



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Lola Rodríguez de Tió**

**Intermediate School 162**

**600 St. Ann's Avenue  
Bronx  
NY 10455**

**Principal: Angel Fani**

**Date of review: October 30, 2014**

**Lead Reviewer: Yolanda Torres**

## The School Context

Lola Rodríguez de Tió is an intermediate school with 376 students from grade 6 through grade 8. The school population comprises 30% Black, 69% Hispanic, 2% Other. The student body includes 25% English language learners and 29% special education students. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 88.0%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-------------------

### Findings:

The strong culture for learning at this school includes high expectations for student achievement that are clearly communicated, understood and implemented by staff, students and families.

### Impact:

There is a strong culture of collaboration and mutual accountability where students take responsibility for their own learning as they prepare for their future academic endeavors.

### Supporting Evidence:

- The principal has communicated high expectations and non-negotiables to all constituents during faculty conferences, town hall meetings, student assemblies and parent meetings leading to a unified understanding of daily performance and achievement.
- The school climate is a safe and orderly environment where staff, students and parents respectfully collaborate and adhere to rules and regulations. Instituting study hall and a school uniform policy in tandem with hiring a social worker and creating a new position for a student support coordinator have contributed to a decrease in student suspensions. Students indicate that they are well-supported this year and are focused on preparing for college and career. Leaders and staff members have made a concerted effort in building a community where all stakeholders understand their responsibility in contributing to a learning environment that leads to the fruition of the school-wide motto: "Student success. Nothing else."
- School leader and staff communicate expectations on the importance of academic improvement and social emotional growth during meetings, inclusive of the School Leadership Team, in support of student preparation for the future. Regularly scheduled assemblies and parent meetings provide staff, students and parents forums to discuss expected behaviors, adherence to the dress code and uniform policy, which was adopted by the parents, and guidance connected to the understanding of college and career readiness.
- Leaders use the Danielson Framework for Teaching to provide staff with feedback on instructional practices and professional expectations resulting in a system of accountability with a bank of strategies to support the achievement of expectations.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### **Findings:**

Although there is a common set of beliefs about student learning, the teaching practices and strategies have yet to consistently align to these core values in order to ensure high-quality instructional engagement of all learners.

### **Impact:**

Teaching practices are not yet leading to consistent levels of student engagement in meaningful discussions and purposeful tasks.

### **Supporting Evidence:**

- School-wide core beliefs on how students learn best, informed by the citywide instructional expectations (CIE), Principles of Learning, and the Danielson Framework for Teaching, are displayed in every classroom providing a framework for instructional practices, discussion during professional development for staff and advisory sessions in order to meet the needs of all learners.
- Lesson objectives are presented with essential questions that begin with the phrase, “How can I...” so that all students can reflect on their learning at the end of the lesson and complete exit slips that usually begin with, “I can” statements. This practice ensures instructional accessibility to all populations across all content areas, but, most importantly, provides teachers with immediate feedback on the success or flaws of the lesson and how to address students’ next steps.
- Teachers use the school-wide Student’s Learning Page to ensure planning for the essential components of a lesson: learning target, power skill, time-on-task, assessment of learning, and homework. While performance tasks and problem solving activities that require students to show evidence of their learning in their work products are included in lesson plans, there is an uneven implementation of challenging instructional practices which leads to missed opportunities for student cognitive engagement.
- Although some teachers use questioning techniques that engage students in higher level discussions resulting in meaningful student work products, a high percentage of teachers still execute teacher-directed lessons giving students minimal opportunity to engage in independent work.
- Student work products such as reflection sheets, student success learning plans, end-of-unit assessments and writing baselines provide teachers and students with vital information and feedback on student progress and areas in need of focus.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	-----------------------	----------------	-------------------

### **Findings:**

The use of a variety of teacher-created common assessments and the school-wide grading policy to measure student progress towards achieving academic goals is consistent from classroom to classroom.

### **Impact:**

The school-wide focus on analyzing student data provides teachers with information that leads to instructional adjustments and actionable feedback to students.

### **Supporting Evidence:**

- Daily checks for understanding with exit tickets and benchmarks provide teachers and students with important information on student understanding and progress.
- The use of baseline assessments for all students and common rubrics with actionable feedback assist in tracking student progress towards the attainment and refinement of the individual goals agreed upon during conferences with teachers. Conferral notes provide teachers with formative data resulting in lesson adjustments to meet students' instructional needs.
- Students can access from home their individual data results on assessments, tests, daily work, homework and attendance in order to meet with teachers and self-reflect on their next steps towards learning. This access allows families to engage in conversations with their children on the importance of remaining focused on their learning and goal achievement.
- Data Team members analyze data sources with teachers in order to make instructional decisions that align with the standards and are refined to meet the needs of students. As teachers track student progress they glean valuable information that can inform efforts to enhance student learning and their own professional growth. These data talks empower teachers to make decisions that lead to improved student outcomes as evidenced by improved formative assessment results and student work products.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
---------------------------	---	----------------	-------------------

**Findings:**

Teachers engage in weekly inquiry team meetings to build capacity for analyzing student work and assessment data and improvement of student learning.

**Impact:**

The structured professional collaborations lead to teacher empowerment, increased student achievement and attainment of school goals.

**Supporting Evidence:**

- Teacher teams meet weekly to discuss student data and review conferencing sheets in order to agree on interventions that will help students succeed academically.
- Meetings are structured so that teachers have multiple opportunities to plan across content areas. Teachers voice that this forum helps them inquire about individual students' strengths and next steps, thereby agreeing on strategies to be consistently used with specific students in the varied classes.
- The implementation of mentor groups and content leaders provides teachers with opportunities to develop their agendas and articulate with the literacy coach for instructional coherence and consistent practices. Teachers indicate that the mentor groups have helped to develop trust and stronger relationship with students leading to a learning community where students have a direct rapport with the adults.
- Teachers engage in inquiry-based discussions on individual students' strengths and next steps and are empowered to make decisions that impact on student learning. They meet and communicate with the principal to share their discussions and plans for implementing their decisions resulting in improved student achievement.

**Findings:**

School leaders align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) or other content standards that integrate the CIE emphasizing rigorous habits.

**Impact:**

All students gain access to cognitively engaging tasks that promote college and career readiness and result in improved outcomes.

**Supporting Evidence:**

- The CCLS-aligned curricula in English language arts and math promote higher-order thinking skills for all students, thus ensuring accessibility of learning targets and enduring understandings for student achievement.
- Teachers plan daily independent reading time and record students' reading progress based on the Common Core standard or power goal. Teachers confer with students to ascertain student understanding and stamina, thus providing them with information to plan for continuous growth in reading and comprehension. These conferences also lead to Response to Intervention services as teachers plan to group students for further instructional support.
- Consultants provide professional development on rigorous tasks that are CCLS-aligned and challenge students' thinking, such as the EngageNY unit on ratios that requires students to conceptualize mathematical understanding, fluency and application to integrated learning experiences. Teachers plan lessons taking into account the multiple entry points needed for student learning.