



# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Pura Belpre**

**Elementary School X064**

**1425 Walton Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10452**

**Principal: Barbara Headley**

**Date of review: May 7, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Roxan Marks**

## The School Context

Pura Belpre is an elementary school with 286 students from grade 4 through grade 5. The school population comprises 16% Black and 83% Hispanic and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 44% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 90.0%.

## 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>Additional Findings</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>Celebration</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>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The majority of teachers participate in collaborative inquiry and promotes the integration of the instructional shifts and achievement of school goals. School leaders and staff communicate expectations for college and career readiness and progress toward goals.

### Impact

Through teacher team collaboration, teachers' capacity and pedagogy, and progress toward goals for groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders provide clear expectations to staff through the staff handbook and morning messages. School newsletters include a note from principal, sharing ways parents can help support learning, important dates for school events, and grade specific content about what students are learning in core subject areas. Professional development plan was created and is supported by consultants from Lit Life, Generation Ready, Ramapo, network and coaches. Learning this year includes using assessments, planning lessons, supporting technology use, building academic vocabulary and managing student behavior. Professional learning plan was yearlong and teachers shared that they participated in inter-visitations outside of the school to see how to effectively group students for learning based on data and observation. In order to support teachers with resources that enable them to refine curricula, school leaders provide professional development as well as time for teachers to meet to look at student work and data. Consultants provide assistance in differentiation and questioning as teachers make modification to maps and lessons.
- School sends progress reports home to parents detailing information for reading, writing, listening, math, science, social studies, behavior and attendance; these reports are sent in English and Spanish. Some classes maintain a website that share current information to families about topics being taught. Teachers shared that goals are set based on results of reading level assessments and evident in student folders. During the initial meeting with families, teachers provided a list that specifies the necessary skills needed for students to get to the next level in their learning.
- School leader shared that the open door policy allows access for families to address any concerns or offer suggestions. Parent commented that they are pleased with the principal and teachers reach out if their child is struggling or to provide praise. Coffee with Principal meetings is conducted throughout the year to impart information with families. Workshops are provided for parents on English as a second language (ESL), Healthy Homes and bullying. Throughout the year School Messenger is used to communicate with parents, attendance outreach using letters and phone calls focus on chronic absenteeism. Student advisory allows students to be known well by an adult. To support social and emotional development there is a push on kindness. Guidance counselor support students with transitioning to middle school. Students shared that the departmentalized programming mirrors middle school where students change classes and stated this helps them be ready for the next level.

## 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. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

Although pedagogy is informed by the Danielson Framework and the instructional shifts, the inconsistent teaching practices limit the ability of students to engage in meaningful discussions and work products reflect uneven levels thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to curricula and are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best. Principal shared that school believes in small group instructions, access for students using technology, two teachers in classroom and exit slips to assess learning. To support teachers in analyzing student work in order to make appropriate instructional modifications, school leaders enlist the aid of coaches and consultants. Feedback during observations enables administrators to share explicit guidance regarding student thinking and participation during lessons. Teachers attend professional development sessions and books support their learning as well as collaborating with peers during teacher team meetings.
- During a grade 5 English language arts (ELA) lesson, students were examining cause and effect as it related to informational texts. There were four groups created in the room, a group was using laptops, another was reading text doing independent practice and two groups were guided by teachers. The questions posed by the teacher were low level and added to some confusion in the lesson resulting in uneven levels of discourse among the group.
- In another lesson in grade 5 Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom students were learning about Canadian provinces and territories. Teacher reviewed vocabulary learned which was provided on a paper and using a map of Canada on smart board asked questions such as “Are there two countries on same continent?” “What languages spoken?” The teacher read most of the text during this lesson rather than having students take ownership of their learning. Although teachers during the team interviewed shared ways in which they scaffold instruction include chunking, sentence starters, visual, checklist and planned question, across most classrooms, questions were low leveled and whole class tasks were mostly seen with some visual supports to aid students.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The schools' curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and task consistently emphasize higher order thinking across the grades.

