



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**The Bilingual School**

**Elementary School 025**

**811 East 149<sup>th</sup> Street  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Carmen Toledo-Guerrero**

**Date of review: November 25, 2014**

**Lead Reviewer: Yolanda Torres**

## The School Context

The Bilingual School is an elementary school with 495 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 9% Black, 90% Hispanic, and 1% other students. The student body includes 22% English language learners and 11% special education students. Boys account for 55% of the students enrolled and girls account for 45%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 93.0%.

## 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>Proficient</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>Additional Findings</b> | <b>Proficient</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>Celebration</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>Proficient</b>     |

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**3.4 High  
Expectations**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### **Findings:**

The leadership communicates high expectations to all stakeholders connected to an atmosphere of mutual accountability and a road to future aspirations.

### **Impact:**

The communication of high expectations leads to effective partnerships and supports resulting in student achievement.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- High expectations are clearly understood by all stakeholders. Teachers provide evidence of all training sessions as well as ongoing communication to students and families on the importance of instructional growth. Service providers, alongside teachers, work collaboratively and communicate in unison clear expectations with meaningful and purposeful feedback so that all student populations take ownership of their learning as they prepare for the next level.
- The administration uses the Danielson Framework for Teaching and surveys as a means to ascertain teacher understanding and implementation of practices to ensure that the culture of learning permeates consistently from teacher to teacher and from classroom to classroom.
- Students effectively articulate how knowledge and skill acquisition connect to their success towards college and career readiness. They understand the “why” of learning as they complete projects; engage in hands-on activities, conduct community service through the Student Leader Council and experience acting and singing through the Drama Club. Additionally, parents and the school staff have established a strong partnership as they participate in a variety of activities and meetings to support students’ progress for future achievement. Some of these venues include the First Friday, Second Cup of Coffee with the Principal, Tuesday parent-teacher sessions, monthly Parent Association meetings and Saturday Exploration.
- Staff is intentional in their collaborations and trainings, thus ensuring that there is coherence in their ongoing conversations with each other, students and families. During Parent Engagement Tuesdays, staff and families engage in meaningful activities where families receive ‘substantive feedback’ on their children’s progress to ensure ownership on future aspirations and steps towards independence.
- The school-wide belief on high expectations for student academic achievement is conceived through the school motto: “*Believe and Achieve*” which is consistently referred to by a school community committed to the development of the whole child to ‘unlock the potential of each and every student.’

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### **Findings:**

Teacher pedagogy incorporates a variety of strategies that scaffold student learning for engagement in high levels of discussion and work products for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities.

### **Impact:**

As a result of teacher practices in questioning and discussion, students engage in meaningful conversations and produce work that accelerates their learning.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The instructional focus on question and discussion techniques is a common goal that is evident in every classroom. This consistent trend provides a common language and instructional expectations where all students' entry points of learning are taken into account for overall improvement.
- Emphasis on accountable talk stems and discussion prompts promotes student authentic interactions as they think critically and respond with wonderings leading to research and discovery. Teachers' knowledge on language acquisition and granular strategies ignite students' curiosity to venture further on topics, issues, or ideas resulting in project-based learning projects.
- Teachers and service providers work in tandem in classrooms to ensure that students engage in learning via role-playing, discussion of story messages and lessons learned as they complete skits. This collaborative approach serves as a unifying process where all students, including English language learners, students with disabilities come together learn from each other, and lend mutual support.
- The professional development plan serves as a guide for teachers to understand how to scaffold teaching practices that address individual students' modes of learning and entry points. There is evidence of a variety of graphic organizers and child-friendly rubrics that provide support as students gain paths towards independent learning.
- Although the school has demonstrated student engagement in challenging tasks with the provision of multiple entry points towards learning, there is inconsistent evidence of high-quality supports and extensions for all students, especially students with disabilities, to demonstrate higher order thinking in their work.

## Additional Findings

|                           |   |                |                   |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Quality Indicator:</b> | <b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b> | <b>Rating:</b> | <b>Proficient</b> |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|

### Findings:

Teacher engagement in collaborative meetings provides opportunity for professional growth, capacity-building and leadership development.

### Impact

Collaborative teams design the focus of their meetings and make key decisions on student learning that lead to teacher ownership and improved instructional practices.

### Supporting Evidence

- All teachers engage in inquiry-based collaborations where they share ideas and see how everything connects: Danielson Framework for Teaching, instructional shifts, the Quality Review Rubric, the school-wide professional development plan and their work. Teachers consult with each other regarding student work and how to apply collegial recommendations back to the classroom.
- Teachers consistently analyze data: dissect assessment results vis-à-vis student work to identify trends across all classrooms. All specialty teachers, inclusive of the Horizon citywide initiative, contribute and have a voice in the decision-making process in student learning. Teachers appreciate given the opportunity to decide on agenda items and lead the discussions with the accountability premise of following through with an email to the leadership with their accomplishments and next steps.
- The goal-setting process with groups of students has contributed to teachers' professional growth as evidenced by the comparison of student progress. As teachers share their practices and individual improvement, they observe demonstrated progress in their lesson execution, collaborations and student performance.
- Teachers keep track of agenda items and minutes of meetings for their one-on-one sessions with the school principal to discuss the impact of their collaborative work thus far in their classrooms. This process provides both principal and teachers with vital information on how the decisions made by the teams informs on student outcomes.

**Findings:**

Teachers use common assessments aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) to analyze student outcomes to provide feedback to reach student goals.

**Impact:**

Results of assessment tools provide teachers with viable information that leads to improved student outcomes.

**Supporting Evidence**

- As teacher teams analyze assessment outcomes, school leaders assess and norm the practice to ensure that the levels of support and resources are appropriately assigned and are helping teachers improve their instruction.
- School leaders collect a sampling of student work, as indicated in the Writing Units and Assessment Calendar, in order to provide “Glows” and “Grows” feedback to teachers on areas of celebration and areas in need of focus. This process serves as a model so teachers can replicate as they look at student work and provide student with meaningful feedback.
- Student goals are revisited to ensure that they are making progress. One-on-one conferences take place with individual students so that they can assess their own work. This provides the students with feedback on how they are reaching their goal. This process is done using a rubric for students to have an understanding of expected outcomes.
- Students articulate clearly how teachers’ “Glow” and “Grow” feedback helps them improve their learning. They are aware of their levels in reading and the next steps to take towards improvement.

|                           |                       |                |                   |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| <b>Quality Indicator:</b> | <b>1.1 Curriculum</b> | <b>Rating:</b> | <b>Proficient</b> |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|

**Findings:**

Curriculum maps and units are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards where academic tasks are challenging and accessible to all learners.

**Impact:**

CCLS-aligned curricula results in coherence from classroom to classroom with evidentiary student cognitive engagement.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders and teachers have made purposeful decisions in the adjustment of the CCLS-aligned curricula to meet the needs of students, thus granting access to standards-based curricula to all learners. Based on last year's experience with the curricula, the units have been revamped and refined to meet the school-wide goals.
- Teachers engage in meaningful conversations to ensure coherent delivery of instruction. In order to provide content accessibility to all learners, especially English language learners and students with disabilities, they use a tracker for differentiation of instruction that provides them with useful information on student progress. This exposure to differentiated tasks provides students with work that challenges their thinking, thus encouraging more participation.
- As students engage in in-depth problem solving activities, teachers can ascertain students' areas of need with next steps for achievement. There is constant check for understanding to ensure that the tasks are rigorous in nature and accessible to all learners with needed scaffolds for successful knowledge acquisition.