



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Fairview School

24Q014

**107-01 Otis Avenue
Queens
NY 11368**

Principal: Heather Benson

**Date of review: January 22, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Madelene Chan**

The School Context

PS 14 is an elementary school with 1,689 students from grade kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 4% Black, 85% Hispanic, 2% White, and 9% Asian students. The student body includes 26% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.80%.

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	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	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	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 Teachers have practices in place to review data and student work within inquiry based teams. Teachers are afforded decision making opportunities around teaching practices, assessments and curricula adjustments.

Impact The work of teacher teams has resulted in a collection of best practices, improved pedagogy and increased collaboration. Teachers share leadership roles to improve student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The Vertical Team, comprised of teacher leads from every grade level, analyze rubrics that are used across writing samples, while working to bring writing coherence to grades. The team also developed a vertical skill set of writing strategies for college and career readiness. Characteristics that have been added to rubrics as a result of this work are picture cues and icons to represent different rubric indicators. These additions have created a student friendly document that is used by all levels of learners for self-reflection.
- Teacher teams review the results of state tests scores to make instructional decisions, share ideas to modify teaching practices and interpret student work and trends. As a result of this work, students have shown improvements in citing and discussing text-based evidence, using visuals to prove a claim and increasing academic vocabulary.
- Teachers developed a protocol called CREED (Claim, Reason, Evidence, Evidence, Document) to help students' self-assess their work and organize their thoughts. Through this process, students have choice of text and a process to determine their success. As a result of this practice, students in the upper grades have improved in developing the body of a writing piece and providing supporting details to anchor a claim.
- Teachers posited that they felt empowered to have input on decisions toward the development of professional learning communities, instructional resources and adjusting curriculum and teaching timelines to meet the needs of students. This shift has encouraged teachers to volunteer for a myriad of committees that are supporting the school's instructional focus and long-range goals.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Developing

Findings The school uses common assessments in literacy, writing and math, tracks student progress and checks for understanding but this is not effectively carried out across all grades, classrooms or specialty classes.

Impact The school's systems to monitor progress through data analysis as well as during instruction are not aligned to a school-wide practice and cannot consistently show impact regarding students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- In one fourth grade self - contained English language learner (ELL) class the students were working on isolating information in math word problems to get the answer. Prior to this work, students turned to a partner and discussed how they would assess their success. Students shared that they would complete the task, do their job, gather information and listen to their peers' answers. Students stated that knowing how to assess themselves has helped them be more accountable for their work and learning outcomes. Although this practice was deemed effective, it was not reflective of practices in other classrooms.
- Across literacy classrooms teachers use exit slips, peer feedback checklists, student self-assessment checklists and rubrics specific to the task to make adjustments to lessons. Adjustments observed included guided reading groups, visual aids, leveled texts, and a variety of graphic organizers. Although evidence of these assessments are available, some teachers have difficulty explaining what data was used to plan the lesson and how lessons are impacting proficiency levels of students.
- A review of teachers' conference notes indicated that formative assessments led to some instructional adjustments like re-grouping, re-teaching and enrichment extensions, however it was difficult to surmise how the class as a whole had progressed or if sub-groups of students were making strides.
- The school is in the process of developing a grading policy so that assessment and class scores are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and translate to report card grades. Furthermore, administration was in agreement that all teachers need to be articulate on the number of students who are progressing on a monthly basis, the program being implemented and the strategies responsible for the impact in progress. Data from the state tests indicate the number of students reflecting specific proficiency levels, but at this time the school is challenged in demonstrating which of those students have shown progress.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings Curricula is aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Higher order tasks and skills are reinforced for all learners across grades and content areas.

