



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**The Bedford Academy**

**Elementary School X054**

**2703 Webster Ave  
Bronx, New York 10458**

**Principal: Dr. Marybelle Ferreira**

**Date of review: December 10, 2014**

**Lead Reviewer: Melodie Mashel**

## The School Context

The Bedford Academy is an elementary school with 486 students from pre-k grade through grade 5. The school population comprises 25% Black, 71% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian and 1% other students. The student body includes 30% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 92.0%.

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

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings

The school uses common assessments to track student progress toward standards.

### Impact

The school uses results gathered from common assessments and the analysis of student work to track student progress, adjust teaching practices to meet student learning needs and provide clear next steps for improvement.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use curricula aligned assessments in math and provide students with written feedback about their work. A review of student work folders captured teacher written feedback that informed the student of their quality work and recommended that the students find alternate methods of solving their problems.
- The school uses an array of assessments to gather information about student achievement. Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA), student baselines in writing, and performance tasks.
- The analysis of student work and teacher conference notes informs teachers of the need to adjust student groupings and provided additional guided practice.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

While pedagogy has focused on elevating student discussions, the use of high level questions is emerging across disciplines and classrooms. Teachers work with students in small guided groups.

### Impact

The minimal use of multiple entry points and teacher low level questioning hindered all students including English Language Learners and students with disabilities with access to lessons taught, and limited student participation in discussions, resulting in the uneven production of high level student work.

### Supporting Evidence

- Classroom visits reveal teacher low level questioning and some teachers elicit basic recall of content. In addition, in classrooms visited, teacher questioning encouraged a response only to the teacher. For example, in one class visited, after students read a poem, the teacher posed the question, "How many people were in the poem?" One student responded to the teacher and the teacher moved on to another question.
- Supports for English Language Learners (ELLs) and special education students ensured students participate in the same challenging assignments. However, teachers primarily provided entry through fluid student groupings and other points of entry were not evident.
- Students in some classrooms engaged in conversations about their unit work. However, conversations with students and a review of student work across a grade, reveals that in some classrooms the level of rigor of required work to be produced by students is uneven. For example, during a social studies lesson in a fourth grade class, students were expected to write one paragraph explaining what their wampum belt symbolized. In a second grade class students were required to research their community of interest and were provided with a choice of projects to complete such as poster, diorama or pop-up book which was representative of their selected community.
- Students produce persuasive writing pieces and cite evidence to support their claims. However, much of the student written work is limited to this one genre.

## Additional Findings

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

### Findings

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and refined to meet the needs of all learners.

### Impact

The school's curricular decisions ensure coherence across all grades and subjects and promotes student thinking that prepares all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, for a college or career path.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school has adopted Ready Gen as the common core curricula for English language arts and Go Math as common core curricula for math. English language arts units integrate science and social studies content.
- English language arts units are refined to include additional writing tasks and embed student written reflections. A review of student work provides evidence that students engage in challenging writing experiences that require them to cite evidence from text to support their written claims.
- Written units in all subjects demonstrate entry points such as the use of leveled texts and graphic organizers to support all learners.
- Math lesson plans reveal embedded differentiated learning opportunities in content that include the use of differentiated math problems that vary in complexity for all learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities and provide evidence of fluid groupings as students move toward higher levels of mastery of the standards.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

### **Findings**

High expectations are conveyed to all staff through the use of Danielson's Framework for Teaching. Workshops and ongoing communication keep families informed of student progress toward a path connected to college and career.

### **Impact**

The school's structures effectively communicate a common set of high expectations for all stakeholders that holds teacher accountable for them and strengthens partnerships with families so that they can have a role in preparing students for college and careers.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders' frequent classroom observation using Danielson's Framework competencies and weekly meetings ensure that staff is held accountable for meeting expectations that improve their craft.
- Staff and parent handbook, weekly grade meetings, school wide implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention Systems relay the schools expectations.
- School leaders' monthly data meetings with parents together with a review of student work folders and weekly contact with parents ensure students and families remain informed of student progress. Parents expressed their appreciation for ongoing data meetings that informs them of student progress toward Common Core Learning Standards.

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

### **Findings**

Teachers engage in regularly structured teamwork and participate in decisions about curriculum and instruction.

### **Impact**

Teacher teams participate in professional collaborations sessions that elevate the quality of their instructional practice and builds teacher leadership and capacity.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers collaborate to determine the best ways to infuse technology supports in to daily lessons that serve to meet the needs of all learners and further align the curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards. (CCLS)
- Teacher teams meet monthly with a literacy consultant that supports teachers in improving the teaching of reading and writing and provide teachers with support on raising the level of their questioning and student discussions. A review of the school's professional development plan reveals a recent focus on building teacher practices that promote student small group discussions.
- Teacher facilitated grade level meetings provide teachers with the opportunity to share their expertise and exchange best instructional practices that support student achievement. For example, fourth grade teachers articulated that a colleague conducted a workshop around the design of student projects that elevated the level of student engagement.
- Teacher teams analyze student work and identify student strengths and challenges and make curricular adjustments. For example, during an observed team meeting, members of a teacher team reviewing student math work, determined to embed the use of different types of graphic organizers, front load transitional words into lessons taught and include additional leveled texts on the topic of study.