



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Vida Bogart School for All Children

Elementary-Middle School X352

**1330 Bristow Street
Bronx
NY 10459**

Principal: Lourdes Mendez

Date of review: February 10-11, 2015

Lead Reviewer: Robin Cohen

The School Context

P.S. 352X is a K-8 school with 516 students from grade kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 36% Black, 57% Hispanic, 3% White, 2% Asian and 2% other students. The student body includes 21% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 76% of the students enrolled and girls account for 24%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 86.0%.

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	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	Additional Findings	Well Developed
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	Well Developed
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	Focus	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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

All curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. The school continues to deepen, expand, and refine their curriculum maps, units of study, and academic tasks to ensure a range of learning experiences across the continuum of services.

Impact

The school's curricula decisions has built coherence across all subject areas while promoting college and career readiness, thereby, demonstrating increased achievement for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school makes purposeful choices about curricula based on student performance and periodic assessments such as Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI). At the close of marking period 1, students scoring Level 3 and Level 4 demonstrate the following growth; in reading 80%, in writing 81%, and in math 80%. Based on Rethink data, 908 individual targets were mastered, based on individual education plan (IEP) goals. According to Running Records data (179 students), 50% of those students progressed to a new instructional level and/or independent level. In addition 100% of all students using the Smile program (alternate assessment) have made progress in phonemic awareness, and students using the Wilson Reading Program, 100% made progress.
- The school-wide instructional focus of "Developing Literacy across the Curriculum through Real World Context". The curriculum planning team made up of administrators, coaches, and lead teachers created supporting tools used throughout all five sites. Specific standards were addressed, to help support and promote college and career readiness skills for their students. For example, based on student assessment data and teacher observation, the school has focused on strengthening students' ability to find key details in their reading assignments and to convey this in writing. Strong emphasis was placed on students being able to describe familiar people, places, and things, thereby increasing their vocabulary by using words acquired through conversations in classrooms or being read to by staff. In addition, the systematic movement around Webb's Depth of Knowledge is interwoven, as well as, the instructional shifts, teaching points, and culminating tasks. For example, in an elementary class for students with autism, students were reading news articles about real world topics. One group was reading "*Get the Tooth Truth – Sticky Teeth*". Students used reading strategies such as, highlighting relevant information, making text-to-self connections, and text-to-world connections.
- The school is very vigilant in their planning and refining of curriculum maps and units of study. The curriculum maps and units of study are organized by the school's created student body groupings (instructional level); functional – green, functional/academic blue, and academic – yellow, for both alternate and standardized assessment students. In addition, they are organized by grade bands and grades within each band in all content area subjects and social skill development. Culminating tasks within the unit plans are based upon differentiation of individual students' needs and IEP goals, which were developed through common core assessments and curricula systems.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
---------------------------	------------------------------	----------------	-----------------------

Findings

School leaders have created a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for all constituents, provides professional development opportunities for staff, and college and career readiness skills for students, fostering a culture of high expectations for all members of the school community.

Impact

Structures that support the school's high expectations results in effective academic and personal growth of students and adults, however, additional parental support is needed.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers stated that “high expectations” is consistently exhibited and communicated to all members of the school community through a variety of means such as, the staff handbook, instructional memos and emails, monthly faculty meetings, post-observations, and during conference days. In addition, administration has built a culture of accountability by providing focused feedback and ongoing professional development with input from staff.
- To provide support to families in lieu of a parent coordinator, teachers have dedicated Tuesdays as parent outreach day. Parents stated the administration, teachers and related service providers keep them informed of their child's progress, both academically and behaviorally. In addition, administrators have been resourceful by assigning an “events coordinator” at each site, as a professional assignment for teachers' administrative period that connect home and school through newsletters, open houses, student work fairs, and assemblies.
- Evidence of high expectations is demonstrated by the movement of students to a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). In grade 5, of the 51 eligible students, 19 students (37%) went LRE. In grade 8, of the 14 eligible students, 13 students (93%) went LRE.
- To ensure students are provided with constant opportunities to take ownership of their learning, the school created “next step boards” within all classrooms. There is ongoing communication, both verbally and in writing, amongst staff members and students concerning their progress. Students stated, during their team meeting, that they are aware of their progress through teacher conferencing, portfolio coversheets, culminating activities/tasks on the bulletin boards, and daily “high fives” and verbal praise.
- According to the School Environment Survey, questions related to high expectation reveal that: 94% of students responded that “staff believes that all students can do well in school and teachers keep me on track for college and career”. 88% of parents indicated that the “school keeps my child on track for college, career and success after high school. However, only 90% of teachers indicated that “the school communicates effectively with parents about their child's progress.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classrooms are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best as informed by Danielson's Framework for Teaching. Lesson plans are well designed with student specific Multiple Means Learning Approach (MML), individual pacing and supports to ensure all learners have the opportunity to produce cognitively appropriate and meaningful work products.

