

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Dr. Roland N. Patterson School**

**Elementary School X230**

**275 Harlem River Park Bridge  
Bronx  
NY 10453**

**Principal: Rowena Penn**

**Date of review: April 1, 2015  
Reviewer: Cheryl McClendon**

## The School Context

Dr. Roland N. Patterson School is an elementary school with 155 students from grade 4 through grade 5. The school population comprises 44% Black, 52% Hispanic, 02% White, and 02% Native American students. The student body includes 13% English language learners and 21% special education students. Boys account for 41% of the students enrolled and girls account for 59%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 89.3%.

## 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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</b>

## Area of Celebration

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

School leaders communicate high expectations to the staff and provide training and accountability structures. The faculty communicates expectations and provides feedback to families regarding student progress.

### Impact

Professional development offerings support teachers in meeting school leaders' expectations. Feedback helps families understand student progress towards school expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- Every year, school leaders disseminate the *School Procedures and Protocols* manual to faculty members. This manual contains documents which set school-wide expectations for the establishment of systems and structures such as on-going formative assessment, instructional differentiation, literacy and math tools, paraprofessional roles, school wide behavior, lesson plans and classroom environment. A review of the manual is led by school leaders at the beginning of the school year.
- Professional development sessions are conducted every Monday covering topics such as data-analysis, running record assessment, guided reading, conferring, writing process strategies, *Treasures* unit-planning, Common Core instructional shifts, and the Depth of Knowledge scale.
- Parents shared that administration and teachers communicate regularly. One parent stated that the teachers invite parents to meet weekly to discuss instruction and student progress. Parents have received information detailing the Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, the parent coordinator distributes a monthly newsletter which includes curricular highlights apprising parents of what students will be studying in various curriculum areas in addition to announcements of school wide events.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Developing**

### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of Danielson Framework-aligned beliefs about how students learn best. Instructional practices do not consistently incorporate effective questioning strategies and appropriate scaffolds to provide multiple entry points.

### Impact

The inconsistency in both effective questioning and the provision of multiple entry points leads to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher order thinking skills in student work products.

### Supporting Evidence

- In some classes teachers were observed asking high-level text-based questions that engaged students in analyzing and evaluating textual themes. However, in other classes, the teachers posed low-level questions that elicited one word responses. This was observed in a grade 5 class where the teacher's question, "If you had a walkie-talkie and your little brother broke it, how would you feel?" elicited responses such as, "Angry" and "Mad". Moreover, the teacher did not push students to elaborate or develop their answers.
- Across classrooms, students were observed in teacher-directed guided reading groups. However, there was minimal strategic instruction evident. In one class, a group worked with the teacher to read the story, "Fish Tricks". Students read round-robin style, with the teacher providing the correct answer whenever a student misread a word. The paraprofessional guiding the other group also provided immediate corrections during the reading.
- In a grade 5 writing lesson, the teacher circulated from table to table to support students in writing responses to literature. The teacher was observed prompting students to add more details as she instructed individual students to read their writing out loud. The teacher also asked questions about the story to further students' thinking.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### Findings

The school is making efforts to align the curricula to the Common Core Learning standards. Higher-order skills and rigorous habits are inconsistently reflected in academic tasks across grades and subjects and for English language learners and students with disabilities.

### Impact

Although the school has selected Common Core-aligned curricula in English language arts and math, well-articulated and coherent social studies and science content-standard-aligned curricula is developing, which leads to an inconsistency of rigor across subjects throughout the grades.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across the grades, teachers use the *Treasures* anthology-based program for English language arts instruction. The principal shared that she has adopted a more prescriptive program to provide teachers with instructional scaffolds.
- The school is in the second year of implementation of the *Envision* math program. School leaders stated that this program is more engaging than the previously implemented math program due to the fact that each unit presents more hands-on and interactive lessons. Lesson plans for the *Envision* curricula incorporate scaffolds for English language learners and students with disabilities, such as visual aids and math vocabulary supports.
- Trade books of varying levels of text complexity were purchased to support the school's guided reading program, book clubs and literature circles. Across classes and grades, guided reading or literature circles are planned and implemented every day for one period.
- Pacing calendars for social studies and science are evident for the existing grades 4 and 5. The principal maintains that the *Treasures* anthology integrates social studies and science topics throughout the anthology. In addition, the Social studies scope and sequence and Harcourt science textbook is used to plan lessons in these areas.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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### **Findings**

Although teachers administer common assessments, strategic use of the data is not consistently evident. Across classrooms, teachers inconsistently use of checks for understanding.

### **Impact**

Teachers do not consistently use assessment results to adjust curricula and instruction. Inconsistency in the strategic use of checks for understanding impedes teachers' abilities to make effective instructional adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Across the school, teachers administer curriculum-based performance tasks and *Fountas and Pinnell* running records at bench mark periods. However many of the teachers are developing in their analysis and effective use of the data to plan for instruction. For example, teachers are beginning to use the data to plan targeted instruction for guided reading groups.
- The school uses the computer-based program *Achieve 3000* to measure students' reading comprehension. This assessment is administered by the *Achieve 3000* teacher, and the results are shared with classroom teachers. Teachers are beginning to utilize the data to develop targeted instruction for comprehension strategy groups.
- Across classrooms, the practice of checking for understanding is inconsistent, and students' misconceptions often go unnoticed by the teacher. For example, in a grade 7 math class, the teacher conducted a teacher-centered lesson on measurement, and did not circulate to monitor student's problem-solving strategies.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Developing</b>
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**Findings**

Teachers participate in collaborative team sessions. However the strategies and structures for inquiry are inconsistent. Teacher teams are beginning to analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused.

**Impact**

Teacher team work does not yet typically result in strengthened instructional capacity of teachers, improve teacher practice, or lead to progress toward goals for groups of students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams meet one period per week, as evidenced by dated sign-in sheets, agendas and minutes.
- The school has a grade 4 and a grade 5 teacher team, which represent the existing grades in the school. The principal stated that this year’s teacher team focus is assessment in instruction and feedback to students. She also shared that the teams use a team meeting protocol, and facilitation is rotated, based upon the content of the meeting and individual areas of expertise.
- The principal shared a student work protocol document that begins with a ten minute period for teachers to reflect upon the instructional strategies that they tried from the previous meeting and how well they worked, a ten minute presentation of the selected student work samples, a fifteen minute examination of student work and a culminating ten minute collaborative planning of next steps for each focal student. This protocol was loosely followed during grade 5 team meeting. During the grade 5 teacher team meeting, teachers discussed the *Exemplars* performance assessments rubric gradient as it applied to the samples of math problem-solving samples. The presenting teacher shared her concern with the labels of each level of the rubric gradient and stated that she felt that the term novice is stigmatizing. Initially, the discussion was not focused on the actual student work. Another team member refocused the discussion toward student work analysis. During this meeting, one or two members dominated the discussion, and the process of collaborative inquiry, analysis and discussion was not fully evident.