



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Lyndon B Johnson

Elementary School Q223

**125-20 Sutphin Boulevard
Queens
NY 11434**

Principal: Deborah Otto

**Date of review: January 21, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Joan Prince**

The School Context

Lyndon B Johnson 27Q223 is an elementary school with 661 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 72% Black, 13% Hispanic, 1% White, and 8% Asian students, 1% Multi-racial, and 5% American Indian/Alaskan Native. The student body includes 3% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 92.0%.

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	Proficient
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	Celebration	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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations, including elements of Danielson Framework, to the entire staff. Teachers engage families in a culture for learning to provide support for student progress.

Impact

Communication of high expectations to staff has resulted in consistent professional development training and a culture of mutual accountability involving all stakeholders that offers ongoing and detailed feedback and guidance supports so that students are prepared for the level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide meaningful feedback to teachers based upon formal and informal observation, as evidenced by documents reviewed. There are focused trainings on Danielson's domains at teacher team meetings and school-wide professional development. The principal provides a weekly newsletter to all staff highlighting upcoming important dates, reminders, instructional foci and kudos for best practices. The high goals set by this principal and in the Comprehensive Educational Plan call for deliberate and consistent practices that strengthen and enhance the school vision with all constituents playing their part in the education of the children.
- Curriculum resources, assessment data and grade-specific portfolios are maintained to provide a unified system connected to supporting all students to own their educational experience. High expectations based on socio-emotional needs are communicated to students through the Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) core values and classrooms have multiple systems of accountability for behavior and learning. On a monthly basis, teachers select a 'student of the month' and they are rewarded with PBIS tickets to the school store. Students interviewed stated knowledge of the program and enjoy "leadership" responsibility and "respect". There are effective guidance/advisement supports ensuring that all students, including high needs subgroups, are prepared for academic and social performance.
- Teachers and the parent coordinator conduct workshops for parents/families with translators to provide support in all academic areas. Parents regularly receive guidance about the school programs and are given tools to help their children at home. Automated phone messages have impacted on the attendance of parents, along with the school calendar stating upcoming events. For example, there are Parent Literacy nights with teachers, students and families reading together and having literary discussions. There are legacy parents in this school and they stated that "the school gets better every year in giving support to students to furthering their education. As seen in agendas and in the Comprehensive Educational Plan, parents workshops about life skills designed to promote independence and self-efficacy to assist their children with the transition to middle school take place.
- The school has a program of Terrific Tuesdays where families are welcomed to visit teachers and have conferences and class workshops with the entire class after school. The school also encourages involvement in family reading programs, such as (FRED)-Families Reading Every Day.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and Danielson's Framework. Teaching strategies provide scaffolds and consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Shared beliefs around Danielson's Framework inform pedagogy and professional development opportunities. Students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and supported by lessons that include multiple entry points for all learners; however, the strategic inclusion of scaffolds and extensions does not yet exist in a majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's instructional focus has been around increasing the use of Danielson Framework for Teaching. The focus currently is questioning and discussion, and ways to improve student engagement in the classroom. In addition, it was determined through teacher team meetings and whole staff professional development meetings that an increase in student writing was needed and that students needed to be able to monitor their own learning through the use of rubrics and checklists. The integration of self-assessment for students has been ongoing, as evidenced in classroom visits and discussions with teachers and the principal.
- Across classrooms visited, students were engaged in accountable talk across subject areas and peer conversations, such as turn and talk, were helping to deepen the understanding of the content area taught. For example, in the 4th grade English language arts (ELA) class in which the students were reading a traditional Native American story, tasks were differentiated to support student understanding and students worked in small groups. Students were working in different centers, using rubrics, visuals, checklists, and vocabulary prompts for planning their writing assignments. Activities were scaffolded to allow all learners an opportunity to engage in the lesson. Some teachers are using Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questioning levels to create higher-order questions. In a fifth grade ELA class the students had "talking sticks" which gave feedback to other students on their presentations, such as "good work" or "needs more text-based citations". However, this support did not exist in all classrooms visited, as seen in a math class where all students were assigned the same task with no entry level support or extensions for advanced students.
- Professional development to assist pedagogy is aligned to needs generated through observation data and staff input. Teachers are given binders to have instructional supports to enable them to be successful based on their student's entry points into the curricula. There is an increased number of teachers attending professional growth opportunities. Instructional coaching has assisted in strengthening the use of instructional shifts and is beginning to take place across the majority of classrooms.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and make purposeful decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-orders skills for all learners.

