



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Hammond School

Elementary School Q082

**88-02 144th Street
Queens
NY 11435**

Principal: Dr. Angela Boykin

**Date of review: February 25, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Dr. Marion Wilson**

The School Context

The Hammond School is an elementary school with 649 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 7% Black, 60% Hispanic, 2% White, and 31% Asian students. The student body includes 28% English language learners and 15% 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 94.5%.

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	Focus	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	Well Developed
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	Celebration	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	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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

The school consistently uses and adjusts curricula-aligned assessment practices, grading policies and pedagogical strategies that focus on checks for understanding to create a clear portrait for students and staff regarding student progress.

Impact

Data-driven decisions are made school-wide leading to rigorous curricula adjustments at the teacher and classroom levels, and student self-assessment tools guide instructional decisions and provide clear and actionable learning targets for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- On a weekly basis, the principal and teacher teams meet to plan rigorous tasks aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards that support questioning and discussion and next steps for learners. Every week, teachers across subject areas and grades apply information from class lessons to determine student growth and adjust groups and instruction accordingly through a comprehensive data spreadsheet tool, accessible by core team members and teachers.
- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers' monitored progress of students within each unit of study through frequent strategies such as checklists, questioning prompts, exit slips, and in class conferring, in order to effectively group students based on levels and performance. Students are aware of their groups and what it takes to be done in order to move between flexible groups based on their work performance. The school-wide writing rubric which is used across grades and a variety of genres is appropriated based on the grade level and performance of students. There are also standards-aligned rubrics used in all content areas, as well as student checklists that ask students to go through a series of steps and answer questions to improve their work and monitor their progress towards mastery of content standards.
- Teachers collect data from various sources including checklists, rubrics, exit slips, quizzes, and performance tasks to monitor student's learning style and progress towards learning goals. Students are aware of their next learning steps and are able to organize rubrics and checklists along with samples of their work as evidence of them achieving or making progress towards achieving learning goals and targets.
- The school uses a variety of feedback protocols, such as looking at student work so that students have the opportunity to self and peer assess and teachers utilize this information to support students in achieving their learning targets or goals. Students also are given the opportunity to have input in their portfolios selections, goals, and action plans. In addition, there are anecdotal notes and qualitative data points to help them make curricula and instructional adjustments, as needed.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills across most grades and subjects for most learners.

Impact

As a result, performance tasks in mathematics and literacy are based on instructional shifts for both subjects. In addition, academic tasks require students to demonstrate their understanding of domain related concepts and challenge student thinking across most classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- While the school has purposefully mapped out curriculum maps and unit plans, through the planning of a curriculum calendar, as well as, changing around units in resources, they are currently in the process of updating their curriculum plans to strategically integrate the instructional shifts to help build coherence across all grades and all subject areas. The school uses ReadyGen, Go Math, and other resources to assist with developing curriculum maps.
- Most of the performance tasks and learning bundles are created by teachers by looking through the lens of Depth of knowledge (DOK) for mathematics and literacy based on ReadyGen, Go Math and other supplementary materials used by the school. However, additional work needs to be done to further unpack the standards to cohesively incorporate all subject areas in greater depth.
- While the school has created tasks that require students to explain the learning target for each lesson, some of these tasks are not always created to allow additional Universal Design for Learning (UDL) supports for English language learners and students with disabilities or to challenge advanced learners as needed.
- Understanding the linguistics of complex text through making meaning of linguistic frames has been embedded into curriculum in all content areas in order to increase text complexity and provide grade level access to English language learners throughout the school.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
---------------------------	---------------------	----------------	-----------------------

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Across the vast majority of classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation and ownership.

