



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 051 Bronx New School

Elementary School X051

**695 East 182nd Street
Bronx
NY10457**

Principal: Paul Smith

**Dates of review: February 6, 2015
Reviewer: Safiyah Satterwhite**

The School Context

P.S. 051 Bronx New School is a/an Elementary school with 242 students from pre-Kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 37% Black, 59% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013 -2014 was 93.2%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core

| <i>To what extent does the school regularly...</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. | Focus | 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 | Additional Findings | 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

Across the vast majority of classrooms instructional assessment practices reflect the effective use of rubrics, ongoing checks for understanding and student self assessment that is aligned to the curricula and provides a clear portrait of student mastery.

Impact

As a result, students and teachers are provided clear, actionable, and meaningful feedback regarding student performance and students are aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- Item analysis is conducted on the schools assessments to gauge student performance and customize curricula and supports. Benchmarks are issued three times out of the year to monitor growth. The initial assessment provides the school with a baseline from which to track student progress, the follow up assessment is conducted mid year, and an end of year helps the schools summarize students' successes and plan for their learning needs and next steps.
- Teachers college assessments are also provided; student progress on concepts about print, letter identification, letter sounds, word lists and reading levels are tracked per every student. The school uses these research-based assessments, which are aligned to the curricula to provide clarity and coherence on student mastery. As a result, there has been improvement on 2013- 2014 English language arts and math state exams for students in grades 3, 4 and 5. According to the 2014 English language arts state exam results, students performing on a Level 1 decreased by 21%, students performing on Level 2 increased by 5% and students performing on Levels 3 and 4 increased by over 10%. According to the 2014 mathematics state exam results, students performing on a Level 1 has decreased by 18%, students performing on a level 2, has decreased by 8.2% and students performing on levels 3 and 4 has increased by 22.5%.
- Writing midline assessments are administered and students are provided with clear next steps from their teacher. For example, the current midline writing assessment identified that one group of students can identify the setting, write a story with a clear beginning, middle and end, and provide closure. This group of students was informed of their next steps such as to add dialogue and transitional words to their writing pieces.
- Assessments practices consistently provide next steps for student learning and some differentiation strategies. For example, one teacher grouped students by their next learning steps as a result of an assessment documenting that temporal transition words, strong openings and continuous dialogue was going to be an upcoming area of focus. In another classroom a teacher pivoted her approach during the lesson after administering a thumb up, thumbs down check for understanding. These practices were reflected across the school.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

The school provides a Common Core Learning Standards aligned curricula that is planned and refined using student data and work products. School leaders and teachers integrate the instructional shifts in the curricula to promote college and career readiness.

Impact

Curricula planning documents do not consistently reflect the strategic integration of the instructional shifts and extensions to support high achieving students in being cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- During the summer, teachers participate in grade level planning sessions led by the assistant principals in English language arts and math. All teachers create English language arts unit plans that integrate a variety of genres with appropriate scaffolds to allow learners to meet the desired student outcome. These plans include depth of knowledge indicators and modifications to provide access to the standards for all students. In addition to custom curricula writing teachers utilize programs such as Go Math and various state resources to provide activities that can be modified to meet the learning needs of students.
- Curriculum is Common Core Learning Standard aligned and integrates the instructional shifts. Assessments provide next steps for student learning and some differentiation strategies. Each student's supports are planned and customized based on the results of their assessments. For example, differentiation strategies for one student that needed to use circular endings and have a stronger balance between actions and introspection in their writing was to use mentor texts and exemplary writing samples such as *Craft Lessons* by Ralph Fletcher to demonstrate circular endings and *Hunger Games* to demonstrate a balance between actions and introspections. In another class, the teacher planned for modeling and scaffold questions to ensure student access.
- Across curricular documents, rigorous tasks and higher order skills are not yet embedded in a way that push all learners' thinking including Special Education students and English language learners.
- Curricular tasks are planned and refined to differentiate for lower achieving students but do not consistently offer opportunities for higher achieving students to take ownership of their learning. The academic tasks and lesson extensions do not provide cognitive challenges to promote engagement for the higher achieving students.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms student work products and teaching practices reflect an articulated belief that is aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching on how students learn best.

Impact

This common belief results in classroom practices characterized by high levels of student engagement, participation and student thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- The school believes that students learn best through high levels of engagement actualized through group and center based activities. These practices were evident in the majority of classrooms. Across classrooms students were engaged and facilitating discussions with one another while teachers circulated and provided additional supports to those in need.
- The instructional shifts were evidenced across classrooms, such as using evidence to support claims, and productive struggle. In one class, for example, students were engaged in a productive struggle to identify the associative and commutative properties. The students were unable to share their findings and thinking process with their group.
- Classroom environments were reflective of respect and a positive rapport. Throughout the majority of classrooms, teaching practices encouraged student choice and learning experiences were connected to other disciplines. This was particularly evidenced in the kindergarten and early childhood thematic program.

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|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Proficient |
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate and build a culture of high expectations amongst teachers and parents that are connected to a path for college and career readiness.

Impact

A clear collaborative system of accountability is in place to encourage staff members to support the high expectations, and parents are heavily engaged in obtaining support from the school to further those expectations in the home.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers engage in self-assessment of their own practices via the Danielson Framework for Teaching and then work with the school leaders on areas that they need to improve. This accountability system promotes teachers in internalizing the schools expectations and viewing school leaders as supports available for them to become more effective in the teaching competencies.
- Parents, teachers and students set goals for the year and parents are supported in helping students create SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound) goals that are tracked by the school's teachers. For example, one parent's goals for their child include reading every day and using different strategies to solve math sentences. A teacher's goals for the same student include adding more details to personal narratives and becoming more vocal during classroom discussions.
- Parent engagement is a staple of the school community. The school has a myriad of programs to continue to involve parents in their child's education. Programs and fun activities offered to parents include ballroom dancing, apple picking, literacy parent workshops, dinner nights, Million Father Marches, hoedowns, Saturday academy, and Valentine's Day dance. Parents express that they particularly enjoy ice skating activities, bake sales and other school trips. Parents expressed in the interview that they love the school, and although they struggle with the Common Core, believe that the school provides many supports to help them better understand the expectations.

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|---------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|
| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development | Rating: | Proficient |
|---------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------|

Findings

Teachers collaborate in a school environment that has a strong emphasis on distributed leadership and the inquiry process grounded in successfully implementing the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts.

Impact

Teachers have a strong voice in the instructional decisions of the school and experience enhanced pedagogical practices as a result of the support they receive.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers have common planning time, which allows them to come together and analyze student data to make refinements to their lesson plans. Mondays are used to bring the whole staff together to turn key some of their learnings and share various practices to strengthen their instructional capacity.
- Two teachers last year were trained as administrators and this year one teacher is participating in a leadership program with the support of the principal. The teachers claim to have a direct voice in decisions that effect learning in the school and have multiple opportunities to take on leadership roles.
- The principal, according to the teachers, is frequently in classrooms and provides specific Danielson aligned feedback as well as allows and encourages them to observe one another’s practice to strengthen their instructional skill. The principal also provides opportunities for teachers to observe practices and attend trainings outside of the building. Teachers express that this system is useful as they know they will have the administrator’s support if they want to attend training.
- Teachers in the interview stated that during team meetings they receive ideas on new strategies to apply in the classroom, and that as a result, their teaching practice has improved.