



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

**Luisa Pinero Fuentes
School for Science and Discovery**

Elementary X307

**124 Eames Place
Bronx, NY**

Principal: Yolanda Valez

**February 2, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Melodie Mashel**

The School Context

Luisa Pinero Fuentes School for Science and Discovery is an elementary school with 404 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 10% Black, 80% Hispanic, 1% White, 7% Asian, and 2% other students. The student body includes 25% English language learners and 23% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 94.0%.

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	Celebration	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	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	Additional Findings	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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

The school's curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Units are revised to support the school's diverse groups of learners.

Impact

The school's curricula are coherent across grades and subjects, engage students in challenging tasks and are refined to meet the needs of all students including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, thus preparing them for college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- The school adopted Ready Gen as the curricular resource for English language arts (ELA). To strengthen the ELA curriculum and student reading comprehension, the school also uses Teachers' College Comprehension Toolkit. In addition, the school embedded additional writing units into the ELA curriculum.
- A review of the school's curriculum maps reveals students write across genres and disciplines. For example, in a third grade classroom students conducted research, reading a variety of texts on a topic of interest and produced informational writing about specific animals they had selected such as wolves and dolphins. The school has designed ELA units that integrate the arts and social studies content.
- Informed by the analysis of data and student work, teachers revise the curriculum. A review of unit plans included curricular modifications for ELLs and students with disabilities. Teacher written unit revisions included use of a variety of graphic organizers, computer programs such as IXL Math, Think Central to build math fluency and Big Brainz for Math automaticity with multiplication, division, addition and subtraction. They also use MyOn and Lexia to support students in reading.
- To raise the level of rigor, lesson plans reveal teachers use the Depth of Knowledge rubric to design and assess the level of tasks students are required to complete. A review of written math units reveals students are expected to solve multi – step problems using multiple ways and provide written explanations that support their method of problem solving.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Teacher instructional practice that provides varying instructional strategies to meet the needs of all learners is an emerging practice. High level student work varies across classrooms.

Impact

The use of instructional strategies that provide multiple entry points into lessons for all students including ELLs, students with disabilities and students at standard levels is inconsistent, thus hindering students from producing meaningful work products that reflect student high level thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans reviewed revealed planning for ELLs and students with disabilities. However, classroom visits revealed that in some classrooms modifications were made for a diverse group of learners. For example, in a fifth grade Integrated Co- Teaching (ICT) classroom students were grouped strategically and the teachers used a variety of tools to support all students in accessing lesson content. A group of English Language Learners worked collaboratively on a math problem on a laptop, the teacher worked with another group and modeled the solution to a math problem and others worked in partnerships sharing and showing their work on wipe off boards. However, in all other classrooms visited this practice was limited.
- In some classrooms visited, teachers posed high level questions. For example, in a fourth grade class, students were asked why the civil rights leaders they had studied were important contributors to the Civil Rights movement in America. Students were also required to compare several short texts read and a video clip they watched about the movement. However, in five out of seven classrooms visited teacher questions elicited recall of facts.
- Written units indicate students are required to write across genres and disciplines. A review of student work folders revealed that in some classrooms there was a range of the quality and volume of student writing. For example, in a third grade class students wrote in response to a science experiment and produced an informational booklet about an animal they had researched. However, a review of first grade student folders reveals limited samples of student writing since the beginning of the school year.
- In a second grade science class, students engaged in the exploration of a seed and gingerly dissected a lima bean. Students were required to draw a diagram of the bean and label its various parts. However, students were not encouraged to deepen their thinking by determining the functions of each part of the seed.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school's use of common assessments and rubrics provide students with actionable feedback about their progress. Assessment results are used to make curricula modifications.

Impact

The school's assessment practices inform adjustments to units and lesson plans and ensure students gain a clear picture of their progress and next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a variety of assessments i include Performance series, Lexia (ongoing assessment as students progress through the program- intervention), Gates MacGinitie (a screener), Performance Tasks, unit tests and running records.
- Written actionable feedback provided to students in math, focuses on guiding students to provide written explanations of their work and find multiple ways of solving a problem. For example, in a third grade class teacher written feedback provided the student with the suggestions to use arrays and other picture representations to support them in solving the problem.
- Teachers monitor student progress in reading during conferences with students and adjust instructional practices to provide students with additional support. Teachers consider re- grouping, targeted re- teaching of lessons, additional modeling and embedding additional guided practice for students.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations to staff aligned to the Danielson's Framework for Teaching and to families through a variety of systems and structures.

Impact

The school's structures convey high expectations to all stakeholders, thus preparing students for college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent observations of teacher practice using Danielson's Framework for Teaching. Leaders meet with teachers to discuss their practice and provide areas of recommendations. For example, observation feedback has focused on further enhancing teacher's ability to confer with students in elevating the quality of their writing. Staff is held accountable for holding quality conferences with students during writing periods and school leaders monitor the quality of conferences during visits to classrooms.
- Weekly professional development sessions on topics such as elevating the quality of student conferences and engaging students in multi-step problem solving in math, grade meetings, emails, teacher participation in professional learning webinars and "lunch and shares" provide teachers with support that further raises the level of their instructional practice and solidifies the expectations for teaching and adult learning.
- Parents participate in workshops provided by the school on topics of concern to parents such as; health, safety, parenting tips, New York State Tests, Common Core Learning Standards and positive discipline. For example, the school recently held a workshop that provided parents with targeted strategies to use with children with attention deficit disorders. The school hosts family nights and a science fair. Newsletters, school wide assemblies and one to one meetings with parents serve as additional venues through which parents are apprised of school's expectations.
- Parents shared that teachers are always available to meet with them and the school "is like a small family." Parents are updated of student progress on Parent Tuesdays, Myon reports, report cards, phone, e-mails and via notes sent home.

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

Teachers participate in professional collaborations that promote Common Core Learning Standards and share in making decisions about student learning.

Impact

School leaders and teachers engage in structured inquiry that strengthens teacher expertise, empowering them to provide input in curricular and instructional decisions that support student learning outcomes.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher grade-level and vertical teams meet weekly to continue to align their units of study to the Common Core Learning Standards. For example, teachers embedded additional writing units in the school's literacy units and students are required to write across content subjects. A review of teacher team agendas and adjusted writing units revealed how teachers provide opportunities for students to write across content area subjects. For example, a visit to a second grade classroom, revealed students writing in their science journal about their observations from a scientific investigation.
- Teacher teams meet monthly with a consultant to guide them in ensuring mathematical practices are addressed in their instructional practice. For example, teachers expressed that to ensure students deepen their math concepts and tend to precision; they needed to embed additional use of math models into their lessons.
- Teachers articulated that in collaboration with their colleagues, they are encouraged by the school leaders to provide input on key decisions about adjustments to curriculum and their own instructional practice. For example, for their unit on algebraic thinking, third grade teachers determined the need to embed the use of student exemplars in their lessons. In addition, teachers decided there was a need for additional teacher modeling of concepts and problem solving.
- Teachers lead grade and content area meetings. They facilitate professional learning sessions and turnkey knowledge and information they have gathered from external professional development. Teachers determine which area of study they need to further develop and conduct text based study groups on the topic of need or interest. For example, teachers shared they lead a study group around the instructional strategies to use to support new ELLs to the school.