



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Jose Celson Barbosa School

04M206

**508 East 120th Street
Manhattan
NY 10035**

Principal: Camille Forbes

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

The School Context

Jose Celson Barbosa School is an elementary-middle school with 884 students from grade 3 through grade 8. The school population comprises 27% Black, 64% Hispanic, 5% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 39% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. 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	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	Additional Findings	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	Celebration	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

The school's faculty consistently examines formative and summative data as well as look at student work samples within grade level inquiry-based teams. Leadership structures provide a means for teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula and teaching practices. (4.2)

Impact

The work of teacher teams has resulted in improved pedagogy and student progress on assessments. Shared leadership structures build teacher's capacity to improve student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams have a facilitator and a co-facilitator to support the work within teams and at the same time yield opportunities for all teachers to play a leadership role around the inquiry work. Co-facilitators rotate on a monthly basis and work collaboratively with the team's facilitator to plan agenda items and collect student work samples.
- Teacher facilitators and co-facilitators utilize protocols to look at and discuss student work samples. They also have clear next steps established based on patterns observed in student work samples or set individualized plans based on student's specific needs. For example, during one of the grade team meetings teachers noticed that students were to utilize proper capitalization, punctuation, and organization of ideas. As a result, teachers decided to infuse small group instruction to address these areas with those students having difficulties with these writing elements.
- Facilitators and co-facilitators 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 inquiry focus this year is looking at student work as well as questioning and discussion. Teacher facilitators support the teams in identifying three students to study, and then they focus on analyzing student work to surface skill deficits that students demonstrate and assess their progress towards reaching proficiency every three weeks with diagnostic benchmarks. The teams utilize different protocols that help them look at student work and identify next steps to support the students' further development. Additionally, the teams participate in learning walks to identify potential future areas of focus.

Area of Focus

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, meaningful student work products and discussions were not evident across 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. Students then had an opportunity to read leveled text and identify how different genres of text are organized for the reader. However, in one Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class students were on the rug paired with each other to discuss whether or not they agreed to schools having a dress code. The two teachers in the room modeled for students a conversation that posed to opposing arguments regarding the use of dress codes in schools. Students then engaged in a conversation that allowed them to practice posing an argument. While students were provided with the opportunity to engage in discussion, several students did not participate and had difficulties assessing the teachers' dialogue as well as developing their own point of view on the topic at hand.
- In a science class, students were purposely grouped; however, some students were observed copying content onto their graph and data sheet from fellow group members who were more familiar with the task.
- In a Math class, students were learning about multiplication utilizing the grouping method and the task was appropriate for the lower and middle level students. There were several students that were ready to tackle a more challenging task, yet the work provided did not cognitively challenge them. Consequently, as one group of four students moved towards their table they spoke among themselves and within the conversation solved the problem before they went back to their seat.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) assessment data to meeting the needs of a diverse student population.

Impact

School leaders and faculty make purposeful decisions to ensure that curricula are CCLS aligned thus promoting college and career readiness for all learners. The school's curricula adjustments and modifications ensure that all student needs are met and that tasks cognitively engage all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Staff aligned all pre-existing curricula to CCLS and infused different programs and resources to meet the diverse student population. Resources, which served as starting points for this work, include: Teachers College Reading and Writing, CMP3, IXL, Ready, and Achieve 3000.
- Curricula maps provide evidence that the school develops rigorous academic tasks through the adaption of instructional materials from Teachers College Reading and Writing, CMP3, IXL, Ready, and New York City Science and Social Studies Scope and Sequence.
- Most 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, science and social studies lesson plans show the use of visuals aids (primary sources or scientific tools or devices), 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 of self-contained classrooms to modify curricula to be accessible, yet rigorous and grade appropriate for students with disabilities.

Findings

School leader and staff use common assessments across subject areas to determine student progress toward goals, and continuously check for understanding.

Impact

The school's systems to monitor progress through data analysis as well as during instructional time are used regularly and result in guiding adjustments in units and lessons to meet students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- During one of the teacher team meetings, teachers analyzed student work and identified target areas of growth for individual as well as groups of students that would be addressed during daily lesson or within the unit of study. They also discussed ways they would address common areas of need among groups of students. For example, teachers noticed that students struggled with the organization of ideas as well as providing evidence from the text or details. Consequently, teachers agreed that in subsequent lessons they would infuse writing and reading strategies to help students gather and organize ideas, in addition to utilizing graphic organizers to support their learning.
- Teachers utilize a variety of assessments to monitor student progress in all content areas. For example, teachers utilize pre-, mid-, and post- unit assessments within mathematics units of study. Based upon findings teachers make modifications to a unit to meet the needs of individual students as well as groups of students.
- Teachers also utilize rubrics, checklist, post-its with feedback or next steps, one-on-one conferences and notes and exit tickets to monitor student progress and check for understanding during lessons. A review of teachers' conference notes indicated that formative assessment leads to instructional adjustments. Adjustments observed included extended time in guided reading group instruction, leveled text, use of a variety of graphic organizers that include T-charts, Venn diagrams, KWL charts and sequence organizers.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and staff communicate high expectations to both families and students.

Impact

School leaders and staff have established a culture of high expectations that has resulted in parents consistently being aware of their students' progress toward meeting grade level standards. Additionally, school personnel provide programming and supports to prepare students for subsequent grades, high school and beyond.

Supporting Evidence

- Parents unanimously claimed that Engrade and easy access to staff via email or phone is an invaluable resource in keeping abreast of how their children are doing academically and socially. Several parents stated that the teachers continually call them to inform them of positive gains as well as areas of improvement for their children. Additionally, all parents felt that Engrade kept them informed of their children's progress.
- The administration and parents provide orientation and parent meetings to support students and their families with transition between grades. Each year the school conducts orientation for parents at the end of the year as they are about to transition to the next grade level. Also, during advisory students are supported and made aware of what the expectations will be in upper grades.
- The school has established social-emotional supports for students by establishing the Character Pledge program throughout the school as well as providing the Life Skills curriculum for grades three through five and Overcoming Obstacles for six grades. All of these programs support and teach scholars techniques to learn how to manage and resolve conflict and guide them to better manage their social-emotional needs.
- Every year the school holds Career Day to prompt career development. Also, through the school's advisory program students are supported to prepare for the high school application process.