



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Public School 017

Elementary-Middle School X017

**778 Forest Avenue
Bronx, New York 10456**

Principal: Marlin Hoggard

Date of Review: February 25-26, 2015

Lead Reviewer: Arthur Fusco

The School Context

Public School 017 is a special education school with 405 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 31% Black, 47% Hispanic, 3% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 20% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 81% of the students enrolled and girls account for 19%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 85.7%.

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	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	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

Across all four sites, all teachers participate in professional learning communities (PLCs) that consistently examine student work and data, and provide a means for teachers to have input on adjusting and adapting curricula and teacher practices.

Impact

School leaders' distributed leadership structures have strengthened teacher practices through professional learning communities ensuring a shared commitment to meeting school and student goals, resulting in increased student performance.

Supporting Evidence

- Structured PLCs have strengthened teacher abilities to provide curricular adjustments and refinement, and with a formalized teacher-to-teacher observation process, embedded systems have led to the improvement of teacher practice, resulting in improved student outcomes. Examples of curricular adjustments that the teams worked on were: use of modeling and concrete examples; use of organizers, including, picture symbols and now/later charts; use of alternative augmentative communication (AAC) devices; allow "wait time for students to process the information; and student grouping. Data from the Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) indicates that students in alternate assessment programs showed an average increase of 25.1 points in reading, and data from the Ed Performance series indicates students in standardized assessment programs showed an average increase of 71 points on reading comprehension.
- During a PLC meeting, teachers verbalized that school leaders have developed a culture of collaboration, respect, and trust. They indicated that they are active members of the school community and have a true voice in student learning. Teachers pursuing educational leadership and administrative degrees were involved in creating the student handbook, "PRIDE", and the school's Curriculum Task Force were instrumental in bringing Structured Methods in Language Education (SMiLE) and Writing Matters to the school.
- School leaders are strategic in designing classroom and cluster teachers' schedules, across the sites, enabling teachers to meet twice a week. Based upon this collaborative team configuration using the Consultancy Protocol, teacher team discussions led to the administration of Fountas & Pinnel (F&P), so teachers could more effectively monitor student performance in reading and design successful strategies to increase student achievement. In September 2014, 47 students were administered the Fountas & Pinnell. In January, results showed 36 of 47 students achieved their targeted goal, 10 of 47 students exceeded their targeted goal, and 1 of 47 is progressing toward his goal.
- The school has contracted with the School-wide Information System Company (SWIS), to help them monitor student disciplinary occurrences. During a team meeting, teachers took time to analyze the SWIS data and the results of January's Fountas & Pinnell scores. As a result, they are able to share observable trends between academic outcomes and student behavior occurrences with the rest of the school.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

The school's core belief system is that students learn best when teaching practices reflect lessons that are engaging and integrated with small group activities differentiated with multiple entry points and, students' produce meaningful work products and discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Across classrooms, teaching strategies are challenging and support students in demonstrating higher order thinking in discussions and work products. However, there were missed opportunities for some students to have ownership of their work.

Supporting Evidence

- In the classrooms visited, opportunities for students to engage in peer-to-peer interactions were evident. In some classrooms, teachers prompted and directed students to "Turn and Talk" with their partners, while in other classrooms, during group activities, students initiated peer-to-peer conversation.
- Classroom teachers are developing and asking higher order questions utilizing the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) skill set matrix. For example, during a fourth grade class on American history, the teacher asked, "Name some of our presidents and what are some of the accomplishments they are known for?" "Why do we need to have presidents?" While across classrooms, teachers use a range of Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questions, this practice is not yet strategically embedded, thereby limiting some students to extend their thinking.
- In a few classrooms visited, students were responding to yes/no questions, teachers used basic recall questions, which did not give students opportunities to expand on concepts, thus not promoting high levels of students' critical thinking and did not push students to extend their thinking across all content areas.
- Differentiated supports that address access, interest, and learning style are planned based on identified student needs. Across classrooms, evidence of the following was consistent; workshop model and modeling, effective use of classroom and 1:1 paraprofessionals to support the varied academic levels of students, use of hands-on manipulatives, student use of personal white boards, visual cues and prompting, picture symbols, activating prior knowledge, AAC, and graphic organizers.
- Clear scaffolds and multiple entry points, such as differentiated groupings, direct teaching of academic vocabulary, and visual aids, allowed learners a variety of means to complete tasks and demonstrate their thinking. For example, in a second grade social studies class, students were provided a graphic organizer that allowed them to summarize information to write a paragraph to retell the important events in Rosa Park's life. However, this lesson did not allow students to make a deeper connection between the story and their own lives.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Curricula across the school's organization are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and have been refined and adapted to provide multiple entry points for all learners.

