



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Jonathan D. Hyatt

Elementary School X154

**333 East 135 Street
Bronx
NY 10454**

Principal: Alison Coviello

**Date of review: April 29, 2015
Lead Reviewers: Roxan Marks**

The School Context

Jonathan D. Hyatt is an elementary school with 396 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 38% Black, 57% Hispanic, and 2% White students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 19% 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 92.0%.

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	Proficient
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	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

The high expectations are consistently communicated to all staff and professional development activities are aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders and staff partner with families to communicate the expectations connected to college and career readiness.

Impact

The school has embedded routines and practices that foster a culture and mutual accountability for high expectations resulting in active partnerships with parents to support students' progress towards goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Clear expectations are communicated through the staff handbook that addresses curriculum, instruction, assessment, professional conduct, and expectations for teams, resources and partnerships with external organizations. The principal shares weekly highlights with staff, celebrating excellent attendance and curriculum news regarding “good work” observed in classrooms. New teachers are paired with experienced teachers, from their grade or content area, to mentor and communicate the school-wide expectations for professionalism and instruction. School leaders provide feedback to the staff on the quality of bulletin board displays and ensure specific components are present across the school.
- The professional development plan includes working on data analysis, implementing guided reading, setting student goals, questioning, creating student discussion, lesson planning using the Universal Design for Learning, and teaching mathematics for conceptual understanding. An extended day learning plan was also developed for teachers by week and outlines content for pedagogy focus meetings, data analysis meetings, study groups and classroom walks. The school supports teachers and holds them accountable as they develop their skills to provide rigorous instruction. To this end teachers visit lab sites and attend collaborative classroom walks with teachers across all grades and content areas to share best practices and develop a mutual understanding and accountability of and for instructional expectations.
- The school leader shared that they use Responsive Classroom, an instructional theory that is rooted in the belief that to address college and career readiness and to foster self-regulation and peer supports, classroom environments need to help students prepare for the future while transforming the school culture by providing social-emotional support for students. Students receive progress reports, distributed twice a year, share current goals in subject areas, and assess academic behaviors. In addition, they include the child's reading level and the appropriate grade-level benchmark so that parents are aware of their child's goals. In grades 2 to 5 students lead “Progress Report Conferences” with parents. Teachers and students prepare a script for the conferences that includes personal information about their learning goals and the support they need to achieve them.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the school's core beliefs about how students learn best. Student work products and discussion demonstrated high-level of participation and thinking.

Impact

In most classrooms instructional practices are informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching that enable students to engage in challenging work that demonstrates their thinking and participation. However, high levels of student ownership in learning were not systematically observed across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the school there is a commonly held and frequently referenced belief that students need to know themselves as learners and to develop strong levels of independence through authentic learning activities. There is a strong instructional focus on deepening the level of student discussion in classrooms as aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Talk prompts were provided for each grade to support discussion in classrooms, although in some rooms discussion was not at a high level. During a grade 5 lesson students were in different groups completing tiered assignments. One group was determining whether information from a text should be quoted or paraphrased. Five students used laptops to listen to President Obama's speech on "Immigration Reform." A group of students used chunking strategies to make meaning of the text, while another group used photos as an entry into this lesson. The discussion in this class was at a high level. However this was only observed in some of the other classes where student talk occurred without the support of the teacher. In a grade 2 math lesson students were investigating the concept of base ten by figuring how many groups of ten are represented in bundles of t-shirts. After noticing some students were having trouble, the teacher gathered students and asked "What was special about the story yesterday? How did he organize them? In groups of what?" During work time student discourse was limited when students were working with partners and the teacher was not scaffolding the discussion.
- In an integrated co-teaching class (ICT), each teacher worked with small groups of students. After the mini-lesson in one group, the teacher asked the students to turn-and-talk with their partner and say that they would incorporate dialog, thinking and action in their writing. Students turned and as a group recited that they are "adding dialog, thinking and action" to their writing. The teacher's prompt curtailed the creative, individual dialog between the partners when students were instructed what to say.
- Instruction in the classrooms matched the pacing calendar for the unit plans. The grade 5 math was starting the unit "The California Frog Jumping Contest" in which students are learning to use a double number line to investigate ratio. There were examples of extended writing on all grade levels displayed on hallway bulletin boards. In one example a third grade student wrote a persuasive essay supporting the change in the cell phone policy. In a grade 3 English language arts classroom students engaged in learning about social issues and noting discoveries as they read. Using the text "Fly Away Home", student pairs shared noticings as the teacher asked high-level questions. A student said she learned that many homeless people have jobs. The teacher affirmed what the student said by restating the sentence and replacing the word jobs with employed using a high-level vocabulary word.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Academic tasks consistently foster rigorous and higher-order skills across grades and subjects for all students.