Impact

Students across grades and subjects, all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, are consistently engaged in a coherent and rigorous curriculum.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Ready-Gen for Literacy aligned to the Common Core and also addresses the academic shifts to teach literacy skills. Curriculum maps have been designed to use components of the scope and sequence that meet the needs of all students. Writing has been an emphasis to reflect higher-order thinking, such as inference skills and critical thinking for all learners. Students following the scope and sequence in grade two classes are drafting procedural essays and practice in small groups to plan and organize their writing. Go-Math is aligned to the Common Core, addresses the shifts and has been refined to prioritize units that address the standards and essential skills tested on the state exam. In addition, vertical team meeting have created alignment of curriculum across grades. Webb's DOK charts were aligned to the Common Core writing standards and displayed in all classrooms.
- The formative and summative data in math identified a need to strengthen students' foundational skills. Curriculum maps were revised to include more essential tasks in primary grades, and further geometry applications in the upper grades. Teachers across the school have developed clear objectives in "I can" statements using Webb's Depth of Knowledge. There is a focus on mathematical thinking so students can explain their thinking both in writing and verbally while increasing knowledge of numeracy. This process is evident in lesson plans as seen in a third grade science lesson. Students were asked to take turns in reading aloud, sharing the responsibility of a large article on classifying organisms. DOK questions were embedded in the lesson, along with a discussion of scientific careers and what schooling is needed to become a biologist/doctor/etc.
- Across classrooms teachers were using small group instruction and accountable talk to develop language and speaking skills. There is extensive use of multicultural resources as seen in the classrooms in children's literature, storytelling, music and drama to engage all students in rigorous habits. As seen in the kindergarten class working on a text, students were answering questions about key details. Spanish translations were available if needed. The students were discussing characters that have different experiences in the book and how they react.
- All student growth in college readiness is enhanced through access to project-based learning assignments. Students stated that they know "college work is hard" and they are learning new vocabulary every day to explain their ideas in discussions with partners and groups.

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

Teacher teams are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations using inquiry that supports goals and strengthen teacher capacity. Embedded distributed leadership structures that influence key decisions are in place.

Impact

Teacher capacity is improving and teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are engaged in creating their own protocol for teams of teachers observing one another and providing feedback to share best practices. In the teacher team meeting, teachers discussed a deep trust that has developed between teachers, staff and administration that has created an open and collaborative space collaborating on ideas that improve their practice and foster greater student outcomes. Coaches provide modeling/small group instruction based on data needs. Teachers participate on committees to support the entire school community, such as the School Leadership Team, the Safety Committee, Consultation Team and Professional Development Team.
- Teachers reported that all decision making is shared and that distributive leadership structures have formed as a result of high expectations for students and the culture of professionalism created by the principal. Teachers give feedback and discuss the outcomes of the lesson shared or observed to determine if students are encouraged to make connections, defend their position and take risks in all areas of instruction. Common preps for teacher teams to extend their work are in the daily schedule. Specialists on data teams determine meetings based on school-wide initiatives.
- Teachers at the team meeting observed were engaged in conversations that were targeted and data-driven, and protocols for looking at student work were in place. For example, the 4th grade team, which meets once a week, was looking at reading strategies across the curriculum and data reflecting low rates of improvement. Revisiting the ELA benchmark and the extended response portion was discussed. Through this analysis, they noticed that students struggled with synthesizing information to make their essays cohesive. It was determined that outcomes from this meeting will also be discussed at vertical meetings. As a result, teachers adjusted their practice to immerse students in organizing paragraphs and looking for details.
- During the professional development team meeting, teachers discussed goals and expectations in regard to a teacher survey to formulate further professional development for the entire school. It was stated that all teachers provide workshops based on their strengths. There is a team of experts which provide workshop models in different subject areas, such as “Having Fun in Math at Home” for any staff and all parent and families. In addition there are Teacher Team Tuesdays where all teams get together and use protocols to analyze student work, interpret data across multiple grades and content areas and look to make changes, if necessary, in regard to their own mastery of the instructional shifts.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school uses common assessments in all subject areas to track student progress and inform curricular and instructional decisions. Teachers consistently use ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

As a result, teachers consistently refine curricula and instruction to provide targeted interventions and varied scaffolds to meet all student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- There were rubrics for all assignments and checks for understanding in the classrooms observed. Curricula aligned assessment practices and grading policies provide actionable feedback. Students held up fingers/cards/color to show an understanding of the targeted lesson, groupings are predetermined and flexible and think/pair/share was evident across classes observed. Exit slips are used to check for understanding.
- There is a school-wide grading policy and subject-specific benchmarks. Baseline and diagnostic assessments are used at regular intervals. Gathering data and monitoring each student's progress over time is embedded into the school-wide system. Teachers use checklists and conferencing notes to identify who needs immediate attention during a lesson. Teachers access and analyze student outcomes and progress through benchmark assessments, formative and summative. Bulletin boards and classrooms have student work with rubrics with actionable feedback.
- Students are aware of their reading levels and discussed with me how important it is to read every day to get to the next level. Student work is assessed using a content-specific rubric for subject areas. There is continued refinement of assessment and feedback systems to ensure that students and families have a clear understanding of what their child is doing well and what they need to do to succeed. Grade and vertical teams look at assessment procedures to align and discuss next steps, revise curricula and make instructional decisions to further student learning outcomes.
- The leadership and faculty continuously examine their assessments to determine levels of rigor and ensure that they are effectively aligning assessments to key chosen standards in literacy and math. Assessment data provides clear evidence of individual and subgroups achievement. For example, teachers have identified challenges in writing assessments using a lesson study, and came up with various scaffolding techniques as instructional support. Teacher teams are assessing student learning in all subjects, across all grades, for understanding of content to target interventions, vary scaffolds and make revisions to instructional planning to meet all students learning needs.