



**Department of
Education**

Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Theodore Schoenfeld Elementary School

09X110

**580 Crotona Park South
Bronx
NY 10456**

Principal: Daisy Perez

**Date of review: November 14, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Claudette Essor**

The School Context

Theodore Schoenfeld is an elementary school with 486 students from pre K through grade 5. The school population comprises 42% Black, 53% Hispanic, 4% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 10% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 93%.

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	Celebration	Well Developed
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	Additional Findings	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:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Intensive cycles of assessments, closely matched to curricula, result in feedback to staff and students about students' progress towards learning goals, informing strategic and timely instructional adjustments to curricula and instruction.

Impact

Feedback contributes to an accurate snapshot of students' progress towards mastery of learning goals so that all students' needs are targeted accurately and addressed effectively, leading to increased student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- In all content areas, there are end of unit assessments from which teachers cull data and make adjustments to instruction to improve student performance. For example, trend analyses identified students' weaknesses in constructing effective paragraphs in essay writing so teachers collaborated to incorporate new strategies in re-teaching for student mastery of this skill area.
- Teachers use a school-wide grading policy and task-specific rubrics aligned to curricula to provide feedback on student performance in all disciplines, to students and other staff. For example, a "Writing Growth Continuum" and a "Qualities of Good Writing Rubric", attached to samples of work for each child, provided feedback on the work.
- Across grades and subjects, a color coded assessment folder maintained by each student, provides a portrait of the student's mastery of skills on assessments done, via a cover page that shows tracking of progress from one assessment date to the next, and copies of each assessment showing scores and teacher comments about the student's strengths and areas of need.
- Teachers implement common assessments, including running records, Fountas and Pinnell and Measures of Student Learning baseline assessments in reading, writing and math, assessing student's proficiency and content knowledge related to varied performance tasks.
- The principal noted that as a result of a review of grade level assessment data, she pushes teachers to infuse more writing across content areas and attributes that to the samples of lengthy pieces of student writing shown on bulletin boards. In addition, the principal indicated that school's shift from the *Reading Street* to *Core Knowledge Curriculum* for grades K-2 is a direct result of findings from assessment data, which highlighted areas of need not effectively addressed by the *Reading Street* curriculum.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Although instructional practices reflect the written curricula and the tenets of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, teaching strategies do not regularly incorporate effective questioning, rigorous tasks and multiple entry points to learning across classrooms.

Impact

Teaching practices do not immerse all students in productive struggles with tasks that maximize their opportunities to demonstrate higher order thinking in their work.

Supporting Evidence

- In the majority of classrooms visited, all students worked on the same task and most teachers did not provide extension activities for advanced learners. For example, in one classroom all students sat on a rug listening to the teacher talking and reading about the life cycles of animals, after which they were asked to read additional pages in triads and note “the most important ideas”.
- Teachers in some classrooms engaged students in challenging tasks, such as reading texts to cite evidence for responses to tasks and using academic vocabulary to explain solution to problems. For example, in one class early grade students worked with a partner on fluency and problem solving in math, using manipulatives and a Smart Board to demonstrate varied ways of adding numbers to solve the assigned problems. However, in other classrooms tasks were of low demand, including in an upper grade classroom where students were asked to read short excerpts of texts to complete writing (main idea) in a graphic organizer.
- Several lessons were teacher dominated, with students quietly listening to the teacher or to responses from a few peers who were called upon to answer predominantly low level, short answer questions that required very little thinking. For example, a class of fifth grade students spent over 10 minutes listening to the teacher read excerpts of a text, pausing frequently to ask questions such as, “What happened to the house? What did the fire do? How did that make her feel? Did they have time to grieve?” The students responded to these questions with simplistic answers such as, “fire”, “burned to ashes”, “sad” and “no”, respectively.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Using student work and data, the school has developed and implemented curricula aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and instructional shifts.

