Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The William Haberle School

Elementary School Q195

253-50 149th Avenue
Queens
NY 11422

Principal: Beryl Bailey

Date of review: May 4, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Andrea Harris

The School Context

The William Haberle School is an elementary school with 647 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 92% Black, 5% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 1% English language learners and 20% special education students. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013 -2014 was 93.0%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
To what extent does the school…	**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		
To what extent does the school…	**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	**Celebration**	**Proficient**
Systems for Improvement		
To what extent does the school…	**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:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient

Findings:
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff and families and provides supports for their success in towards meeting the expectations. The principal holds staff and families accountable for working together to achieve college and career readiness goals for all students.

Impact
Through a variety of systems and structures staff and parents regularly collaborate in fostering an environment that contributes to ongoing progress in achieving the school's high expectations and promotes improvement in staff and student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- School leadership uses a weekly newsletter to communicate high expectations to all staff. Teacher teams discuss these expectations and how to best implement them across the school. Additionally, school leaders set clear expectations during one-on-one conversations with teachers. To inform these conversations as well as reflect on norming "effective" and "highly effective" instructional practices, prior to monthly meetings with building leadership teachers use a self-assessment tool that they developed in alignment to the Danielson rubric.

- There are monthly Monday and Friday professional learning opportunities for all staff, promoting high expectations. For example, staff studied the art of questioning along with the Depth of Knowledge matrix and an increase in higher level questioning was evidenced in both teacher and student talk. In classrooms teachers were heard using prompts such as: "Can you explain your thinking? How did you come to that conclusion? Support your response with text based evidence". In addition, school leaders make weekly visits to classrooms, ensuring instructional coherency across grades, including those containing English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

- Parents are consistently informed about what is being taught and the expectations for all students. There are parent workshops every other Saturday morning and families receive a monthly newsletter highlighting the school's expectations. There are also monthly parent workshops, emails and phone blasts, sharing information such as expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards. Further, parents are kept abreast of student performance, via teachers' use of additional time on Tuesdays for parent outreach, including on site teacher/parent meeting or telephone conferences. During such meetings parents have opportunities to engage in conversations around topics such as "How to support your child with developing reading and writing strategies?" or "Getting ready for first grade or middle school". The "Dojo" online reporting system allows all families to be regularly updated on their children's progress and several parents shared that they frequently check "Dojo" for results of tests, quizzes and homework.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing

Findings
Teachers inconsistently provide instructional supports and engaging learning activities for all students, with few lessons providing multiple entry points and facilitating student to student discussion.

Impact
In a majority of classrooms, instructional practices resulted in limited opportunities for students to produce meaningful work products and experience challenging tasks that deepen their thinking and participation in learning.

Supporting Evidence

- In classrooms visited some students were actively engaged in discussions. They explored their thinking and, at times, challenged each other's ideas and justified thoughts, using text based evidence to support their reasoning. However, most discussions were limited by low level questioning prompts from teachers. For example, in a kindergarten/first grade self-contained bridge class, the teacher created a graphic organizer with four columns, on the board. She asked students questions such as, "What do firefighters do in the community? What do police officers do in a community? What do doctors do in a community?" In each case students responded with a few words that described the role of each and the teacher recorded their responses on the board.

- In most classrooms, all students engaged in the same activities and most received limited support from the teacher. In addition, student discussions were minimal and driven by questions prompted by the teacher in most instances. Further, at times several students completed the task quickly and were not given next steps, while others struggled and needed additional support. As an example, during a grade two science lesson, the students engaged in a lima bean planting activity. The lesson began with the question: "What are the things that plants need in order to grow?" Several students responded to this question correctly before doing the experiment. Students were then asked to complete a life cycle worksheet as they engaged in the lima bean planting activity. While some students who were unsure of what to do were instructed to work with a partner, several other students shared that they did not find the task challenging and finished the task quickly.

- During a fourth grade math lesson students were asked to complete a worksheet on converting fractions and decimals. The class was divided into five work groups all using the same worksheet. The teacher circulated the room asking students to explain their work using evidence to support their answers. Students had a Depth of Knowledge matrix on their desk and were expected to reference it in their answers. Students in some of the groups successfully completed the worksheet. The teacher assisted students in one group while students in another group received little assistance and were unable to complete the task. One student shared that he did not understand or know what to do.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient

Findings:
Across content areas curricula and tasks are rigorous and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards. Instructional units target higher order learning and thinking skills for all students.

Impact
Common Core aligned curricula for all grades and content areas provide opportunities for all learners to be engaged in challenging tasks designed to promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses *Voices* to support English Language Arts instruction. At the end of each unit, there are embedded assessments that promote alignment with the targeted Common Core Learning Standards and allow for instructional adjustments related to the needs of all students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities. Learning tasks show that the Depth of Knowledge Matrix is used to support higher order thinking skills and to assess the level of rigor within student performance tasks.

