams. Teachers shared that there is an open line of communication with administration and they have a voice in assessments and curriculum. The school leader shared that the community reviews the results of Learning Environment Survey with the School Leadership Team (SLT) and the entire staff receives input in ways to address key areas or modify existing structures.