



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 026 Jesse Owens

Elementary School K026

**1014 Lafayette Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11221**

Principal: Cynthia Celestine

**Date of review: February 11, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Gary Knight**

The School Context

P.S. 026 Jesse Owens is an elementary school with 201 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 1% Asian, 71% Black, 26% Hispanic, and 2% White students. The student body includes 7% English Language Learners and 24% students with disabilities. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 89.5%.

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 <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	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	Focus	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 to the entire staff and provide training for those expectations. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

The consistency in communicating high expectations has resulted in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations. The school successfully partners with families to support student progress toward those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- At the start off the school year, school leaders send a letter to each staff member as an introduction to the year's expectations and tone setting. In addition, teachers are provided a staff handbook with detailed information regarding expectations, and they must sign acknowledging receipt. The vision, mission and core value statements are communicated and reviewed with staff. Staff are also given daily bulletins and professional development. One such professional development instituted the beginning of a book study schedule on *Teach Like A Champion* by Doug Lemov. The book study included, but was not limited to, topics such as lesson structure, acting on data, building rigor through questioning and setting high academic expectations.
- The school communicates with families via designated time on Tuesdays for parent engagement, classroom newsletters in multiple languages, weekly progress reports, and ClassDojo, which is an interactive online system that provides families in-the-moment updates on their children's academic progress. It also allows for families to reciprocate in the communication process. The principal conducts "Breakfast with the Principal" as another means of communication. Partnerships include collaborations with families to co-plan school related events, which include curricular night workshops. For example, a session was held to expose families to the Common Core Learning Standards. Multicultural events are also used as an opportunity to communicate and reinforce expectations and student progress with families.
- The school leadership conducts observations with specific "look-fors" based on workshops and areas of focus discussed in book study. Specific feedback is provided and modeling is also done with teachers. One-on-one time is provided to support teachers in developing learning targets, which are also revisited during classroom observations.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers use assessment results to adjust curricula and instruction and make effective adjustments to meet all students' needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leaders have implemented a data driven cycle that includes assessing, analyzing, planning, professional learning, observing, and adjusting. For example, a grade 5 on-demand, informational writing assessment revealed that some students did not meet the standards with ideas/purpose, elaborating with evidence, and transition words. As a result, teachers adjusted instruction by planning next steps to include a use of graphic organizer to help students identify the sub-headings, and organization. Students will cite evidence when supporting subheadings and use an informational transitional word sheet.
- The school has developed an assessment calendar and uses various forms of common assessments including on-demand writing in math and reading, Journeys language arts curricular benchmark assessments, unit assessments, Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) and Dibels to determine student progress towards goals. For example, grade 3 math baseline data was analyzed and color coded to identify which students performed at a Level 1 (16.7), Level 2 (53.3), Level 3 (23.3) and Level 4 (6.7). This practice is done across grades and subjects. Students are then sorted by standards, and instruction is planned accordingly. Although the school uses common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress, all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities do not demonstrate increased mastery.
- Across classrooms, teachers also check for understanding by conducting teacher-student reading conferences, and by using a quick sort checklist, which helps them to identify which students meet, exceed, or do not meet expectations. For example, a grade 3,4,5 teacher checklist states the objective, "I can read and write numbers through 1 million (grade 4 and 5), and I can use patterns, arrays and skip counting to multiply (grade 3)." Data is inputted for each student. One teacher comment read, "Needs help in making equal groups and writing multiplication sentences." Student self-assessment practices are also used. For example, grade 2 students complete a "check progress on my work" sheet which helps to capture from the students' point-of-view, areas of strength, struggle, what they would change and what they are going to work on next.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to CCLS and integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher order skills are emphasized in curricula.

