



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 048 Mapleton

Elementary School K048

**6015 18 Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11204**

Principal: Diane Picucci

**Date of review: January 20, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Claudette Essor**

The School Context

P.S. 048 Mapleton is an elementary school with 596 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 47% Asian, 1% Black, 28% Hispanic, and 23% White students. The student body includes 28% English Language Learners and 17% students with disabilities. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.9%.

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	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	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	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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and staff engage in reciprocal communication with families to share expectations for students and promote partnerships in support of staff and student achievement.

Impact

Communication of and targeted supports for attainment of high expectations by staff and students promote collective responsibility among staff and families, contributing to improvement in staff and student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders set clear expectations and support all teachers in developing their instructional practice through school-based professional learning activities, intervisitations and offsite professional learning opportunities. The school-based support team includes an English as a New Language (ENL) coordinator, data specialist, grade leaders, a literacy/math coach, Teachers College staff developers, a special education liaison, and an Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teacher, all of whom collaborate with all teachers to support the implementation of effective instruction for all students. Teachers receive extensive training in literacy and math as part of ongoing implementation of *Teachers' College Reading and Writing Project* (TCRWP) reading and writing curricula and a lab site on each grade level allows all teachers to view and share best practices across cycles of professional learning activities. Teachers reported that they all turnkey learning to peers and work with each other in implementing the best practices across all content areas.
- Teachers have received training focused on components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, including planning and preparation, student engagement and questioning, and discussions for higher order thinking. Observation reports show feedback that reflects emphasis on instructional expectations linked to these components, with next steps for teachers grounded in applications of the *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders have also offered training in the use of technology, *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) question stems and *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL) strategies to differentiate instruction and improve student engagement in learning. Staff developers model lessons and facilitate workshops related to all instructional expectations and the literacy/math coach supports all teachers with planning to implement units of study. Teachers noted that the supports they receive improve their pedagogy and result in students making progress towards learning goals.
- School leaders and staff partner in learning with families through workshops on topics such as Common Core Learning Standards, New York State assessments, web-based supports for learning at home and introduction to the ENL, kindergarten and middle school. Families receive monthly newsletters about academic activities and there are weekly outreach calls and meetings with families regarding student progress. Families also visit the school to learn about curriculum programs and receive grade-specific unit overviews at events such as, "Meet the Staff" and "Parents' Night" which inform them of goals and expectations for the grade. Through a book fair and packets of learning activities, the school further engages families in home-school partnerships that have contributed to gains in reading levels for many students, as per data from running records. Families reported that they have contributed to funding for items such as interactive white boards, school supplies and air conditioning in the lunch room and some continue to help with afterschool programs.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

While teachers use instructional strategies that engage students at all levels, lessons viewed did not consistently incorporate rigorous tasks and few lessons illustrated student participation in deep, peer-to-peer discussions across content areas and grades.

Impact

There were missed opportunities to deepen learning by all students via challenging tasks and discussions that consistently demand higher order thinking across disciplines and result in high quality student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- In several classrooms, teachers assigned Common Core-aligned tasks, with students citing evidence from texts to respond to questions and/or reporting on findings from inquiry based tasks. For example, in a grade 2 reading class, groups of students engaged in reading texts to compare and contrast characters. The teacher used a Venn diagram to model how they should complete the task and they followed up by reading their own text independently to identify, compare and contrast two characters. In a bridge class with grade 4 and 5 students, the teacher asked students to review information gathered by groups of student researchers and use the information to move forward with their project of writing their own book. The teacher used details from the text, *Snow Bulldogs*, to model ideas for organizing and writing, based on the work done by the research groups.
- In some of the classrooms visited, the teachers presented students with challenging tasks that forced them to think deeply about the topic involved. This was the case in a grade 3 Collaborative Team Teaching (CTT) class where, with support from several adults in the room, students in small groups engaged in problem solving to explore the relationship between multiplication and division. They were challenged to write related division and multiplication problems of their own on a white board that each child had. One student showed his partner how the numbers 3 and 7 can be written as 21 divided by 7 and 21 divided by 3, respectively, and that 3 multiplied by 7 yields the same product as 7 multiplied by 3. All students engaged in writing their own sets of related multiplication and division facts that they shared with a partner or other peers in groups. Similar engagement in critical thinking tasks was not noted in several other classrooms, including one where the teacher asked and answered her own questions about problems involving properties of addition, while groups of students looked on quietly.
- Although turn and talks were used routinely in most classrooms, only a few lessons generated high level peer-to-peer discussions amongst students. For example, while the teacher in a grade 3 reading lesson distributed differentiated sets of maps to students in small groups that engaged in discussions of differences in climate and population density in different parts of the world, students in a grade 5 English Language Arts (ELA) class were minimally engaged in discussions during their lesson. In a science class where students worked with a partner to investigate their prediction about whether changes in variables would affect outcomes, by swinging a pendulum three times from varied angles in 15 seconds and noting differences in the number of swings per 15 seconds, discussions evoked mainly yes/no responses. When asked, some students were unable to explain why their prediction was proven to be true or false and only a few moved on to next step of finding the average number of swings across the three trials of 15 seconds each.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

