



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Wilton Elementary School

Elementary School X30

**510 East 141 Street
Bronx
NY 10454**

Principal: Debra Michaux

**Date of review: January 22, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Sandra Litrico**

The School Context

Wilton is an elementary school with 565 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 21% Black, 75% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 15% English language learners and xx% special education students. Boys account for 50 of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 89%.

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	Proficient
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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry based professional collaborations. Protocols are used and distributed leadership structures are implemented.

Impact

These collaborations promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards. School wide structures and decisions to improve teacher practices and student learning are developed using teacher input.

Supporting Evidence

- Scheduling of common planning time ensures teachers have time to meet and collaborate. Teachers gather in grade level teams to develop and analyze student work and data. They also develop lessons and formative assessment tasks aligned to CCLS. Vertical Team meetings are designed to connect the work, focus standards and problems of practice across grades. Special education and dual language teams also meet weekly with a focus on addressing the needs of subgroups.
- Teachers facilitate and rotate roles including setting agendas, facilitating the meeting and maintaining team documents. Grade leaders disseminate instructional information to their respective grades leads; promoting distributive leadership. They facilitate professional development sessions and support teachers in improving teacher pedagogy which impacts student learning. Teachers also give input on curriculum decisions and are empowered to make revisions in units based on student assessments.
- During a grade three teacher team meeting, teacher's analyzed Chapter 5 Go Math performance tasks and noticed many students did not answer all parts of the questions. They brainstormed ideas to assist students in understanding multi-step word problems and how to break it down. Suggestions included bulleting each step, underlining and drawing pictures. The vertical second, third grade team developed station teaching centers to effectively teach vocabulary and reading strategies.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

There is uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher order thinking skills in all student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms there is a common belief that students learn best through small group instruction with supports and scaffolds, where students are engaged in critical thinking and discussions. However, these practices were inconsistent throughout classroom visits. In most classrooms supports were limited and some students were not challenged.
- During a mathematics lesson, students were solving division problems by using the strategy “act it out” The students had to make three equal groups using twelve counters. Although the students had correctly completed the problem in their workbook, the teacher modeled the same problem and did not ask them to explain their thinking. Similar problems were given to all the students as a follow-up with no differentiation or challenge. In another mathematics lesson, students completed three pages of multi digit division problems in their workbook. As a result, there is limited engagement and no evidence of high level extensions.
- The literacy lesson focused on a story from ReadyGen entitled “Statues in the Ice”. Although the objective read “I can ask and answer questions about key details in the text”, the entire lesson focused on the main character. Students read sections of the story and were asked low level questions including “How do we know the story is about Alice”. There was little evidence of student work products or discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation. Most teachers did not promote meaningful discussions using team talk or text based discussions that are part of the curriculum.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Rigorous tasks that challenge all students including students with disabilities are not evident across classrooms and subjects. Planning for engagement and instructional coherence across the curricular using student data is inconsistent across the school.

Impact

The planned units are not consistently challenging to all students, limit student progress and embody inconsistent levels of rigor. School leaders and faculty are in the process of integrating the instructional shifts and designing tasks that challenge students to think write and problem solve at higher levels.

Supporting Evidence

- The school is in its second year of implementation of common core aligned curriculum programs ReadyGen and Go Math. The literacy program includes phonics and word analysis. Although teachers have created pacing calendars with noted topics they have not refined the development of curriculum maps. Some teachers are using an Understanding by Design template while others write the topic and workbook page in a box. As a result students tasks and learning activities vary widely in planning quality.
- Across classrooms the lessons implemented by teachers demonstrate varied levels of understanding in the literacy and mathematics instructional shifts. As a result lessons do not always appropriately challenge students or support higher levels of thinking.
- Multiple entry points are noted in some of the teachers' lesson plans through scaffold instruction for small groups. Although teachers said that they tier students by ability in each lesson, the majority of teachers do not indicate specific plans for sub groups in their lesson. Mathematics lessons do include page numbers of re-teaching and above level activities in the workbook that teachers assign students. Learning tasks do not cognitively engage all learners, For example, all students in the kindergarten class were copying sentences into their notebooks. In addition, students in the special education class were not asked to explain their strategies or extend their thinking as they solved division problems. Although the school wide focus is on TELEC (Think, Explain/Respond, Listen, Extend and Challenge) there was little evidence of this in student tasks or activities.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Although the school utilizes a wide range of assessments to track students' progress, all teachers are not consistently using data to make needed changes to the curriculum, student groupings and their instructional practices.

Impact

Teachers are limited in gauging student learning outcomes and the effectiveness of their curricula and instructional practice. Thus far, the approach is to identify the needs of individual students based on assessments. However, teachers are not consistently using data to make curriculum modifications.

Supporting Evidence

- Some teachers use check lists and exit slips on a regular basis to assess student understanding of prior lessons. This level of checking for student understanding, however, is not the norm across grades and classrooms. Additionally, although teachers repeatedly ask questions, many do not analyze student responses as a check for understanding. This hinders teacher's ability to make timely decisions and effective adjustments so that students receive daily feedback and are able to master concepts and further their own learning.
- Some teachers use rubrics and/or "glow & grow" comments to provide written feedback to students but the quality of feedback varies. Some teachers give meaningful feedback with next steps for improvement, while others write general comments.
- School leaders spend time looking at school wide and classroom level data to create grouping charts and prioritize skills and strategies. They analyze data and create charts and graphs which they share with the staff. Teachers also review data during team meetings and reflect on.
- There is an assessment calendar which includes cycles for review and analysis. Performance based assessments in writing are used by teachers to determine individual student needs and trends. However, there was little evidence in classroom visits that students test data informed instruction. A case in point was the word work lesson which reviewed the vowel sound of the letter "e". All students received the same lesson with no differentiation and many students already knew the sound. There were no planned activities to extend the lesson.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

High expectations are consistently messaged to the staff via the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching in trainings and other modes of communications. Workshops and progress reports keep families apprised of student achievement toward college and career readiness.

Impact

Structures that support the schools high expectations build systems of accountability for student academic, social and emotional behavior. Staff and school leaders offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The staff handbook delineates clear expectations for providing a quality education for all students. Staff meeting and professional learning sessions all focus on high expectations for student learning. The schools mission statement is posted in English and Spanish throughout the schools hallways and classrooms.
- The school hosts an open house and Family night in addition to parent-teacher conferences to support student progress toward college and career readiness. The school holds parent workshops on English language learners, common core expectations, adult English as a second language and citizenship classes to support families and promote a solid partnership between school and home. Parents shared that teachers regularly send updates on their child's progress.
- Career Day exposes students to a variety of different careers and exposes them to different fields of interest. Guest speakers deliver clear message as to the importance of education in assuming these roles and career choices.
- Positive behavior Intervention System (PBIS) matrix is posted and highlights appropriate behaviors in the classroom and common areas. Routines are followed and students are respectful to one another as well as to staff. There is an inclusive school tone that is conducive to learning. On a daily basis, students are rewarded for exhibiting specific traits that are introduced monthly and reinforced daily in classrooms, such as self-control and perseverance. Students work well in groups and follow classroom rules. They are orderly throughout the building and follow teachers' directions.
- Student Council promotes community service activities. Students are also involved in lunch and after school clubs including sports, photography, dance, fitness and technology. During this time students learn important attributes like perseverance, goal setting and team building skills. Students are encouraged to Think, Explain, Listen Extend their learning and Challenge themselves (TELC).