



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

PS 24 Andrew Jackson

Elementary 25Q024

**141-11 Holly Avenue
Queens
NY 11355**

Principal: Debra Cassidy

Date of review: October 29, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Danielle DiMango

The School Context

P.S. 024 Andrew Jackson is an Elementary school with 978 students from K through grade 5. The school population comprises 3.30% Black, 10.40% Hispanic, 2.00% White, and 83.50% Asian students. The student body includes 33.90% English language learners and 9.00% special education students. Boys account for 52.60% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47.40%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2012 - 2013 was 96.80%.

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	Celebration	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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	Well Developed
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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Strategic curricula decisions made by school leaders and faculty have resulted in coherence and alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards within and across grades and content areas. Teachers use student work and relevant data to make adjustments to curricula and tasks that has closed achievement gaps and increased cognitive engagement for all learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities.

Impact

Rigorous habits are embedded across classrooms, within units and tasks that require all learners, including student subgroups, to think critically and create their own meaning through evidence based expectations. Teachers use student data to ensure all learners have access to curricula and tasks are cognitively engaging.

Supporting Evidence

- Understanding the linguistics of complex text through making meaning of linguistic frames has been embedded into curriculum in all content areas in order to increase text complexity and provide grade level access to English language learners throughout the school.
- School curriculum maps and tasks use a blend of resources such as Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, Engage NY, Go Math, Math in the City, New York City Department of Education Scope and Sequence and FOSS kits. These resources include essential questions, standard aligned learning goals and targeted vocabulary as well as interventions and extensions to target the diverse needs of students.
- There is a clear balance of fiction and non-fiction text and opportunities for immersion in each genre at grade level and beyond, though increased use of complex text aligned to authentic real world tasks within units of study. These units include appropriate scaffolds such as linguistic frames and visual supports across all content areas and across grades.
- Math curriculum and blending of programs targets key standards and demonstrates increased focus of instructional shifts. For example, in a fifth grade classroom, students worked in different math stations where they engaged in a variety of high level tasks that commanded they differentiate the different types of triangles using their sides and angles to classify them. Each activity commanded students to demonstrate a deep understanding of concepts and ability to apply them in real world math situations.
- The school uses Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) data and item skills analysis this year to modify curricula and redesign tasks as data revealed students struggled with applying conceptual knowledge to high level questions. Tasks are designed in centers that allow students multiple opportunities to incorporate deeper meaning of content and apply it to their writing or math tasks.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

While pedagogy is consistent in providing instructional supports, questioning scaffolds and entry points for a variety of learners, there is evidence that some teachers are still working through alignment of pedagogy to the rigor of the curriculum.

Impact

Teaching practices are not yet purposefully planned or implemented to allow opportunities for students to take full ownership of their learning, impacting the level of their work products and some student's' progress towards mastery of the standards.

Supporting Evidence

- In most of the classrooms visited students engaged in discussions, in pairs and in flexible groups, where they were able to make connections, relate ideas within and across content and justify their choices. In a kindergarten class visited, students were using sentence frames with their peers and discussing appropriate sentence punctuation.
- Across all classrooms there was clear evidence of planning of teaching points that are aligned to curricula, such as asking students to investigate genre traits authors use in order to make improvements to their own writing. However, in some classrooms, lessons, teaching strategies and planned activities did not yield student work products for a variety of learners reflective of the expectations and rigor of the curricula.
- Clear scaffolds and entry points, such as purposeful groupings, sentence starters, vocabulary prompts, thinking maps and other structured planning documents, visual cues and student centered work stations allowed all learners a variety of pathways to complete tasks and demonstrate their thinking. For example, in a third grade class, English language learners were provided with sentence starters and picture queues that allowed them to engage in discussions with their peers around ways that species adapt to survive in their environments.
- All classrooms demonstrated evidence of structured opportunities for students to engage in tasks on their own or with their peers that required the use of academic vocabulary, genre specific evidenced based writing and demonstrating deep understanding and application of math concepts in their work. For example, students in a science cluster worked in groups in to build boats using the concepts of buoyancy, displacement and capacity. However, there were limited opportunities outside the planned activities that allowed for students to lead and further explore and apply these concepts in different situations and take ownership of their learning.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

The school consistently uses and adjusts curricula aligned assessment practices, grading policies and pedagogical strategies that focus on checks for understanding to create a clear portrait for students and staff regarding student progress.

