



# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**P. S. 107**

**Elementary School X107**

**1695 Seward Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10473**

**Principal: Katherine Hamm**

**Date of review: May 15, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Dr. Karen Ames**

## The School Context

P. S 107 is an elementary school with 510 students from Pre-K through grade five. The school population comprises 37% Black, 62% Hispanic, 1% White, and 0% Asian students. The student body includes 10% 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

<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>Celebration</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>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

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.1 Curriculum**

**Rating:**

**Proficient**

### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards content standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula emphasize rigorous tasks and consistently adjust and modify it to address needs of a diversity of learners

### Impact

Unit plans and lesson plans across the content areas are embedded with rigorous tasks which are differentiated resulting in student to student discussion and development of higher order thinking skills across classrooms.

### Supporting Evidence

- Samples of curriculum maps across subject areas provide evidence of alignments to the Common Core and the instructional shifts. For example, a kindergarten English Language Arts unit plan requires students to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose an informative text in which they write about and supply information about the topic. A fourth grade ELA writing unit plan requires students to write explanatory paragraphs and narrative essays.
- Curriculum maps across the content areas emphasize higher order thinking skills using the Depth of Knowledge Wheel and essential questions. A fourth grade narrative unit includes essential questions that ask, “How do we use words, letters, and pictures to tell stories?”, In the third grade social studies unit the focus centers on the cultural characteristics of each Native American Tribe?
- Curriculum units include varied forms of differentiation to ensure access for all learners, especially English language learners and students with disabilities. For example, a kindergarten ELA unit includes the use of supplemental guides utilizing the Core Knowledge program to support the entry and instructional support for these diverse learners. A fourth grade ELA plan includes four different graphic organizers designed to support their needs and ensure their ability to engage with the content being taught.
- A third grade English Language Arts lesson plan required students to state their claim from the reading of a nonfictional text and provide evidence to support their claims. A reviewed Close reading lesson plan required students to read text features and provide key details or ideas as a group to get the gist of the text.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

### Findings

Across classrooms, there are structures for students to work in groups. However, teaching strategies to ensure meaningful discussions and higher order thinking by all students are uneven across grades.

### Impact

Due to inconsistent teaching practices, there were missed opportunities for high level discussions and active engagement by all learners. As a result, students including English language learners and students with disabilities do not always have the opportunity to demonstrate higher order thinking skills in their work products.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across some classrooms, lessons were differentiated for students to provide multiple entry points to the curricula and ensure learners were actively challenged and engaged. In a grade 5 ELA class, students were assigned to groups based on their reading levels and provided graphic organizers to support their learning. In a grade 3 ICT ELA class, students were assigned to groups based on reading abilities and provided nonfictional texts accordingly. In a kindergarten class the teacher asked students to get in their groups to complete a coloring task however, students did not move from their current seats and there was no evidence of data used to group students.
- Lessons provided uneven engagement and discussions. In those classes where students participated in class discussions teacher-generated questions provided the basis for student involvement. Students generated their own questions in only one of the seven classrooms visited. For example, in a grade 5 science class, students were to watch a 5-minute video from Discovery Education on how hydraulic arms work in the real world and then discuss in their groups how hydraulics are used. Students recorded the discussion by taking notes and sharing within their groups. While in a first grade math class the teacher asked students to name the shape drawn on a chart.
- Some teachers prepare lessons that target the specific needs and strengths of students and employ strategies that address a range of student abilities. However, this is not consistent across all classes visited. For example, although the school focus is on student engagement, most teachers dominated the lessons with whole class discussions and posed questions that did not require students to engage in rich discussions. The majority of the questions were low level literal questions.

## Additional Findings

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

School leaders and staff align assessments to curricula and use on-going assessments and grading practices to analyze data to make instructional adjustments at the team and classroom levels.