Impact

The school's commitment to continuously reviewing and modifying curricula results in all learners having access to coherently sequenced units of study with academic tasks designed to accelerate learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Minutes of meetings show that teacher teams conducted data analysis of student baseline assessments and reviewed student work samples to determine adjustments needed to alignment instruction to Common Core Learning Standards. For example, teachers examined student work with a focus on students' proficiency in using academic vocabulary and producing informational and argumentative writing.
- Unit plans show the school's focus on the instructional shifts, with tasks requiring students to engage in learning activities such as composing explanations of inferences drawn from texts, solving complex problems in math and preparing summaries of reading selections.
- An instructional handbook for each content area shows Common Core aligned units and tasks, derived from revisions of past units, modification of lessons from Engage NY, and the adoption of curriculum resources such as *Go Math*, *Expeditionary Learning* and *Core Knowledge* that are aligned to the Common Core Standards.
- The school uses curriculum binders as a school-wide tool that highlights grade level monthly curriculum calendars, provides detailed curriculum maps that chart cross-discipline outcomes for writing, reading, listening, and speaking across classrooms and incorporates specific instructional materials for English Language Learners and students with disabilities. There is also a Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) curriculum with topics to be covered and activities to be implemented across the school, to teach all students "the three 'Rs'- Respect, Responsibility and self-Regulation".

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Administrators systematically convey high expectations to staff, students, and families and support them towards success in meeting the expectations.

Impact

The school continually raises the bar for high quality work by all staff and students, leading to collective responsibility for learning and ongoing improvement in staff and student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Tools such as curriculum binders, instructional memoranda, data collection sheets, and templates for analyzing student work are distributed to all staff, specifying the school's high expectations for teaching and learning. For example, there are weekly, instructional memoranda that explicitly state expectations linked to the targeted components of the Danielson Framework, the instructional focus across the school and content specific instructional steps, supports and materials that must be evident in all classrooms.
- Administrators use conference notes, reviews of unit and lesson plans, feedback from observations, and analyses of student work, to hold staff accountable for the school's high expectations. For example, at staff conferences the principal uses a spreadsheet to share results of assessments by classes, publicly identifying teachers whose classes met or did not meet the pre-determined targeted level of mastery (80%) on the assessment. Each teacher whose class did not meet the target receives a letter from the principal, with explicit next steps and recommendations for re-teaching the content and skills, in preparation for a follow up assessment of the same skills/content.
- A parent stated that at a "Curriculum Night" the school informed families of expectations for their children and gave out curriculum newsletters. Another parent added that the school sends home progress reports, invites them to parent teacher conferences, and uses a "Class Dojo" online communication system to inform them about their children's progress in meeting expectations for learning. One proudly noted that her child's teacher told her that her child "is reading above grade level but must read more each day". Parents also praised the school for hosting workshops, including a workshop on Common Core Standards and a math workshop where families received manipulatives to take home to help their children with assignments.
- Data displays on bulletin boards, spreadsheets, instructional memoranda and documents in assessment binders, show that administrators track student performance and constantly focus attention on the progress of specific teachers and students in meeting high expectations. For example, a monthly attendance tracking sheet lists the names of all teachers and highlights all who met or did not meet the "94% standard for attendance" and a "Chapter Analysis" document tracks each teacher's progress in moving students to the targeted mastery level on each end of chapter assessment.

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

Scheduled professional collaborations across grades and content areas allow teams of teachers to share content knowledge and instructional strategies for improving teaching and learning.

Impact

The inclusion of all staff in a multitude of teams empowers all teachers to assume responsibility for collectively improving teacher practice and student mastery of applicable performance standards.

Supporting Evidence

- Four teacher teams (grade 1, grades 2 and 4, grades Pre-K and 3 and grades K and 5) meet weekly, using agendas and protocols that focus attention on meeting the goal of improving student achievement through improved teaching practices.
- Teachers of the same grade are programmed for a common planning period and on Tuesdays teachers engage in collaborative inquiry activities involving analysis of student work and data, including item skills analysis of the 2013-2014 standardized assessments.
- At team meetings, teachers refine curricula, develop and evaluate assessments, and design instructional adjustments and improvement plans. For example, one teacher at a team meeting reported that after analyzing student's math work samples, she observed that students' multiplication strategies needed support and introduced the "lattice method" which led to improvement in student performance on a follow up assessment.
- A variety of tracking tools and documents viewed in assessment binders and intervention binders used at team meetings, showed that teachers regularly analyze assessment data and make adjustments to instruction and curriculum. One teacher stated that after each end of unit or chapter assessment the grade team examines the results to determine next steps for students who do not meet the mastery target for that assessment and share ideas in creating an action plan that is given to the principal.
- The principal indicated that team meetings include all teachers of the grade, Response to Intervention teachers, related service providers and teachers of English as a second language, with lead teachers and coaches providing support with data analysis, instructional resources, and next steps to improve student learning outcomes and teacher pedagogy. According to the principal, this has strengthened teacher practice and contributed to improvement in student performance on the 2013-2014 New York State math assessment.