



Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 186 Dr. Irving A. Gladstone

Elementary School K186

**7601 19 Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11214**

Principal: Bayan Cadotte

**Date of review: February 5, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Claudette Essor**

The School Context

P.S. 186 Dr. Irving A. Gladstone is an elementary school with 1, 000 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 39% Asian, 0% Black, 27% Hispanic, and 33% White students. The student body includes 31% English Language Learners and 14% students with disabilities. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 95.8%.

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	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	Well Developed
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 expectations for high levels of shared accountability for learning across the school. All staff members communicate and partner with families to support academic expectations and learning goals for all students.

Impact

A variety of effective communication systems and support structures contribute to strong partnerships between staff and families and result in mutual accountability for improving achievement by all students.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders disseminate tools such as lesson plan templates, a staff handbook, curriculum binders, instructional memoranda, and data collection and analysis sheets to all staff, specifying instructional expectations linked to targeted components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and areas of schoolwide instructional focus. Teachers cited shared expectations for increased student engagement, rigorous instruction, differentiation, high level questioning, and use of multiple entry points, effective discussion practices, and daily assessment of learning. School leaders hold staff accountable for these expectations, through reviews of unit and lesson plans, analysis of student work, and classroom visits, from which school leaders provide teachers with actionable feedback and note changes in pedagogy, based on expectations articulated during conferences with teachers.
- Using peer-to-peer inter-visitations, lunch and learns, common planning sessions and other professional learning events, teachers collaborate with peers to share strategies for success in improving student achievement and readiness for their next level. In addition to professional development from school-based staff, teachers attend offsite professional learning events and review videos and articles that enhance their expertise in meeting instructional expectations. School documents reference staff meetings on “Marvelous Mondays” and “Terrific Tuesdays” that, together, offer all teachers a range of professional learning activities, aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, to improve their pedagogy. This includes teacher-led workshops on topics such as strategies to differentiate instruction for English as a New Language (ENL) students and the use of rubrics to foster student self-assessment.
- During the meeting with families, all stated that they meet with teachers regularly and participate in workshops that inform them about expectations for their children and ways to support learning at home. Families spoke about Saturday English classes for families of ENL students, a recent “College Awareness Day”, and workshops on reading levels, Common Core Learning Standards, English Language Arts (ELA) and math exams, and links to online resources, all of which empower them to help their children. They added that events such as “Family Fun Fridays”, ENL meetings and curriculum nights provide an overview of expectations for class work and homework. Families also noted that staff members constantly communicate with them via the school’s website, text messages, phone calls, and emails. Through progress reports, student-led conferences and sharing of data from Engrade, an online portal, all staff members partner with families, whose work with their children contributes to student readiness for the next grade. Families contribute funds for student planners and yearbooks and help coordinate day and afterschool events.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, all students engage in discussions and complete challenging tasks. However, the deepening of learning through in-depth discussions and extensions of curricula and tasks for learners at all levels was not evident across classrooms visited.

Impact

While consistent application of scaffolds and multiple entry points results in students being engaged in discussions and rigorous tasks across grades and content areas, instructional practices reveal missed opportunities to further elevate student thinking and promote ownership of learning.