School leaders and teachers use student work and data to revise curricula and instruction, with targeted focus on further aligning units of study to Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts.

Impact

All students have access to curricula and tasks designed to engage them in learning activities that support college and career readiness goals and expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- Units of study reflect alignment to Common Core Standards and instructional shifts and highlight topics, focus questions, essential understandings, assessments, target vocabulary, and sample tasks for guided and independent practice. For math instruction, teachers use the Common Core-aligned *GO Math!* program, supplemented by units of study linked to *EngageNY* resources, for additional focus on instructional shifts in math. *TCRWP* curricula add literacy-based tasks to interdisciplinary units of curricula for instruction across all grades. New York State and City scope and sequence curricula guide instruction in social studies and science, with Full Option Science System (FOSS) resources adding content for inquiry-based tasks in science and a social studies textbook and nonfiction text sets contributing to content grounded in relevant standards. School curricula also include coverage of topics and skills linked to activities such as theater, band, chorus, art and community service projects which incorporate college and career readiness skills.
- The school's curricula incorporate specific instructional materials and strategies for all learners, including ENL learners and students with disabilities, to have ready access to learning tasks. These include use of manipulatives, interactive white board activities and technology-based curriculum resources such as *Mathletics*, *Think Central* and *Raz-Kids* for enrichment, intervention and differentiation of instruction. *Foundations* is used for phonics-based instruction in kindergarten through grade 2, while the *Wilson* reading program is used in grades 3-5 for at-risk students. Lesson plans and units show that teachers incorporate targeted vocabulary in creating learning tasks that support language acquisition. For example, in a grade 4 nonfiction reading unit there is a vocabulary work bank to support struggling students with a culminating performance task. Each unit includes Common Core-aligned rubrics and checklists for assessing levels of student mastery of content and skills.
- Teachers described several revisions to curricula to address diverse student needs. Grade 4 teachers analyzed data from the nonfiction performance assessment and item analysis items on the 2015 New York State Common Core ELA exam and noticed that the majority of students were not meeting standards related to main idea and supporting details. They modified the unit by expanding the scope of the task outlined in the *TCRWP* curriculum packet to have students engage in a research project on a high interest topic, such as natural disasters, and create a presentation and self-assessment rubric that would be used to assess mastery of the task. Similarly, math teachers' analysis of student work from quizzes, class work and informal assessments from a unit on the distributive property of multiplication resulted in modifications that added small group work at three different data-driven levels of support and differentiated problem solving tasks for learners at all levels of proficiency.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Analysis of student work and a variety of other student assessment data highlights student progress towards learning goals and informs adjustments to curricula and instruction.

