



Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Inocencio Casanova

Elementary School X062

**660 Fox Street
Bronx
NY 10464**

Principal: Lisa Manfredonia

**Date of review: April 30, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Renardo Wright**

The School Context

Inocencio Casanova is an elementary school with 790 students from grade Pre-Kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 22% Black, 76% Hispanic, and 2% White students. The student body includes 11% English language learners and 27% 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 90.0%.

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	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	Additional Findings	Proficient
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	Celebration	Well Developed
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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

**3.4 High
Expectations**

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School leaders have established a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff and families and are connected to college and career readiness. These high expectations are consistently provided to teachers and families through ongoing communications and collaborations.

Impact

There is a supportive learning environment where school leaders communicate high expectations for professional learning and parent involvement leading to a path for college and career readiness for students.

Supporting Evidence

- At the beginning of the year, school leaders provide a professional handbook for teachers that outlines clear expectations and professional duties. The staff handbook also includes the school's mission, effective lesson plan templates, and the expectations for observations and evaluations based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching. In addition, the handbook offers all teachers a Classroom Checklist form, which includes the expected instructional practices, the assessing and monitoring of student learning outcomes, and making professional contributions to the school community.
- Teachers across grades provide monthly newsletters to parents. The newsletters include upcoming parent workshops, meetings, and what students are learning across the different content areas. In addition, school leaders provide a monthly calendar to parents outlining various school activities occurring for the month. For example, May's calendar included the school's Health Fair, Science Performance State Assessment, Multicultural Family Night, and Teacher's Appreciation day. During the parent meeting, parents expressed how the newsletters and calendars keep them updated on what's happening with their children and the school.
- Ongoing feedback to families to understand their children's academic and social progress is consistently made via phone calls, letters, emails, and progress reports. During the parent meeting, it was expressed that school leaders and teachers provide ongoing communication with them through emails, letters, and progress reports. Parents also shared that school leaders have open door policies, allowing them access at any time during the school day to discuss their children's social and academic progress.
- Several parents have partnered with the school as Learning Leaders who provide them with strategies to support classroom teachers. Before parents join as Learning Leaders into classrooms, they are provided professional training and clear expectations of their roles set by the school and the program.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula emphasize rigorous tasks and is consistently revised and modified to address the diversity of learners.

Impact

Across classroom, students are engaged in rigorous tasks and pushed towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Samples of reviewed curriculum maps across the different content areas provided evidence of alignment to the Common Core and include the instructional shifts. For example, a third grade curriculum map required students to determine the main idea of an informational text. A fourth grade curriculum map required students to compare and contrast the organizational structures of different informational texts.
- Reviewing an English language arts (ELA) lesson plan, modifications and revisions were made to address English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs). The lesson plan included additional visual clues, flexible grouping, and repeated instructions to provide additional supports during the lesson for ELLs and SWDs.
- While reviewing both ELA and math curriculum maps, there were evidence of written modification and revisions made by teachers to address the academic needs of the diverse student populations. During the teacher team meeting, teachers expressed that curricular is constantly revised during the year based on results of students' work and data. For instance, a literacy curriculum map revealed evidence that teachers decided after assessing students' practice tests and homework assignments that there was the need for additional instructional lessons to build non-fiction reading skills.
- The curriculum incorporates learning targets that promote reasoning and problem solving to cognitively engage all students. For example, a third grade curriculum learning target required students to compare and order fractions by using models and reasoning strategies. A fourth grade curriculum learning target required students to solve multi-steps decimal problems.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provided multiple entry points into the curricula so that all learners were provided appropriately challenging tasks, leading to active engagement and discussions.

