



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Esteban Vicente Early Childhood School

Elementary School X170

**1598 Townsend Avenue
Bronx
NY 10452**

Principal: Nancy Ramos

Date of review: December 4, 2014

Lead Reviewer: Tammy Pate

The School Context

Esteban Vicente Early Childhood School is an elementary school with 275 students from kindergarten through grade 2. The school population comprises 20% Black, 74% Hispanic, 1% White, and 2% Asian students. The student body includes 24% English language learners and 8% 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 92.3%.

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	Well Developed
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

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations (professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching) and provide training to the entire staff, and effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

The impact of consistent high expectations and training resulting in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations and successfully partner with families to support student progress toward those expectations

Supporting Evidence

- The administration uses a wide variety of professional learning events to communicate high expectations to staff including weekly teacher team meetings related to curriculum, grade, bilingual and special needs; summer curriculum planning sessions; full day curriculum planning events during the school year; and teacher leadership teams. Team meetings include protocols for looking at student work and use the Danielson Framework for Teaching Domains 3B and 3D as the basis of inquiry to support specific teachers in understanding how to assure student mastery of a standard.
- The school shared that expectations connected to getting students to be college and career ready are communicated to parents in the following ways: parent/teacher conferences, promotion in doubt meetings with teachers, individual education plan meetings, written communications such as reading level letters and conference requests. Student goals and expectations are explained to parents at Parent Teacher Association meetings. Numerous opportunities are extended to families to participate and lead in setting learning goals for their children. Parent meet frequently to review and revise school goals and expectations, Common Core Learning Standards, reading levels, literacy and math curriculum and New York State exams. This was observed during a parent meeting when parents shared how they regularly contribute to the above.
- Students understand high expectations through teacher/student conferencing, checklists, rubrics, student reflection systems, peer-to-peer assessment practices, pre- and post-tests, school-wide Rocket Reader goal charts, and writing goals. During a meeting with students, all were able to communicate what they were learning, how they learned best, and how this learning would help them in the future. Students are taught and can communicate what, why and how they are learning something. The school shared that every student writes a letter to their future teacher explaining what they have learned during the current school year and they set their goals for the following school year.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies, including questioning, scaffolds in English and/or native language where appropriate, and routines, consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula and student work products and discussions.

Impact

All learners, including English language learners and students with disabilities, are consistently but not yet strategically engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products, thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders are using feedback based on the Danielson Framework to support teachers in implementing the current Common Core-aligned curriculum in daily instructional performance; school leaders also review student workbooks and provide teachers with checklists of recommendations that are shared during teacher meetings and inform class groupings and differentiation of assessment. Teachers use these checklists to plan questioning and assessment activities for students. Student writing folders displayed labels on their front covers with two to three pre-printed feedback comments. One or two comments were circled by the teacher as a form of feedback to student, other workbooks showed evidence of student-to-student conferencing and peer assessment.
- Across classrooms teaching strategies consistently provided multiple entry points or differentiation in group work across classrooms. Lesson observations demonstrated multiple examples of flexible student groupings and strategies that promote Accountable Talk which evidenced the school's instructional focus of student-to-student discussion. Several classrooms observed displayed differentiation in student assigned task. All students appeared engaged and participated in peer and group activities.
- Student work products displayed engagement in challenging tasks, and some, but not all, demonstrated higher order thinking skills. All posted student work contained teacher feedback and reflected on prior work the student completed. Teachers work with the school's English language learners (ELL) to craft appropriately challenging tasks for all students including those in bilingual classes. In one class visited, students were grouped heterogeneously by language proficiency and students switched between English and Spanish as they completed a group assignment. However, there was limited differentiation of the tasks, which hindered the amount of choice available to students and kept the students from accessing higher levels of thinking.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts, and curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

