



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

**Thurgood Marshall Magnet School for Multimedia
and Communications**

Elementary School Q080

**171-05 137th Avenue
Jamaica, Queens
NY 11434**

Principal: Kersandra M. Cox

**Date of review: February 4, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Mabel Muniz- Sarduy**

The School Context

P.S.80 is an Elementary school with 556 students from grade Pre-K through grade 5. The school population comprises 88% Black, 7% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 28% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94%.

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	Focus	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	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	Celebration	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

Teachers' exam data and student work consistently within inquiry-based teams. Leadership structures provide a means for teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula, the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and teaching practices.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has resulted in improved pedagogy and a stronger teacher voice in key decisions affecting capacity and improve student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- During a 3rd grade team meeting, teachers reviewed three pieces of student writing. The lead teacher shared goal for the team; "To provide next steps for teacher based on student work". Agenda, timing, protocol, member roles, and expectations were clearly articulated throughout the meeting. Some suggestions teachers made after review of student work was; If the student starts with a question in his or her writing, teacher should teach how student should answer that question throughout his/her writing, teach linking words, one student use a text to support his/her writing while the other did not, give students sentence stems or a checklist to guide the student and show student how to use a graphic organizer to support his/her writing. This inquiry approach reviewing of student work has led to a strengthened capacity of the instructional decisions by the classroom teacher and also allows teachers to provide feedback and next steps for the teacher.
- Distributed leadership structures are in place so that teachers have built in leadership through the vertical alignment of monthly teacher lead meetings. At a second team meeting, during the question and answer period, teachers articulated the definition of "rigor" as a little struggle within a task. They noticed after review of data that many students had difficulty with place value using word problems. Therefore all grades are placing an emphasis on problem solving language from Kindergarten to 5th to determine the math vocabulary and language to determine math concepts.
- Administration and teachers have a common language of what is expected in rigorous task for all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs). This was articulated through the conversation with the administration, teacher teams and student meetings. Students articulated that some of the work is challenging however teacher "places us in a group to help us with task. We have rubrics and organizers to help us too".

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

The school uses instructional strategies across classrooms that are embedding the Common Core Learning Standards. However multiple entry points, so that lessons are fully challenge student thinking and student work did not fully reflect high levels of engagement.

Impact

Across classrooms, lessons did not consistently challenge all students including our high achievers, ELLs and SWDs, to their full potential, thus limiting opportunities from them to engage in high order thinking tasks or demonstrate ownership for student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching strategies including questioning, scaffolds and multi – entry points inconsistently provide curricula leading to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in student work, including our high achievers, ELLs and SWDs. In a 2nd grade class, the teacher was reading, “*A Chair For My Mother*”, the teacher posed questions like, “I wonder what Rosa does with the other half of the money?”, “What kind of person is Rosa?”, “What character traits does she have?” These questions were posed to specific students who agreed or disagreed with other students, limiting the opportunities for peer to peer discussions and discoveries, which in turn promotes accountability and thinking for a wider range of learners.
- Across classrooms, students worked on same task which reflected uneven levels of student thinking. For example in 4 out of 7 classrooms whole class teacher to student discussion took place as well as everyone working on the same task. In a collaborative team teaching math classroom, students worked on the same word problem of subtraction of mixed numbers. There was no evidence of manipulative to support the variety of learners in the class. There was limited evidence of multiple entry points for advance learners or struggling learners.
- Across classrooms, high order thinking skills was uneven and students did not demonstrate ownership for student learning. For example, in one class the objective of “I can understand addition as putting together, subtraction as taking apart and taking from”. All students were given different numbers however the purpose was unclear. Teacher circulated around and asked to make the number they had in front of them using manipulative. Students had numbers from 2-12, after students in pairs created the number teacher asked to see. Then teacher asked to use the number they had to make a number sentence. Students grappled with task and teacher had difficulty addressing the needs of students. Many students were playing with manipulative instead of working on task.
- In one classroom, the objective, “cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources; determine central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions”, was posted. The teacher modeled and students answered questions teacher posed. As students worked on given task, the teacher circulated around, checking to see if everyone was on task. As teacher walked around there were missed opportunities to continue to push the thinking around Colonial Life and Living in Queens. Her response as she was walked around was good job. Other students were unclear of expectations; teacher could have on the spot selected the group of students who were unclear and model expectations.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The schools' curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrates the Common Core instructional shifts in tasks using student work to make curriculum refinements.

Impact

The school has made purposeful decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students by providing connections in reading, writing, social studies, science and engineering.