- The school uses *Envision Mathematics,* a Common Core aligned program, across all classrooms. The inquiry team identified areas of weakness and revised the *Envision Math* program to support teachers' daily instructional practices. As an example, teachers found a need to adjust the timeframe and length of study in the skill of converting decimals to fraction, so in a unit on fractions they extended the time period from one week to three weeks and added a focus on prior lessons about money. This afforded additional time to help students understand the relationship between fractions and money. The teachers included a chart to support students' thinking when converting whole numbers to decimals and incorporated the use of the Depth of Knowledge cube to push higher order thinking by students who were required to create questions to share with a partner.

- The English Language Arts and math curricula include computer based content and tasks to ensure that all learners, particularly English language learners and special needs students, have access to rigorous learning experiences. In addition, teachers collaboratively develop lesson plans that target higher order thinking skills for all students, with particular attention to English Language Learners and students with disabilities. Lessons are designed to be easily accessible and challenging and allow for adjustments and flexibility as needed. For example, a lesson plan for a self-contained class showed the use of three different graphic organizers to support student thinking and learning about roles of "community helpers". The task required groups of students to use pictures and sentences to write about a specific "helper". The advanced group was asked to create booklets (about "community helpers"), which would be shared and read by peers.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
Across classrooms, teachers create and use common assessments, rubrics and grading policies, in measuring and sharing feedback about performance and progress of all students and implementing adjustments designed to accelerate their achievement across content areas.

Impact
Teachers use formative assessments to inform daily instructional practices and adjustments to curricula and instruction. Students benefit from data driven feedback and instructional adjustments that address their individual needs and promote improvement in their performance.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher planning is based on common benchmark assessments given during and at the completion of units across content areas. This affords teachers opportunities to adjust curricula and lessons targeting the needs of all students, inclusive of English Language Learners as well as students with disabilities. Teachers share these results as well as strategies for improving their instructional practice. They also engage in checks for student understanding during lessons. For example, in the upper grades there is the use of peer to peer assessment, while teachers of the lower grade classes use a “thumbs up or thumbs down” strategy to gauge students’ understanding of lesson content and skills.

- Teacher developed rubrics and assessment tools are used to foster students’ self-assessment of their work. For example, a check-off style rubric was used by students in fourth and fifth grade integrated co-teaching classes, supporting higher order thinking, self-assessment and student to student feedback. Across classrooms this check off style rubric and a Depth of Knowledge tool are affixed to the top of every student’s desk, for the students’ personal reference in explaining their thinking when responding to questions. Students’ constantly refer to these tools when engaged in learning, speaking and listening activities and teachers make adjustments in their teaching based on the data generated from students’ conversations.

- All teachers have conferring binders and provide students with actionable feedback during and after lessons. Teacher leaders are responsible for sharing the results of all common assessments with school leadership, to determine progress made on both individual, classroom and grade levels, towards meeting school wide goals. Performance levels noted on rubrics and grading policies are designed to align with the performance levels (one, two, three or four) used on New York State assessments. For example, English Language Arts and math exams contain 25 questions of which a student would have to score at least 19 correct responses to earn performance level 2.

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

Findings
In collaboration with teacher leaders and administrators, teacher teams meet regularly to analyze and discuss student performance and work products, determining how best to use performance data to drive daily instructional practices, in alignment to Common Core and other applicable Learning Standards and school wide goals.

Impact
Through collaborative and distributive leadership practices, teacher teams consistently analyze various forms of data in determining students' strengths and weaknesses and make purposeful decisions to adjust teaching to accelerate staff and student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, teachers engage in structured inquiry based activities that promote professional collaborations towards achieving school goals, including the delivery of rigorous lessons addressing Common Core standards and instructional shifts. Teachers engage in inter-visitations and view each other as resources for validating their work and promoting instructional coherence content wide and across grade levels. This work has promoted improved instructional capacity among teachers and several teachers credited teamwork for progress of students towards learning goals, as evidenced by results of assessments.

- Teacher teams use a broad range of data, including data from classroom inter-visitations, to support teacher development. They have also incorporated data from student surveys which push them to reflect deeply about teaching and learning. Teachers are empowered by the school wide philosophy of "Each one… Teach one…" as individual teachers host professional development sessions for colleagues. For example, based on a school wide assessment teachers determined that there was a need to focus on improving students' writing. The data also reflected a need to build trust among the staff prior to targeting classroom practices and fueled several opportunities for teachers to share best practices in both formal and informal settings. Teacher team groups developed writing benchmarks and rubrics for horizontal and vertical use among staff. The improvement in students' writing, including that of students with disabilities and English Language Learners, is evident on student work samples displayed throughout the building.

- Teacher teams collaboratively review norms as they analyze student work across content areas. All team meetings are driven by outcome based agendas linked to school wide goals. Conversations focus on how to teach and re-teach content to ensure that all students are able to demonstrate critical thinking in their work. Distributive leadership is at the forefront of teacher-led collaborative meetings. The main focus of these meetings allows individual teachers to have latitude in guiding discussions on student learning as well as empowers them to determine how best to address any gaps that may surface. Teachers feel they have a real voice and decision making power involving the daily delivery of instructional content.