



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2015-2016**

**P.S. 110 The Monitor**

**Elementary School K110**

**124 Monitor Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11222**

**Principal: Anna Cano Amato**

**Date of review: May 18, 2016  
Lead Reviewer: Audrey Madison**

## The School Context

P.S. 110 The Monitor is an elementary school with 448 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 5% Asian, 6% Black, 23% Hispanic, and 64% White students. The student body includes 10% English Language Learners and 10% students with disabilities. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.8%.

## School Quality Criteria

| <b>Instructional Core</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                            |                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>To what extent does the school...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Area of:</b>            | <b>Rating:</b>        |
| 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                                                                                                                                 | <b>Additional Findings</b> | <b>Proficient</b>     |
| 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 | <b>Celebration</b>         | <b>Well Developed</b> |
| 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                                                                                                         | <b>Additional Findings</b> | <b>Well Developed</b> |
| <b>School Culture</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                            |                       |
| <i>To what extent does the school...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Area of:</b>            | <b>Rating:</b>        |
| 3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Additional Findings</b> | <b>Well Developed</b> |
| <b>Systems for Improvement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                            |                       |
| <i>To what extent does the school...</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>Area of:</b>            | <b>Rating:</b>        |
| 4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Focus</b>               | <b>Proficient</b>     |

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Across all classrooms, teaching practices informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* reflect a coherent school-wide instructional focus for students to engage in questioning and discussion. Teaching approaches strategically provide multiple entry points and supports into the curricula.

### Impact

The needs of all learners are met so that students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and discussions, and demonstrate higher-order thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders determined that the instructional focus for this year would be implementation of reciprocal teaching. Across observed grades and subjects, during all assigned tasks and textual analysis work, students collaborated in groups to meet their rotating responsibilities to clarify, question, predict, and summarize. At the beginning of a second grade science lesson, students read descriptions for the roles of hypothesizer, researcher, analyzer and summarizer, then chose their roles for the week and signed-up on a class tracker of positions. The strategies of reciprocal teaching have also been incorporated into fourth and fifth grade math collaborative groups who use question prompts including, “Can you draw a diagram, picture, table or other representation to help you solve the problem?”, and “Are there any words, symbols or terms you are unsure of?”
- As third grade students rotated to new roles, they discussed the rubric for reciprocal group conversations and set goals to deepen their literary conversations. For example, one group agreed to focus on “thicker questions” such as, wondering and why questions, “because we can go deeply into the story and think about the ideas in the story.” Students then engaged in group discussions about the short fiction text, *Why Anasi Has Eight Skinny Legs*. Students used Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* question cards to pose questions. One student interjected, “Even though I’m not the predictor, I think...”
- Students in a fourth grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class worked on differentiated tasks to apply understandings of area and perimeter to solve real world problems. One teacher facilitated a group as students used grid paper and referred to unit vocabulary cards, which included pictures and descriptions for square unit, width, perimeter, and area. Geoboards were available as needed. The co-teacher circulated among individual students and posed guiding questions such as, “If we know \_\_\_ then how would we find that side?” Both teachers required students to refer to their problem solving procedure charts to support explanations. In a second grade ICT math lesson, one teacher facilitated students’ use of a hundreds chart, nickels, dimes, quarters, and drawings to support them in designing solutions and explanations of multi-step problems. The co-teacher facilitated a group of students in a number talk lesson and required students to discuss their strategies with a partner. During a class share, the teacher posed, “Who did a different strategy than we’ve seen?” One second grader persisted in his explanation until he was sure his teacher correctly understood his process.

## Area of Focus

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| <b>Quality Indicator:</b> | <b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b> | <b>Rating:</b> | <b>Proficient</b> |
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### Findings

Teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations and consistently analyze assessment data and student work. While qualitative assessments are a focus, there is less of a focus on quantitative interim assessments.

### Impact

Collaborative teacher teams promote the achievement of school goals, and strengthen instructional capacity of teachers and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Although teachers consistently analyze individual student work and data, analysis is not always focused on specific groups of students over time to systematically inform practice and further student mastery.

