



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**P.S. 066 School of Higher Expectations**

**12X066**

**1001 Jennings Street  
Bronx, NY 10465**

**Principal: Thomas DeGrazia**

**Date of review: December 2, 2014**

**Lead Reviewer: Maria Giacone**

## The School Context

P.S. 066 is an elementary school with 665 students from grade Pre-K through grade 5. The school population comprises 26% Black, 71% Hispanic, 2% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 19% special education students. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 91.0%.

## 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>Proficient</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>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>Celebration</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

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

Teacher teams engage in professional collaborations to promote the achievement of school goals by analyzing assessment data and student work and arriving at key decisions regarding curricular and instructional practices.

### Impact

Inquiry-based teacher team collaborations address the school's instructional goals through assessment of student work and data, refinement of pedagogy and shared leadership resulting in adult and student learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- Using agreed-upon protocols, teachers analyze assessment data in grade teams to discuss areas where students have challenges in order to make instructional adjustments. For example, a teacher in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade team shared assessment data based on recent student work in math and posed a question regarding students' understanding of place value so that instructional strategies could be modified across the 5<sup>th</sup> grade to address student needs.
- Teams regularly engage in a review of student work and data to assess the progress of students and determine next steps towards meeting student goals. During a teacher team meeting observed, 5<sup>th</sup> grade student math work was examined to uncover student misconceptions regarding place value and decimals. Action plans were then discussed to provide supports and interventions for identified students.
- Teachers take the initiative in structuring their team time and make decisions regarding curriculum and instruction. For example, teams have adopted and implemented protocols to use such as the Tuning Protocol in order to share problems of practice or student assessment concerns and develop strategies to address them. They make key decisions that affect student learning as when the 5<sup>th</sup> grade team decided to revise the pacing calendar to adjust curriculum for the remainder of the year.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

While teaching practices across classrooms reflect alignment to the Common Core instructional shifts to promote high levels of student thinking and participation, active participation by all students varies across classrooms.

### Impact

Teaching practices aligned to the Common Core instructional shifts support students to engage in high level discussions and to produce meaningful work products, yet there are missed opportunities for all learners to take ownership of their learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms lessons are structured to include mini-lessons, guided reading, independent reading and discussion in partner or small groups, and whole group work. This is consonant with the school's belief that children learn best in small groups structured for their learning needs and where specific strategies are practiced in guided group work. Using these teaching practices, teachers address the common core instructional shifts so that students build knowledge through nonfiction and informational texts, show evidence from text, and demonstrate application and understanding of mathematical concepts. For example, a 2<sup>nd</sup> grade class was asked to chart data about the type of farm they were researching; in a 5<sup>th</sup> grade math class students engaged in a rotation of workstations to discuss processes for determining the unknown number in sequencing decimals according to a given rule.
- Across classrooms, students were engaged in group activities to produce meaningful work products. For example, in a math classroom, students applied themselves to show their work and explain their thinking. In a literacy class, students focused on "good details" to effectively support their written and oral statements. In another class, students engaged in research using multiple sources that included texts and photographs. However, across classrooms there were missed opportunities to tailor instruction for groups of students including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) due to a lack of providing leveled, high quality supports or extensions to ensure active engagement by all learners.
- Across classrooms, there are practices in place to allow students opportunities to engage in higher order thinking and participation through productive discussion. For example, in a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class, students presented their research findings on habitats and student listeners prepared and asked questions of the presenters to engage in knowledge sharing in a whole group discussion format. However, across classrooms there were missed opportunities to allow students to discuss and formulate responses to higher order questions so that each student could be actively involved and take ownership of his/her learning.

## Additional Findings

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

Curriculum is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and curricula and academic tasks are planned using student work and data.

### Impact

The school's curricular decisions align with the Common Core instructional shifts and respond to students' needs building coherence and ensuring cognitive engagement by all students. .

### Supporting Evidence

- Based on a review of curricular documents and resulting student work, school leaders and faculty made the decision to move to a balanced literacy approach. A review of current curricular units and tasks shows that units are aligned to Common Core standards and promote the instructional shifts while embedding the components of balanced literacy.
- The decision was made to embed tasks that promote higher order thinking skills and provide additional access points for all students including struggling learners, ELLs and SWDs. For example, selected complex texts from the previous curriculum, Ready Gen, were kept and additional opportunities for guided reading for struggling readers and for ELLs were embedded in curricula and lesson plans.
- School leaders and teachers explained that the practice of looking at student work impacts curricular decisions. For example, during a teacher team meeting, teachers explained that after implementing a writing unit, teachers meet to see how students have applied key skills and concepts. Adjustments are then made to the following unit to address areas of need.

**Findings**

Teachers create and use a variety of assessments and rubrics aligned with the school's curricula. Progress monitoring data informs the school of student progress toward goals.

**Impact**

The school has systems to monitor progress through data analysis in order to provide feedback to students and guide adjustments in units and lessons to meet students' learning needs.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, student work was posted with teacher feedback aligned to rubrics that gave students feedback regarding next steps. For example, next steps to a fifth grader read, "Make sure to break up paragraphs with different events." During a student meeting, students spoke about how they use teacher feedback to improve. For example, one student said, "When I finish the essay, I use the rubric and reread the essay to see what I accomplished and how I can make it better." Another student said, "I knew what I had to do in my next essay—use the graphic organizer better."
- Another tool to provide feedback is conferencing. During a teacher team meeting, teachers explained that the practice of conferencing with students provides them opportunities to give targeted feedback to help students meet their learning goals which are shared with students through such venues as the "My Goal Book". During a student meeting, students spoke about the learning goals they discuss with their teachers. One student said, "My goal is to get better at writing margin notes for details." Another student said, "My goal is to learn decimals by drawing in base 10."
- During a teacher team meeting observed, teachers examined the results of a mid-chapter 5<sup>th</sup> grade math assessment and determined that students lacked mastery of the concepts of place value and decimals of that chapter. They discussed ways to promote student mastery of those concepts. Based on student data, specific lessons were highlighted where teachers could plan greater differentiation and plan teaching strategies for identified groups of students.
- During a teacher team meeting, teachers explained how they engage in frequent data talks to review data garnered from common assessments. Based on this review, goals are developed to address academic concerns and teams collaborate to make necessary adjustments to curricula and instructional practices. For example, instruction for ELLs across grades was modified to place a greater emphasis on vocabulary, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students receiving Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETSS) who were not performing at level were regrouped.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### **Findings**

School leaders and staff convey high expectations to all students and establish a culture for learning through ongoing feedback to students and families.

### **Impact**

Structures are in place to provide ongoing feedback to students and families based upon a set of expectations resulting in a clear path to increased student achievement and college and career readiness.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- During a parent meeting, parents indicated that teachers provide ongoing progress reports on their children's progress and have offered them suggestions as to what they can do at home to help their children along with a timeline for improvement.
- Parents indicated that they use the websites the school has provided them and indicated that their children access these sites for additional help to meet their learning goals.
- School leaders and teachers explained that teachers offer ongoing feedback to students through written rubric-based comments and next steps and through ongoing one-on-one conferencing. Posted student work includes rubrics and teacher comments that give a rationale for the score and next steps for improvement.
- The school has 2.5 social workers and 1 guidance counselor to provide ongoing support to students and families and have a designated Care Teacher to offer advisement support to students.
- Action plans for students who are not showing growth in reading and or writing are developed so that those students have clearly marked goals for growth that serve as guideposts towards their next learning steps and can be tracked by teacher teams.