CCLS alignment has produced coherence across grades and subject areas that promotes college and career readiness for all students so that individual and groups of students, including the lowest- and highest-achieving students, ELLs and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams create their own curricula in English language arts (ELA) and math based on units modeled after those found on EngageNY and Georgia Math. Lesson plans utilize Webb's Depth of Knowledge to support the instructional focus of questioning and discussion. On a monthly basis, students read theme-base non-fiction texts across all grades. The school uses a standard writing response format that requires all students to demonstrate their understanding by citing evidence from the text.
- School administrator shared that teams begin planning over the summer and have four professional development days built into the school year to work on revisions. Revisions made in different colors on curriculum map. The school uses these dedicated times to revise their curriculum which includes a school-wide common language for rubrics and triangulation of the Common Core, checklists and rubrics, and teacher-created curriculum units. These units include differentiated texts based on Lexile levels and the special learning needs of ELLs and students with special needs.
- Teachers meet once a week to examine student writing and to score and analyze student work products. They record students' strengths and weakness across the grade and revise rubrics to support student discussion and language development through the use of questioning. An example of this was observed in teacher unit plans and on student work products that both emphasized the use of high frequency words and transition words as a way to make student discussions more accountable and to require a higher thinking demand. Additionally, student work demonstrated evidence that instructional shifts in literacy were embedded such as rubrics that assess a student's ability to use evidence from sources to inform or make an argument.

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula and across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

The use of assessments aligned to curricula, ongoing assessments, grading practices, and analysis of student learning outcomes provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's use of rubrics for writing allows students to self-assess and assess the work of their peers. The use of the Reading Rocket chart and several writing rubrics has created a system used by all to track the progress of students.
- Math units demonstrate how the school uses assessments to inform curriculum development. During a teacher meeting, teachers shared that they use their weekly scheduled meetings to look at student work to determine if students understand what is being taught and then make adjustments to their shared lesson plans when student work reveals a problem.
- The school uses a three step assessment system in writing that includes a baseline, mid-line, and end-line assessment. The results of these assessments are aggregated by the data specialist and made available to the school on distributed tracking sheets.
- Teachers use frequent checks for understanding during classroom instruction, however questions remained at the Recall and Comprehension levels and students were often prompted toward the correct answer.
- School uses a multi-level data tracking system to monitor individual student progress toward meeting performance goals. Teachers administer pre- and post-tests in math. They use data to modify lesson plans and student workbooks show evidence that peer-to-peer assessment has resulted in more rigorous engagement and student performance.

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

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused, and distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Analyzing the work of students teachers have in common has resulted in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students. Teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams use scheduled meetings to discuss the performance and needs of students they share in common. During an observed team meeting, teachers shared that many of their students are enrolled with little or no English language ability. Bilingual support takes many different forms including pre- and post-testing, shelter instruction observational protocols (SIOP), an instructional model that “helps teachers plan and deliver lessons that allow English learners to acquire academic knowledge as they develop English language proficiency,” and Aussie, educational consultants, who provide coaching to teachers in framing questioning, lesson and unit plan sharing, and share fairs of teachers’ best-practices. The teachers reported success in helping students and spoke about how valuable team meetings were to teaching and learning.
- Every grade and each content area has a teacher leader. Teacher leaders meet regularly with administration to discuss curriculum, student performance trends and the needs of the grade or department. Using teacher-created checklists that gauge student mastery of targeted skills and revised checklist criteria and indicators, student performance is discussed and adjustments to assessment practices such as rubrics are made. In one instance, analysis of 2nd grade place value unit assessments led to teachers revising base-ten instruction to include individual student practice packets through manipulatives and value charts.
- The school’s data specialist collects and aggregates student performance data onto an at-a-glance data tracking form so that teacher teams are able to easily track performance of individual students and groups of students over time.
- Administrators use school funds to hire per diem teachers to cover classes so that teachers have the opportunity to meet and plan during the school year. The principal also pays per session to teachers to meet during the summer to write and revise curriculum. School leaders shared that promoting leadership among teachers is a key focus. Teachers lead common planning where they review and revise literacy and math curriculum, lesson planning, assessment data is analyzed and used to drive instruction, looking at student work, and turn-keying of information received at professional development.