



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 033 Timothy Dwight

Elementary School X033

**2424 Jerome Avenue
Bronx
NY 10468**

Principal: Lynette Santos

**Dates of review: March 24, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Jacqueline Gonzalez**

The School Context

P.S. 033 Timothy Dwight is an elementary school with 1,061 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 10% Black, 85% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 27% English language learners and 18% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 91.2%.

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	Proficient
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	Celebration	Well Developed
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	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School-wide assessment practices are embedded in all content areas and are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Rubrics, student self- and peer- assessments, data from bi-weekly assessments allow for a clear portrait of student mastery and progress.

Impact

Teachers' and school leaders' use of the analysis of data to inform curricular and instructional adjustments ensures that students' learning needs are met through targeted supports and extensions.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal and faculty have collaboratively designed an assessment program for the school that requires increased rigor and standards- based tasks for all students. Instructional coaches and teachers use resources from an online system, IReady, which are aligned to state exams in English and math, to design assessments based on the learning targets for each unit of study. Assessments are reviewed and approved by assistant principals to determine the level of cognitive challenge and critical thinking required in tasks, standards alignment and opportunities to build stamina. As a result assessments are rigorous and provide feedback to teachers about student work, progress and learning needs. Teachers then plan using the data, for example, to ensure students are grouped based on item skills analyses from assessments and work on differentiated tasks within a lesson.
- Teachers systematically analyze data in team meetings and receive biweekly progress information from administration of school-wide assessments. They conduct error analysis and determine what strategies they should use to address the trends or gaps in student work. This provides a clear picture of mastery of goals for specific groups of students. For example, as a result of early fall assessments teachers built in lessons on fluency in math based on their findings that most students in grades three to five were scoring below proficiency on number sense.
- The analysis of student work and data informs a strategic school-wide reading and math intervention program designed to meet the targeted needs for supports and extensions of learning for all learners. The school's strategic and targeted Response to Intervention structures are designed to meet the individual learning needs of all learners including students with disabilities, English language learners and higher performing students. Each afternoon, for one full hour all teachers meet with carefully designed groups of twelve students or less, that have specific reading and math needs in common. Groups are flexible and allow for movement based on mastery of skills and content. All staff, including paraprofessionals, are engaged with students and use various resources such as Passport Voyager and strategies for reading such as those included in the Wilson program and scaffolding for English language development. During this time which the principal and faculty hold as a high priority as evidenced by the level of engagement throughout the building, the needs of all learners are strategically met and student progress across the school is improved.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Pedagogy is aligned to the curricula and reflects the school's shared set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. Teachers consistently provide lessons that engage students in discussion and rigorous tasks.

Impact

Across classrooms, discussions reflect the use of higher order thinking skills and content language. Across most classrooms teachers require that students explain concepts fully using subject-specific terms. In some lessons, however, there are missed opportunities to engage all students in consistent use of content language or explicit ownership of conceptual understanding.

Supporting Evidence

- The administration and faculty have engaged in collaborative development about their beliefs around teaching and learning. The principal articulated that they believe students learn best when teachers model expectations explicitly using the Fisher and Frey model which includes a mini-lesson, opportunities for independent practice and small group work as well as time for students to share their learning. Lessons observed from early childhood classes to the upper grades reflect these components and consistently engage students in observing, then trying out the concept with support before independent practice.
- In one kindergarten class the teacher modeled using explicit "think aloud" strategies how she would go through the process of classifying random objects into groups based on specific characteristics of the objects such as color, size, and shape. The teacher then allowed students to classify several objects with her and talk to partners about why they would group objects together. Finally students were given a task to go around the room on their own and find objects with similar characteristics that would place them in the same group. This progressive release of responsibility creates independence in student learning that builds critical thinking and higher-order skills.
- In early grade science lessons, students were prompted to use academic vocabulary to answer questions about plant growth or classifying objects. Most lessons provide time for students to share with one another but do not explicitly require content language in the discussion. In other lessons teachers accepted students' limited phrases or one word answers as correct and built on students' responses by expanding on their thoughts; thus missing opportunities to push student ownership of learning and to engage in more detailed demonstration of their thinking.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school's curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and reflect planning across content areas that integrate the Common Core instructional shifts through project-based learning units and academic tasks that promote higher-order thinking and discussions.

