



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

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2015-2016

**P.S. 132 The Conselyea School**

**Elementary School K132**

**320 Manhattan Avenue  
Brooklyn  
NY 11206**

**Principal: Beth Lubeck**

**Date of review: January 7, 2016  
Lead Reviewer: Gary Knight**

## The School Context

P.S. 132 The Conselyea School is an elementary school with 686 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 7% Asian, 16% Black, 42% Hispanic, and 33% White students. The student body includes 10% English Language Learners and 8% 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 94.4%.

## 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>Well Developed</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>Focus</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>Celebration</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

<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 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 and successfully partner with families.

### Impact

The school has established a culture of mutual accountability around its high expectations and supports student progress towards those expectations as well.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school-wide expectations are communicated to staff in various ways. Staff is provided a handbook that details information regarding arrival time, classroom appearance, bulletin board guidelines, student work and data collection, classroom parents' roles, and common preparation time expectations. They also receive emails and memos that address expectations. Learning walks, learning environment checklists and professional development activities are also conducted to inform and expose staff to what expectations look like throughout the school environment. Some of the professional development topics include; conducting initial planning conferences, differentiated learning communities, enhancing classroom environments, aligning tasks and rubrics based on new writing expectations, creating exemplars for current writing units, and questioning and closing. Staff is expected to implement the practices discussed in their classrooms. Administration conducts classroom observations and provides specific feedback to teachers. Lead teachers also meet with teacher teams to reinforce expectations and share information with administration regarding meeting outcomes and, when applicable, inform school leaders of teacher requests and concerns that require follow up.
- Teachers send home weekly newsletters to families to inform them of expectations and to make them aware of their children's academic experiences and upcoming school sponsored events. Newsletters include such information as: updates on recent tests administered in each class, reading and writing assignments, attendance expectations, math, social studies, reading and science news, Common Core literacy standards, homework, upcoming tests, reading logs, reading response questions, task-related rubrics. Parents are also provided academic feedback on what is required to move the students to the next level based on goal setting sessions for level 1 and level 2 students. These forms of communication have allowed for the school to identify students who are in need of additional academic support. It reinforces the home to school connection by providing parents the opportunity to collaborate with the school, not only to receive the information on their child's academic standing but to receive the tools necessary to work with their children at home with the areas identified as skill deficits. As a result, the school has experienced growth on the State's English Language Arts testing as it relates to the school's lowest performing students, as indicated on the School Quality Snapshot.
- Workshops are held for parents on the following topics: exploring the Common Core Learning Standards, middle school information, helping with homework, Common Core instructional shifts, and transitioning to middle school.

## Area of Focus

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts. Although teaching strategies provide multiple entry points and high quality supports, there were missed opportunities to provide extensions into the curricula in all classes and for all students.

### Impact

Across most classrooms, teaching practices reflect a coherent set of beliefs and students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work.

### Supporting Evidence

- Higher-level questioning strategies are infused into lessons. Both teachers and students use higher-order thinking (“HOT”) question cards as a guide for questioning, allowing for reflective and higher-order thinking throughout lessons school-wide. The cards are color-coded with sample question stems that reflect the Bloom’s Taxonomy competence level. For example, “What do you think about...?” or, “How would you have handled...?” are question stems for the „valuating” component of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Reciprocal teaching, an instructional activity in which students become the teacher by guiding discussions during small group reading sessions, was a common practice evidenced in the classrooms. It engages students in challenging tasks and further reinforces higher order thinking skills.
- Activities in the classroom lessons are differentiated and groupings are based on the needs of students. For example, in a grade 5 English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, three groupings were based on students’ reading levels. Each group received reading passages on the same topic, but was provided additional support by having the passage leveled to meet their needs.
- Students are offered access to the lessons via multiple entry points such as graphic flow thinking maps, infusion of technology, teacher modeling, turn and talk, and writing. In a grade 4 lesson, students were asked to debate a topic from different perspectives using arguments to defend their positions. This lesson included charts and post-its to capture information, a video on students having a debate, students sharing ideas with each other, and teacher input. In another grade 4 class, students were able to create a skit, compose a song, write a diary entry, design a poster or build a PowerPoint presentation.
- Although teaching strategies strategically incorporated critical thinking, scaffolding of learning activities and provided multiple entry points and high quality supports, extensions to activities were not observed in the majority of the classrooms. Two examples of extensions observed were in a grade 5 class where extension options were provided and a grade four Social Studies class in which extension activities were based on a prior interest inventory.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits of higher-order thinking skills are embedded in a coherent way across the school.