Impact

The school's aligned curricula and strategic integration of instructional shifts have resulted in coherence across grades and subjects. Academic tasks are embedded in a coherent way across grades and subjects so that all learners must demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Journeys curriculum for English Language Arts (ELA), Envisions for math and Fusion for science. New York State Scope and Sequence is used for social studies along with EngageNY as curricula supports. *The Common Core Companion Booster Lessons* are also used. Staff are supported with alignment and execution of curricula through professional development workshops. For example, on November 3, 2015, the workshop agenda covered adjusting the social studies curriculum, planning to help struggling students, and planning and adjusting curriculum for a 6-week writing cycle for Unit 2 writing cycles across grades for informational/explanatory writing.
- The school's instructional plans strategically integrate the instructional shifts across grades and subjects. For example, a grade 6 six-week instructional plan for Informational writing addresses, by week, the following: studying a mentor text, reading source texts and finding text evidence, thinking it through and organizing evidence, drawing evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection and research, clarifying the precise meaning of key words and producing, publishing and presenting work.
- Rigorous habits and higher order skills are emphasized in planning documents through the use of essential questions. For example, a unit 3, grade 4 planning document for an inclusion class asks the question, "How are different parts of the ecosystem connected?" Scaffolding questions for English as a New Language (ENL) and students with disabilities are detailed in plans. The school also uses the support of a teacher development coach to work with staff on rigor and the integration of these strategies in plans. Students are challenged to explain their thinking, and staff infuse the use of the Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questioning in planning.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn. Teaching strategies strategically provide multiple entry points and high quality supports.

Impact

The Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts inform the teachers' practices. All learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- School wide, teachers' lessons reflect alignment to the curricula and a coherent set of beliefs of how students learn. All lessons included instructional targets to provide a clear focus on intended student outcomes, essential questioning, Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), engagement, differentiated work, academic vocabulary and assessment. For example, a grade 3 math lesson had established goals of students' applying properties such as the distributive property in finding area. Students were using the areas of rectangles to model the distributive property of multiplication and demonstrating the property. Some students were called to the board to show their work.
- In a grade 4 math lesson, students were using partial quotients and the standard division algorithm to divide by single digit numbers. Domain specific vocabulary such as dividend, divisible, division, divisor, equation, quotient, partial quotient and remainder were addressed. The students were divided into five color-coded groups which provided academic tasks at varying levels to meet the needs of each student. Each group had to complete their leveled problems on chart paper using the SOLVE process and paying attention to the math rubric. The lesson also ensured the needs of the English Language Learners were met. Technology was infused for these students as they watched the visual learning bridge for using partial products.
- Essential questioning and higher order thinking strategies were evidenced in all classes. In a grades 3-5 English Language Arts/science integrated lesson, students were asked why is it important to be informed about what is happening in our world? They were also asked to identify the main idea and details in an informational text on humans and the environment, through collaborative reading and discussions. Students were all engaged in the task, referring to teacher made anchor charts, a main idea checklist, and a writing map to guide them through activities, culminating in some students presenting their main idea, supporting details and strategies used to the class.

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 that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for the students on whom they are focused.

Impact

The school’s professional collaborations have strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers. Consistent analysis of assessment data and student work have typically resulted in improved teacher practice.

Supporting Evidence

- During common planning time, teachers engage in weekly professional collaborations to promote the achievement of school goals. Teachers also meet in vertical and grade level teams to analyze data, improve instruction and student outcomes, and further build coherence across the school. For example, the administration has implemented a book study, which teachers use to have discussions around strategies, and best practices that can be applied in the classroom to push the teaching and instruction forward.
- Teachers state that the structured teams have helped to support their practice and strengthen their instructional capacity. For example, they have positively impacted their planning process. They articulated that the collegial discussions and feedback have caused them to be more intentional in planning teacher moves because they are able to discuss the children whom they share and, as a result, they are better able to understand the needs of children based on noticings revealed through student data and shared experiences.
- The teacher inquiry team meetings follow a structured protocol for examining student work. In the meeting observed, teachers looked at student progress as it related to an on-demand independent writing task on dangerous animals. This focus reflects the school’s focus. The data will be analyzed in order to make adjustments to teacher practice and to design support for students’ needs. Grade 3 students were asked to write an opinion essay that answered which animals are more dangerous to other animals: sharks or snakes. While looking at student work, teachers noticed three areas for follow up. Some students did not state sufficient reasons in the introductory paragraph; others did not restate the position in the conclusion, and others needed additional support with domain specific vocabulary. Next steps agreed to were: conference one-on-one with identified students who struggled in all three areas or provide students a choice of which skill they wanted to address first. Teachers will revisit paragraph-writing strategies to use with students such as the hamburger and Oreo method to fine tune paragraph development, and will intentionally scaffold the domain specific vocabulary.