



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

The Windsor Terrace School

Elementary School K154

**1625 11th Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11215**

Principal: Eric Havlik

**Date of review: December 10, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Tracie Benjamin-Van Lierop**

The School Context

The Windsor Terrace School is an elementary school with 533 students from grade kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 6% Asian, 3% Black, 20% Hispanic, and 64% White students. The student body includes 5% English Language Learners and 17% students with disabilities. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 95.6%.

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	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	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	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 consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide training. Staff members effectively convey expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families.

Impact

A culture of mutual accountability supports students' progress on a path toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has a comprehensive website that offers information about curriculum, events, and policies for families. As new information is posted on the site, families receive an email notifying them of the update. Additionally, the principal writes a monthly newsletter highlighting current events at the school, and explains to families ways how they can be more involved in their child's learning experience. Many of the teachers have class blogs and use letters and email to regularly communicate with their student's families to inform them of upcoming units of study, Tuesday parent meetings, Friday Folders, and report card distribution. Family Friday is an event that takes place on the first Friday of every month. Every parent is invited to the school for the first period of the day. Families are encouraged to visit their child's classroom and participate in activities designed by teachers.
- Families play a very active role at the school raising funds for the music and science programs. Both the school and families attest to their partnership and the community they state they have built together collectively. The science committee includes five parents who collaborated on a visiting scientist day for all grades with a different focus area for each grade. Also, the school and parents worked together to host a City Workers Day for students to hear from parents employed by New York City about their respective roles, and what schoolwork is necessary for students who choose such careers.
- School staff is held accountable for meeting their individual Danielson Framework for Teaching aligned goals that they have made in tandem with leadership via observations, one-to-one meetings, student academic progress monitoring, and school-wide intervisitations. Additionally, staff members are provided with handbooks at the beginning of every school year and school-wide meetings focus on assessments, grading policies, and the Danielson Framework for Teaching evaluations.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts. Teaching strategies including questioning and scaffolds consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products. However, high quality strategic supports and extensions embedded into the curricula vary affecting all learners ability to consistently engage in cognitively challenging tasks that demand demonstration of higher-order thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- The school believes students learn best when they are engaged in learning and are working independently or in groups on tasks that are developmentally appropriate with the aim of moving them closer to achieving mastery level standards. For example, in math, teachers scaffold instruction and use visual representations and manipulatives so when students are presented with a problem, they are able to approach mathematical challenges with tools from their individual or collective toolkits whether they are working on a product independently or in a group.
- Students in an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) social studies class presented group projects via Google Drive presentations on the constitution and how it affected the United States. While preparing their projects, students were taught how to change backgrounds and fonts, add transitions and animations, and connect images. During the presentations, students led the discussions as one teacher circulated the room taking notes and another teacher stood at the front of the room to support student presenters. Students were able to articulate why some of the amendments did not come to pass in The Bill of Rights and explain the impact of James Madison's role.
- Across classrooms visited, teachers focused their attention on questioning and discussions. However, the levels of questioning and extension activities varied across classrooms. For example, in an English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were asked the following low level questions, "What is this text about?", "Is this page about shark's senses?", and "They can hear low pitch noises. This can help them when they're hunting, right?" In a math class, students worked in groups and with partners on differentiated tasks and were expected to be able to articulate their thinking on tens' frames, however, the students in the higher level group finished their activity earlier than the other groups and didn't have another activity to complete to extend their thinking.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and make purposeful decisions to build coherence and college and career readiness for all students. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Across grades and subjects, students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities are cognitively engaged and have access to the curricula.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Teachers College Reading and Writing Program, Foundations, and Wordly Wise for English Language Arts (ELA) curricula, and Go Math! and Exemplars for the Math curricula. Before the school adopted Go Math! they spent time looking into other curricula options and decided to focus on the Go Math! curricula because of its focus on computation and accuracy, which met the needs of their students. The math teachers recognized a gap area in problem solving skills and decided to use the Exemplars curricula to address their student needs. In ELA, the school decided to integrate Wordly Wise, which targets academic vocabulary across content areas to support understanding of complex texts and academic language. The school has a staff developer who works with teachers to align both curricula to Common Core Learning Standards
- Technology has been integrated into units and curricula maps as a means to promote the instructional shifts, college and career readiness, and accessibility for all learners. Teachers also use an inter-disciplinary approach when creating lesson plans so that science, theater and visual arts, and physical education learning are connected throughout the day. In a grade 3 unit, students examine theater history to further understand its social and cultural context, as well as analyze performance video for cultural clues, impact, and legacy. A kindergarten curriculum plan supports math understanding and logical thinking integrating use of technology requiring students to navigate a computer to launch a program, recognize different symbols and buttons, and exit the program.
- In a grade 4 unit overview, students are expected to have an understanding of Shakespearean language, analyze text for goals and tactics, and critique peer work. In the lower grades, extra days were added to some math curricula chapters to allow for additional instruction and problem solving, mathematical language development, and centers. Teachers stated, "We did a lot of research across the grades. We're clearer about what our students are expected to do, especially in writing, and we're working with Teachers College to consistently revise our curricula to focus on organization and writing independence which is reflected in our planning."

