



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

Elementary School Q066

**85-11 102 Street
Queens
NY 11418**

Principal: Phyllis Leinwand

**Date of review: January 29, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Dr. Marion Wilson**

The School Context

Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis is an elementary school with 546 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 5% Black, 66% Hispanic, 5% White, 18% Asian and 6% Multi-Racial students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 12% 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 94.5%.

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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School leaders and faculty strategically align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards with intentional integration of the instructional shifts. Teachers use student work and relevant assessment data to make adjustments to curricula and academic tasks.

Impact

Curricular refinements are based on student work and data to ensure all learners have access to cognitively engaging learning experiences, resulting in coherence across grades and subjects that promotes college and career readiness for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- School curriculum maps are designed through collaboration between vertical and horizontal teams throughout key intervals in the school year. Reference to the school's curricula resources across all maps include, but are not limited to the Wonders reading program, Envisions math, English Language Arts domain specific books, New York Ready, Treasure Chest for English language learners (ELLs), the New York City Department of Education social studies scope and sequence, and McGraw-Hill for science. These cross-curricula and integrated maps include essential questions, standard-aligned learning goals, multi-modality approaches utilizing technology (such as Brain Pop, RAZ Kids, Imagine Learning, myON on-line literacy program, and I-Ready) which are explicitly included, along with interventions and extensions to target the needs of students.
- The school uses performance assessment data and item skills analysis to modify curricula and redesign tasks as data revealed students struggled with applying conceptual knowledge to high level questions. For example, the school requires teachers to complete an end of unit reflection for every unit taught. These recommendations are utilized to revise existing and future tasks and activities based on student performance on baseline and benchmark assessments. The fifth grade map was written mid-year when the reflections revealed that students were not utilizing adequate grade appropriate academic vocabulary in their writing. In addition, access to middle school trade books were made available for high achievers and the strategic use of Rosetta Stone for beginning and intermediate ELLs were also put into place.
- There is a balance of fiction and non-fiction text and opportunities for immersion in each genre at grade level and beyond, through increased use of complex text aligned to authentic real-world tasks within units of study. These units include appropriate scaffolds such as visual frames across all content areas and across grades. For example, after studying, reading, and researching about Native Americans, fifth grade students prepared a museum of artifacts, models, research reports, and diagrams for the entire school to visit.
- English language arts curriculum and blending of resources and programs targets key standards and demonstrates increased focus of instructional shifts. For example, a sample fifth grade reading curriculum map incorporated elements of science, reading and math by asking students to ask and answer questions related to the topic of global warming and comparing the Earth's climate today and in the past. Each activity commanded all students to demonstrate a deep understanding of concepts and ability to apply them in real-world life situations and problems.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Teaching practices across classrooms are aligned to the curricula and reflect the school's core beliefs around student learning. Teaching strategies include multiple entry points, scaffolds and tiered questioning that support student learning.

Impact

Teachers share a common belief around student learning, resulting in coherence across classrooms where most students are actively engaged in their own learning process. However, consistent high-quality supports provided to meet the needs of all learners were not always evident.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms there was clear evidence of planning of teaching points that are aligned to curricula, such as asking students to investigate genre traits and 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. For instance, in one math classroom, all students were only asked to use fraction pieces to compare and order fractions. While in another similar math class students were asked to compare, order, and create their own fractions examples and explain their thinking, provide the strategy they used and write an explanation about their work.
- Clear scaffolds and entry points, such as purposeful groupings, vocabulary prompts, graphic organizers, 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 second grade classroom, students worked in groups to compare and contrast the different regions of the world and used text-based evidence to justify why that particular region was the best place to live. Teachers used tiered open-ended questions based on student performance level. For example, struggling students were asked, "How would you describe the weather in a tropical environment?" While on and above level students had to respond to the question, "What conclusion can you draw from lifestyles of people living in a tropical part of the world?"
- In most classrooms visited, students engaged in discussions and tasks, 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 first grade classroom visited, students used pictures along with sentence strips to identify and classify the difference between fact and opinion from different sources and real-life prompts. For example, cards which stated, "Mary is a beautiful little girl," compared to "Mary is a girl in the first grade." Students worked together to classify each statement and write their explanations in their notebooks.
- 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 fourth grade math class worked in groups to solve the daily word problems based on interactive learning principles to solve algebraic operations.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessments.

