



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 005 Dr. Ronald McNair

Elementary School K005

**820 Hancock St.
Brooklyn
NY 11233**

Principal: Lena S. Gates

**Date of review: November 19, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Rod Bowen**

The School Context

P.S. 005 Dr. Ronald McNair is an elementary school with 230 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 0% Asian, 81% Black, 14% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 6% English Language Learners and 29% students with disabilities. Boys account for 48% of the students enrolled and girls account for 52%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 90.6%.

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 <i>Framework for Teaching</i> , aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	Additional Findings	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	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	Focus	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Curricula documents reflect Common Core learning standards and the integration of instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined based on student work and data.

Impact

All students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, have access to curricula and tasks that are cognitively engaging and promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula documents reviewed reflected alignment to Common Core Learning Standards and New York State content standards. Examples of Common Core standards include: refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text; and interpret products of whole numbers.
- Academic vocabulary was embedded in a number of lesson plans. Emphasized words and phrases included product, pressure, presentation, organization, transition and supporting details.
- The guided practice section of an English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan contained leveled reading tasks based on student performance levels. Peers read tasks aloud to students performing below standard, students approaching standard-level work partner read, and those working on level read independently.
- A math lesson plan included strategies for meeting student needs, with particular attention to those of the English Language Learners (ELLs) in the class. The plan specified native language translations by a bilingual paraprofessional and purposeful use of visual modeling.

Area of Focus

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

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations. Distributive leadership structures are in place but not embedded across the school.

Impact

School-wide instructional coherence promoting increased academic outcomes for all students is not yet established; however, professional collaboration is strengthening teacher capacity and supporting the implementation of the Common Core. Teachers have a voice in school decisions but currently do not play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- A cross-grade teacher team was observed referencing a rubric to collectively evaluate student work. While following a clear protocol, teachers noted that a student's work evidenced weak organizational skills, a lack of specificity when using details, and missed opportunities to compare and contrast. Analyzing another writing sample, teachers noted a student's lack of understanding in distinguishing between similarities and differences. Such analysis of student work has resulted in strategic grouping and the use of strategies such as thinking maps, focusing on transition words that support comparison.
- Teachers were in agreement that the biggest impact of their work this year has been looking at the relationship between the rubrics that are used to inform instruction and the expectations embedded with the Common Core Learning Standards. As a result of this work, the vertical alignment across grades has been more purposeful as they work to capture the nuances within learning standards as the rigor increases from grade to grade. For example, they noticed the need to quote from text when making an inference in the fifth grade standards and are now able to work toward that skill in the fourth grade.
- The focused work of teacher teams on effectively implementing Common Core Standards aligned tasks is evidenced in the schools curricula across grades and subject areas.
- The principal is working to encourage teacher leaders within her school and has created a formal process to identify staff members for that role. Teacher leaders dedicate twenty percent of their time to working directly with teachers as coaches. A teacher leader was observed actively facilitating the upper school team meeting. Additionally, this teacher explained how she is supporting the work of the lower school team who is working on vertical curricula alignment regarding specific skills in anticipation of their students entering the test taking grades.
- Teachers rotate as facilitators at team meetings, making all teaching staff accountable to the productivity of the group.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices reflected a consistent commitment to ability based grouping and student discussion that are informed by the Danielson Framework and the instructional shifts.

Impact

Students, including those with learning disabilities, are engaged in curricula-aligned, challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in their work products.

Supporting Evidence

- After a math mini-lesson, groups of students were directed to “teach someone”. Two of the student groups were observed immediately supporting peers at their tables in the proper use of number lines. A third group struggled with working independently and made little effort to assist one another. After briefly checking on the other tables, the teacher guided the third group to the floor to engage in scaffolded instruction, which included use of an oversized number line and a slower paced “we do” activity.
- During an early childhood science lesson, the teacher encouraged student voice by posing questions such as: “What have we learned about air?”, “What does air do to a parachute?”, and “Why do we breathe?” She also directed follow-up questions to students based on their peer’s contributions with, “Why is that?”
- Accountable talk was heard consistently during a fourth grade writing lesson. Groups of students followed a discussion protocol that encouraged them to be kind, specific, and helpful in their peer discussions. In one group, a student said, “I would like to add on to what L. said...” In another group, a student asked a peer, “Can I ask you a question? Why do you agree?” An assistant teacher was heard asking students to substantiate why they agreed or disagreed with a peer.
- In a math lesson, students were observed using close reading strategies as they annotated a word problem.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, assessment practices are aligned with the school's curricula and consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Students and teachers are provided with actionable feedback regarding student performance and achievement. In addition, teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- When asked about the role of rubrics in their learning experiences, students responded by saying, "Our teachers give us rubrics to level ourselves. She tells me to grade myself," and "I read my partners work and give them a level in a peer conference to tell them what they could do better next time."
- When asked about the feedback that they have received on their own work, a student noted, "The next time I will annotate each paragraph so that I can get the main idea." Another referenced positive feedback when he said, "I went back to the passage to prove the answer to the reading warm-up."
- A teacher noted that the lesson observed was necessary because, "yesterday I realized that I needed to pull back and have them go deeper." As a result, she had students revisit the skills they had not successfully learned about using base 10 as well as compatible numbers and partial quotients.
- During a science lesson, a teacher asked, "If you can remember all of the things we learned about air, give me a big thumbs up." Most students responded by raising their thumbs. She then directed students to discuss their recollections in pairs. During the pair shares, she circulated and took notes on participation and content. She then asked students to share out what they had discussed as she charted their responses.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations that are aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching and provide training to the entire staff. Staff members consistently communicate expectations connected to a path of college and career readiness, and offer on-going feedback on student progress to families.

Impact

Teachers have the training they need to support achievement of high expectations and are held accountable to meeting those expectations. Parents and guardians understand their children’s progress toward meeting the school’s expectations, which are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal’s high expectations regarding the effective implementation of ability-based grouping was evident in both lesson plans and during instruction. During classroom observation debriefs, her intended feedback to her teachers was aligned with these expectations. For example, she noted, “I would group those who weren’t getting it earlier.” She also noted that she would direct her lead teachers to position themselves with the student groups that need the most support as opposed to the assistant teacher or paraprofessional working with those groups.
- The expectation that teachers constantly work to identify students in need of purposeful grouping, support, and intervention is reflected in the data room; a meeting place for teachers to convene and collaborate. One wall in the room has the name of every third through fifth grade student, charted on a continuum from Level 1 to Level 4. Another wall contains item analysis from a math assessment and clearly highlights skills to be focused on in re-teaching efforts. A third wall shows targeted students based on data from an English Language Arts assessment. The principal ensures that the data on the walls is refreshed as assessment data becomes available.
- Parents stated that the staff communicates well with them regarding their children’s progress in school. Specifically, they mentioned communication during the Tuesday parent conference times and an on-line platform that updates them on projects, assignments, grades, and events. In addition, some teachers forward math websites to parents that they can refer to support their children’s learning at home.
- Teachers have facilitated a parent workshop on Common Core Learning Standards in math as well as on the English Language Arts instructional shifts.