



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Dorothy Bonawit Kole School

24Q049

**63-60 80th Street
Queens
NY 11379**

Principal: Thomas Carty

**Date of review: October 27, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Madelene Chan**

The School Context

PS/IS 49 is a K-8 school with 1,129 students from grade kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 1% Black, 27% Hispanic, 56% White, and 16% Asian students. The student body includes 6 % English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 97.6%

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	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	Proficient
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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Teachers across grades and content areas consistently use data and student work to plan and refine curricula and unit tasks so that all students are engaged in challenging learning experiences that require them to demonstrate their thinking.

Impact

The planning and revising of curricula has led to coherent curricula samples that provide rigorous habits and higher order skills for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers infuse real life problem solving, informational writing and text-based responses in the design of their lessons, which challenge all students to complete high quality work. For example, students in grades 6, 7, and 8, receiving an extra period of instruction each day, have been asking more high leverage questions aligned to their progressive rubric that shows expectations across the grades.
- Curricula and academic tasks require students to take and support positions, engage in scholarly discourse and use and adapt what they know for new learning challenges. For example, students in grade 5 are required to practice writing responses for 25 minutes or more and are told to write, “long and strong”. While students in grade 4 are using a “post assessment rubric” for building stamina in writing using mentor texts. Teachers posit that the vertical alignment of tasks and expectations has shown an increase of more than 25% proficiency in students’ work.
- Curricula and academic tasks are designed to engage students, advance them through units of study and assess their understanding as evidenced by their work products. Students are required to use the school’s universal “Forever Five” graphic organizer to integrate global themes that allow them to demonstrate their thinking. In one class, the use of this strategy enabled students to think flexibly, pose problems to their peers and remain open to continuous learning.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies are aligned to a rigorous curriculum and students are given opportunities to offer reflections while producing meaningful work products. Students have multiple entry points into a lesson as scaffold techniques are being explored.

Impact

Although teaching strategies are creatively designed and integrated with other content areas like the arts, not all lessons offered high quality supports and extensions.

Supporting Evidence

- In classes visited, students participated in discussions by responding to teacher-generated questions and sharing “turn and talk” time with a partner. However, there were limited opportunities for student choice of activities. Furthermore, there was an uneven amount of student autonomy. Students were able to question one another or problem solve in pairs or triads, but other options were not strategically offered based on the needs of certain sub-groups.
- Specific use of scaffold techniques is a next step in a few classes. In one class students were determining if the main character handled her problem well. Students were able to complete the task, but there was no extension for students who wanted to write about a different dimension of that writing assignment.
- While conversations with students showed that student groups were based on their needs, extensions to the lessons did not consistently challenge all learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities. A review of some group work indicated that students were able to move beyond the scope of the lesson, stating that the work was easy for them.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Assessments are used to track student progress and to make curricula and instructional adjustments at the team and classroom level.

Impact

As a result of teachers using data from checks for understanding and common assessments, they are able to adjust curricula and make effective instructional adjustments to meet the learning needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The assessments used throughout the school are aligned to standards based curriculum and assess key student knowledge and understanding. Teachers and grade teams effectively analyze data to retrieve information about student's progress and learning needs relative to their goals.
- Teachers are able to track and communicate what ongoing assessment data demonstrates and how lesson adjustments align with students' needs. Teachers identified specific instructional responses to data and agreed that re-teaching parts of the content and developing more challenging units would better meet the needs of a sub-group of students who were exceeding proficiency levels. The results of the modifications gleaned information indicating that those students were able to state claims that were inferred in the text and document their claims with text based evidence.
- The use of assessment review is strategically integrated into teacher team work so that teachers plan for checks for understanding and student self-assessment. Students are able to articulate assessment criteria and state that learning objectives are easily accessible when they have a clear understanding of the expectations and their peers are able to evaluate their work.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

A culture for learning radiates throughout the school where high expectations are the norm and supports are provided to achieve those expectations.

Impact

As a result of the school community consistently conveying high expectations, all stakeholders take a personal responsibility for learning through modeling strong work ethics and investments towards the success of one another.

Supporting Evidence

- The administration engages in consensus building among teacher team members for a common goal of social, emotional and academic success for all students. Staff members implement effective strategies for communicating high expectations on the school's website and through a "blast text" APP piloted for 8th grade parents. These strategies support college and career readiness in that students are well versed in initiatives to move to a higher level of learning.
- The school identifies and promotes school-based strategies like guidance, inquiry and student self- assessments that support students in rigorous instructional tasks; integrated with the arts. The school creates multiple opportunities to partner with and engage families in learning and offering them feedback on their child's progress towards meeting college and career expectations.
- There are clear and specific norms for teacher team work and structures are in place to hold members accountable. As a result, teachers have instituted a culture for learning and provide students with effective feedback and clear next steps that determine student accountability for learning goals and expectations to prepare them for the next grade.

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

Teacher teams are using an inquiry approach to learning that creates distributed leadership with a strong lens on student achievement.

Impact

The work of teacher teams and teacher leaders has strengthened teachers' instructional capacity, resulting in instructional cohesiveness and improved student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams analyze assessment data, lesson plans, classroom data and shared practices which have improved mastery of goals for groups of students. There are consistent systems available for looking at student work and reviewing existing practices. Information is shared on Google docs so that trends and strategies are transparent and available to the staff.
- Teacher voice has strengthened team decision making with the use of structured protocols for sharing instructional practices and giving transparent feedback. Teachers state that the ability to share practices has developed a collegial force that allows for internal professional development and sustainability of best practices.
- Targeted professional developments have increased teachers' capacity to analyze data, adjust curriculum and revisit planning patterns so that all students can progress. Current research on analyzing data assisted teachers by offering tiered math questions by students' needs. As a result students advanced from 40% on level (pre-test) to 60% on level (post-test).