



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

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2014-2015**

**The Clove Valley School**

**Elementary School R035**

**60 Foote Avenue  
Staten Island  
NY 10301**

**Principal: Melissa Garofalo**

**Date of review: December 17, 2014  
Lead Reviewer: Jessica Jenkins**

## The School Context

The Clove Valley School is an elementary school with 378 students from pre-kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 9% Black, 22% Hispanic, 59% White, 7% Asian students and 3% other. The student body includes 2% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95.7%.

## 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>Additional Findings</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>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**2.2 Assessment**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers collaborate to create assessments and rubrics that are aligned to the school's curricula, offer a clear portrait of student mastery and provide actionable feedback to students and teachers. Teachers supplement these assessments with ongoing checks for understanding and adjust their instruction as needed to meet identified student needs.

### Impact

Coherence in assessment practices in and out of the classroom ensure that teachers diagnose student need, make effective instructional adjustments, and ensure that students understand their next learning steps.

### Supporting Evidence

- A school-wide conference policy ensures that all teachers and students are engaged in meaningful assessment-based conversations. For example, in English Language Arts, all students must have their conference notebook out during reader's and writer's workshop to use as a toolbox to support their progress. Additionally, if a student has demonstrated mastery of a teaching point, the teacher indicates this in the notebook and sets a new goal with the child or introduces another strategy to ensure the student masters that teaching point.
- In math, all teacher's record a goal each student should work toward during a particular unit of study, dates that students was observed demonstrating progress on mastering that particular goal, and the date in which the student mastered the goal. Across classrooms, students are cognizant of their learning goals and can speak to which goal they were working towards as well as name a specific strategy they were utilizing.
- Across subjects, teachers record pre and post assessment data for all students and maintain separate trackers for students with disabilities and those scoring in the bottom third. This data informs small group instruction and was evidenced in several classrooms observed. Each topic assessed includes a carefully constructed rubric. For example, a fourth grade rubric assessing student mastery of written multi-digit numbers using base-ten numerals and expanded form defined what it meant to exceed that standard as well as what an emergent understanding of that standard meant. These rubrics allow teachers to track student mastery and adjust both whole and small group instruction.
- The school strongly believes that formative assessments are a powerful tool for strengthening student performance. As a result, teachers do not wait until the end of the unit to assess learning and to make corrections. Teachers use exit slips, misconception checks, student conferences, and self and peer assessments to guide their work.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Across most classrooms, teaching strategies and academic tasks immerse students in rigorous work and discussions that foster higher-order thinking. Instructional strategies illustrate some use of extensions that enrich discussions and evoke student ownership of learning.

### Impact

In most classrooms, cognitively demanding tasks promote consistent student progress towards mastery of standards. In a couple of classes there are missed opportunities to deepen student learning with tasks that allow all students to demonstrate high levels of discussions and ownership of learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- In one third grade reader's workshop, students analyzed character traits by interpreting character action using a variety of excerpts based on reading levels. Students reading above grade level worked with "Because of Winn Dixie," students on grade level read from either "My Rotten Redheaded Older Brother," or from "Tales of a Fourth grade Nothing, and struggling readers referenced excerpts from "Ready Freddy." Each group worked on differentiated graphic organizers while the teacher provided targeted small group instruction to a group of students who experienced difficulty differentiated between character actions and traits during the prior day's lesson.
- In a fifth grade math classroom, students persevered through various real-world word problems, were required to construct viable arguments, and critique the reasoning of others through a peer-assessment designed specifically for the task.
- In one classroom observed during a social studies lesson, students worked independently from a text book using the same graphic organizer to note the effect the Erie Canal had on New York City. A lack of student discussion and no evidence of planning for multiple entry points resulted in limited student ownership of learning and uneven levels of student engagement.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

Across subject areas and grades, curricula aligned to Common Core Learning Standard and instructional shifts offer all students rigorous learning experiences that require them to demonstrate high levels of critical thinking.

