



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 015 Jackie Robinson

Elementary School Q015

**121-15 Lucas Street
Queens
NY 11413**

Principal: Antonio K'Tori

**Date of review: May 6, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Matthew Angell**

The School Context

P.S. 15 Jackie Robinson is an elementary school with 427 students from grade Pre-Kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 95% Black, and 5% Hispanic. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 4% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.2%.

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	Celebration	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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide professional development connected to those expectations. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path of college and career readiness to families.

Impact

High expectations for all have resulted in mutual accountability among staff and families to support student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Parent leaders are an important part of school culture and ensure the community is embedded within school practices. Monthly newsletters highlighting extensive offerings at the school including academic and artistic celebrations as well as curriculum highpoints are sent home. The school also maintains a school website that includes more detailed assignments and projects on each grade. One parent commented, "There is a shared vision. The school teaches the whole child. We have programs that develop the whole child that they wouldn't get at another school."
- The school conducted a survey of parent needs in the beginning of the year. The results were reviewed in the Parent-Teachers Association and School Leadership Team meetings. One request shared by parents was to understand the Common Core Learning Standards. The school created a series of workshops across subjects. Parents state the, "workshops are like a class, teaching us so we can teach our children at home."
- Among the staff there is a shared accountability towards teaching the whole child and ensuring the school provides for the academic, social, and emotional growth of every child. The school provides for a variety of academic and non-academic programs many started based on teacher interests and skills to ensure students have access to a diversity of self-expression. Staff members have collaborated on creating their own emotional awareness system for students to self-monitor their actions called KZONE. Also, the entire staff shares in the responsibility for student progress. School leaders conduct surveys of teacher needs and provide resources for teacher improvement connected to survey results, informal conversation, and teacher observation data.
- School leaders and the professional development team review Advance observation data, staff surveys, and teacher input to design professional opportunities for teachers. The school year starts with a full week of professional development at the end of August with 95% attendance. Walkthroughs and intervisitation also provide data to collectively identify staff needs. Both school leaders and teachers spoke to teachers, independent of directives, supporting struggling teachers through classroom visits and with planning assistance.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a consistent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Teaching strategies aligned with Danielson Framework for Teaching that are inconsistent across classrooms create uneven student engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms supports for learners to access the lesson materials and objectives were inconsistent. In a fourth grade English language arts lesson students were engaged in peer feedback on a writing assignment where students were provided a graphic organizer to collect evidence and guide their discussion as well as a rubric for the assessment. Students engaged in productive feedback to improve their partners writing. Whereas in a first grade writing class students were provided no extra supports in drafting their writing. Lack of supports led to uneven engagement from students within the activity and limited diversity of voice as evidenced when students shared their writing, and it was found a majority of students nearly copied the exemplar exactly.
- Across classrooms many academic tasks lacked rigor and did not provide students with opportunities to demonstrate higher-order thinking. In a fifth grade math classroom students were working on a series of scaffolded problems on unit conversion. Students shared out their solutions and strategies with explanations of their reasoning. The teacher monitored student work and created opportunities to collaborate with other students through changing groups and offering enrichment problems. While in a fifth grade integrated co-teaching class a social studies lessons required students to read from a textbook and answer questions at the end of the chapter. The questions were of low level and only required of students that they find facts within the chapter.
- The principal and teachers stated the improving teachers' questioning and student discussion is a priority for the school. Across classrooms student participation in high level discussion was limited. In a 2nd grade English language arts lesson, during a read aloud, the teacher provided multiple opportunities for students to talk with a partner to make textual connections, develop understanding, and cite evidence from the text to support their thinking. Similarly, in a 3rd grade science lesson, students were provided opportunities to speak with partners to recall information from previous lessons, make predictions, and cite evidence from their text. However, many of other lessons only provided for whole group share outs while students worked independently for the majority of the observation.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, content standards, and integrate the instructional shifts. Across grades and subjects academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits.