### Impact

The curricula build coherence and promote college and career readiness. English language learners and students with disabilities have access to the curricula and tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts and college and career readiness. The school uses ReadyGen and Go Math! as their core curriculum programs and follows New York City Scope and Sequence for content area instruction. Focus on non-fiction and research across content areas, integrating technology using smart boards, iPads and laptops were seen across classrooms. The school uses a departmentalize structure which aligns ELA instruction with social studies and mathematics and science. Teachers shared that they are preparing students to be college and career ready through essential questions aligned to standards, problem solving with real world connections, researching, vocabulary development, collaboration with peers in small groups and students using technology.
- Grade 5 units plan for ReadyGen list the standards, big ideas, essential questions and goals for modules. Performance assessments are embedded in units, instructional shifts are noted and applicable aspects of Danielson Framework related to unit is provided. There is a section for English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) support which list some strategies to be used to support their learning. Although these entry points are not fully explained in details in the map, lesson plans have vocabulary support with visuals, tier tasks and questions planned at various levels.
- School uses Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK) to generate high level questions across grades and subjects. Teacher teams meet to adjust lessons, maps and review tasks to ensure rigor and access is embedded. Special education teachers are in all classrooms and they support teachers with appropriate modifications needed to promote entry points in unit and lessons. For example, modifications were made to ReadyGen as lesson guides are provided with differentiated tasks that were developed for various groups based on data. Vocabulary cards with visuals were also provided to teachers to support ELLs and SWDs to better scaffold students in making real life connections to new words. Lit Life units are designed for writing and content area instruction in daily lessons, anticipated challenges and checks for understanding are included. The school has developed to lesson planning template and includes three tier tasks to encourage differentiation. Review of lesson plans shows tiered tasks reflecting various levels of group in classes as well as higher order questions.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### **Findings**

Across classrooms, teachers use and design assessments, rubrics and grading policies aligned to curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student growth towards goals throughout grades and subjects.

### **Impact**

Teachers provide actionable feedback to students regarding their achievement. The results of common assessments are used to adjust curricula, lessons and instruction.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, teachers create assessments and use rubrics to provide next steps to students. School created an assessment calendar showing the months when benchmark assessments are conducted however dates are not given when assessments are to be administered. Running records are administered five times a year and teachers track these on spreadsheets showing the date of mastery and Fountas and Pinnell levels. Grade level reading expectations are established so teachers can quickly identify those students at, below or above grade level. Social studies and science end of unit data is collected and tracked. Data from Catapult afterschool program is shared with teachers including progress reports, lessons and performance tracking.
- School uses common assessment to measure progress towards goals. Teachers maintain assessment binders comprised of assessments, conference notes and performance task. School leaders provide grade specific analysis for reading and math, for example grade 4 math baseline, summative and midline data are displayed by levels with a narrative for staff. Data from iReady and Myon are used by teachers including performance based assessments and note taking on students through conferences are documented.
- Students use checklists to improve the quality of writing and common rubrics are used across grades. Across classrooms rubrics were evident in folders and on bulletin boards and customized for tasks. Student portfolios reviewed during small group meeting show use of rubrics, feedback and student reflection document which is used by teachers to create and revise learning goals. Students shared that when they do not understand an assignment, they ask peers or the teachers at end of lesson and the teacher will provide a reteach package.

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry collaborations and teams use protocols to analyze classroom practices, common assessments and students work.

**Impact**

Through teacher team collaborations, teachers' instructional capacity, implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and pedagogy has improved ensuring progress toward goals for groups of students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers meet in inquiry level grade teams, departmental teams and School Implementation Team (SIT) meets weekly to discuss academic and behavioral concerns impacting students. Teachers meet during common planning to review student work, progress towards goals and strategies to support learning. Structures of teams provide teachers the ability to lead the group and partner with administration to make improvements. Teachers stated they look at data, identify trends and review students work. Teams used protocols such as analysis of student work and documentation of team meetings artifacts and agendas was seen in the team binders. For example, teachers shared that after analysis of writing data they noticed that students were having difficulty in structuring paragraphs and they agreed to use a strategy to increase writing skills.
- During the grade 5 team meeting, teachers were continuing their work with vocabulary. The meeting began with a quick reminder of the last session the team was looking at data and discussing vocabulary development. At this session, teachers were discussing the impact of vocabulary instruction and strategies help students to build background knowledge. Teachers are focusing on Common Core Learning Standards vocabulary standards and assists students in developing relationships and nuances of language. In math, teachers focused on priority standards and making real world connections in problem solving. Teachers work together to plan lessons and focus on common strategies to increase students' mastery of content. Teacher teams adjust and revise curricula and prioritize certain concepts based on data.
- There was a collaborative culture observed in teams as teachers worked in partnership across subjects and grades. Working on teams has strengthened capacity by sharing with colleagues strategies during team sessions. Since the school uses a departmentalized model, teachers feel this has enabled them to be more targeted in noticing areas in need to development. Teacher teams are also supported by consultants that share best practices and inter-visitation has supported their growth this year.