### Supporting Evidence

- This year the work of teacher teams, centers on the school-wide instructional focus of deepening literary conversations through the research and development of practices to facilitate Reciprocal Teaching. Documentation of the second grade Cahn Challenge team reflect an inquiry emphasis on determining what needs to be in place to deepen students' literary conversations particularly, through read-alouds. Teachers discuss texts, plan lessons together, design and evaluate tools for student use, and examine content and quality of student discussions and prompts. Grade-level professional learning committees also focus their horizontal teamwork on implementation of the instructional focus. In kindergarten and first grade, this work is being replicated as book talk. School leaders and teachers have observed enhanced comprehension as a result of student-led discussions.
- Minutes of the third grade team reflect the use of assessment results from the fall Measurement of Student Learning (MOSL) assessment to determine instructional steps aligned to Common Core writing. Teachers recorded student performance across seven traits assessed by the New York City Department of Education Baseline Performance Task and rubric. Teacher findings stated, "Many students struggle with adding text evidence. Students need support with writing short responses." Next steps were to work on each of the component parts of the Common Core opinion standard. Teaching strategies were noted, such as, "Model the proper way to 'echo' a question; define 'claim' and model how to add a claim to our response." During an observed third grade team meeting, teachers took a preliminary look at student responses on the End-of-Year MOSL Performance Tasks. Teachers examined the work of five students including a general education student in the lowest third and an English Language Learner who had scored zeros in all categories of the rubric in the fall. The team compiled an analysis sampling of third grade opinion writing, which indicated positive performance level growth of one to two levels and an overall ability to state an opinion, provide an introduction and a conclusion, and provide relevant reasons.
- School leaders state that groups of teachers and paraprofessionals across pre-kindergarten through grade five also meet as vertical cohorts to refine instruction. For example, according to their minutes, teachers of dual language classes discuss effective teaching practices to promote literacy in French. One identified next step is to expand instruction of the Borel Maisonnay method to develop student abilities in phonemic awareness, phonetic spelling, and conventional spelling.

## Additional Findings

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| <b>Quality Indicator:</b> | <b>1.1 Curriculum</b> | <b>Rating:</b> | <b>Proficient</b> |
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### Findings

School leaders and faculty make purposeful decisions in ensuring curricula are aligned to Common Core and content standards. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills across grades and subjects.

### Impact

All students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, have access to rigorous, coherent curricula, which promotes college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- After adopting the New York City Department of Education approved curricula *ReadyGen* for literacy, school leaders decided to utilize Teachers College units of study and the Writer’s Workshop to further increase rigor in the writing component of English Language Arts instruction. The use of *Foundations* for phonics instruction in kindergarten through second grade, is incorporated to enhance knowledge of the reading foundational standards. In addition to *GO Math!*, performance-based tasks from *Exemplars* and units of study from *EngageNY* deepen the problem solving components of the curricula. Additionally, staff and students are exploring a new computer resource, Spatial-Temporal Math, a game-based instructional software program to deepen students’ abstract understandings of math concepts through visual learning. Science and social studies address the content standards through the use of hands-on investigations and trade books.
- For a third grade unit on fractions, one essential question asks, “How can we compare and order fractions?” A corresponding lesson plan prompts students to draw models and fraction strips to solve word problems. Second grade students engage in investigations such as observing air in containers under water as they explore concepts of air and weather during a third marking period science unit. One focus question for consideration is, “How does air interact with objects?”
- A lesson plan reflects the core math ideas of adding and subtracting single and double-digit numbers mentally, for first and second graders, utilizing different number talk problems. A first grade objective indicates that students will work with their data partner to create a survey question together, gather data, represent with tallies and a bar graph, and then reflect on their findings. Fifth grade students describe how the character’s thoughts and feelings change as the plot unfolds and summarize to determine possible themes. A third grade dual language student wrote a narrative in French about her camping trip with her parents.

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| <b>Quality Indicator:</b> | <b>2.2 Assessment</b> | <b>Rating:</b> | <b>Well Developed</b> |
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### Findings

All teachers use assessments and rubrics that are aligned to the school's curricula and consistently use ongoing checks for understanding and student self- and peer-assessment to make instructional adjustments.

### Impact

School-wide assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet the learning needs of all students and students are aware of their next steps.