Impact

School leaders and faculty make purposeful decisions to build coherent curricula that promote college and career readiness for all students. Academic tasks across grades and subjects consistently require students to demonstrate higher order thinking skills including students with disabilities and English language learners.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricula units and lesson plans revealed consistent practices across grades and subjects. The school adopted the ReadyGen curriculum in English language arts and Go Math! in mathematics. Plans are connected to “big ideas,” learning objectives, key standards, as well as rigorous formative and summative assessments. Academic tasks require students to cite evidence, explain their thinking, and solve rigorous real world problems.
- Lesson plans and unit plans show that teachers design supports for a variety of learners. Even though the school has a relatively low special education and English language learner population, teaching plans still include supports for student groups. Teachers include strategies such as scaffolding, visual supports, vocabulary supports, and sentence starters in their planning to make tasks more accessible to students.
- School leaders and teachers expanded writing opportunities across curricula based on teacher feedback and student data. They created weekend writers projects. Tasks are created across content areas wherein students must read multiple texts and write an argumentative essay and cite textual evidence. The projects begin on the weekend at home and then revisions and edits continue in the classroom the following week connected to unit topics.
- Arts and physical education units are designed to connect to units of study in other subject areas. For instance, in fifth grade dance unit called Poetry in Motion students created a written response and dance routine to demonstrate understanding of the main idea. In a first grade dance unit students connected their movements to their science unit on living things. Students created dances on life cycles and stages of plant growth. Similarly, in grades three through five physical education units’ students researched black athletes using multiple sources. By unit design, students could not choose the same athlete and there was a presentation of papers at the end of the unit.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use rubric based assessments that are aligned with the school's curricula. The school uses common assessments to gauge student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Student assessment results provide actionable feedback to both student and teacher regarding achievement. The results of common assessments are used to adjust curricula and instruction across grades and subjects.

Supporting Evidence

- Student portfolios and posted student work contain rubric-based feedback with next steps. Portfolios contain a cover sheet that records student progress throughout the year in each subject area. Students stated they use the rubrics to guide their work. One student stated "We use rubrics to determine how much we've improved from the beginning to the end." In addition, students could speak to feedback they received and what they were working on. One student stated they had to remember to focus his entire response on answering the question and were working on improving their conclusions.
- The school uses a variety of common assessments such as PARCC, running records, performance exams, and unit tasks to monitor student progress. The school has expanded the use of performance writing tasks connected to standards based rubrics across grades to better evaluate student progress. Teacher team meetings, portfolios, teacher conversation, and student conversation revealed a common language about student performance. As noted by teachers, "Students came in our classes this year using statements like 'I agree with' and 'my evidence is'." Units and lesson plans have been adjusted to provide supports for a variety of learners and are connected to the needs of the students. For instance, grades three through five teachers noticed a need for more instruction on writing structure and organization. Teachers have looked at student progress in these areas throughout the year.
- Student data is collected and analyzed using Excel spreadsheets and Amplify, an online tool. School leaders and teachers break down assessment data by standards and identify student groups for instructional purposes, interventions, and after school support. Grouping based on teacher data was evident in the majority of classrooms.

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

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share of on whom they are focused. Distributed leadership structures are in place so that teachers have built-in leadership capacity.

Impact

Teacher team work typically results in improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students. Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers meet in grade teams and also meet in teams across grades on Mondays to look at student work using protocols and to create action plans based on their findings. For instance, teachers discovered a need to collaborate on their own grade wide mathematics assessments that went beyond the Go Math! assessments and included more openings for students to demonstrate and explain their thinking. The results have been used in team meetings to change classroom practices such as scaffolding problems of the day, manipulative use, modeling, and classroom discussion.
- A teacher team was observed reviewing assessment results and making instructional decisions. Teachers first looked at score ranges for each class on perimeter/area unit assessment and broke them down into student proficiency groups. They then reviewed samples of student work across classes representing different proficiencies. After discussing teaching practices and strategies that contributed to student performance, they identified scaffolds to include within the next unit of study including academic vocabulary, modeling, and word problem solving interventions.
- Teacher team leaders are part of the consultation committee and professional development committee and give feedback to school leaders. In regard to school culture, school leaders have made assemblies and celebrations more inclusive of the whole school based on teacher opinion. On curriculum pacing and adjustments school leaders believe in teacher's professional judgment when they present the rationale and support their rationale with assessment data. Teachers also use these committees to request additional supports and opportunities for professional learning, such as, requests for support in questioning and discussion which is a big focus for school leaders and teachers.