



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Great Expectations

Elementary School X085

**2400 Marion Avenue
Bronx
NY 10458**

Principal: Theodore Husted

**Date of review: May 7, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Kristine Mustillo**

The School Context

Great Expectations is an elementary school with 1006 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 26% Black, 72% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 27% English language learners and 29% 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

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	Additional Findings	Developing
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	Focus	Developing
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	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:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school consistently communicates high expectations to staff and families.

Impact

Systems for communication and collaboration result in a shared accountability for student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The school communicates regularly with parents at a fall curriculum night around the expectations for each grade level. Additionally, information is shared throughout the year on the school website. The school also uses Tuesday Family Engagement time to hold family workshops in science, literacy, and math. While a small number of parents are accessing the workshops, a high number of families participate in Family Nights such as Cook Shop with Dad, and so the school utilizes those events as well to communicate expectations.
- Parents receive report cards that include resources for helping their children at home. Parents have access on a daily basis, in addition to Tuesday afternoons, to the family center where they can receive support from the parent coordinator in accessing on-line resources for their children or to support their own learning needs.
- High expectations for teachers are conveyed through the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Ongoing communication and cycles of observation and feedback are tied to instructional supports that include inter-visitation, Charter School collaboration, external professional development such as Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project, and internal professional development facilitated by teacher specialists.
- In one-on-one meetings at the beginning of the school year, administration develops personal goals with teachers tied their professional learning needs and academic progress of students. Administration revisits these goals during debrief sessions connected to observation cycles.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching and curricula are being adapted to support students working within the instructional shifts.

Impact

Across classrooms, there are uneven levels of student engagement in work products and discussions resulting from uneven planning.

Supporting Evidence

- Early childhood classes stream for literacy and all grades are providing guided reading instruction. In a grade 4 English language arts class, teachers worked with small groups examining the evolution of a character across text. While the teachers worked with guided groups, students reading independently practiced their independent reading “power goals.” In a grade 1 English language arts class the teacher worked with a guided group on multiple skills and strategies while the rest of the class read independently. However, students reading independently did not have “power goal” cards and could not speak to skills that they might be practicing. There was no clear lesson plan for the first grade group.
- All classes use learning targets focused on what students will be able to do at the end of the lesson. A grade 5 self-contained special education class had learning targets for each group focused on formulating questions from the text and text features in non-fiction readings. Pedagogical staff worked with guided groups to model and support the practice of this skill using leveled text. In a grade 1 bilingual class the learning target was to use diagrams to create questions on a topic. The teacher had students write questions about the sun on a post-it. When one student asked for help the teacher brought over a small book on the sun, but other students did not have any place to pull the information from so students asked questions such as, “Is the sun a star?” which they seemingly knew the answer to.
- Student work products in math are primarily worksheets and unit tests associated with the Go Math program. There is no evidence of multi-step problem solving or reflection on process. While there is attention to student grouping during reading, student writing reflects primarily short response and project based assessments from Ready Gen.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school has adopted Common Core Learning Standards aligned curricula in English language arts and math and is in the process of strengthening their planning to support college and career readiness and engagement for all learners.

Impact

Students are exposed to standards based content and tasks. Planning reflects some integration of scaffolds and attention to student groups.

Supporting Evidence

- To support English language arts, the school uses Journeys in kindergarten and Ready Gen in grades 1 through 5. The school participates in the 100 Book Challenge to support independent reading. The school utilizes Foundations to support phonemic awareness and is piloting a Teacher's College writing unit of study to expand writing opportunities for students. While the program and learning targets reflect Common Core Learning Standards and teachers are using data and student work to plan for students, this is not yet strategic and is not consistently resulting in the cognitive engagement of learners. For example, while data is used to plan for streamed guided groups in the early childhood grades, it is not engaging independent readers.
- Teacher Teams are working using a backwards design model for planning, using the performance based assessments from Ready Gen as the end-line to assess the skills and strategies for future focus. As a result, curriculum maps are showing a larger emphasis on vocabulary development and writing opportunities across genres as teacher begin utilizing Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project components to provide a broader range of opportunities in writing.
- Go Math is used in grades 1 through 5. Teachers follow the scope and sequence using pre- and post-exam results to identify which skills need to be retaught and inform student grouping. Within curriculum maps there was evidence that previously taught skills were being spiraled into future lessons. In addition, computation practice through on-line learning programs has been embedded for new English language learners.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School-wide common rubrics and assessments aligned to the Ready Gen and Go Math programs are used.

Impact

Teachers utilize student work and data to inform instructional decisions and track student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- School-wide rubrics that are used are aligned to the Ready Gen program. Students are graded and receive feedback in the areas of focus, organization, development, language\ vocabulary, and conventions, for each project-based assessment. For daily and on-demand writing student friendly checklist are used across grades and content areas.
- School-wide reading is tracked through common reading inventories. Based on inventory data, kindergarten teachers created an intervention period for 19 students who had less than 20 letter sounds mastered. Teachers in the early childhood grades use reading progress to plan for guided instruction and to design reading centers that support student needs. Reading inventory data is used to identify students in need of Response to Intervention services and is monitored in six-week cycles.
- In math, the school uses the pre- and post-tests aligned to the Go Math program. Teachers use pre-assessment data to plan for whole group and small group instruction. Teachers use post-assessment data to monitor student progress and identify topics that need to be spiraled into future units of study.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

All teachers are engaged in professional learning collaborations focused on increasing their instructional and leadership capacity.

Impact

The work of teacher teams is resulting in planning and instruction that is increasingly becoming aligned to student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- In a grade 4 teacher team meetings, teachers work in groups, facilitated by the math coach and lead teacher to review science assessment data to inform upcoming instruction prior to the science exam. Teachers reviewed practice State assessments, and looked at whole group and individual student data. Teachers explored questions to discuss possible student misconceptions. The coach stopped mid-way to see if there were grade trends that could be shared with the science cluster teacher.
- All teachers meet school-wide on Mondays for professional learning. One Monday a month is spent on professional learning from an administrator-created but teacher selected menu that includes Serving English Language Learners in an Inclusive Setting, Differentiation in Math, Response to Intervention, and Fundamentals of Reading. The remaining Mondays are focused on English language arts, math, and students with disabilities. Monday learning is teacher led and teachers give feedback on upcoming supports.
- Teachers meet voluntarily two times each week with administration or coaches, once a week for English language arts planning and once a week for math. Teachers use this time to examine student work. During a math planning sessions, teachers noticed students were struggling with task completion because they lacked fluency. Teacher implemented Big Brains giving students online practice with computation facts, increasing fluency and proficiency, especially for newcomers. Big Brains is used across classrooms.