Impact

The school's Common Core and customized curricula shape the foundation for coherent and rigorous instruction across the vast majority of the classrooms, ensuring cognitive engagement for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Curriculum maps from Code X and Go Math show that teachers are providing students in standardized assessment programs with challenging and higher-order thinking tasks. For students in alternate assessment programs, the school aligned its ELA units of study to the Common Core Learning Standards enabling students to develop progressive understandings and opportunities to apply learned skills in new situations.
- The school uses evidenced-based instructional practices to support students' attainment of higher order thinking. In a second grade class of students with autism, students used text features to construct a biography of Rosa Parks.
- The school makes purposeful choices about the math curricula based on formative assessments, gathered from Go Math and Equals. In Go Math, 58% of students demonstrated an average increase of 9%, and in Equals, 81% of the students demonstrated an average increase of 8 points.
- Across classrooms visited, emphasis was noted in making content relevant to real life situations. For example, in a second grade class with students with cognitive disabilities, students were learning about the seasons and what appropriate attire to wear, while in a first grade autistic classroom, students were learning time telling and how it relates to their schedules and daily routines.
- Across the organization, each site's professional learning community on curriculum and instruction ensures that curricula adjustments and extensions keep students cognitively engaged. During professional learning community meetings, teachers use information gathered from the analysis of student work to refine the curricula to support student learning. For example, teachers analyzing student work on memoir writing noted a negative trend on language and style that prompted teachers to assist students with descriptive language and word choice.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across the school's organization, teachers create and use common assessments, and create and use rubrics, aligned to the curricula, to provide feedback and ongoing checks for understanding to all students.

Impact

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and ongoing checks for understanding to make instructional adjustments to classroom practices that improve student outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers create skill-specific tracking forms where student's levels of progress and independence are monitored and documented. A second grade teacher used the tracking form for her class. One group was being monitored on how to use concrete materials to model number and number relationships for whole numbers, while for a second group, data was tracked on how to use a number line to locate numbers one to three.
- Teachers use pre- and post-assessments for all subject areas that are aligned to the school's curricula. In addition, teachers gather a variety of formative and summative data through the use of the Ed Performance Series, Core X, Go Math, Fountas and Pinnell, Foundations, Equals, SMiLE, New York State Alternate Assessment (NYSAA) and SANDI, and the results from the benchmarks are used to identify trends and patterns that lead to adjustments in instruction impacting student outcomes.
- Across classroom visited, teachers were observed using various checks for understanding including class discussions, exit slips, teacher-questioning specific to the tasks, and student self-evaluation slips. During a professional learning community meeting, teachers indicated that they use the checks for understanding to better guide them in making adjustments to their lesson planning and instruction. As evident in some of the lesson plans, teachers incorporated additional teaching strategies to increase student achievement, such as the use of various graphic organizers, specific student grouping, visual prompting, alternative communication devices (ACC), picture symbols and use of manipulatives.
- Across classrooms visited, teachers use rubrics with post-its to give students actionable feedback and recommendations for next steps.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders have established a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for instruction, professional growth, and the involvement of families to support all students' path and progress to college and career readiness.

Impact

School leaders and staff have a mutual respect and accountability dedicated to students' success, family involvement, and levels of professionalism, which has resulted in increased student achievement and improved teacher practice.

Supporting Evidence

- Parent workshops during the school day and the Saturday Academy play a significant role in enhancing parent involvement and parent-teacher communication. The workshops provided by teachers and related service providers include: sensory integration, the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECs), reading and math through Common Core Learning Standards expectations, Asperger Syndrome and agency supports. Thus there are multiple opportunities for a home-to-school connection that fully support helping parents meet the school's high expectations for their children as they progress towards college and career readiness.
- The school provides parent and student handbooks and clear lines of verbal and written communication to deepen families understanding of college and career expectations for their children. In addition to the communication log book, each teacher sends home monthly newsletters reflecting the expectations of the curricula and samples of student work products. The school provides staff with the "The Bridge to Success" handbook that emphasizes the school charter, We want to feel..., In order to feel this way consistently... In addition, the staff handbook addresses the homework policy, the role and responsibilities of the teacher and paraprofessional and a template of a lesson plan format that targets student interests, and employs teachers to use supports and strategies including the workshop model, visual supports, and intensify questioning.
- During the parent meeting, the parents indicated that the parent coordinator and support staff were instrumental in creating a supportive and nurturing environment. The parents stated that they are involved in goal setting and development of their children's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The parents indicated that the newsletters were helpful in providing them with information on the dates, topics, and locations of school sponsored parent workshops. The vast majority of the parents stated that on a daily basis, they were aware what the teacher was teaching their children. In addition, a parent stated that her child was issued an iPad which enabled him to communicate and be more engaged.
- The school's work in Emotional Literacy has attracted attention from the South Tyneside School in the United Kingdom. School leaders from South Tyneside visited P017X to observe and gather additional information on P017X's social-emotional learning program.
- Across the organization, all staff continued to receive professional development training on questioning and discussion techniques. Based on Advance, over a one year span, there were 21% more teachers rated effective on 3B, Questioning.