



Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Garrett A. Morgan

Elementary School X132

**1245 Washington Avenue
Bronx
NY 10456**

Principal: Anissa Reilly

**Date of review: March 9, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Cheryl McClendon**

The School Context

Garrett A, Morgan is an elementary school with 487 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 57% Hispanic, 42% Black and 01% White students. The student body includes 14% English language learners and 14% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 88.9%.

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	Developing

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide training and accountability systems linked to the attainment of the expectations. Families receive ongoing feedback from teachers to further their understanding of student progress toward the expectations that are set for them.

Impact

Teachers receive support toward meeting the high expectations of school leaders through professional development opportunities. Parents are well informed of the expectations of the Common Core Standards and their children's progress towards meeting those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders disseminate *Teacher Weekly*, a weekly bulletin that highlights important submission deadlines; grade meetings; procedural mandates such as attendance policy, annual review compliance, and school wide homework policy and arrival /dismissal procedures.
- Faculty members and families receive a comprehensive "School wide Rules and Procedures" manual every year. This manual lays out expected performance, compliance and behavioral norms for all school community members.
- The school wide professional development plan reflects six cycles conducted from September through June. The topics covered are the Danielson Framework for Teaching, explicit instruction, high-level questioning, response to intervention, developing open-ended math problems, tiered assignments, assessment and needs assessment/ reflective end-of-year planning. Professional development sessions are conducted every Monday from 2:20 – 3:00. In addition, the English as a second language department has conducted professional development focused on effective ESL strategies such as vocabulary-building using visuals and close reading. School leaders conduct informal observations to ensure that teachers implement strategies that are reinforced during professional development sessions within their instructional programs.
- Parents report that they have participated in Common Core Learning Standard workshops facilitated by school faculty. In addition, each grade has scheduled one on one parent meeting times on alternating weeks/days. Parents meet with teachers to discuss student progress and ask questions about curriculum and student work.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms teaching strategies do not consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, thereby limiting comprehension of task for some students. Student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of thinking and participation.

Impact

Teaching strategies that do not provide multiple entry points limit student comprehension and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- As observed in a fifth grade class, students engaged in a spirited debate over the Revolutionary war through multiple entry points. The teacher prepared students with various research resources such as varied texts, audio-visually and graphic organizers to gather information through independent and partner reading, small-group discussion and note-taking. The culminating task was a two-sided debate with the teacher facilitating as moderator and ultimately evaluator. Conversely, in some classrooms the lack of planning and the lack of multiple entry points resulted in uneven student engagement. Such was the case in a first grade class. Initially, students were observed with their heads on their desks, and the lights were out. Immediately upon noticing observers, each teacher gathered a group of students and began math instruction. One small group sat on the floor as the teacher posted a subtraction problem on the whiteboard. The other teacher posted math problems on the periphery of an already cluttered whiteboard. As each teacher solved the posted math problems, there was little evidence of preparation or strategies that supported student access to authentic engagement in the task. The teachers' lack of preparation was noted by school leaders during the debriefing.
- In some classrooms teachers explicitly modeled the assigned task. For example in a fifth grade English language arts class the teacher wrote a claim on the whiteboard, "Martin Luther King, Jr. was a courageous man." She, then, demonstrated defending her claim with evidence from a text about Dr. King. Finally, the teacher instructed students to turn and talk to discuss the evidence that she used to support her claim. After engaging in this shared activity, students developed their own claims about historical figures they had studied and worked in partnerships to identify the supporting textual evidence. However, also observed was a lack of explicit modeling as a scaffold for student comprehension. This was the case in a third grade class where students were working on fractions. The task required students to partition circles and rectangles into two, three, or four equal shares, describe the shares using the words halves, thirds, etc., and describe the whole as two halves, three thirds, four fourths. However, the teacher did not explicitly model the task and many students did not fully understand what to do as reflected in the wide variety of incorrect answers.
- Across classrooms the level of thinking as reflected in student discussion varied. In a grade two classroom students talked about the challenges that characters in a text face, the teacher strategically scaffolded their discussion skills by modeling how to restate their opinions in order to emphasize their thesis. Students practiced the skill in partnerships, with the teacher listening in. However, in a couple of classrooms the interaction was primarily from teacher to student, without opportunities for students to engage in guided discussion.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Developing
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

School leaders and faculty are in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and the content standards and integrating the instructional shifts. Curricular planning is beginning to facilitate access and engagement for a diversity of learners.