Impact Across grades and content areas, academic tasks challenge students' thinking and skills. The school's curricular decisions promote college and career readiness for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers have created two forums to showcase rigorous, standards aligned student work. The *Rigorous Raves* bulletin board and the *C.A.R.E.S.* bulletin board share best practices around teaching and learning. Teachers “shout out” best practices and encourage rigorous behaviors like students initiating higher order questions, inviting comments from classmates to challenge one’s thinking and disputing a claim with supporting rationales. As a result, student work samples posted in classrooms and on bulletin boards are self-reflective and aligned to the CCLS goals for the grade.
- Lesson plans emphasize higher order thinking and include a series of strategies that students can choose from, for completing rigorous academic tasks. Discussion prompts, visual thinking strategies and student checklists are just a few of the choices, students can choose from to elevate the level of proficiency of their work products. As a result, writing proficiency levels across the school have improved and the subgroup of ELLs have shown reading level improvement since September.
- PS 14 has established a very unique program called, The Newcomers Class where students in kindergarten to fifth grade who are new to the country assimilate to customs, culture, and language in an intense immersion program. Every 6-8 weeks, teachers analyze student data and “graduate out” students to transition into full time English language learner or bilingual classes. Rigorous work and on-line literacy programs like *Imagine Learning* helps students improve in all content areas so that they can eventually be placed in age appropriate classes. As a result of this mindful program, 35% of all newcomers reach an improved proficiency level after their first year of school.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings High expectations are consistently messaged to staff through the Danielson Framework for Teaching and to students and families through various modes of communication. School events keep families apprised of student progress towards college and career readiness.

Impact Levels of staff commitment and routines that support the school's high expectations create structures of accountability amongst the school community, thus providing a concise route towards increased student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Parent workshops provide information on the importance of Common Core Learning Standards in alignment with exam expectations. Increased parent involvement in collaboration with the Queens Museum provides ELL students and their families, opportunities for after-school programs in photographic journalism. Parents state that this experience has helped students with reading and listening skills. Additionally, parents shared that teachers offer guidance and support and regularly send updates on their child's progress via EnGrade postings, newsletters, report cards, phone and email outreach.
- The Culture Committee is working on designing ten murals depicting core values and literary characters that represent each of those values. Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) is an ongoing theme throughout the school and has helped students improve in all content areas. This project reinforces school-wide expectations for teaching a culture.
- Students are very happy at the school and state that their teachers have their best interests at the forefront of all lessons so that they are "calm and free to learn". Students are proud of the "Care Board" that was initiated this year. Students explained that they are recognized for being mindful of others. They are not looking to be rewarded for their good deeds as expressed by one fifth grader, "Doing the right thing is enough". This sentiment can be found throughout the school and clearly a culture of trust, respect and high expectations is leading the instructional journey towards success.

Findings Pedagogy provides supports including the use of entry points and extensions that foster reasoning in student work products.

Impact Across classrooms teachers are aware of students' instructional needs and which learning strategies best fit their style to produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Using rigorous tasks teachers differentiate instruction to meet the needs of the learners in their classes. Student engagement and discussion techniques are utilized through “Turn and Talks” and higher-order thinking questions using the Depth of Knowledge) DOK as a guide. In one fifth grade classroom, students were determining how visual elements contribute to the meaning of the text. The class was offered strategies like re-teach, enrichment and troubleshoot and a close reading passage was suggested for students who mastered the initial task. Students agreed that the “inference protocol” creating interaction with a question and passage, noting what you know, finding clues, exploring supporting details and then returning to the question was one of their strongest levers of support.
- Classes use small group instruction, close reading, student partnerships, guided reading groups, and teacher-student conferences to assist all students in being able to problem-solve and develop a deep understanding of concepts using text-based evidence from both informational and literary sources. In a third grade class students were focused on understanding the central message conveyed through the actions of characters and two texts were used to support the objective. Students stated that working in partnerships has increased their information sources and helped them, “bounce ideas off of a classmate with a good skill set”.
- Classroom teachers provide students with opportunities to express their learning via peer to peer conversations, small group discussions, and daily writing to provide educationally sound opinions about text-based evidence gathered from complex texts and to explain the procedures to get the answer correct through their math learning. In one fifth grade class the students were working in triads to add and subtract mixed numbers with unlike denominators. Prior to the seat work students were shown a video modeling various ways to tackle the problems. As a result of the visual support students chose the strategy that best fit their style of learning. Students were answering questions using mental math, in pairs and using a traditional methods.
- A 12:1:1 bilingual special education teacher collaborated with a social studies cluster teacher in forming units of study depicting various multiple entry points like choices of technology for student power point, modes of art and student options for text and research. As a result student engagement improved and students were confident in presenting their final tasks using *Depth of Knowledge* language.