



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Bilingual Bicultural School

Elementary School M182

**219 East 109th Street
Manhattan
NY 10029**

Principal: Alice Hernandez-Ortiz

**Date of review: December 17, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Alexandra Estrella**

The School Context

The Bilingual Bicultural School is an elementary school with 379 students from grade K through grade 5. The school population comprises 8% Black, 89% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 16% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. 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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	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	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	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and staff have established feedback structures to communicate high expectations to both families and students.

Impact

The school's leadership and staff have established a culture of high expectations that has resulted in parents consistently being aware of their child's progress towards meeting grade level standards and students' understanding what is needed to reach the next grade level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders have established a monthly newsletter to share highlights of student accomplishments with families. . The newsletter is shared with families to keep them abreast of upcoming events as well as highlight school wide accomplishments. For example, the school has started to infuse technology into their weekly curriculum to enhance students' digital literacy; hence, better prepare them for the demands of the 21st century.
- School leaders and teachers provide parents with their email to maintain active communication with parents regarding their children's progress. Students also have an information folder that they take home every night with information about upcoming school events and when necessary, notes from teachers addressing their progress or areas of focus. Students also have planners where they write their homework assignments and teacher write notes to parents.
- Teachers across grades work collaboratively to design an articulation plan to set expectations for students in accordance to those standards or skills students will be expected to know or be able to do by the end of each grade level. For example, the school is looking at mathematics strands and how they develop in complexity as students move from grade to grade.
- School leaders and parent coordinator provide orientation and parent meetings to support students and their families with transition between grades.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Curricula are beginning to be aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Teachers are starting to refine academic tasks using student work and Measure of Student Learning (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, with greater focus on vocabulary given the large population of English language learners (ELLs), and following the Understand by Design (UBD) model.
- Teachers are starting to include modifications of tasks to include scaffolds that support students' individualized needs as evidenced by sample curricula maps.
- 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 Kindergarten literacy class lesson plan showed the use of visuals aids (pictures and videos), graphic organizers, and/or leveled texts to support students to build a better understanding of the subject matter.
- The literacy coach and Academic Intervention Specialist (AIS) teachers work collaboratively with teachers to ensure that academic tasks meet the needs of all learners. For example, they support teachers during grade team or common planning periods to modify curricula to be accessible, yet rigorous and grade appropriate for students with disabilities and ELLs.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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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

Although classes consisted of a diverse student body across classrooms, 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

- In an English Languages Arts (ELA) class, the teacher scaffolded the content to provide all learners with an entry point to discuss and analyze the different forms of writing and text they had studied thus far. However, the text was above grade level which hindered t students' ability to read it independently. Additionally, in classes were there were ELLs, students were not provided with scaffolds or tasks that provided them with an entry point that they could manage given their language proficiency. Furthermore, in a transitional bilingual class, ELLs of all different levels t showed difficulty in completing a task and for the teacher to meet their individual language needs. For example, in one of the literacy classrooms, two ELLs had to consistently ask their peers what was going on because they were unable to follow the work being discussed in class.
- In another ELA class, students were purposely grouped; however, all students were expected to complete the same task without scaffolds embedded in the work. Hence, were there were opportunities for student writing yet those opportunities were not taken.
- In a Math class, students were learning how to add two digits. There were several students that were ready to tackle a more challenging task, yet the work provided did not cognitively challenge them. On the other hand, there were several students that were confused as to what they had to do or how to add two digits, but the teacher did not notice the confusion because she was mostly in the front of the room assisting another group. Also, the class was a dual language class, but the teacher was continuously speaking in both languages even though that day was the English day which led to further confusion for students.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school's faculty has started to use common assessments across subject areas to determine student progress toward goals, and continuously check for understanding.

Impact

Data analysis is beginning to inform guided adjustments to units and lessons. Uneven levels of adjustments in curricula and instruction during instructional time limits meeting student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- During one of the teacher team meetings, teachers analyzed student work and identified target areas of growth for an individual student that would be addressed during a daily lesson or within the unit of study. Teachers noticed that in order to impact a larger group of students they need to look at multiple student work samples rather than just one. For example, teachers noticed that the student started to use punctuation that helped him or her describe dialogue within the story. However, trends across classrooms could not be determined as the team only analyzed the work products of one student.
- Teachers are starting to 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.
- Teachers are also starting to 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 indicated that in some cases, formative assessment leads to instructional adjustments. Adjustments observed included extended time in guided reading group instruction, leveled text, and use of a variety of graphic organizers that include T-charts, Venn diagrams, KWL charts and sequence organizers.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Developing
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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 CCLS 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 the ATLAS protocol for the first time to look at student work. For example, while observing the team utilizing the ATLAS protocol, teachers were able to look at a student work sample and decide what areas they would be focusing on based on their findings.
- Teacher leaders and coaches meet on a monthly basis with the administrative team to discuss school-wide patterns and trends as well as set areas of focus for each grade based on trends found when analyzing student work samples or common assessment data.
- Teachers meet on a weekly basis and extend their work during professional development time on Mondays to engage in inquiry work. The focus this year is around balancing informational and literary texts, academic vocabulary and text-based answers in ELA and Fluency in Math.
- ELA and Math coach are in the process of building capacity among teachers in the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards by revising units of study to that are aligned to CCLS.