Impact

Lack of complete curricula aligned to Common Core Learning Standards limits access to rigorous content and to cognitively engaging tasks for a diversity of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses the Common Core-aligned Ready Gen curriculum for English language arts instruction. Teachers develop lesson plans for reading workshop and writing workshop. Lesson plans reflect the lesson objective, Common Core standards, vocabulary, enduring understandings, mini-lesson, active engagement, small group/ independent work, scaffolds for English language learners and students with disabilities, share points, differentiation modalities and assessments. Teachers implement intervention strategies and programs such as guided reading, strategy grouping and the Foundations language development program for struggling readers.
- Common Core-aligned Go Math is implemented for math instruction across grades. The school's contracted Generation Ready math consultant developed a year-long curriculum map that aligns the New York City math scope and sequence, Go Math units and the Common Core standards. Components reflected on math lesson plans are the teaching point, Common Core standards, vocabulary, problem of the day, engage, teach and talk, small group and independent work, differentiation plan for tier I intervention, English language learners, students with disabilities, enrichment tasks and exit ticket assessment.
- At the time of the visit there were no cohesive social studies or science curricula in place. Teachers use the New York City scope and sequence to plan disparate social studies lessons. Similarly, teachers use the New York State science standards to create disparate science lessons. The principal acknowledged a deficit in these curriculum areas and is planning to develop the social studies and science curricula across grades.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

Findings

Curricula-aligned assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students and teachers. Common assessments are used by teachers to monitor students' progress toward goals and make instructional modifications.

Impact

The use of rubrics and common assessments support student progress toward goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Across grades and subjects teachers administer baseline, midline and end-of-year Go Math assessments to track student progress. Teachers use a tracking sheet to record student proficiency in each of the Common Core math standards. In addition, teachers use a whole-class math assessment sheet to record and categorize class proficiency in focal standards. For example any standard in which 80% or more of the students achieve proficiency is a strength area, any standard in which there is 50 – 79% student proficiency is an area to monitor and any standard in which there is 49% or below student proficiency is flagged as an area in need of support.
- Teachers administer Fountas and Pinnell Running records every six to eight weeks to assess student reading progress. Teachers submit a mid-year analysis of the class-wide reading progress trends to school leaders. Attached to the analysis are assessment-based next steps for groups of students. Early childhood teachers assess emergent literacy and numeracy skills such as alphabet recognition, print awareness, number recognition, counting skills, and color recognition.
- Across grades and subjects, teachers use curriculum-based and teacher-made rubrics to scaffold and evaluate student work, such as the narrative writing rubric, the informative/explanatory writing rubric, the 5-trait writing development rubric, the math problem-solving rubric and the science inquiry rubric. Teachers provide rubric-based written feedback to student and students use the rubric criteria to self-assess.

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

Findings

Across teacher teams the use of an inquiry approach is developing. Although teacher teams analyze assessment data and student work for focal students, this work does not typically result in improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students.

Impact

The work of teacher teams is not yet resulting in improved teacher practice or student progress across the grades.

Supporting Evidence

- During a first grade teacher team meeting teachers were observed analyzing student work. The presenting teacher distributed student writing samples that were labeled “high”, “medium” and “low” and teachers analyzed the writing. Although the writing samples had already been assessed, teachers analyzed student proficiency in the use of temporal words which was the unit’s skill focus. Moreover, several of the first grade writing samples reflected emergent student writing that commanded attention to more fundamental writing skill areas.
- Teacher teams are engaged in the analysis of benchmark assessments, running record data and Measures of Student Learning. Grade level and class-level trends are charted and submitted to school leaders. Teachers are developing in the use of these data to develop action plans and tailor interventions for groups of students.
- All teacher team meetings have an English-as-a-second-language specialist. This teacher supports the team in identifying scaffolds for English language learners on every grade. There is also a vertical special education team that focuses on students with disabilities.