



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The William Hallet School

Elementary School Q076

**36-36 10th Street
Queens
NY 11106**

Principal: Mary Carole Schafenberg

Date of review: February 11, 2015

Lead Reviewer: Dr. Philip A. Composto

The School Context

The William Hallet School is an elementary school with 570 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 32% Black, 47% Hispanic, 12% White, and 8% Asian and 1% other students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 44% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95.0%

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	Additional Findings	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	Focus	Developing
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	Celebration	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

Professional collaborations are a high priority among teachers. Teachers consistently analyze student data and use this information to research effective instructional techniques.

Impact

Teacher teams ensure that the Common Core Learning Standards are infused in each unit of study across grades and subjects thereby strengthening instructional coherence across the school. Teacher collaboration around student work results in student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams plan and implement instructional strategies based on the information obtained from looking at student work. For example, the first grade team noticed that a large percentage of students were struggling with specialty vocabulary and developed vocabulary charts and provided multiple opportunities for students to engage and use these words in their writing.
- Teachers received professional development in areas they identified as needing support by evaluating student data and feedback obtained from their Danielson's framework teacher observation data. For example, teachers that required additional support in lesson planning are paired with a model teacher in this area.
- Teachers are taking a lead in various school committees: Literacy, Numeracy, Attendance, Safety, Measures of Student Learning (MOSL), New Teacher Induction, School Events, Promotional Policy and Budget/Grants committees. These result in distributive leadership as teachers take on the facilitation and coaching roles.
- Teacher teams recognize the importance of data in analyzing student strengths and needs. The fifth grade teacher team presented case studies with work of struggling students. One teacher shared a challenge regarding several students having difficulty comprehending. She investigated and found that it was due to a lack in background knowledge and vocabulary. Colleagues shared strategies such as using visuals with words, using short articles/videos to build background knowledge, field trips and assess standards and skills using articles with visuals (pictures, graphs, and diagrams).

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school needs to extend and expand communication and collaboration with parents to increase their capacity to assist in their child's learning. Feedback clarity is needed to help prepare students for the next level.

Impact

Due to a lack of communication and collaboration with parents and limited feedback to teachers, the culture for setting high expectations is not providing students or families the necessary supports to achieve those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal provided evidence to support Common Core workshops have been offered to parents. However, more than three quarters of the parents that met with the reviewer were not aware of these meetings. The school needs to provide additional outreach to parents using multiple modes of communication such as phone messenger, e-mails, website and postcards.
- The school sends home progress reports on a regular basis. When necessary, teachers use the Tuesday Parent-Teacher Conference Time to call home.
- The staff handbook highlights expectations. Teachers are provided with feedback following classroom visits; however, not all feedback provides teachers with specific examples or resources to develop those expectations. For example, in the written feedback provided to one teacher it stated, "Consider providing rigorous questions." School leaders need to provide staff with specific examples, articles, and/or links to assist teachers in understanding expectations and what rigor looks and sounds like.
- Parents stated that students do not always receive the support that they need to meet the new Common Core Learning Standards. Parents would like to see additional help and support offered during the school day and/or after-school. The parents have requested that an after-school program be established that could support students in academics while also teaching their children the academic and personal behaviors essential for success.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school leader and teachers effectively align curricula to key standards and offer a range of learning experiences that engage students and support their learning.

Impact

Student learning is coherent, promotes college and career readiness and emphasizes student thinking across grades and subjects.

Supporting Evidence

- Across core content areas, units of study incorporate the teaching practice of text based evidence to support answers/thinking. This aligns with the Common Core Learning Standards the City-Wide Instructional Expectations and the English Language Arts (ELA) Instructional Shifts. In four out of six classrooms visited, students were required to write the source. In one third grade classroom, students had to state the sub-heading that supported their answer. In a fourth grade classroom, students had to use illustrations and state details in the text to support their thinking.
- Teachers across the school use curriculum programs that are aligned to the common core standards which provide grade level text, and performance tasks/activities that require students to apply, evaluate and analyze information. In two of the six classrooms visited, performance tasks did not match the objective or rigor of the lesson plans.
- Teachers use and update pacing calendars to ensure alignment and coherence. Teachers across the school are currently working on identifying the staircase of complexity for teaching vocabulary across the grades.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Teachers need to refine the use of strategic teaching strategies to engage students and embed multiple entry points in the curriculum to support all learners in deep reasoning and demonstration of skills in student work products across the school.

Impact

Lessons do not always challenge all students, thus limiting opportunities for them to engage in higher order thinking tasks or demonstrate high levels of discussion.

Supporting Evidence

- In four out of six classrooms visited, lessons were whole class and did not provide multiple entry points for access by all learners. Lessons were teacher-directed and students were using the same materials and/or worksheets. For example, students all read the same article and the teacher called on select students. Not all students were engaged in answering and discussing.
- Across classrooms teachers required students to support answers with evidence from text; however, many questions asked by the teacher were recall, such as “Who”, “What”, “Where” and “When”. There were missed opportunities to support students’ deeper thinking and cognitive engagement by using “How”, “Why” and “What if” questions and articles/texts with varying points of view.
- Although teachers were able to supply their lesson plans, the rigor in the delivery of instruction did not always match the planning. This was evidenced in one teacher’s lesson where she indicated that she would pull out students and provide a different activity using coins; however, all students were observed using the same materials.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Common assessments are aligned to curricula and are being used across classrooms to monitor student progress using on-going assessments to make instructional adjustments based on consistent checks for understanding.

Impact

Students' progress toward goals are tracked and analyzed on an on-going basis across all grades, resulting in curricula and instructional adjustments.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, all teachers assess and monitor students' reading levels and growth in reading. This was supported by record data sheets that indicate student achievement and reading levels on baseline and interim assessments. For example, teachers administer Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments at least four times per year to monitor students' growth and progress in reading.
- Teachers hold conferences with students to assess their understanding and determine areas where they are having difficulty. This was evidenced in conferences notes maintained by teachers on each student.
- Teachers use rubrics to provide students with clear expectations. Students are encouraged to use rubrics to check their own work or that of peers. This was evidenced by copies of student self-assessment rubrics attached to student work. Additionally, several students stated that they use rubrics "to check each other's work."