



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 162 John Golden

Elementary 26Q162

**201-02 53 Avenue
Queens
NY, 11364**

Principal: Joan Casale

**Date of review: December 10, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Danielle Giunta**

The School Context

P.S. 162 is an Elementary school with 711 students from grade PK through grade 5. The school population comprises 2.30% Black, 9.40% Hispanic, 17.00% White, and 70.2% Asian students. The student body includes 12.00% English language learners and 11.8% special education students. Boys account for 55.10% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44.90%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 97.10%.

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	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	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	Focus	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	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	Celebration	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

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

Teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured collaborations and systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment data, and student work.

Impact

Structured professional collaborations have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and promoted the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) resulting in shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Grade level teams are structured so that every member has an active role on the team. Each teacher selects four students to study: one lowest- and one highest- achieving student, one student with a disability and an English Language Learner. Teachers bring student writing to each meeting to assess while simultaneously norm expectations. Together, grade level teams glean trends for each level student and sub-group and use this information to plan for multiple entry points evidenced in unit plans and daily lesson plans. As a result, the school achieved a proficiency rate of 54% on the New York State English Language Arts and 77% on the New York State Mathematics exam and rated Exceeding Target on the Closing Achievement Gap section of the 2013-2014 School.
- Every teacher, including support staff, is engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. One grade level team and Response to Intervention team talked about the positive impact participating on teacher teams have had on their practice as well as on student progress. The most noted impact on teacher practice teacher teams referenced was deepening their understanding of planning for multiple entry points as well as their capacity to move into the role of teacher as facilitator. This was further evidenced in classrooms visits; for example, in all classes visited, teachers carefully planned for differentiated learning activities and scaffolds so all students had an entry point into the lesson. The school-wide implementation of Thinking Maps provides students a tool to organize their thinking at their own level. By encouraging students to make their thinking visible, teachers have access into student thinking and use this as data to determine if students are meeting their learning goals and or lesson objectives.
- Teachers have opportunities to take on leadership roles and play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school. Teachers present at weekly professional learning sessions. The speech teacher has presented topics ranging from how to open an initial evaluation to supporting teachers with teaching vocabulary. Integrated Collaborative Teaching (ICT) teachers come together once a month to share best practices ranging from professional collaboration to meeting the needs of the diverse learners in their classrooms. One teacher stated, "Our school leaders trust teachers to be professional. They understand we know our students best. [School leaders] lay out the vision and goals and give us the autonomy to make it happen, to tackle it. They support us and give us feedback along the way."

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

The school uses common assessments to determine student progress towards goals and across classrooms teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers consistently use assessment data to make effective adjustments to curricula and instruction to meet all students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Assessment data is collected and analyzed at the classroom, grade team and school level. Teacher teams meet regularly to analyze data and make adjustments to curriculum and instruction. School leaders regularly collect grade level data and provide feedback to teachers. To further strengthen their efforts and ensure progress for all learners, school leaders and teacher teams will begin to benchmark progress. For example, currently teacher teams give a pre- and post- test without embedding a mid-point check towards progress. School leaders set annual goals for English language learners and students with disabilities but do not currently have a system in place to check for progress in the middle of the year.
- Across classrooms teachers embed on-going checks for understanding through the use of conference notes, student reflection and exit slips. Teachers effectively utilize this data in determining flexible small groups which can change by unit or daily based on student work. Classroom teachers have implemented rubrics and checklists in literacy and mathematics, they are effectively using on-going checks for understanding to adjust curriculum and instruction to meet all students' learning needs however, students are at the beginning stages of self- and peer- assessment as well as articulating their next learning steps.
- Common assessment practices (pre- and post- assessments, on-going checks for understanding, rubrics and feedback) are regularly used across classrooms in literacy and mathematics. The school will begin expanding these assessments practices into additional subject areas such as science, art, and others.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

High expectations are an integral part of the message that is conveyed through the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and various methods of communication. Newsletters, workshops and parent meetings that effectively communicate expectations for student achievement.