Impact

The faculty and school leaders have made purposeful decisions to build a coherent curriculum that promotes college and career readiness and provides all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, with rigorous tasks across grades and subjects.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Teachers College Reading and Writing units of study and also utilizes Visual Thinking Strategies. The school supplements the city-recommended adopted curriculum Go Math! with Context for Learning and uses Spatial-Temporal (ST) Math for English language learners. Maps and lessons are developed to promote higher-order thinking skills in all students. Tasks created enable students to develop deep content knowledge and engage in activities to promote critical thinking, problem solving, and synthesizing information across many sources. For example, in a kindergarten unit the plan delineates how to develop students' numeracy skills by determining the many ways to arrange eight children on upper and lower bunk beds.
- Unit plans are developed using various formats but similar components are evident across grades. Pacing calendars were created and some units include cross-discipline connections. Units are labeled with key ideas, enduring understanding and standards. Essential questions, vocabulary and assessments are including as well as a learning plan that outlines the main teaching points for lessons.
- The school uses a departmentalized model in grades 3, 4 and 5 that allows for the integration of non-fiction reading and writing units of study with social studies content in the Research and Information courses throughout the year. Exposure to non-fiction texts and use of open-ended questions to allow students to think critically and citing text evidence are a couple of ways the school addresses college readiness.
- In order to build coherence in units, teachers analyzed the gaps in the curricula to shift the sequence of units and make modifications to the curricula and lessons. Teachers fine-tuned the sequence of literacy instruction to move poetry to later in the year in order to group units that focus on structured opinion writing. One grade 5 lesson plan included a task with three levels of difficulty and included a version for English language learners.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies to inform adjustments to units, lesson and grouping. The school uses common assessments to determine progress towards goals across grades and subjects.

Impact

The school uses data to provide actionable feedback to students with clear next steps. Assessment results inform teachers' decisions in adjusting curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Assessment calendars by grade level include a description of the target assessment, administration dates and next steps for teachers to make regarding the analysis of data and implications for instruction. There is a school-wide system for the collection of diagnostic, interim assessments and other forms of data using Google.Docs, an online document-sharing program. Teachers analyze the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) and running record results to identify areas of challenges for students as well as types of miscues in order to adjust guided reading plans, create strategy groups and develop intervention plans for groups of students.
- Teachers use data trackers that include goals for individual students. In grade 1 the overall goal was that by June 2015, 30% of the students would reduce the gap between their performance and the grade level benchmark. As of the date of the review, 15% of the students have reduced their gap. In grade 5, 71% of the students have reduced the gap, far exceeding the goal for the grade. Students track their own progress toward meeting daily reading goals. For example, a first grade student set a goal of reading 12 books by the day of the review. She was keeping a tally of the books she read and chose the books for the day to match her reading level and in a few cases challenged herself. Students understand that meeting their goals is one way they can ensure they are prepared for the next grade. One bulletin board had examples of students with disabilities setting goals for themselves. One student wrote that he wanted to be a Level N reader and wanted to work on communicating his understanding of the text. He wrote that he would develop this communication skill by "telling someone about the story bit by bit."
- Students are given on-demand pre-assessments as well as flash drafts during and at the conclusion of a unit. Teachers categorize student work according to common difficulties using writing progressions as guides and plan lessons to address areas of difficulty for specific groups of students. In mathematics, teachers utilize the Go Math! chapter pre-assessments as well as the concluding written assessment and/or performance task. Teachers analyze assessment data according to content standards to determine areas of need and adjust curriculum and instruction. Students stated that teachers usually give them feedback that helps them make their work better and it often contains tips such as, "Next time add more detail to your story." Student work indicated that most feedback is rubric-based or is in alignment with the Teachers College continuum.

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

The majority of teachers engage in structured collaborative inquiry. Teacher teams consistently use protocols to analyze data and student work for whom they share or upon whom they focus.

Impact

Through teacher team collaboration, teachers' instructional capacity and promote Common Core standards, integration of instructional shifts, and achievement of school goals. These analyses typically result in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers meet in a variety of configurations including pedagogy focus teams, data and planning teams and a child study team which creates intervention plans, tracks and monitors individual student progress in response to targeted supports provided. Grade-level teacher teams meet weekly to discuss content for upcoming lessons, develop common assessments and rubrics and look at performance data for their students. Teacher teams conduct inquiry in cycles of six to eight weeks. At the beginning of the year, teacher teams focused on developing team protocols and processes for looking at student work and data. In addition, teams focused on developing a shared understanding of what true student independence looked like. Common planning time affords teachers the opportunity to meet weekly to plan curriculum and lessons. Since grades 3 through 5 are departmentalized, content area teachers meet with differentiation specialist as well as in grade level bands.
- In order to build teacher capacity to promote high-level discussions and tasks, the structure for professional learning includes the use of various formats to engage teachers in collaborative learning opportunities including lab-sites, learning walks, pedagogical focus teams, data analysis, and planning teams. Teacher teams focus on various questions and explored topics related to academic vocabulary, multiple modalities, and self-confidence. To address the instructional shifts grade level and content teams work on curricula plans that focus on citing evidence, researching and deepening exposure to non-fiction materials.
- In addition to common planning time, teachers meet in pedagogy focus teams every two weeks. A lower grade pedagogy focus team meeting focused on the development of academic language and looked at how well students incorporated the explicit vocabulary into their reflections on their own learning at the end of a cycle of inquiry. The team noticed that students were able to write about how "smoothly" they read, but did not use words like "fluent" even though teachers often modeled the use of that word. Teachers in a pedagogy focus team reviewed an article on the 30 million-word gap and discussed strategies for increasing the quantity and quality of words in their classrooms such as wearing signs with new words around their neck. A teacher expressed that participating in the pedagogy focus group helps her to internalize her lesson plans and grow professionally through interactions with colleagues.