

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Sedgwick School

Elementary School X109

**1771 Popham Avenue
Bronx
NY10453**

Principal: Josette Claudio

**Date of review: March 17, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Cheryl McClendon**

The School Context

The Sedgwick School is an elementary school with 810 students from grade Pre-k through grade 5. The school population comprises 78% Hispanic, 21% Black and 01% White students. The student body includes 24% English language learners and 12% 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 92.1%.

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	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	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	Developing
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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders' well-communicated high expectations for the level and quality of teacher professionalism, instruction, communication and other criteria related to the Danielson framework for Teaching, are supported by effective teacher training opportunities and embody a system of accountability. School leaders and teachers engage in meaningful partnerships with families to support students' progress towards college and career readiness.

Impact

Professional development supports teachers toward meeting school leaders' high expectations. Families feel well-informed and supported by the school through meaningful partnerships.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration distributes and reviews the Employee Policy handbook at the onset of every school year. This handbook is updated annually and delineates instructional expectations, behavioral expectations and school wide goals. In addition, the expectation that teachers will engage in inquiry-based collaboration is supported by common planning periods across all grades and for cluster teachers, as well.
- School Leaders and faculty receive on-going professional development in reading and writing workshops through the Teachers College Reading and Writing Workshop. In addition instructional coaches and teacher leaders provide professional development in math, Common Core Standards, academic intervention, measures of student learning and other areas. Teachers, coaches and administrators engage in two-way feedback via email regarding meetings, observations and lab-sites.
- PS 109 is a Learning Partners host school. Through this program the school collaborates with two participating schools to share effective practices. One focus of the program this year is parent participation. The "Men who Make a Difference" gala hosted by Learning Partners and paraprofessionals was a resounding success this year with a significant percentage of fathers, other family members and Chancellor Fariña present. This well-attended ceremony provided a showcase for student work and achievement and allowed the faculty to share school wide vision and expectations for on-going collaboration with families. In addition, the school has partnered with the Learning Leaders program to provide training for parents to become school volunteers.
- The school has adopted the Positive Behavior, Interventions and Support program. Through this program expectations for school culture and behavioral expectations are established for students, faculty and the entire school community. Program consultants facilitate professional development for teachers and staff turn-key guidelines, expectations and norms to students and families.
- During the parent meeting, parents stated that school leaders and teachers communicate regularly with families through automatic phone blasts, email and scheduled and informal meetings. The parent coordinator and family assistants make home visits Teachers on all grades host workshops on the Common Core Learning Standards, test-taking skills, English language arts and math highlights. Families receive monthly newsletters.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are beginning to reflect beliefs about student learning as informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. However, teaching strategies do not always provide multiple entry points nor fully engage all students in appropriately challenging tasks.

Impact

Although teaching practices are becoming aligned to the school's articulated beliefs about how students learn best, the inconsistent use of teaching strategies that promote multiple entry points curtails engagement in higher-order thinking skills and mastery attainment for students.

Supporting Evidence

- Across grades teachers are implementing the workshop model in reading and writing. In a 5th grade class students engaged in a close reading of a literary passage, annotated and labeled segments of the text C for cause, E for effect and FL for figurative language. After labeling, students in mixed-ability pairs turned and talked to their reading partners to share their work. Students with greater proficiency in task provided support for others. The teacher circulated to check in and was observed providing extra support for struggling students and students with disabilities.
- In a kindergarten reading workshop the posted teaching point of a min-lesson was "How can I solve the tricky parts in a book?" The teacher read each sentence on the illustrated cards aloud and instructed students to figure out the missing word for which there were two clues: the initial consonant and a picture. Although all students knew the missing words immediately as reflected by everyone shouting them out accurately, the teacher instructed them go back, sound out the initial consonant and look at the picture to figure out the words that they had already read. During the hallway debrief the principal stated that the teacher was intent upon delivering a structured mini-lesson as it had been planned. However, this lesson was not rigorous enough for the students and was not modified to meet them at their level.
- In some classrooms collaborative problem-solving in math was observed. For example in one kindergarten class, students worked in partnerships to fill in the blanks within paired equations; reflecting composition and decomposition addition stories. As students worked together, the teacher circulated asking them to explain their work. Students used math vocabulary as they explained the number sentences. Collaborative problem-solving was also observed in another classroom where students used the SOLVE problem-solving method. (Study the problem. Organize the facts. Line up a plan. Verify your plan with action. Examine the results). Students used math vocabulary as they discussed each step in the process. However, this level of student collaboration and discussion was not observed in another class where students were given 3 minutes to solve five complex division problems. Although the principal shared that this exercise was designed to increase automaticity, twelve students had only completed 1 to 2 problems at the end of 3 minutes. During the debriefing it was noted that this math concept should be retaught to build comprehension and mastery rather than timed for automaticity.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The coherence and alignment of the curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts are ensured by school leaders. Curricula and academic tasks engage high-order thinking skills and promote college and career readiness for all students including English language learners and students with disabilities.