### Impact

The emphasis of rigor and alignment of curricula has resulted in coherence across grades and subjects so that all learners must demonstrate their thinking and are increasingly ready for college and career success.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school has teacher-made curricula for ELA that align to the Common Core Learning Standards with an infusion of authentic literature. Teachers received professional development conducted by Generation Ready on reciprocal teaching, which increases student engagement and allows for higher-order thinking. Staff also received professional development for units of study in writing through Teachers College Writing Project to further enrich the writing curriculum. Literacy units of study have been planned and are a part of the school calendar based on area of focus. For example, September/October - Personal Narrative, November/December – Non-Fiction.
- Staff developers support staff by facilitating professional learning opportunities centered on questioning and discussions as well as skills to incorporate differentiated approaches into unit and lesson plans to meet the needs of all students. The school also has a Response to Intervention team that works with staff, assisting in all aspects of curricular development and helping to make adjustments to ensure access and inclusivity for all students.
- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) Common Core aligned curriculum, are infused through an architecture residency with Salvadori Center, which is a hands-on program that promotes higher-order thinking and scaffolds learning with high-quality supports. The program's curriculum works with students on project-based exercises using the surroundings as a basis for the learning process while integrating problem solving opportunities to intentionally include all participants. Similarly, a partnership with the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum supports the Design in the Classroom curriculum, also a hands-on program about design that exposes students to critical thinking and problem solving while engaging in team building activities.
- Lesson plans integrate the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and are constructed with the use of Webb's *Depth Of Knowledge* to ensure rigor and higher-order questioning. Lessons are deliberate to include the active engagement of students where they are able to make connections, differentiated activities to address the learning styles and levels of students, higher-order thinking questions, assessments, exit tickets and teacher reflections. An example of embedding higher order thinking questions was captured in an ELA lesson focused on the use of text features to help in students' understanding of nonfiction reading. The questions were, "How have things changed since this person lived?" and, "Have things become better or worse? How do you know?"

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

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create common assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula and present a clear picture of student progress towards goals across grades and subjects. The school tracks progress and adjusts curricular and instructional decisions.

### **Impact**

Teachers provide actionable feedback to students regarding achievement and all students demonstrate increased mastery.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school uses a variety of assessments to determine student progress including both formal and informal methods, Measures of Student Learning, teacher-made assessments, exit slips and Splash Math, a grade 1 through 5 computer adaptive math program that provides personalized learning on over 350 math skills and assesses students’ mastery of these skills. It tracks color-coded data by grade, student and skill, and informs whether the student’s performance needs improvement, is satisfactory or has demonstrated mastery of a skill. As a result of analysis of data regarding students’ performance in math, it was revealed that grade 4 needed additional overall support and grade 5 needed more background knowledge. Based on this information, the school created a Professional Learning Community specific to math and will incorporate multiple curriculum resources to further enhance the math curriculum.
- Student data for English Language Arts and Mathematics State Examinations are also tracked and monitored as a means of driving instruction and making adjustments. Teachers create spreadsheets by class. For example, a grade 5 class has student data on the most recent state assessment. The spreadsheet provides an item analysis by Common Core Standards, question number, definition of skill, and the number of students who scored a zero, one, two, three or 4. The teachers use this information to form groups based on skill deficit to differentiate instruction and to re-teach lessons. Revisions are made at all grade levels. For example, in one grade 5 ELA unit, the teacher made notes to change the connections previously used with examining non-fiction text in Lesson 6 to include more relevant and meaningful text.
- Curriculum-aligned rubrics are used school-wide. Some of these include grade 5 personal narrative writing, current events rubrics for grade 4 and an autobiography rubric. Rubrics are used in conjunction with a descriptive of the task assigned and actionable feedback to students. The feedback on one lower school writing piece read, “You did a lovely job writing a piece to tell us all about crickets. I love that you used what you already knew about crickets and what you read in your research to help you add many details to your writing. You also did a great job of using proper spacing and capitalization throughout. Please continue to work on editing your work for proper punctuation. Remember, every sentence must end with a period before beginning a new one.”

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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**Findings**

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations that have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and promoted the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. The teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice and student data.

**Impact**

Professional collaboration has resulted in school-wide instructional coherence and shared improvement in teacher practice and mastery of goals for students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The grade 5 teachers were observed as they were engaged in an inquiry-based professional collaboration examining student work, responses to literature and the use of citing text based evidence. The agenda included using the ATLAS protocol, discussing their findings, interpreting data, considering implications for classroom practice, planning for unit extensions, determining next steps and ending with teacher reflection. All teachers have a data binder of all assessments to date that are used to drive conversations during meetings.
- Teachers articulated that the professional collaborations allow them to share ideas and broaden perspectives, as well as help to raise the bar for teaching, and provide support for teachers across grades and subjects. It provides seasoned teachers the opportunity to help the newer teachers hone their craft by sharing strategies with them to further build capacity. The teacher team structure also allows for newer teachers to exchange new and different ideas. The teacher teams present the space for a teacher to model a lesson that went well in their class for a colleague’s class. As a result of data analysis and sharing of practices, the lower grade teachers have identified goals students need to master specific to ELA and noted an increase in decoding and reading comprehension.
- The school schedule is strategically planned for teachers to engage in professional collaborations by including common preps on a daily basis for each grade. There are lead teachers assigned for each grade level to guide and facilitate the meetings and solidify next steps, implications for teaching and what will be taught or retaught to further push student outcomes. In addition to common planning within a grade, the structure enables one-weekly congruence meetings at which time administration meets with academic coaches. The various structures are all in place to review and analyze student data, make revisions and re-teach.