### Supporting Evidence

- To inform instruction more effectively, school leaders and staff created a school-wide teacher feedback system of "stars" and "steps." Across the school, "stars" identify evidence of growth and "steps" indicate skill gaps in need of improvement. Written teacher feedback based on a fifth grade informative writing rubric informs, "Your report on *The Sun* clearly develops your topic with descriptive details. Next time, try to use even more domain-specific vocabulary. Feedback to a first grade student offers, "You started your essay with a great topic sentence and you listed interesting facts about frogs." Next steps indicate an instructional adjustment to include this student in small group work on phonics and basic word study skills.
- Students also identify their own "stars" and "steps." A third grader reflected on her math task and math *Exemplar* rubric, "I'm good at understanding the problem and my strategy work. I need to work on the steps of this problem because I started off good then didn't know what to do towards the end." One student reflection on her narrative writing piece revealed that she focused on the author's craft of using dialogue between characters and still needed to add some inner thoughts of the characters as they interact with each other.
- As teachers implement reciprocal teaching, they monitor groups and individual students through the use of a checklist and a group conversation rubric. In response to observations of previous teaching points focused on good student discussions, third and fifth grade lesson plans indicate the introduction of Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* question starters. Multi-leveled question stems were presented on key rings for each group, as a new tool for students to utilize to pose higher-level questions within their discussions. Teacher conference notes indicate the types of questions and responses students pose in their discussion groups, predictions and clarifications made by specific students, and growth of students in reciprocal teaching roles. Additionally, teachers make notes regarding next instructional steps. For example, one fifth grade teacher recorded that one group needs prompting to think about the author's purpose and that another group needs support to move beyond literal discussions.
- A first grade teacher noted several students did not accurately record tallies to represent groups of five. She reviewed how to record tallies using the previous day's practice data before students worked with their data partners. Conference notes from a fourth grade math lesson identify whether or not when given different scenarios, targeted students were able to determine application of the concepts of area or perimeter. When all five students in the group responded incorrectly regarding placing a fence around a garden, the teacher re-taught the concepts using a geoboard.

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| <b>Quality Indicator:</b> | <b>3.4 High Expectations</b> | <b>Rating:</b> | <b>Well Developed</b> |
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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations, ensure training is provided for all staff, and effectively partner with families to support their children’s progress.

### Impact

School leaders and staff are mutually responsible for maintaining high expectations for themselves and students. Parents successfully partner with the school to further enhance student progress.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders set a goal for 100% of the teaching staff to receive continuous professional learning centered on the topic of student engagement which was the theme of the first two professional development cycles during Monday professional learning sessions. The principal explained that the emphasis was then refined to implement the instructional focus of reciprocal teaching and read-alouds. As a member of the 2015 Cahn Fellows Cohort, the principal focused her attention on the professional development of the second grade teacher team to support implementation of the instructional focus. Teachers were guided and supported to establish structures for adult learning and functioning as a team, develop processes to execute reciprocal teaching effectively, and were charged with responsibilities to facilitate professional learning sessions with their colleagues.
- As one of six schools chosen to participate in a District 14 Innovation Grant, a cohort of teachers across second through fifth grades participated in professional development sessions from October through June. Collaborative training allowed for opportunities to develop understanding of what constitutes highly effective reciprocal teaching and inter-visitations offered opportunities to view effective practices. Additionally, as part of this initiative, a consultant provided on-site professional development.
- School leaders express that formal and informal observations have provided qualitative evidence that teachers and students are meeting and exceeding the expectations for the instructional focus. “Teachers are selecting richer informational and literary texts, as well as planning thought-provoking questions and tasks to promote rich and rigorous conversations. Students are initiating higher-order questions, inviting comments from classmates, and challenging one another’s thinking.”
- Interviewed parents expressed that the interaction they see among students in their children’s classrooms, demonstrates the school’s agenda. Through visits to classrooms, parents have viewed their children “having dialogues in groups, with different jobs, reading and dissecting a piece of text.” These experiences have provided parents with insights into how their children think and with knowledge of how to read and discuss texts and solutions to math problems with their children at home. Parents are informed about their children’s progress through regular meetings with teachers in addition to parent teacher conferences. Grade-level newsletters convey what students are learning across content areas and insights into higher expectations, such as, “In kindergarten, we all have to make a final push to help the children read at or above grade-level books,” and “In second grade, we are focusing less on spelling but emphasizing the importance of word choice, vocabulary.” Several interviewed parents serve as members of an active Parent Teachers Association, which has contributed significant time and effort in writing grants for many projects, including a technology upgrade that has led to a new computer lab for all students to use.