Supporting Evidence

- In some classrooms visited students were provide with opportunities to annotate text to find important relevant facts from text as well as citing text evidence to support their claims in order to cite evidence of theme or central idea. In a class students were asked to cite evidence from the book, *Knots on a Counting Rope*, students responded with sick, frail and the night became as quiet as a soft falling snow. Teams had a question prompt which they needed to answer. Some examples were; How is the phrase "dark mountain" used in the text?, Why does the grandfather talk about dark mountains in the boys future?, Why does the boy smile at the end of the race?, How does the boy learn to race successfully? and What do you think the grandfather means when he says that the wind was "crying" for the boy?
- The school has chosen the curriculum which is aligned to Common Core Learning Standards such as; Ready Gen, Envision Math, Science (Harcourt), FOSS , Engineering Is Elementary and Social Studies city frameworks. The Ready Gen Literacy textbook also embeds the Social Studies and Science content. The use of Common Core Standard Curriculum provides perform tasks in Literacy and Math, promoting annotation of text, citing text evidence and explaining the answers of math problems in support of the instructional shifts as well as preparedness to college and career. The school uses a book of the month and aligns a specific standard across grades in reading in order to ensure access for all learners including ELLs and SWDs. One example of alignment is the book, *My Mouth is a Volcano*, by Carrie Hartman, students in Kindergarten were asked to write about what the author meant by "I erupt" with teacher guidance that modeled for students ways they could write their thoughts. In 1st grade, the students were asked to describe how the students feel when he said, "I erupt" and to use the details from the story to support their answer. 2nd grade students had to use the phrase "I erupt" and answer the following questions in their writing; what does this phrase most likely mean, how does the author's use of this phrase help you gain better understanding of the story, and use details from the text to support your answer. These connections to making the crosswalk of a reading standard across grades Kindergarten to 2nd supported learners in building coherence across grades.
- The schools current alignment template connects the reading standard, writing, and content areas. For example, in a 5th grade template in reading students determine a theme and two or more main ideas. In writing they will be writing opinions as well as write from informational text to link ideas within and across categories. In Science, students will be exploring how organisms are affected by environmental conditions and for Social Studies they will explore inequalities and injustice to women, Native Americans, and African Americans. This attempt at alignment of Literacy with the content area provides opportunities for all learners, including ELLs and SWDs, to access and make connections with content areas in order to promote college and career readiness for all students.

Findings

The school aligns shared practices of assessments so that teachers make effective adjustments to instruction and curricula.

Impact

The school's system to provide feedback using a rubric aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and curricula provides actionable feedback to students in their writing.

Supporting Evidence

- Student work in bulletin boards inside the classroom and outside the classroom provides actionable feedback for students as well as next steps using a rubric aligned to curriculum and standards. Teachers write child friendly next steps for students using a rubric. Students were able to share with me during interviews how they use the rubric and teacher comments to make their writing better.
- The school has a shared practice of assessments captured in Google Docs such as Ready Gen Pre & Post assessments, Go Math Pre & Post assessments as well as performance task in Literacy and Math and running records. This shared practice allows for out of classroom teachers to have access to how students are doing and provides families with timely feedback of progress. Parents acknowledged and appreciated the technology available to see their child's progress.
- Across classrooms, continuation of assessment practices to reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment in order to make effective adjustments needs to continue across all classrooms. In 4 out of 7 classrooms, there were limited checks for understanding or adjustment made to meet the learning needs of all students. As we visited classrooms, some teachers did not capture understanding of learning in order to adjust curriculum as needed on the spot.
- During teacher teams, teachers articulated the norming of rubrics to ensure all students receive a fair rating based on the Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers referred back to rubric as they were looking at student work and provide feedback to teacher. In the third grade inquiry team the teachers provided suggestions to help the teacher increase the volume of the writing in her class by providing ideas which were aligned to the rubric used. Some suggestions teachers made were; self-text connection, elaborate and add more details, more complex sentences, use transitional words, paragraph structure and the use of a graphic organizer.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

High expectations are messaged to staff via the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, in professional development activities and other modes of communication. Families are apprised of student progress toward college and career readiness through workshops and progress notes.

Impact

Structures are in place that supports the school's high expectations and accountability amongst staff, students and their families, providing a clear path towards increased student achievement and college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- In order to communicate high expectations to staff the school provides a variety of handbooks and rubrics. These include the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric, the *New Teacher Handbook* with school procedures and policies, *Special Education Handbook* that outlines forms and professional development and supports available, the *Staff Handbook* that includes school wide goals, school policies and grading policies, a *Paraprofessional Handbook* outlining expectations and *School Aide Handbook* including guidelines for management.
- Students and families are provided with middle school guidance through parent workshops to support families with the process of middle school articulation in order to prepare students for college and career readiness. Verbal as well as written feedback is consistently provided to families through such venues as newsletters, *DoJO*, websites to assist students, phone calls and emails.
- The school has a system of accountability providing students in their classrooms opportunities to share college and career readiness and character traits. The guidance counselor and staff have discussions and visit colleges in order to motivate students to be self-aware of the great possibilities. The school has an outline based on the Career Development and Occupational Studies learning standards of New York State, to promote exploration and research into broad career areas of interest to individual students. Some standards outlined are; Career Development, Integrated Learning and Universal Foundational skills. Each of these standards is covered throughout the year to include essential questions, objectives, goal and activities for students.
- Families are provided with workshops to include; Reading Under The Stars, Students with Disabilities, Early Literacy Skills, community conversations, Modify Promotional Criteria, Stem Parent Workshops and grade specific and content workshops. Parents articulated that these workshops as well as phone blasts, emails and monthly calendars are very helpful.