



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 452

Elementary School M452

**100 West 77 Street
Manhattan**

NY 10024

Principal: David Scott Parker

**Date of review: November 25, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Sandra Litrico**

The School Context

P.S. 452 is an elementary school with 285 students from grade kindergarten through grade 4. The school population comprises 9% Black, 10% Hispanic, 65% White, 11% Asian students, 3% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 2% multi-racial. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 23% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 96%.

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	Well Developed
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	Proficient
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	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	Well Developed
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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All teachers are engaged in structured inquiry based professional conversations around student work and teacher pedagogy. Teacher teams use collaborative and data-informed processes for planning and goal setting for grade levels and subjects and modify these as necessary, based on identified needs.

Impact

Professional growth is a high priority so the reflective faculty profit from varied opportunities to share and develop strengths as individuals and members of the teaching community. Teachers' instructional capacity has strengthened, and there is coherence across grades. Curriculum units are Common Core aligned and support student goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers met regularly to analyze assessment data, classroom practice and student work. Each grade level team has a common prep period at least twice a week. Teacher study groups provide an opportunity for teachers to meet in cross-grade groups to deepen pedagogy and content knowledge. Each six week cycle culminates in a school-wide share of what they have learned and how it has been incorporated into their classrooms. Topics in the first cycle included: book clubs, autism/PDD, station teaching and analyzing student work.
- Teachers also meet on committees that serve the on-going needs of their school community such as Pupil Personnel Team, Measures of Student Learning team, Intervention Response Team and the professional development team. These committees have formed subgroups to deal with important matters including social-emotional learning and Response to Intervention.
- During the teacher team meetings observed, there was a well-developed culture of collaboration, and collegial work was supported by all. There was honest reflection and a willingness to learn from each other. The teams evaluated student work and made revisions of units, lessons and instructional approaches based on assessment data. Teachers also discuss the progress of individual students. Teachers work collaboratively to share ideas and good practice to continually improve student learning.
- The principal has established strong staff relationships with structures for effective teacher leadership. Teachers have good opportunities to develop their leadership qualities within this reflective school where all constituents have a voice. Teachers lead professional development sessions and facilitate teacher team meetings and committees. They collaborate with the administration on instructional decisions to support children's achievement and personal growth. There is a thoughtful approach to strategic planning for professional development

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school integrates common assessments across the disciplines, and the subsequent data is gathered and assessed. However, there is remaining work around effectively using data to make meaningful classroom level instructional and curricular modifications so that all students, including English language learners, students with disabilities and higher level students increase their mastery.

Impact

On-going assessment practices and checks for understanding guide instructional adjustments for most students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leader has designated an effective system that features common assessments. In literacy, the school utilizes Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Reading Benchmarks, spelling and early literacy inventories, writing continua rubrics and NYC English Language Arts Performance Assessments. In math, assessments include Early Childhood Assessment in Mathematics, Everyday Math on-going and end of unit assessments and performance assessments.
- Teachers use data to inform planning and goal setting for grade levels and subjects, and modify these as necessary, based on identified needs. However, this was not evident in some of the classrooms where there was station teaching. It was also unclear how the needs of higher level students were being met in the literacy writing class observed.
- Teachers were observed conferencing with students and using checklists to gather assessment data to track progress. In some classes higher level questions were used to assess whether students had learned the big ideas of the unit lesson. However, this check for understanding should be extended to all classroom lessons. This will allow students take ownership and engage in more discussions and conversations to assess their own learning.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Curricula are aligned to CCLS, and rigorous tasks provide students with consistent learning opportunities that engage students in critical thinking and real life application.

Impact

A wide range of experiences and choice facilitates student ownership of learning. The development of project-based learning gives students the opportunity to undertake research, solve problems and be more active learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Ongoing curriculum mapping and work with Teachers College staff developers' further support literacy instruction that is aligned to the instructional shifts. There is a balance of fiction and non-fiction in all units of study with an integration of science and social studies. The school develops early childhood literacy skills by providing students with a rich literacy program that supports a lifelong love of reading through varied experiences. The curriculum focuses on the development of reading habits and behaviors and provides opportunities for constant student engagement with books.
- The math curriculum provides students with mathematical skills that support student performance and progress. Lesson development is based on common core learning standards using student work to guide instruction. The curriculum integrates appropriate Everyday Mathematics units of study. Curriculum mapping is also supported by consultants from Metamorphosis who support mathematics instruction.
- To date, each grade team adopted and/or revised at least two units in ELA, math, science and social studies to reflect the focus standards as well as the principles of Universal Design for Learning. The teachers examine student work and base their revisions on gaps in student knowledge or skills.
- The units of study are engaging and rigorous and cover a broad range of curricular. The second grade unit on New York City Bridges, for example, includes social studies, science, reading, writing speaking and listening standards. The unit includes an exploration of the city and field trips to each of the five boroughs. The end of the unit culminating activity is building a ground-up model of New York City. Students are given the opportunity to participate in collaborative conversations and share ideas as to how they would like to express this model. Products of mapping activities and field trip notes assist students in their comparison of different neighborhoods. Students are actively involved in their learning.

