



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2014-2015**

**Public School 133**

**Elementary School Q133**

**248-05 86 Avenue  
Queens  
NY 11426**

**Principal: Marianne Sheridan**

**Date of review: March 23, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Lucius Young**

## The School Context

Public School 133 an elementary school with 480 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 5% Black, 17% Hispanic, 12% White, and 64% Asian students. The student body includes 6% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-15 was 95.9%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.1 Curriculum**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards, and strategically implement the instructional shifts emphasizing rigorous habits and higher order skills.

### Impact

As a result, school leaders and staff have created curricula that promote college and career readiness and tasks cognitively engage all learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school has adopted the NYCDOE Ready Gen English language arts program that is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. After working with the program in its initial year, the school met with teachers and adjusted the curriculum and lessons to include a greater emphasis on writing. The school implemented the Teachers College writing units of study as part of their literacy program. In addition, the school created a schedule for all grades to participate in a sustained reading block daily to build the reading stamina levels in students in grades 1 through 5 and most recently has extended this practice to include the kindergarten classes.
- In math, the school follows the Go Math program. After one year of implementation, the school focused on increasing the conceptual understanding of students' math abilities and helping them improve their problem solving skills. The school felt the current program did not engage students in complex problems that required multiple representations that encouraged children to construct viable arguments to justify their responses. As a result, the school purchase of Exemplars math problems and its implementation school wide promotes higher thinking at all grade levels for all students.
- Unit plans outline the key learning objectives, essential questions, standards, key texts, and assessments, for a unit of study. Daily lesson plans reflect a detailed planning process that includes designed questions, grouping of students, varying tasks that target all learners, and checks for understanding. For example, in a kindergarten lesson plan designed to classify triangles as flat shapes with three straight sides and three vertices, students were divided into three groups. One group of students was working with the teacher as they required guidance and support, one group had a worksheet with complex problems to classify triangles to complete independently and a third group worked with Geo Boards to create triangles and then replicate the triangles created on dot paper. In another grade and subject area, students were learning about communities. Students were divided in three groups. The Hearts group was responsible for the types of groups they can join in a community and were provided with pictures to support their charts and learning. The Stars group responded to how they can be a good citizen in either their home or school community. This group was provided with a premade graphic organizer to complete and share with the class. In the Diamond group, they responded to how they could participate in their community to make it a better place and collaborated as a group to decide what would be the best method to share their information.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs. Teachers ask higher order questions and provide some students with multiple entry points into activities.

### Impact

As a result, there is instructional coherence across grades and classes. However, there are limited opportunities for students to engage in academic tasks that further promote high-level thinking and participation and ownership of learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school believes in the workshop model of instruction whereby teachers deliver a mini lesson, provide opportunities for students to work independently or in groups, and then conduct a debrief with the class. Teachers circulate and when appropriate conduct a mid-workshop interruption to either highlight a concern or success. This was evident in the third grade during an ELA lesson during which there were groups of students working on cause and effect relationships. The teacher worked with a small group who did not complete mastery, and after spending time with the group circulated and conducted a mid-workshop interruption to highlight a trend he saw for the class.
- In a first grade Science class, students were studying the unit of matter and energy. The students were to identify which objects were transparent, translucent, and opaque. Students were to work in groups and predict which items from their list would fall into those categories. While some students participated in the lesson and followed closely to the steps, there were groups of students that had limited opportunities for discussion to ensure they understand the next steps of the process and limited the thinking of the students.
- Across classrooms, there was evidence of targeted small group instruction. Students were provided with various activities that provided an entry point for them to complete the activity to reinforce the learning and gain access into the curricula. However, in one classroom, while the students were divided into three groups, the high achievers completed the same daily work as assigned to the other groups and then followed up by completing additional problem worksheets. While the students were able to move on their own pace, the activity did not afford the students with an opportunity to engage in conversations around the concept or reflect on a higher level of student thinking for the task.

## Additional Findings

**Quality Indicator:**

**2.2 Assessment**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### Findings

Teachers use common assessments aligned to the curricula in all subject areas and consistently track student progress. Across classrooms, teachers use ongoing checks for understanding.

