



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The West Farms School

Elementary X006

**1000 East Tremont
Bronx, NY 10460**

Principal: Juliet Young

**Date of review: January 23, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Rafaela Espinal**

The School Context

PS 006 is a/an elementary school with 615 students from grade Pre-K through grade 5. The school population comprises 25% Black, 73% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 10% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 90%.

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	Developing
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	Developing
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	Developing
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	Developing

Area of Celebration

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations on teams. Structures are developing to support leadership capacity-building and to include teachers in key decisions.

Impact

Although there are structured opportunities for collaboration, the use of an inquiry approach is developing across the teams and teachers are beginning to make decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- There are teacher teams and common planning time opportunities that are structured and embedded in the school schedule. The work of teacher teams are beginning to promote the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts.
- A professional development committee is beginning to use the professional learning time on Mondays to turn-key on and off-site professional development to improve teacher effectiveness. The team also creates a Professional Development Newsletter to inform teachers of the opportunities. This professional development for teachers has not yet consistently led to strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers.
- Teaching strategies discussed are beginning to align to the achievement of the school goals. During the 5th grade team meeting observed, teachers began to examine student data using a protocol lead by a lead teacher. The teachers referred to data that is shared in a newly developed school-wide online data system. It includes spreadsheets to disclose student performance, strengths, and weakness. Teachers then discussed strategies that need re-teaching.
- Teachers reported they feel included and shared that they work alongside administrators and are included in decision-making. For example, they are all participating in the Teacher Leadership Program (TLP) professional development sessions planned and executed by a team with support from outside consultants (i.e. English language learner specialist) that is loosely aligned to school goals. In addition, an instructional cabinet meets weekly and includes staff members who represent a variety of constituents across grades.
- Distributive leadership structures are developing to provide teacher leadership opportunities. These structures include the School Leadership Team that meets on a monthly basis to discuss school-wide issues and generate possible solutions; College and Career Readiness (CCR) - Lighthouse Club Committee who develops, revises and monitors the clubs throughout the school year; Two Response to Intervention teams that meet weekly to address academic and behavioral concern of students, and the Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) Committee that provide school supports in understanding the Local and State MOSL. These structures do not yet affect student learning across the school.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Teaching strategies across classrooms did not consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula with challenging tasks to engage all learners. Furthermore, meaningful student work products and discussions were not evident across classrooms.

Impact

Academic tasks were not scaffolded to engage all learners; therefore, not all students work products and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- In 2 out of 7 classrooms observed, teachers used multiple entry points and had students in groups with appropriately challenging tasks. In some classes visited, students were seated in groups; however, they were completing the same task and worksheets. For example, all students in a second grade class were completing the same math page even when most students were not able to solve the problems.
- Across classrooms observed, there was minimal discussion by students and lessons reflected uneven levels of student participation. In some classes observed, students spoke to one another as they worked in groups, but the conversations were not based on content. For example, students spoke on taking turns and working together because the teacher asked them to work together. Teachers asked low-level questions. For example, "What did you read? Can you trace that sentence for me? Are you trying everything to get to four?" These questions led to low-level student work products.
- Student work products demonstrated low levels of student thinking. The student work was not varied and did not provide opportunities for students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills. For example, all students in another math class were completing the same page numbers and some did not complete anything. Across classrooms visited, student completed pages from textbooks or preprinted sheets for completion. There were missed opportunities to provide scaffolds that would lead to higher levels of thinking and participation. For example, during a writing class, students were asked to respond to the same prompt even when they were working in small groups with different adults and students were not given opportunities for choice.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders and faculty are in the process of aligning curricula to Common Core Learning Standards and integrating the instructional shifts. Academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits inconsistently across grades, subjects, and for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Impact

School leaders and faculty are starting to make purposeful decisions to ensure that curricula are Common Core aligned thus promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Curricula and academic tasks are hindering all learners from enhancing their higher-order skills.

Supporting Evidence

- The school is taking steps to align the curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards, content standards, and instructional shifts. Teachers engage in curricula enhancement professional development sessions every Monday and have begun to address meta-cognition, explicit instruction, and how to write an effective learning target. Learning targets were displayed in most classrooms.
- Teachers collaborate from various grades to create curriculum calendars. Teachers are executing the curriculum materials and lesson plans gathered. A review of curriculum maps revealed, teachers are starting to include tasks that include scaffolds that support students' individualized needs as evidenced by some curricula maps.
- The school leaders are beginning to use Professional Learning Teams (PLT's) to support teachers in the creation of academic tasks that address diverse learning styles and academic needs. Although the school leaders shared that the staff has engaged in professional development to promote the integration of higher-order thinking skills, the use of think-pair-share activities, accountable talk stems, and the use of open-ended questions, these items were not evident across grades and subjects in planning documents such as unit plans and lesson plans.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school's faculty has started to use common assessments across subject areas to determine student progress toward goals. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Data analysis is resulting in teachers beginning to make consistent adjustments in curricula and instruction. The school's assessment practices are not yet advancing students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Although the school shared that there is an expectation for the use of strategic questioning to check for understanding and student friendly checklists that correlate to the performance task and are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, they were inconsistently implemented across classroom visited.
- There is a school-wide data collection site-online data tracker to help teachers and staff analyze data, examine trends, identify strengths and weaknesses, and plan accordingly. The data gathered include Teachers College Running Records to form strategy groups and guided reading groups, pre and post tests, Foundations assessments to measure students' phonemic awareness as well as knowledge of Concepts of Print, and various levels of student writing samples. However, the adjustments to curriculum based on those data sources were not evident or consistently used to adjust instruction.
- School leaders reported that teachers use a two-point rubric to check for understanding. Across classroom visited, learning targets were displayed and some teachers used thumbs up/thumbs down, and some teachers used the red light-green light checks for understanding approach. In one class, the teacher used white boards. However, effective adjustments based on checking for understanding was inconsistently observed in classes visited.
- Across classrooms visited, there was limited use of questions to check for understanding and students self-assessing their work. In one class, the teacher used exit slips to check for understanding; however, there were not adjustments made based on data captured during the lesson.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations to the entire staff and are developing training and a system of accountability aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders are developing systems to provide feedback to families.

Impact

The school is developing systems that are connected to a path to college and career readiness and beginning to provide supports to achieve high expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leaders communicate high expectations to staff through the teacher handbook that is distributed to all staff at the beginning of each school year and highlights the school's expectations. Additionally, the school leaders communicate expectations through the PS 6 Lighthouse Professional Development Quarterly Newsletter *the Guiding Light*. These documents are in the process of becoming aligned to Danielson Framework for Teaching.
- The school is developing expectations that are connected to a path to college and career. School leaders have established a monthly newsletter to share with families. The newsletter keeps them abreast of upcoming events as well as highlight school-wide accomplishments. For example, the announcements of monthly assemblies are published in newsletters. These documents are in the process of becoming aligned to a path to college and career readiness. The school has established student involvement in Lighthouse Leagues: College and Career Ready Clubs. These clubs are beginning to provide families with information on college and career expectations.
- Parents are aware of the behavioral expectation and the use of the color-coded Lighthouse conduct chart to monitor students' behavior and support students as they self-monitor. There is a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports System to modify behavior and recognize positive choices made by students. The school is beginning to consistently inform parents of their children's behavioral and academic progress.
- The school is beginning to establish consistent partnerships with families and support student progress towards college and career readiness. The coach and the parent coordinator have planned a series of workshops based on the results of the school survey.