Impact

The school community is committed to working together around a clear vision of supporting and accelerating student learning. High expectations are continuously communicated resulting in a collaborative learning culture and improved student learning outcomes for adults and students throughout the school.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders effectively use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to determine school level trends as well as the support individual teachers need to advance their practice. Effective use of data gleaned from Advance was used to formulate the school's instructional focus for engaging all learners with an emphasis on Danielson's components for questioning and discussion (3B) and student engagement (3D). School leaders provide consistent and targeted feedback to support growing teacher practice aligned to the instructional focus as evidenced not only in feedback reports but in high levels of student engagement through the use of questioning, discussion and multiple entry points in all classes visited. Further, school leaders design professional learning opportunities aligned to data gleaned from observations and rely on expert teachers, inter-visitations and network achievement coaches to facilitate support. High expectations accompanied by systems and structures for support have resulted in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations. For example, teachers spoke to feeling ownership and a sense of agency to share best practices to further support each other and strengthening the school community at large.
- School staff has effectively partnered with families. Parents feel welcome at the school and believe they have an authentic voice in school level decisions. For example, the School Leadership Team is conducting a "needs assessment" via a parent survey to determine workshops parents would find most relevant in promoting their child's success in school. Recently, parents of children in third grade raised a concern about the new mathematics program becoming significantly more rigorous in third grade than in second grade. In response, school leaders scheduled a series of workshops targeted to parents of third grade children facilitated by the network achievement coach for mathematics.
- Parents feel that they receive ample and timely communication. Parents are informed through telephone calls, emails, letters, class newsletters, monthly calendars, School Messenger Service, and the PS 162 website. The website provides links for parents to obtain resources for their children and contains links to grade and classroom pages which provide parents with access to current curriculum and learning activities in each grade. The parent coordinator is instrumental in making sure that parents are informed of upcoming events and issues on a regular basis. The principal and the assistant principal have an open door policy. Parents note an increase in communication and as a result feel a sense of ownership in the school and their child's education.

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work.

Impact

The school's strategic curricula decisions have resulted in coherence across grades and promotes college and career readiness for all learners so that individual and groups of students including the lowest- and highest-achieving students, English language learners and students with disabilities have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Through careful analysis and on-going feedback, school leaders and faculty ensure curricula are aligned to the CCLS. For example, although the school adopted a common core aligned literacy program the school leaders and faculty did not feel the program offered a robust curriculum inclusive of independent reading and ample opportunities for writing. To address this gap the school is supplementing their core literacy program with Foundations, TCRWP writing and incorporating Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) into unit plans and daily instruction. Careful alignment is evident in unit plans, daily lesson plans and classroom visitations.
- School leaders regularly collect grade level unit plans and provide teachers with feedback to ensure alignment not only to the CCLS but to the school's instructional focus on engaging students through questioning and discussion and multiple entry points. For example, all unit and daily lesson plans incorporate a section for "scaffolds and supports" for English language learners, students with disabilities and high achievers.
- Teacher teams regularly analyze student work and pre/post assessments to plan for and refine curricula and academic tasks. For example, after analyzing a non-fiction pre-assessment writing task, teachers noted a decline in some student writing levels. Through reflection the team realized they were using an informational non-fiction text as their model text during instruction but used a narrative non-fiction text for the task. Teachers adjusted the curriculum to ensure a variety of non-fiction model texts were highlighted throughout the unit as well as determine a small group intervention for the following lesson.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classrooms reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best, are aligned to the curricula and allow for multiple opportunities and entry points, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, to engage in common core aligned activities.

Impact

Teaching practices are aligned through the team and school level discussions. Curricula and academic tasks are embedded in a coherent way across grades and subjects so that all learners must demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Through a carefully selected instructional focus, based on data gleaned from the Danielson Framework for Teaching, school leaders have successfully advanced teacher practices through strategic feedback and alignment of professional development. As a result, across classrooms teachers are engaging students through multiple entry points and high-quality supports and extensions. For example, in one third grade class children were asked to identify the theme of a story and use text based evidence to support their claim. The teacher strategically planned for three different leveled groups, which is an outgrowth of the work teachers are engaging in at the team level in studying student work at a variety of levels. All groups were using appropriately leveled texts and using thinking maps as a support for identifying the theme. In a low achieving group, the teacher pre-identified the theme and thinking map to be used allowing students to focus on identifying text based evidence. A second, higher achieving group, was given a set of possible themes across two texts and students were asked to identify the most appropriate theme using text based evidence and a thinking map to organize their ideas. The highest achieving group was assigned the task to identify a common theme across two separate texts and choose the thinking map that best helped them organize their evidence.
- Across classes teachers are stepping into the role of teacher as facilitator through encouraging classroom discussion, asking open-ended questions and planning for small group collaborative learning. For example, in one-fifth grade integrated collaborative teaching (ICT) mathematics classroom students were strategically paired to work on problem solving tasks. Partnerships have differentiated problems to solve and are provided plastic colored cups which serve as a signal to teachers when the partnership is feeling stuck (red cup), require a check in for accuracy (yellow cup) or working with ease or appropriate challenge (green). Teachers utilize this colored cup system as an on-going check for understanding. When conferring with partnerships signaling for help, teachers redirect partnerships by asking students to explain their thinking and using probing questions such as, “How do you know that?: or, “It’s greater by how much?”
- High-achievers are a large population at PS 162 with 54% of students at proficiency in English language arts and 77% at or above proficiency in Mathematics. Teachers plan as carefully for this group of students as they do for other groups of students. Students are provided opportunities to extend learning. For example, in one class, after completing their differentiated task, students were able move into an enrichment center where they were able to extend their work on multi-step word problems by creating a game inspired by Monopoly in which students created community chest cards requiring multi-step problems multiplication and division for their peers to solve.