Impact

As a result of these highly effective teacher practices, classes are student-centered with teachers working with small groups as needed. Furthermore, all students are articulate, highly conversational about their work and next steps, and take ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- In all English language arts (ELA) and math classes visited, lessons were student-centered with teachers providing support, modeling, or instructing based on need and learning styles. For example, some students were working on the floor with varied level texts debating what they were reading, while other students used teacher-created materials, such as graphic organizers to organize and structure their thoughts. For example, in a fifth grade literacy class, students were asked to compare the overall structure of ideas and concepts in two or more texts.
- Across classrooms, students were all engaged in the lesson and were empowered to push the thinking of their classmates with higher-order thinking questions or alternatives during table conversations. In one classroom, students were working in partnerships and participated in debates and discourse about questions using Webb's Depth of Knowledge which they generated on their own, based on the book of their choice. In one fourth grade math class, students had different math activities where students were asked to write fractions in their simplest form and then compare them using visual models. Students had to explain the process they used to come to consensus about their responses. In addition, students have several options of varied activities during center time, an opportunity for students to work or expand on topics of their own choice.
- The ESL teacher pushes in to co-teach with general education teachers to provide on-site support for English language learners (ELLs) in the form of explicit front loading of vocabulary, visual cues, differentiated questioning and graphic organizers.
- All classrooms visited had students working in small groups based on homogenous and heterogeneous levels with students representing the bottom, middle and top thirds based on reading levels, skills, goals, or lesson target. For example, in one math class students were working to solve multistep word problems with visual models and analyzing real world situations in word problems based on their level of understanding and proficiency. In another class, readers developed and asked their own questions to express their understanding of character development in the text and to determine the mood of the story by analyzing the setting and characters. Students had books appropriate to their reading and comprehension levels.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

The school establishes high expectations for all constituent groups, including students, teachers, and families, through a variety of communication practices. The administration consistently communicates important information to staff through the components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Communication around high expectations of student success engages all stakeholders. These best practices have also resulted in high levels of professionalism and quality instruction, resulting in improved student reading and math levels.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration provides opportunities for ongoing and frequent intervisitations, which are coordinated and organized by teachers. For example, teachers have spent time in each other’s classrooms observing and offering feedback based on components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and support ongoing professional learning.
- Administration communicates through both formal and informal observations to teachers on the expectations. Teachers receive emails, letters, and one on one support if needed to help support their professional learning goals and plan. Professional development opportunities are differentiated and offer support based on teacher need and strength.
- Parent workshops are organized around the Common Core and parents have a choice in the course offerings and can choose from morning or evening sessions. In addition, the school provides resources to help students through online interactive websites such as MyOn Reader, IXL for Math support, and Brainpop for English language learners. These tools provide feedback on student progress to all stakeholders.
- The school sponsors a Career Day using parents, relatives and other professionals to advance college and career opportunities and requirements. College and career readiness are incorporated into lessons in order for students to make connections between academics learned in school and their value in the real world. The school encourages habits of mind such as perseverance and collaboration by having students building stamina by working through challenging and complex texts as well as using team- and partner-centered activities in most classrooms.

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

Findings

There are structured professional team collaborations using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning.

Impact

As a result there is improved teacher practice, increased progress of small groups of students, and increased teacher contributions to decisions that positively affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use common planning periods to meet and include cluster teachers, the English as a second language teacher and other teachers as needed to make decisions affecting individual and groups of students that they teach. However teachers have not yet begun to work across grades to collaborate and plan units for school-wide instructional coherency for all grades and all subject areas.
- The 5th grade team used a protocol to look at student work from a 5th grade performance based assessment (PBA) and classwork on opinion writing about crafting speeches for justice. Teachers highlighted trends based on student work and shared noticings across grades and classes. Through this analysis teachers were able to generate additional strategies to support English language learners and struggling students with understanding the components of quality writing. For examples, a tool was created to help students understand how to create a logically structured piece which addresses all of the items of the task while developing their use of transitional words and phrases. However, such inquiry practices are not yet consistent across all the school.
- Most of the performance tasks and learning bundles are created by teachers by looking through the lens of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) for math and literacy based on curricula and other supplementary materials used by the school. However, additional work needs to be done to further unpack and meaningfully integrate the standards across all subject areas.