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use assessments and rubrics that are aligned with the school's curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades.

Impact

Teachers and students are provided with actionable feedback and results are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Students receive verbal and written feedback on their work through one-to-one conferencing, post-it's, and informal feedback on the go, which is integrated into daily instruction as teachers take notes while students work independently and in groups. Teachers administer ELA on-demand writing assessments to develop a solid understanding of the skills students need reinforced and those that they have mastered. In reading, teachers use running records to track the reading growth of their students to assess current reading levels and identify goals.
- The school's New York State assessment ELA scores increased while the math scores slightly decreased which has impacted the way teachers design their in-class assessments. The principal stated, "We are ensuring all of our assessments are focused on targeted grade level work." In an effort to address student-learning gaps, the school spends one Monday per month aligning math assessments to the material being taught to make certain there are opportunities for students have a balance of computation and problem solving experiences.
- Rubrics and revisions checklists are utilized across classrooms and content areas for Sketch-up, narrative and opinion writing, and in math, students use Exemplar checklists to guide their work. In science classes, students use project checklists. For example, teachers used a detailed checklist rubric to assess students' use of research, citations, and writing accuracy in a project titled Shelters Around the World, to evaluate students' focus on the affect climate, geography, and natural resources have on the way people build their shelters

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

Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment data, and student work. Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that there is effective teacher leadership.

Impact

Teachers play an integral role in key decisions resulting in shared improvements in teacher practice that affect student learning and improve mastery of goals for groups of students across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- During the grade 3 struggling writers inquiry team meeting, teachers discussed strategies to use for students experiencing difficulty with writing volume, spelling, generating ideas, and confidence. Some of the strategies teachers used included using sand timers and clocks to meet goals, creating a schedule for small writing goals with rest times, and using technology at home for dictating written homework. In review of student work, teachers identified students making significant progress with the use of graphic organizers and some who were having difficulty transitioning to the next level. They recommended incorporating a sketch or diagram to assist the students with communicating their ideas, which would also provide the teachers with assessment data as to whether or not the students understand the task.
- Kindergarten teachers have discovered that their inquiry work has made an impact on how they are grouping students and increasing their stamina. Teachers shared how they are keeping groups of students accountable so that students are working in meaningful ways together. The new teacher team members have found communication with their colleagues across grades helpful in the sharing of best practices and building common ground in supporting students. “Teams allow teachers to feel very comfortable and it’s a way for us to bounce ideas off of each other”, stated a teacher. Another teacher commented, “ We actually look at student work and ask each other how can we push our teaching?”
- Each grade has a grade leader and that leader is the first point of contact between the faculty and administration. The grade leader is responsible for facilitating grade meetings and ensuring that outside professional development is turnkeyed to the rest of the team. The selection and supplementation of the Go Math! curricula is an example of a teacher-led decision to dig deeply into modifying their curriculum. Teachers incorporated Exemplars into the math curricula, after examining learning gaps identified in the New York State assessment data. Additionally, teachers in grade 5 collectively decided to approach the school leadership with the idea of departmentalizing the grade in order to better prepare students for their middle school experience. During the student interview, grade 5 students commented that the departmentalized model has really impacted their learning and that they like being treated like middle school students and changing their classes throughout the school day.