



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Joseph H. Wade

Middle School X117

**1865 Morris Avenue
Bronx
NY 10453**

Principal: Delise Jones

**Date of review: April 27, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Cheryl McClendon**

The School Context

Joseph H. Wade is a middle school with 619 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 82% Hispanic, 15% Black, 2% Asian and 1% White students. The student body includes 38% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 90.1%.

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	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
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

High expectations grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching are consistently communicated to staff by school leaders along with the supports of on-going professional development. School leaders and faculty communicate expectations connected to college and career readiness to families.

Impact

Teachers are supported in meeting school leaders' expectations through weekly professional development. Parents feel well informed about their children's progress in school.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders disseminate the staff handbook at the beginning of every year. This handbook delineates school goals, core values, and standards of professionalism, the instructional focus, non-negotiables and instructional and behavioral expectations. School leaders review school wide expectations and norms at the beginning of every year.
- The school's year-long professional development plan begins in August with topics such as planning, developing units of study and teacher effectiveness training. Throughout the year topics include measures of student learning, Danielson's Framework for Teaching, modifying curriculum, Achieve 3000, academic intervention and academic vocabulary. Teachers participate in professional development sessions every week.
- School leaders and the parent coordinator disseminate a Parent/Student Handbook every year. Through this handbook, parents are apprised of school wide programs, school policies, the assessment calendar and the schedule for possible meetings with classroom teachers.
- During the parent meeting, parents stated that they receive frequent progress reports. Teachers communicate with parents via telephone calls and text messages. Parents check their children's grades, attendance and behavior reports through the Jupiter on-line communication system. Parents also meet with teachers weekly to discuss any concerns.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points that engage all learners in appropriate tasks and elicit higher-order thinking. Across classrooms student discussions reflect uneven demonstration of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Teaching strategies that inconsistently provide multiple entry points lead to uneven levels of student participation and limited higher-order thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Teaching strategies that elicited student engagement were observed in some classrooms. For example in one class, students re-read their notes and engaged in team discussion as they prepared for a text-based debate about democracy and the court system. Students were also assigned various roles. While in other classes, students were observed to be minimally engaged. For example, in an eighth grade social studies class, the teacher read the task instructions aloud, read the entire excerpt about Pearl Harbor aloud to the class, underlined the key words in the text and then she filled out all of the responses within the graphic organizer without any student participation or input. Although some students raised their hands to participate, the teacher did not acknowledge them, thus some students were not engaged.
- In some classes teachers provided multiple entry points to facilitate student engagement and understanding, notably as observed in an eighth grade integrated co-teaching class. Students were engaged in a simulation activity focused on the importance of biodiversity in the preservation of ecosystems. Students explored how disease spreads quickly amongst infected organisms of similar genotype. Multiple entry points were facilitated through small group discussions, role-play, physical movement and visual representation. Conversely, in some classrooms, the lack of multiple entry points limited student engagement and higher-order thinking. For example, in a sixth grade English language arts class, the lesson on character analysis was teacher-centered, with no opportunity for student discussion. The interaction was teacher to student. Moreover the teacher constantly interrupted students as they attempted to respond, not allowing them to fully express their thoughts.
- Across classrooms, throughout subject-areas, a focus on the use of academic vocabulary was observed. Teachers reinforced student's use of vocabulary by commenting on student's word choice and listing key vocabulary words for the various lessons.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

The coherence and alignment of the curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards are ensured by school leaders. Curricula and academic tasks are designed to engage critical thinking and promote college and career readiness for all students including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Impact

The implementation of coherent, standards aligned curricula facilitates opportunities for critical thinking and preparation for college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Expeditionary Learning for English language arts (ELA) instruction in all monolingual classes across the grades. However, due to the fact that teachers found that newly arrived and first year ELLs struggled with the program, Codex was adopted for ELA instruction with this population of students. Teachers maintain that the Codex curriculum is more accessible for ELLs due to embedded scaffolds and greater opportunities for writing. The principal shared that as part of the Renewal Schools program, the school will also incorporate units from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program.
- In math, the school selected the Math in Focus program for all grades, which was recommended by the Senior Achievement Technology Integration Facilitator from the network. Math in Focus, as described by the principal, is in 100% alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards.
- The school selected Pearson's American History textbook for social studies instruction across the grades and Glencoe Science textbook. The faculty analyzed the units of the textbook to ensure its alignment with the New York City Social Studies scope and sequence and the Common Core Learning Reading for Information Standards.
- Across subjects, teachers develop unit and lesson plans. The unit plan template includes the Common Core or content standards, objectives, big ideas, essential questions, content skills, vocabulary, assessments and learning activities. Lesson plans templates include learning targets, Common Core or content standards, vocabulary, key concepts, mini-lesson, guided practice, independent practice and share. Within lesson plans, teachers also prepare questions for students to reflect upon their learning and consider how they may apply newly learned strategies.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

The school is developing in their use of common assessments to measure student progress toward goals across grades and subjects. Teachers' assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Inconsistent use of checks for understanding limits teachers' abilities to tailor instruction to meet individual student's needs.

Supporting Evidence

During the leadership meeting, the principal shared that pre and post unit assessments are administered on all grades in ELA and math. Curriculum-based unit assessments are administered in social studies and science. Twice a year, all teachers administer running records as the Measure of Student Learning.

- During the leadership meeting, the principal stated that data collection and next steps or follow-up are one of the teacher's areas of struggle. She asserted that being strategic about how data is used to change practice is a focal area. A data tracking form has been devised for teachers to track student performance in math and ELA. Teachers analyze the data to identify the lowest five performing students and develop action plans for these struggling students. Implementation timelines including frequency and intensity of intervention, progress-monitoring strategies and projected dates of skill acquisition were not included in the plans.
- In some classrooms, teachers circulated to monitor students' discussion and written responses and provided clarification or prompted students to think more and provide more detail. However, in other classes, teachers were not observed to be checking for understanding. For example, in a grade 7 math class, as students worked at their desks to generate factors for the number 12 through the use of arrays, the teacher stood in front of the room and did not circulate to monitor for accuracy and understanding.

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

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in teacher team meetings with a focus on the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers analyze data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused to improve their own practice and student progress.

Impact

Teacher teamwork supports teacher practice and student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Some teacher team meetings are designated for the enhancement of instructional tools. For example in December, all teacher teams focused on the development of Common Core-aligned lesson plans that focused on the integration of high-level questioning using the Depth of Knowledge scale. Teachers also worked to modify lesson plans to include scaffolds for English language learners and students with disabilities.
- The grade 7 teacher team was observed analyzing a survey that students took after the Common Core English language arts exam. Team members worked in dyads to identify students' needs and develop targeted intervention strategies based upon the analyzed survey feedback. Findings and next steps were recorded on large graphic organizers to be shared at the next meeting
- All teacher teams analyze student work and assessment data utilizing a looking at student work protocol and discuss next steps for each focal student. The instructional coach attends the team meetings and uses the analysis data to inform professional development for teachers.