



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**William Wordsworth**

**Elementary Q048**

**108-29 155 Street  
Queens  
NY 11433**

**Principal: Patricia Mitchell**

**Date of review: December 11, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Shirley Wheeler-Massey**

## The School Context

William Wordsworth is an elementary school with 573 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 68% Black, 15% Hispanic, 0% White and 11% Asian students. The student body includes 7% English language learners and 9% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**3.4 High  
Expectations**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations regarding the advancement of all stakeholders' learning that is used as a conduit towards college and career readiness.

### Impact

The ongoing communication around high expectations to staff, students and families has promoted reciprocal responsibility in support of teacher and student improvement efforts.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are provided a clear and descriptive outline of the expectations around teaching and learning within the school's faculty handbook. There is a comprehensive list of indicators for distinguished teaching and learning, along with Google links to Hess' and Depth of Knowledge (DOK) cognitive rigor matrix across content areas and the expectations for planning and executing lessons that teachers are to reference and utilize in their classrooms.
- Teachers maintain independent professional development logs which outline the content of their learning and how it will benefit and improve student achievement. Professional learning opportunities which are facilitated by various staff include supports for teachers around data analysis, guided reading practices and the norming of Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) and running records data. Teachers participate in "Rubicon Thursdays" where they are provided support from one of the teachers on how to design engaging and rigorous curricula, on how to use various tools to differentiate teaching strategies, and how to align assessments to curriculum.
- Administrators and staff communicate high expectations to families through parent newsletters, parent workshops on how to help their children succeed, and ongoing support on the Common Core Learning Standards. Parents shared how teachers and the school support them by taking time to work with them either individually or in groups on the new ways of learning, as well as by offering GED and ESL classes, in order to improve their skills, which allow them to better support their children at home.
- Parents are provided daily feedback on their children's progress through the Class Dojo Application (APP), which indicates students' academic progress or areas in which they need to improve. Teachers and parents expressed how the immediate feedback on homework, assessments and school work holds everyone accountable for student progress, which has strengthened the home-school connection and partnership.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers are beginning to align their practice to the school's beliefs around student learning. Teaching strategies include inconsistent use of multiple entry points; scaffolds, and higher order questioning that engage and support all learners' needs.

### Impact

The result of varying teaching practices and strategies across the school, has led to uneven opportunities for students to be exposed to learning experiences that allow them to demonstrate higher order thinking through tasks that address their diverse learning needs.

### Supporting Evidence

- During class visits, some teachers provided opportunities for students to participate in small group tasks with scaffolds that supported their understanding of the lesson objective. In four classrooms, teachers provided students with visual aids, math manipulatives or highlighted texts that allowed them to gain a better understanding of the tasks. However, in the other three classrooms, there were no supports provided as students worked on independent tasks that were not tailored to their specific needs.
- While three of the seven teachers made attempts at providing multiple entry points and differentiated tasks that addressed students' specific learning needs, in other classrooms, students worked on the same task. For instance, in one class, some students worked on writing tasks that addressed gaps in their writing skills, while others worked on writing and responding to questions or created power point presentations that were aligned to the content theme. However, all students in another classroom were charged with the same science tasks that didn't allow those who were secure with the concept to engage in a more challenging activity.
- Teacher questioning across classrooms was predominately on DOK level 1, with few teachers asking open-ended questions that pushed students to think critically about their work. Questions that monitored students' comprehension or required one word responses dominated the level of questions that were posed to students. For example, students were asked, "Do you see the first word?" "How much is that?" or "What is the value of this number?" which did not require students to think critically or demonstrate their understanding of the lesson or concept.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The school implements curricula which are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards that incorporates some of the instructional shifts. Teachers collaboratively develop and refine curricula, lesson plans and academic tasks based on student work products and data.

### Impact

School-wide application of Common Core aligned curricula has led to coherence across the grades and students' exposure to college and career readiness skills. The creation and refinement of lesson plans and academic tasks, based on student outcomes, has provided opportunities for teachers to expose students to learning experiences that cognitively address their special interests.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, teachers are using ReadyGen and the Reading Street literacy programs, Engage NY resources for math, and the scope and sequence for social studies and science. These resources allow for the promotion of some of the instructional shifts such as engaging in close reading, citing text-based evidence to support student thinking, reading both informational and literary texts and solving multi-step problems that require students to engage in some productive struggles.
- Lesson plans include the outlining of activities and strategies to promote and expose students to academic vocabulary and language, with supports specific to address the gaps for English language learners and students with disabilities. Supports such as flash cards, highlighted vocabulary words within the texts and unfamiliar academic language are identified as items to address with students who require further support.
- Within Rubicon Atlas, teachers are making revisions to the curricula and academic tasks to address gaps in student learning and understanding. For example, based on discussions at teacher team meetings and feedback from one of the special education providers, the science teacher revised one of the 4<sup>th</sup> grade science units to address some of the misconceptions that emerged within one of the end of unit assessments.

**Findings**

Across the school, teachers utilize assessments and rubrics that are aligned to the school's curricula to monitor and determine student progress.

**Impact**

The analysis of student performance has provided opportunities for teachers to provide feedback to students and make curricula adjustments in response to learners' diverse needs.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers use baseline, mid and end line assessments and MOSL data to track student performance across content areas, which is documented in DropBox so that all staff have access to review and offer suggestions for revision during their grade team meetings.
- Most student work products and tasks displayed on hallway bulletin boards indicate rubric and task aligned feedback to students that informs them of their strengths and next steps for improvement. During discussions with students, they were able to articulate their progress based on purple and green highlighted indicators on their individual rubrics that inform them of where they are and where they need to go.
- Data from common assessments such as Fountas and Pinnell running records are tracked on the school's data wall, which is shared with staff, students and families in an effort to offer a portrait of student progress. Families are provided with individual student data postcards four times throughout the school year, which allow them to track and understand their child's reading levels. Teachers also maintain assessment summary sheets on each student, which are used during team meetings to adjust instruction and organize flexible guided reading groups.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### **Findings**

Teacher leaders across the school, facilitate grade team meetings, where teachers engage in inquiry-based professional collaborations to plan Common Core aligned lessons and units of study.

### **Impact**

Collaboration across the school has given teachers access to various teaching strategies that support their pedagogical practice and engage them in decision-making that influences student outcomes.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- During an observed meeting, grade two teachers engaged in inquiry work with a focus on student writing. Teachers utilized the *Looking at Student Work* protocol that allowed them the opportunity to discuss the strengths and areas of weakness on the students' writing assignments, as well as the implications for teaching across the grade. Teachers shared various strategies they believed would be beneficial and support young writers.
- Teachers expressed how the work of their teacher teams help them formulate various strategies and approaches that help them focus on what is critical to improve student outcomes. Teachers also noted that the sharing of best practices allows them to recognize that not all strategies work for all students, since there is such diversity across the grades.
- Teachers shared that they are heavily involved in taking on various leadership roles within the school, and that school leaders encourage their voice in critical decisions that impact student improvement efforts. Examples include teacher's responsibility with making and maintaining curricula revisions within Rubicon Atlas, the maintenance of DropBox, where data is stored and shared amongst teachers, and the Class Dojo APP which shares student performance and progress with parents.