Impact

Data driven decisions are made school wide leading to rigorous curricula adjustments at the teacher team and classrooms levels, and student self-assessment tools guide instructional decisions and provide clear and actionable learning targets for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- The school wide writing team adapted the 6+1 writing rubric that is used across grades and a variety of genres. There are also standard aligned rubrics used in all content areas as well as aligned student friendly checklists that ask students to identify strengths and areas for improvements to ensure they are aware of the steps needed to progress towards mastery of standards.
- Across classrooms there is evidence that teachers are monitoring progress of students within each unit of study through frequent strategies such as use of checklists, questioning, exit slips and conferencing in order to effectively group students. Students are aware of the purposeful groups and are able to articulate their understanding of the groupings and the range of work that needs to be done with their peers.
- The principal works closely with the school assessment team to track a variety of data such as MOSL writing performance assessments, school wide pre and post assessments, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) running records and Math program embedded assessments and charts student progress. This disaggregated data is used by teacher teams to track student understanding of standards and to make adjustments to curriculum.
- On a weekly basis, vertical and horizontal teacher teams plan rigorous tasks aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards that support critical thinking and student next steps. Every week, teachers of Math are applying “mini-tests” to determine individual student growth and adjust groups and instruction accordingly.
- The school’s instructional focus, as articulated by all teachers and administrators, centers on deepening the knowledge of students through planning and is reflective of analysis of assessments. This work has led to increased focus on the design of tasks and teaching strategies, such as building vocabulary and close reading strategies to include multiple entry points. This in turn allows for productive struggle for all students, with a particular focus on English language learners.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school establishes high expectations for all constituent groups, including students, teachers, and families, through a variety of communication practices. The administration consistently messages important information to staff via the components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and use of professional learning consultants.

Impact

There is mutual accountability of student success by all stake holders. These best practices have also resulted in high levels of professionalism, quality instruction, and effective communication around academic, social, and behavioral expectations for students resulting in improved student outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- First Friday's sessions allow parents to visit classrooms to work side by side with their children in engaging activities in order to stay up to date on current teacher practices, curriculum mandates and learn the expectations for the Common Core Learning Standards.
- Parents receive monthly newsletters, translated into Spanish and Chinese, from staff as well as quarterly progress reports in all subject areas highlighting students' progress within units of study as well as assessment data allowing parents to be active participants in their child's learning.
- Teachers receive high quality professional development from Teacher's College, along with Maryann Cucchiara, that has led to consistent practices within and across grades. An example includes the use of visual icons to give effective feedback to kindergarten students regarding their progress.
- The principal communicates with staff daily through Reflections and Updates, highlighting best practices as well as staff "check ins" regarding feedback and professional development.
- Through use of rubrics and teacher and peer feedback systems, students are able to clearly articulate the skills, strategies and standards they are learning and what they need to do in order to improve their work products. This was evident during the student meeting where students in all grade levels were consistent in expectations that were communicated to them around writing units and next steps, why they needed to demonstrate thinking in math tasks and how to connect their work to real world concepts. One student stated, "We learn this because we need to learn what is happening in the world not just in our school."

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

Teachers work effectively in collaborative teams within and across grades to share their practice, analyze data from common assessments, monitor student progress and make modifications to curriculum.

Impact

These structured collaborations result in shared leadership structures and the implementation of curricular adjustments aimed at improving learning outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Across teams, most teachers are able to articulate the instructional focus of deepening their understanding of students through the collection and analysis of data, to improve instruction and curriculum units to ultimately improve student learning outcomes. During one cross grade meeting, teachers were gathering and tracking data to identify skills that students displayed in their writing in the former grades in order to make decisions about what targets needed to be addressed at their current grade level.
- Although teachers are clearly evaluating the impact of curriculum on student learning through analysis of assessment data and student work products, they have not yet engaged in inquiry around pedagogical decision making and how their practice informs outcomes for all learners.
- Teacher teams are currently visiting each other's classrooms to observe practice. One teacher new to the school said she was currently visiting her colleagues to observe effective group management and ways to teach linguistic frames.
- Teacher teams include service providers to help support student subgroups throughout the school, particularly English language learners and special needs students. During third grade teacher team meeting, the English language learners' teacher was recommending instructional approaches to colleagues around how to effectively support the needs of these learners when reading complex non-fiction text.