Impact

Across all classrooms, the unified common core aligned curricula have fostered wide-spread teacher collaboration, produced a coherent set of beliefs in how students learn best, and teaching practices to improve students' outcomes. Teacher ratings demonstrate an increase in the areas of questioning and discussion techniques and reflect student thinking and ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- The school provides ongoing professional development on Danielson's Framework for Teaching. School leaders were very vigilant in analyzing teacher performance. Based upon teacher observations, both formally and informally, in the area of questioning and discussion techniques, 57% of teachers are effective and 11% are highly effective. In the area of engaging students in learning, 59% are effective and 16% are highly effective. In addition, in the area of using assessment in instruction, 57% are effective while 19% are highly effective.
- Teacher designed units of study were developed to move students around Webb's Depth of Knowledge wheel as they progress through each marking period. The units were also built to cohesively link the standards and specific skill acquisition across all disciplines. 100% of students have demonstrated progress in literacy and math as measured by the Literacy Foundational Skills Continuum (LFSC) and Math Foundational Skills Continuum (MFSC). School-wide 20% of students have moved to the "next step" in literacy skills and 18% of students moved to the "next step" in math.
- Lessons are strategically designed using MML with individual student pacing and defining the students' preferred mode of communication (PMC). For example, in a "green" (instructional level – functional) grade 3-5 classroom, students were reading/learning "how to make a simple snack" and the correct sequencing of this task. The lesson plan indicated the appropriate level of support based on student groupings. For example group 1 needed consistent modeling and prompting, group 2 needed intermittent modeling and prompting, while group 3 only required limited modeling and prompting as needed.
- In most classrooms visited opportunities were provided for students to engage in peer to peer interactions. Students were prompted to "ask their partner", where applicable, a question about the story or article they were reading. Teachers consistently stated the instructional focus is to increase student-initiated communication with classmates, leading to increasing independence.
- Based on teacher observations (formal and informal) to date 2014-2015, 4% of teachers are rated ineffective, 12% are rated developing, 61% are rated effective, and 23% are rated highly effective. In addition, in comparison to the 2013-2014 school year, 19% of teachers were rated highly effective, to date 23% are rated highly effective.

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, the school uses common assessments, rubrics, and checklists aligned to its curricula to analyze student work, monitor student understanding, and provide meaningful feedback, so students are aware of their next learning steps.

Impact

The strategic use of varied assessment data aids in adjusting curriculum and classroom practices, thereby, increasing student growth. In addition, student self-assessment tools help guide instructional decisions and provide clear learning goals for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school created a class profile sheet that is used to inform which targeted Common Core Learning Standards will be addressed, track student performance, for both standardized and alternate assessment students, thereby, pinpointing individual student needs, and providing more intensive academic instructional services. This has resulted in, based on the LFSC and the MFSC data, that 100% of students have made progress in literacy and mathematics. 20% of students have moved to the next step in literacy skills and 18% of students have moved to the next step in math.
- The school believes that assessment data is an effective approach to drive instruction and improve student learning. Following each unit of study, assessments are administered to capture student progress for targeted skills. Teachers and students reference students' learning goals throughout the instructional period as demonstrated during classroom visits. Goal specific feedback is provided through the use of common rubrics of student performance as evidenced in portfolios and bulletin boards displays. During the small student group meeting, students stated "they know what to do next time to get a 4 the next time."
- Across all classroom visited, teachers monitor student progress through strategies such as the use of questioning, by both teacher and students, classroom and student-to-student discussions, exit slips, and student self-evaluation. Student work samples are reviewed on a weekly basis as seen during a collaborative team meeting. The results are used to determine next steps and subsequent lesson planning including group assignments, re-teaching, and inclusion of appropriate related service provider, such as the speech teacher to support and increase students' communication skills.
- During classroom visits, teachers provide time for students to self-assess using rubrics and checklists constructed by teacher teams, aligned to their curricula, and are student friendly and cognitively appropriate for both standardized and alternate assessment students. In addition, meaningful feedback is provided to students both verbally and in writing, such as "next step boards" post-it notes, and one-on-one conferencing. For example, during an individual conference with a student (group: yellow/academic, alternate assessment, grades 2-4). The teacher spoke about the use of graphic organizers – to visually help configure how to supplement what had been drafted by adding additional text-based details to support his opinion. In the next step section, the teacher wrote "make a habit of using graphic organizers when writing!" "There are all the pieces of a report there – no need to start from scratch!" "Add details from the organizers to the report."

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Well Developed
---------------------------	---	----------------	-----------------------

Findings

All teachers participate in inquiry-based and content/grade level team meetings so that all teams have opportunities to collaborate on curriculum development, plan for instruction, strengthen teacher practice, and analyze student work focusing on increasing student achievement. Embedded leadership structures ensure teachers have input on key decisions about curricula and teaching practices.

Impact

Professional collaborations, cohesive curricula, and classroom practices continuously strengthen teacher practice ensuring a shared commitment to increased student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers are active members of collaborative teams, meet at least twice weekly across all sites. Teams are grouped according to student populations as well as their instructional levels (functional – green, functional/academic blue, and academic – yellow), for both alternate and standardized assessment students. The teams use the Tuning Protocol when looking at student work.
- Teacher teams differentiate learning opportunities to meet the needs of all students as evidenced in their unit plans, pacing calendar, portfolio cover sheets, and student culminating activities/tasks, as evidenced in student portfolios and bulletin board displays. For example, during the Green/Blue grade 3-5 alternate assessment team meeting, teachers were examining student work demonstrating the writing of an opinion piece. Teachers were first discussing the score for calibration purposes then discussed the rigor of the work itself, and finally providing concrete comments such as; teaching students how to add more details, and how to provide students with the ability to elaborate on their conclusion. Sentence strips and question prompts were suggested.
- As a direct outgrowth of the collaborative culture within the school organization, there are bulletin board displays such as, “Teachers Helping Teachers” demonstrating samples of best practices. One such display was “*the BEST thing I saw today*” and the teacher posted how to provide meaningful feedback to students.
- To actively facilitate distributed leadership, specific structures were designed to provide clear examples of teacher leaders. For example, collaborative team leaders oversee team meetings and Marvelous Monday professional development workshops. The school has provided for various staff members to share their area of expertise to all staff members. Teacher mentors support new teachers and teachers identified as developing, as per Danielson’s Framework for Teaching, with best practices and daily routines. In addition, members from the curriculum team stated “we are able to effectively advocate for the refinement of current tools and the acquisition of future materials intended for classroom use.”