Findings

Across classrooms teaching reflects an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn. Curriculum is aligned to the instructional shifts and is focused on inquiry, wonder and creativity.

Impact

Teaching strategies, classroom instruction and learning activities that provide appropriate challenge for students' achievement levels, and teaching practices aligned to the instructional shifts, engage students in meaningful real world problem solving, conversations and discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- Station teaching provides students with small group targeted instruction. Children rotate from independent and partner reading to word study and writing. Stations are also used in mathematics. For example, students in first grade were composing and decomposing numbers. Teacher asked the students to explain their strategies as students used their whiteboards to show different ways to represent the number 54. The teacher explained that the process of mathematics is metacognitive, and that lessons were planned to ensure that students think mathematically
- The kindergarten classrooms were celebrating the culmination of their Parks Unit of study. One teacher asked what they can learn about birds from their study of parks. What did they share with the grown-ups who visited the celebration? What did you teach them in your role as a tour guide? They referred to their field trip noticing where they stopped and jotted notes from their field trip experiences. Vocabulary charts were posted from previous lessons. Student work was also posted and displayed. The projects incorporated writing, science and social studies concepts they had learned based on their central park investigations. In another kindergarten classroom visit students were encouraged to "write like a scientist" by using their senses to describe a tree which was part of their study. The trees were classified by cold, summer, fall and hot zones.
- In the 3rd grade ICT literacy lesson, students were in different groups. One teaching point read "How can I use what I know about word solving to help me read informational texts with power." In another group, students were studying mentor texts for examples of elaboration. This was linked to their All around the World unit study. "Postcards from our travels" was a student work display from the unit. One teacher was conferring with a student and taking notes on her IPAD which also contained photos of students writing to share or refer to as part of her teaching toolkit.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school leader communicates high expectations to the entire staff including teachers, students and parents and has created a culture of mutual accountability for these expectations. This includes professionalism, instruction and communication to parents to support student progress.

Impact

School staff effectively communicates with families and provides clear and focused feedback to parents to ensure students are prepared for the next level. There is a culture marked by personalization that supports the holistic social emotional and academic learning of the child.

Supporting Evidence

- All classrooms and/or grade level teams send home weekly/biweekly newsletters to families to keep them up to date on the curriculum and to offer suggestions for how they can support their children at home. Parents were also provided with Teacher College Professional development days and were offered teacher led subject nights. They implemented a “Coffee Chat with Scott” to discuss curriculum issues. The parent coordinator and social worker provide workshops on purposes and expectations for parent/teacher conferences. The 2013-2014 School Survey indicates that 99% of parents agree and/or strongly agree that the school has high expectations for their child. This was confirmed during parent meeting.
- The teachers push students’ thinking and provide children with college and career ready skills in real life experiences. Curriculum is adjusted so that all units are developmentally appropriate and challenging with clear expectations for students via rubrics, checklists and exemplars. The professional learning communality is focusing their inquiry work on productive struggle for high performing students.
- The school develops positive academic and personal behaviors. Students are able to work collaboratively and independently and to express their ideas through speaking, writing and the use of technology as evidenced in their project studies. Teachers have built strong content knowledge units on topics that are interdisciplinary. They articulated their goals and next steps in achieving them. One student said that this school educates faster than other school because she knows more than her other friends in fourth grade who attend different schools. Parents supported the fact that students are challenged and encouraged to do their best.
- The leader through collaboration with his staff has effectively aligned professional development, family outreach and student learning experiences and supports. There is in an overwhelming positive environment with common academic and personal behaviors across the school community. Students take ownership of their learning and have a responsibility to demonstrate their knowledge by teaching it to others.