Impact

Teachers and students have data with which to formulate action plans, including teacher interventions and curricula adjustments to address specific individual student needs and accelerate student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers implement assessments, including *Schoolnet* baseline assessments, running records, guided reading conferences, end-of-chapter and end-of-unit assessments, and use the resulting data to evaluate student proficiency and content knowledge related to performance tasks across grades and subjects. The TCRWP program provides running records reading assessment and pre-and post -assessments in writing. The *GO Math!* program provides for a variety of assessments, including performance tasks at the end of each unit. The assessments are aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards, helping teachers to determine which standards students have mastered and which ones need remediation. School leaders and teachers reported that they use these assessments to differentiate instruction and monitor student progress throughout the year.
- School leaders use a variety of documents, including spreadsheets with data for individual as well as subgroups of students, to show levels of achievement across assessments. The principal presented documents illustrating planned adjustments to curricula, such as revisions of content and teaching points based on analysis of tasks linked to the assessments and to 2014- 2015 New York State ELA assessment data showing questions, standards and skills that most students struggled with. Teachers stated that they use assessment data to form guided reading groups with differentiated tasks. During the teacher team meetings, several teachers noted that based on data from end of unit assessments, they re-teach specific concepts to improve students' mastery of targeted skills. One teacher stated that analysis of student work identified weaknesses in elaborating and using transitional words in essay writing, so teachers brainstormed and added exemplars and more writing prompts for re-teaching towards improved student mastery of these skill areas.
- Teachers adopt and create Common Core-aligned rubrics, checklists and a school-wide grading policy, aligned to the curricula, to provide feedback on students' performance on tasks. Bulletin board displays of student work illustrate use of narrative and informational writing rubrics and checklists to evaluate progress in student writing across grades. In addition, there are several task-specific rubrics attached to units of instruction to measure levels of skills and content acquisition across disciplines. Most classroom bulletin boards with student work showed rubric-based feedback to students, via teachers' comments with next steps for students to improve their work. On one work sample the teacher urged a third grade student to, "focus on the character's actions in the text to find evidence for claims about the character". Further, while a few of the students interviewed were not able to clearly specify what they needed to do to improve their work based on the feedback noted on the work that they displayed, all students at the interview stated that they work with rubrics and/or checklists.

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

Weekly team meetings allow all teachers across the school to regularly engage in collaborative planning, analysis of student work and data and decision making about school wide goals and initiatives.

Impact

Collaborative planning and decision-making by staff and school leaders contribute to shared improvement in teacher practice and student progress towards mastery of learning goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams target students performing at Proficiency Levels 1 and 2 in grades 3 through 5, including students with special needs and ENL learners. They collaborate to develop instructional strategies needed to help these students to improve on these levels of proficiency. Teachers and support staff for each grade level work together to analyze student work and data and identify instructional practices that target student needs more directly. All teachers are focused on planning for more rigorous instructional practices that are aligned with the findings from all data, including data from a second round of TCRWP running records assessment administered recently. The instructional coach and TCRWP staff developers work closely with the grade level teams to continue to support their work and document the improvement in student mastery of learning targets, as evidenced by the data to date.
- Observation of a teacher team meeting showed participants engaged in analyzing student work from a unit on Westward Expansion to look for trends and use their findings to reinforce and modify instruction for all students to achieve learning targets and goals. The teachers examined work samples from three students and the presenting teacher asked peers to record noticings about common student strengths and deficiencies, suggest strategies for improving the work and consider the implications for instruction of other students in the class and grade. Participants cited deficiencies in organization, elaboration of ideas, use of transitions and citing text-based evidence. They followed up with next steps for addressing these needs. Recommendations included “using boxes and bullets to create body paragraphs”, adding a visual such as a graphic organizer with transition words as prompts, and re-teaching to help students understand “the difference between reasons and evidence”.
- There are many teams with teacher leaders who work collaboratively in making high-level decisions that positively impact teaching and learning across the school. They include grade teams, a consultation committee, a professional development committee and a School Implementation Team (SIT). School leaders and teachers indicate that with teachers serving in roles such as ENL coordinator, data specialist, grade leaders, instructional coach, special education liaison and AIS provider, they collaborate regularly with school leaders and provide information and services that are integral to effective implementation of initiatives for improvement in achievement by all staff and students. The peer leaders help select instructional resources, design and implement professional learning activities that align with school and district goals, attend workshops, and turnkey strategies to help build instructional capacity for all teachers. One teacher leader noted that with nine new teachers on staff, they asked school leaders to support additional professional learning time and activities for new teachers and school leaders readily provided what was requested.