### Impact

The school's assessment analysis results in actionable feedback to students and teachers make effective adjustments to meet the needs of all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school uses various forms of data that include TC reading levels and the curriculum aligned assessments as tools to support their understanding of their students. In addition, the school participates in the NYCDOE interim benchmark assessments and provides teachers with an item skills analysis that enables them to target instruction for individuals and groups of students. Teachers use this data to plan lessons and to form small groups with targeted instruction. For example, in an ELA class, students were grouped by reading levels, and based on their levels, collaborated within their group to complete a task of identifying text features. One group used a shortened checklist with pictures and another group had a checklist. Both groups recorded on a Venn diagram to share out with the rest of the class.
- Rubrics are used across classrooms, aligned to the school's curricula, and are provided by teachers to students in support of their learning. In the student group, one student shared that the rubric was a great support and had an impact to her final work product in that she was able to use it in guiding her next steps and creating a goal to achieve to the next level. The student noted that she had to work on her punctuation and to add more details to her writing. In the same student group, some students spoke that a rubric was provided at the end of the task and the feedback was written on the rubric to indicate what they needed to do to improve the next time. However, this was a lost opportunity for students to take ownership in their learning early on in the task and apply the next steps in completing the final task.
- Teachers use post-it notes and conferences with students to help guide and plan next steps. In addition, at the teacher team meeting, teachers spoke about how the use of checklists has impacted their planning in order to support student learning. Teachers on each grade level meet, plan, and create, a checklist aligned to the unit of study and provide a copy for students to use as a guide for them to self-assess their work. Teachers have found value in these checklists and as noted by one teacher this process has helped in her planning for students with varying needs. Her individualized checklist has helped her students to better self-assess and her strategic planning provides her with an opportunity engage all learners in her class.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations around professionalism, instruction to the entire staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

### Impact

As a result, there is a culture of mutual accountability amongst staff and a successful partnership with families that support student progress towards expectations connected to the Common Core Learning Standards.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders provide feedback to staff anchored in the Danielson Framework for Teaching and align their professional learning to meet the needs of the faculty. For example, the school leaders provided a survey to the faculty to identify areas of growth and as a result, professional learning opportunities such as designing flexible groups for students and questioning and discussion were offered and differentiated to the varying needs of the staff, and provided with the guidance and support of the Network to teachers in order to support their professional growth. As a result of this structure, the data from the Danielson report shows an improvement in questioning and discussion techniques and student engagement has increased for teachers.
- Teachers feel a mutual sense of accountability in meeting and contributing to the expectations and vision of the school leaders. Teacher's value feedback and school leaders honor the insights of the faculty. For example, teachers shared that they felt a need for their students to be provided with a revised schedule in their day to allow students to build in independent reading time. Teachers met to review the Ready Gen English language arts program and noticed that students were not getting enough independent reading time in the classroom that contributed to the lack of stamina for students in reading. As a result, the teachers shared this with the administration, and the principal redesigned the schedule to incorporate an additional block of time for students to engage in independent reading, which is now a scheduled school wide practice.
- School leaders and staff communicate high expectations aligned to college and career readiness. In addition to flyers, emails, phone calls, and the schools website the school also put out a survey to parents. The survey was created by the school leaders to solicit the types of workshops parents felt would most help their children at home. The survey items included homework, alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards, middle school articulation, and testing. After collecting this information, school leaders then generated workshops to present to families. At the parent meeting, parents stated that the workshops provided them with additional strategies and guidance to support their children at home. One parent reported that a guide was sent home with their child to help with homework, she has been using this regularly, and as a result has built a routine at home to work alongside the child to support his learning. Parents also reported that the principal is responsive and has built a strong community and a culture of trust. Many parents noted that the school leader is available at all times with her open door policy.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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**Findings**

The majority of teachers are engaged in collaborative inquiry work to ensure alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers regularly analyze student work and share best practices.

**Impact**

As a result of professional collaborations, there is an increase in teachers’ instructional capacity and progress towards achievement of school goals.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers meet a minimum of once per week in collaborative grade level teams to analyze student work, plan instruction, share practices, and adjust lessons. Teams have an identified facilitator and a recorder who captures information from the meetings that is shared with colleagues and with administration. Although there is an organizer for teachers to memorialize their meetings with implications for instruction and next steps, and teachers record minutes as a reference for future meetings, this is not yet a fully embedded practice leading to sufficient adjustments to their practice.
- The 2/3 data team used the inquiry cycle to enhance student writing. To specifically plan for interventions, they collaboratively looked at student work and, identified successes and challenges from a focus group of students selected by the teachers. One team member shared that they created a strategic checklist from these meetings and implemented it back in his classroom with the students to support their growth and help teachers plan for adjustments. As a result, the administration has noted that this analysis and system has become a coherent practice across all grades.
- Teachers state that during team meetings they collect and use various data from across the school to plan and adjust their lessons in order to meet the needs of various groups of students. In addition, teachers shared that the meetings provide an opportunity to obtain strategies and resources from their colleagues that they can use in their classrooms to support groups of students. One teacher shared that she received copies of various graphic organizers from her colleagues that has helped with her planning to ensure all her students would be engaged and able to access the curriculum. For example, one organizer used was supportive to a group of her students in organizing their thoughts. Another teacher shared that she now incorporates exit slips at the end of the lessons as a means to check in on students and help guide her next steps in planning.