Impact

Learners were actively engaged and there were multiple learning opportunities to promote higher order thinking skills and high-level discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- Across several classrooms, there were high levels of active engagement and participation. For example, in a first grade science class, students were actively engaged in “a hands on” science experiment involving clouds and precipitations. Students worked in groups and engaged in full discussions about their experiment observations. In a 5th grade math class, students were actively engaged in mathematic discussions in finding the volume of a rectangular prism.
- Across several classrooms, teaching lessons were differentiated for students to provide multiple entry points to the curricula and ensure all learners were actively challenged and engaged. In a second grade math class, students were assigned to three groups during the lesson. The first group worked on assigned math problems with the support of the classroom teacher. The second group was assigned word problems that compare two lengths. The third group was assigned to create math word problems that involved conversions. In another math classroom, students were assigned to different groups based on their performance levels. While several students were provided direct instruction from the classroom teacher, some students worked in groups or independently.
- Across some classroom, lessons were cognitively challenging to promote higher order thinking skills and meaningful discussions. For example, in a third grade class, students were required to synthesize information from a literary text to understand important ideas and issues. Additionally, students were asked to rewrite the middle and ending of “The Ruby Bridges Story” and apply their acquired strategies of synthesizing effect. In a fourth grade math class, students were required to use multiple steps to resolve several decimal and fraction problems.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and staff align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessments and grading practices to analyze data on student learning outcomes and make instructional adjustments at the team and classroom levels. Teachers use ongoing checks for understanding to inform them of next instructional practices.

Impact

The school's use of common assessments, data analysis and feedback allows teachers to make thoughtful instructional adjustments at the classroom and grade levels to improve students' outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Across several classrooms, teachers checked for understanding during the lessons. Teachers used conferring, thumbs up, and various questioning strategies to assess students' understanding during the lessons. In a second grade math class, the teacher was conferring with groups to monitor and assess their understanding of the presented tasks. In a third grade ELA class, teachers walked around to the different groups to ask various low and high level questions to assess students' understanding. While in a third grade Integrated Team teacher classroom, teachers asked students to put their thumbs up in the air if they understood the assigned tasks. Teachers moved on with the lesson when they observed that all students understood the assignment.
- The school has a grading policy that detailed a standard based grading rubric for all subjects. During the visit, the use of content rubrics accompanied by meaningful feedback from teachers to students was evident in hallways and classrooms. While reviewing students' work, there was some clear actionable feedback provided to students from teachers that was aligned to content specific rubrics. In addition, students also expressed that they use rubrics to guide and support them in completing their work products/projects.
- In September, school leaders provided school wide baseline assessments in ELA and math across the grades. ELA and math unit assessments are incorporated monthly followed by benchmark assessments to track and monitor students' progress throughout the school year. Results from benchmark assessments in December and January advise school of student grouping and curriculum revision.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The vast majority of teachers engage in structured professional collaborations during which pedagogical practices, student work, and common assessments are reviewed and analyzed. Distributed leadership is embedded across the school.

Impact

The work of shared leadership and teacher teams have fostered meaningful teacher collaborations resulting in improvement to student learning outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teachers' work, including teacher classroom practice, assessment data, and student work for students they share or on whom they focused. During the visit, fifth grade teachers met to review and discuss one of their fifth grade colleagues' student's written assessments. The teacher presented all team members with samples of students' writing assessments based on the response of President Obama's State of the Union speech. The team used a school-wide template, Protocol for Looking at Student Work, adapted from the NYCDOE Division of Teaching and Learning as well as an inquiry approach to guide their work. As the team analyzes the student work, they looked for various patterns and trends that was evidence across the class as well as across the grade. Based on the findings, the teacher was provided a Theory of Action plan with next steps on instructional and pedagogical practices for moving forward.
- School leaders provide the opportunities for weekly professional collaborations and professional learning. The school has incorporated grade teams and three professional committees that teachers have opportunities to be part of during the school year. The three committees include the Attendance committee, Response to Intervention team, and the Professional Development team. During the meeting with the principal, it was shared that the vast majority of teachers are on a grade team and/or committee.
- School leaders have embedded daily common preparation periods to allow for all classroom teachers to be able meet any day during the week to discuss grade and school matters. During the teacher team meeting, it was expressed that grade teams are scheduled to meet weekly, but their school schedule allows for them to meet daily if they decide to do so.
- School leaders use grade leaders and members on the Professional Development team as leaders across the school. Grade leaders work very closely with teachers on their grades, as well as to facilitate grade meetings. Committee members of the professional development team work very closely with teachers and school leaders with implementing instruction, curriculum adjustments, and planning professional development. The professional development committee is instrumental in planning and facilitating professional development leaning opportunities for the entire school community. During the teacher meeting, teachers expressed that teacher members of the professional development committee voice to school leaders their concerns and needs for various professional collaboration and learning opportunities.