Teachers use ongoing checks for understanding to inform their 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' academic outcomes.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school's grading policy details a standard based grading rubric for all subjects. The use of content rubrics accompanied by meaningful feedback from teachers to students is evident on bulletin boards in hallways and classrooms. While reviewing student work, clear actionable feedback provided to students aligned to content specific rubrics was in evidence. For example a first grade student's writing sample stated, "You used many details from the book to explain why Eugene changed. Next time, make sure that your sentences make sense when you reread your work." Feedback on a third grade student's writing stated, "You tried to complete your reflection, but you only wrote one paragraph. In the future, please work on completing the entire assigned task."
- In the beginning of the school year, school leaders administer school wide baseline assessments in ELA and math across the grades. ELA and math unit assessments are incorporated monthly followed by benchmark assessments which consistently track and monitor students' progress throughout the school year. School leaders and teacher teams use the results from the benchmark assessments during the middle of the year to advise student grouping, curriculum adjustments and revisions. In addition, school leaders provide classroom teachers with a school wide assessment calendar to ensure ongoing assessments to monitor and measure students' progress.
- Across several classrooms, teachers checked for understanding during the lesson. A variety of practices such as, conferring, thumbs up or down, and exit slips were used to assess students' learning. In a second grade class, the teacher walked around the class and conferred with groups of students to monitor and assess their understanding of the assigned task. In a third grade math class, the teacher asked students to put their thumbs up or down during the lesson to assess their understanding as she moved on with the lesson. In yet a third grade class, the teacher used exit slips to assess students' understanding at the end of the lesson. The exit slip required students to write one thing that they learned and rate their understanding of the lesson presented on a scale of 1-10.

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

School leaders have established a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff and families 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 offering ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress.

### Supporting Evidence

- In the beginning of the school year, school leaders invite families to their Learning Expectation Meeting to provide them with the school's goals for the year. In addition, parents are invited to join school leaders on school walks and participate in workshops around Common Core learning Standards. School leaders also provide parents with a parent handbook that outlines student support services, homework policies, Common Core understanding, dates of upcoming assessments, and the role of parent involvement. During the parent meeting, parents expressed how the school meeting held in September and the parent handbook provided them with a wealth of information concerning learning goals and clear expectations for them and their children during the school year.
- In September, school leaders provide all staff with a professional handbook outlining clear expectations and professional duties. The staff handbook also includes the school's mission, lesson planning guidelines, and the use of the professional development periods.
- Ongoing feedback to families regarding their children's academic and social progress is consistently made via phone calls, newsletter, emails, and text message. In addition, school leaders provide monthly calendars for the school community. The calendar includes activities and events that are happening for the month, such as, the parent/teacher conference, parent stress management workshop, and school safety meeting. During the meeting with parents, it was shared that the school keeps them updated on all events and activities through the use of calendars, newsletters, and phone calls.
- In September, school leaders provided staff with a 2014-2015 Professional Development Plan that was designed to address the professional needs of the staff. The plan includes the four domains of the Danielson Framework of Teaching and content specific learning opportunities, such as study groups to strengthen pedagogical practices across the school. In addition, the plan includes classroom visitation schedules and teacher feedback.

<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 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 foster meaningful teacher collaborations resulting in improved student learning outcomes.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of a teachers’ lesson plan including classroom practice, assessment data, and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused. At the team meeting attended, third grade math teachers reviewed and analyzed the third grade students’ math assessment results referenced from a Skill Analysis report. The team used a protocol specific to looking at student work as well as an inquiry approach to analyze the current data. The team recorded patterns and trends across the class and grade. Based on the findings, the teachers made plans to group students based on their performance levels and provide additional graphic organizers to support them. In addition, the math curriculum was adjusted and revised to accommodate the learning needs of learners.
- School leaders provide teachers across the grades the opportunity to meet on Tuesdays to discuss and analyze work samples of students across grades. Teachers in grades 3-5 analyze benchmark data in mathematics and identify the standards that students are not meeting or mastering. Teachers in grades K-2 analyze base line writing samples from students and identify the writing skills and standards that are not being mastered by students in those grades. After analyzing available data, in literacy and math, lesson plans and unit plans are modified or revised to address the learning needs and gaps across the grades. Based on the available data, teachers may plan for small group instruction, reteach various lessons, and include additional supplemental learning activities to ensure student progress or mastery.
- School leaders provide and foster distributive leadership by involving teachers on the professional development team to play an integral role in key decision making with regards to the academic structures at the school. Teachers on the team are responsible for planning and facilitating professional learning opportunities, collecting school data, selecting curriculum programs, assisting teachers, and turn keying information to staff. The professional development team and teacher teams meet regularly to review and analyze school data. In addition, school leaders provide teachers the opportunity to share their thoughts, questions, and learning experiences with them through Professional Development Reflection sheets. Teachers’ reflections are recorded and shared with their peers and school leaders for further professional collaborations and planning that impact the entire school community.