### Impact

All students' benefit from well-developed Common Core aligned curricula that drives coherent instruction across grades. This results in all students making steady and sustained progress towards mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards.

### Supporting Evidence

- Rigorous curriculum across subjects and grades provide students with rich learning experiences and exposes them to in-depth tasks. For example, teachers have incorporated and refined the use of the Exemplars program in math to supplement and enhance their Common Core Learning Standards aligned units of study. Universal Design for learning strategies such as varied open-ended tasks in one 5<sup>th</sup> grade math classroom required that each student take responsibility for a part of assorted word problems, based on the most recent assessment data. Real world application included thinking through fundraising for a field trip and planning for a barbeque, necessitating group thinking and discourse.
- In a third grade non-fiction unit based on an in depth study of diverse countries, students were required to use text evidence to ask and answer questions, navigate text features to locate relevant information, and use information from illustrations and words in a text to demonstrate understanding. A wide-range of readings from multiple sources and from heterogeneous Lexile levels supported all learners as well as multiple graphic organizers to support students' ability to integrate information from across texts.
- In a fourth grade English Language Arts unit integrating themes from social studies, students closely read a National Address by Barack Obama to America's Students. Students were taught to make inferences using prior knowledge and text evidence to support their thinking through class-wide discussion and written response.

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

The principal and her teachers have established a culture for learning that strategically and systematically communicates high expectations, encouraging families and teachers to work collaboratively toward improving student achievement. The principal and her staff are unwavering in their commitment to high standards of classroom practice through on-going professional learning and intentional and individualized support.

**Impact**

The principal, teachers, parents, and students work in partnership, resulting in mutual accountability for student achievement, providing a well-defined path towards college and career readiness.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A detailed professional development plan is rooted in desired student learning outcomes and includes data sources as well as specific professional learning opportunities and readings designed for staff to build instructional capacity. Specific and targeted professional development is based on carefully analyzed data from teacher observation reports. Instructional rounds based on an identified problem of practice are a part of this professional development plan, with the most recent rounds taking place around compliance versus engagement.
- Parents report that the principal and teachers communicate by means that are appropriate and effective to inform them of student progress and are available to conference with them about particular issues or challenges. All parents stated that the school pushes their students, specifically those with disabilities, to exceed learning expectations.
- The school has effective structures and systems in place to ensure that staff consistently communicates high expectations and engage parents in their child’s learning. These include regular emails and comprehensive letters outlining new units of study, conference notes, and goal-setting forms. Additionally, parents receive multiple updates with regard to their child’s independent reading level. Accompanying these updates are the specific reading behaviors their child should be displaying within their current Fountas & Pinnell Level as well as the next two-three levels.

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

The vast majority of teachers are involved in teacher teams that collaboratively analyze classroom practice, assessment data, student work and curricular tasks for the purpose of making thoughtful adjustments to ensure student learning at the highest level.

**Impact**

Teams have a clear instructional focus that promotes the implementation of the instructional shifts and results in shared improvements of teacher practice and increased student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In addition to common planning built into the school day, teacher teams utilize professional time on Monday and Tuesday mornings to meet in grade teams to build out units of study, document revisions, and plan for small group instruction. Additionally, differentiated professional development teams meet weekly with other teachers across grades based on areas of need based on observation data. These differentiated professional development plans have had a positive impact on teacher practice, particularly in the area of questioning.
- In one teacher team meeting, teachers utilized a formative assessment tool to analyze student work. The expectation noted was that students could quote accurately from the text and make inferences based on those quotes. The team utilized the tool to distinguish students who were far below, approaching, meeting, or exceeding the standards as well as logged a concise description of student performance within each category. They then planned for individualized and small group instruction where students fell far below the standard.
- A common formative assessment tracker is also utilized during teacher team meetings. This highlights the specific standard, what that child scored on that standard, and includes a re-assessment column to track whether or not teacher team adjustments resulted in student mastery of the standard.