Impact

The planning and implementation of Common Core-aligned curricula promotes college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses the Engage NY modules for math instruction across the grades. The Common Core Learning standards for math, Engage NY math lessons and math center activities from a math resources K-5 website have been aligned in grade specific alignment guides for teacher reference. In addition math pacing calendars that include essential questions, Common Core standards, lessons, assessments and bulletin board display dates for culminating unit-based student work.
- The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project curriculum is implemented for English language arts instruction. This curriculum has been aligned with the Common Core Learning standards. Across the grades teachers are provided with year-long instructional pacing calendars that cover units in Reading and Writing workshop.
- Units of study in science are developed from the New York State Science Standards and the Full Option Science System (FOSS). Social Studies units are developed in alignment with the New York City Social Studies Scope and Sequence and integrate internet-based resources from Brain Pop and United Streaming. Teachers use the Depth of Knowledge framework to develop higher-order essential questions for each unit in science and social studies.
- Across the grades focus on the instructional shifts are reflected through a balance of informational and literary text with Spanish language text to support literacy engagement for newly arrived English language learners, as well as an emphasis on the use of academic language in all subject areas. Close reading is also an instructional scaffold for all students with particular focus on English language learners and students with disabilities. Daily independent reading of books of trade books of varying levels of complexity is also an established instructional modality. In math, school wide implementation of the SOLVE method for problem-solving supports the development of students conceptual awareness skills.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

The school is developing in their use of common assessments to measure student progress across grades and subjects. Across classrooms there is an inconsistent use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers are developing in their analysis of running records and their development of rubrics. These assessment practices, along with inconsistent checks for understanding impedes student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the grades, teachers administer baseline assessments in math and English language arts. Pre and post assessments are administered at the beginning and end of every unit of study. Across the grades teachers also administer running records during benchmark administration periods throughout the year. The principal shared that data analysis revealed a gap between students' summative English language arts performance levels and their respective running record levels. This disparity indicates that teachers require more training in administering and assessing running records. School leaders are coordinating norming sessions for this purpose.
- The school follows a literacy progress monitoring schedule that aligns all of the literacy assessments with the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project units of study. Teachers maintain assessment folders for every student. In addition teachers confer with students during Reading and Writing workshop and maintain conference notes in each student's assessment folder, as well.
- In some classrooms teachers were observed circulating amongst students as they engaged in independent and group work, to provide clarification and or push student thinking. However there were some classrooms in which this practice was not observed and students' misconceptions and errors went unnoticed by the teacher.
- In many classes teachers provide students with and use checklists to assess the quality of student work. As noted by the principal, the checklists only provide a list of criteria and do not allow students or teachers a gradient of proficiency by which to score the work. Many posted work samples had a score but without a gradient the score was ambiguous. The principal stated that teachers will be required to use scaled rubrics and teach students to use them to self-assess.

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based collaborative teacher team meetings to enhance the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and the attainment of school wide goals. Distributed leadership structures allow teachers to have a voice in key decisions across the school.

Impact

Teacher-teamwork and distributed leadership structures enhance the attainment of school wide goals and teacher leadership.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams are scheduled for a double period of common planning time each week. Teams include grade level teachers and cluster teachers. The rotational teacher team roles are time-keeper, note-taker and facilitator. A designated grade team leader participates in all teacher team meetings. Grade team leaders confer with administration for guidance and to share information weekly.
- Teacher teams use the Problem of Practice protocol to analyze student work. During the visit the 5th grade teacher team was observed analyzing and discussing work through this protocol. The presenting teachers, an integrated co-teaching team shared student responses to an informational text. The task was to write a response providing one relevant detail. Team members asked clarifying questions and offered instructional/ intervention strategies. The presenting teachers took notes as their colleagues gave feedback. The session culminated with the presenting teacher reading off the strategies that they planned to implement during follow up lesson(s).
- There are many structures for distributed leadership such as grade leaders, teacher mentors, learning partners demonstration teachers, curriculum committee membership, lab-site demonstration teachers, and instructional coaches.