Impact

As a result of these assessment practices, teachers and students are provided with actionable and meaningful feedback about learning outcomes, which inform adjustments and modifications to curricula and instruction on an on-going basis. Students have improved their reading and writing skills, and can articulate how they made improvements and are aware of their next steps for learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers and administrators articulate coherent reasons for assessment choices. Across content areas, assessments are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and curricula content standards. These assessment practices deliver a wide range of data, daily, monthly, and quarterly reports to sustain collaborative inquiry and continuously improve instruction. Conferences with students, collection of student work samples, Wonders reading program and Envisions math assessments provide diagnostic and prescriptive information on the targeted skills which students need. For example, the score reports for the aforementioned programs provide detailed student skills based on the standards. The school also uses rubrics across grades, subjects, and a variety of genres. There are also standard-aligned rubrics used in all content areas, as well as aligned student-facing 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.
- A variety of feedback to students, from both teachers and peers, is accurate, specific and timely, advancing learning as evidenced by students' articulation of checklists and rubrics showing progression based on lesson targets and where they fall on the continuum. Teacher feedback on student work posted on bulletin boards or in student portfolios is precise and incorporates language exactly from rubrics tailored for each activity. In addition, in the student meeting, one student shared, "I am able to use the information from how I graded my work and then look at what my partner said before the teacher sees it and gives a grade and feedback. All the comments are almost the same and this helps me improve my work."
- In the vast majority of classes observed, teacher monitoring of student understanding during lessons was visibly active and continuous. Teachers were observed making frequent use of strategies to check for understanding and gather information about individual and group of students' understanding and learning trends. For example, in one-second grade class, the teacher asked probing questions to elicit student explanation of math concepts. The teacher asked one student, "Can you figure out which fraction is larger even if you use different fraction pieces? Does the answer change if you used a circle or a square to figure out if $1/2$ is greater than $1/3$?" The teacher recorded the student response on a checklist and continued observing the students as they worked in groups.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school establishes high expectations for all constituent groups through a variety of communication practices. The school provides ongoing and regular feedback to students and purposeful communication to their families in order to strategically support students on a path towards college and career readiness.

Impact

There is mutual accountability for student success which has led to many students meeting or exceeding grade level expectations, while ensuring their ownership of the learning process.

Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes E-chalk, their on line communication resource, to share information with parents on a weekly basis, along with their structured outreach practices on Tuesdays as part of their school culture. Teachers send a weekly newsletter to parents informing them of calendar dates, upcoming dates, skills and strategies each individual class is working on and other pertinent information. In addition, the principal and assistant principal facilitate monthly workshops for parents on topics such as solving math investigations or interactive read-alouds. These workshops support parents' understanding of expectations for reading, writing, and solving math problems.
- The school organizes and conducts Positive Parenting Strategies workshops that include topics for parents with students with disabilities, ELLs, as well as general education students. Parents are invited to participate in panel discussions to aid other parents based on the topics, which include, learning strategies, attention and focus, positive discipline rules, as well as social and academic strategies to help children become college and career ready. Parents have a menu of options to choose from each month. These workshops support parent partnership with the school in ensuring their child's mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards.
- Each class adopted a college to promote college and career aspirations for all students in the school. Students wrote letters to the colleges and universities for background and requirement information. Teachers incorporate this information throughout the course of the school year on a regular basis. In addition, the school helps in developing habits of mind that promote success for students, such as grit, perseverance and self-discipline. In addition, personal habits of self-regulation are messaged to all students at the monthly Student of the Month assembly programs.
- Feedback to students is provided informally through daily check-ins. In addition, student friendly rubrics have been developed in all subjects, clearly establishing the criteria for exemplary, high-quality standards of work and performance. Students are aware of their strengths and next steps for growth, and are actively involved in reflection and self-assessment of their work. Post-it notes are placed on all work with "glow and grow" comments and student self- assessment and reflection comments.

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

Across the school, grade teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data, student work products and to share teaching strategies. Teacher leaders work collaboratively with school leaders to make curricula and instructional revisions.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has led to increased teacher collaboration and the sharing of best practices. Teachers' involvement in key decisions around curriculum and instruction have allowed for engaging learning opportunities for all students and resulted in student demonstrated success.

Supporting Evidence

- Throughout the school, all teachers collaborate in professional teams during Monday and Tuesday sessions, as well as on their own, to develop and implement school-wide instructional practices, embedding the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts in order to continuously promote improved achievement for all learners. Teachers have a daily common planning period to meet and use this for inquiry work, vertically and horizontally. For example, teacher teams meet in "swap meet" to work in cross-grade teams to engage in inquiry, analyze data, and share best practices around the curricula to ensure it meets the needs of their student population and also to build coherence.
- Teacher teams systematically and strategically revise learning continuums and expectations based on the work in classrooms and then adjust classroom practice to improve outcomes for students. For example, during the fourth grade mathematics team meeting teachers across classes examined the gaps in the 3rd grade standards regarding place value and long division. It was determined that their students struggled with certain concepts on the assessment as the standards were not yet taught in the class. Teachers then correlated the information from the assessment to note areas of strength, areas of challenge, and next steps and implications for practice in working with individual and groups of students and shared the information with the third grade team.
- School leaders and teachers offer clear examples of teacher leadership that illustrate how teachers and teacher leaders play a vital role in school-level decision making. For example, teachers, with the administration's support, decided not to spend additional resources on external professional learning consultants, additional technology and personnel resources, to improve practices and student learning outcomes. Teacher leaders, such as the literacy team liaison or data specialist facilitate professional learning and turnkey information to other teachers or identify teachers to conduct sessions. Some workshop topics included, looking at student work and analyzing reading and math unit assessment data.
- Administrators and teacher leaders identify distributed leadership structures that are deeply-rooted in the school's day to day operations and articulate how they serve as a conduit for teacher input in strategic decisions that affect student achievement. For example, teachers serve as grade facilitators on grade level teams and are held accountable for leading horizontal team meetings during the course of the school year. Teacher leaders are supported in their role by attending on and off-site professional development. Teachers are also the ultimate decision makers for curriculum choices and decisions and the delivery of instructional methodologies.