Impact

Academic tasks and instructional plans, designed to promote student thinking and engagement, ensure a coherent instructional program that requires college and career readiness skills of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular planning documents and lesson plans demonstrate the school's expectations that students engage in thinking and discussion about their learning as required in the Common Core Learning Standards. For example, across grades reading and language arts lessons include non-fiction social studies and science texts and concepts and promote rigor, academic language development and conceptual understanding. For example, in a prekindergarten class, students discuss how plants grow and change and have opportunities to discuss their predictions about how long it will take for seeds to become plants. The language objective for students to ask and answer questions about details and make connections between self and text were evidenced in students' discussions.
- Units of study are paced to provide supports for English language learners and students with disabilities appropriate challenge and support that they need in order to access the complex texts in the curriculum and engage in rigorous tasks. Students are identified for differentiated tasks and grouped in Tiers 1 through 3 from less to greater support based on skills. For example, in a math lesson on fractions, Tier 1 students will solve multi-step verbal problems requiring comparison of fractions with unlike denominators, while Tier 3 students will use graphic representations to identify greater and lesser values. Across subjects these different levels of difficulty are reflected in tasks and texts and ensure that all students have opportunities to demonstrate their thinking.
- Instructional shifts are specifically identified in units of study as an expectation for the delivery of instruction, selection of resources and design of learning tasks to support all learners in meeting the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards. For example in a fourth grade unit on comparing the elements of non-fiction vs. fiction texts, shifts in literacy include ensuring that students are reading a true balance of literary and informational texts and that they build knowledge about the world around them through texts rather than the teacher or activities. The explicit mentioning of the shifts in units and lessons ensure that lessons across grades and content areas engage students in multiple types of reading and that they use evidence from texts to demonstrate their learning.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

High expectations are consistently communicated to the entire staff, students, and school community, and there are various structures in place to support all stakeholders in meeting those expectations.

Impact

As a result, there is a sense of mutual accountability amongst the staff in meeting school goals and parents are supported in helping their children, including higher achieving students, as they progress towards expectations for college and careers.

Supporting Evidence

- Expectations for teaching are made clear through the components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, which are embedded in the observation and feedback to teachers as well as in faculty meetings and professional development. Teachers state that communication from administration is consistent and supportive as they endeavor to be effective and highly effective in the prioritized components of the framework, including discussion and questioning strategies to engage students in challenging tasks.
- The school staff and administration ensures a safe and productive environment that provides academic as well as social emotional supports to reflect expectations that the development of the whole child is addressed. These expectations for students are supported by partnerships with organizations such as Dream yard and Mission Society. Parents state that these non- academic opportunities are available and encourage their children beyond the school day. Additionally supports for parents in learning about the Common Core as well as classes for English language development are very helpful and well attended by parents who strive to support their children in succeeding academically. Parents state the disposition of the school staff and availability by phone or in person, is consistent across grades and that they feel well supported in helping their children beyond the school day.
- Parents receive bimonthly progress reports to help them understand how their child is progressing through the curriculum. In addition to Tuesday afternoon parent engagement hours where parents can meet with individual teachers, the school has regularly scheduled goal setting meetings with students and their families and provide ongoing information to families that allow them to make decisions about the types of support they can offer or request to help children meet their goals. As a result there is a high level of trust and communication between the school staff and families.

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

Across grades and departments all teachers meet regularly in structured collaborative planning and inquiry teams. Teams of teachers assess student work and instructional planning documents to assess student learning for groups of students they share.

Impact

Teacher team work promotes the achievement of school-wide goals related to the expectations of Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. The analysis of student work and subsequent discussions about teaching strategies improve student work and strengthen teacher capacity across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Grade level teams facilitated by teacher leaders, engage in collaborative inquiry to look at student work products and determine adjustments to instruction in order to address the learning needs uncovered in the process. In addition to individual student work, they also look at data from biweekly assessments to identify learning gaps and develop implications for teacher practice.
- One teacher team observed provided evidence of the use of instructional rounds and inter visitations as the key structure for ongoing professional development and sharing of best practices across the school. Teachers debriefed the observed lesson and then took turns using a feedback protocol to offer suggestions, provide key learnings and describe the changes they will make in their own practice as result of the observations. Teachers state this has increased collaboration across the school and strengthened instructional practices.
- There have been two iterations of instructional rounds thus far and teachers state that the clear focus on components from the Danielson Framework on student engagement and using multiple entry points for student learning has impacted student progress. The results of biweekly assessments and observations reveal that at least 80% of student learning is focused on text-based discussions and problem solving. These professional collaboration structures are yielding classroom level results, thus improving student learning school wide.