Supporting Evidence

- In the classrooms visited, teachers provided supports and scaffolds for students to be highly engaged in learning. Students, including ENL students and students with disabilities, were observed in small group activities, one-to-one conferencing with the teacher or working with a partner to respond to the task, prior to sharing with the whole class. In a grade 4 class, the teacher used a video clip and manipulatives to engage students in exploring how types of rocks are formed. Working with peers, students used a magnifying glass to examine different rocks that the teacher distributed to each group. Using a graphic organizer and definitions posted on an interactive white board, the students sorted and identified the rocks by type. Similar supports were seen in a grade 1 class, where students used manipulatives such as water, cotton, ice, sand, paper and rocks, to investigate the size, shape, color, texture, mass and temperature of objects and identify which objects can change their state.
- In a grade 5 class students rotated across stations, using varied pictures and excerpts of information from charts and texts to make inferences about Molly Pitcher's character. Students worked in groups where they connected ideas across the texts and pictures posted around the room, and shared opinions about "Molly Pitcher's acts of bravery during the American Revolution". A student recorder, reader and speaker facilitated the discussion and some students changed their positions as they listened to peers in other groups citing evidence to justify their positions. In a grade 4 class, students in literacy groups collaborated to create their own "inferential and literal questions" about characters, based on text details about the characters' actions and experiences. A recorder, detective, facilitator and presenter guided this group's work. Similar examples of students taking ownership of their learning were not observed in several other classrooms visited.
- In the classrooms visited most teachers presented or elicited from students, higher order thinking questions that fueled lively discussions. In a grade 5 class, groups of students collaborated with peers to examine texts for evidence, to respond to questions such as, "What led to the American Revolution? What do you know about the American Revolution so far?" Similar opportunities for students to engage in high level discussions were evident in a grade 3 class, where the teacher distributed task cards and chart paper to groups of students and asked them to use varied strategies to solve differentiated word problems. They responded to questions such as, "How can you break down the problem? What's another way to restate the question? Why did you choose that strategy?" In some of the other classrooms visited, discussions emerged mainly through brief turn and talks, as in a grade 4 class where students briefly discussed similarities and differences between two versions of the story of "Red Riding Hood", prior to completing a comparison and contrast organizer, based on information from a handout with excerpts of both versions of the story.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and illustrate strategic integration of instructional shifts. All teachers constantly collaborate to generate curricula and rigorous tasks for all learners across grades and content areas.

Impact

A school-wide commitment to continuously deepening alignment of curricula to relevant standards results in all students having access to Common Core-aligned units of study with tasks designed to deepen thinking and accelerate learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's curriculum binders show Common Core-aligned units with tasks from curriculum resources such as *Journeys*, *GO Math!* and *EngageNY*, which are used for instruction in literacy and math, respectively. New York City scope and sequence resources guide instruction in social studies and science, and science instruction is further supported by *Science Fusion* for students in the lower grades and *Harcourt Science* for those in the upper grades. *Foundations* supports phonics-based instruction for students in kindergarten and grade 1. Unit maps and lesson plans reflect tasks that require students to engage in close reading of texts and cite evidence to support responses to tasks. They also show project-based tasks for students to craft informational essays and describe math problem solving or science inquiry steps. A unit task for grade 2 students asked them to complete a "Community Diorama Project" by researching, writing and drawing to describe a type of community. All units of study highlight focus standards, skills, vocabulary, essential questions, texts, sample tasks, rubrics, assessments and suggested forms of differentiation.
- Curricula also include content from technology-based enrichment and intervention resources such as *MindPlay*, *I-Ready*, *IXL* and *Think-Central* and content for service learning projects designed to build college and career readiness skills for all students. A Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS) program further exposes students to tasks that foster college and career readiness, as they apply and interview for, and receive checks and pay stubs for working in positions such as cashier, bagger, security agent, inventory handler, receipt validator and business manager, in a school store that is part of that program. An ExpandedED. program operated in partnership with a community-based organization (CBO) adds curricula for an extended school day that offers students access to arts, wellness, science, technology and math (STEM) activities, as well as additional small group instruction and preparation for the New York State English as a Second Language Test (NYSESLAT) and New York State ELA, math and science exams.
- The school's curricula incorporate specific instructional materials for ENL students and students with disabilities. Further, unit maps illustrate the use of *Universal Design for Learning* (UDL) and Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) tools to embed high-level questioning stems, instructional strategies and text resources for all students. Lesson plans show use of graphic organizers, manipulatives, visual cues, videos, sentence prompts, color coded reference charts, and checklists to support diverse learners, especially ENL students, in rigorous learning. Additionally, with technology-based resources integrated into units for all content areas, all students have opportunities to complete demanding tasks through applications of visual or auditory technology to create multiple entry points to learning.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All teachers use formative and summative assessments, aligned to curricula, to create a clear portrait of student mastery of targeted skills across all grades and content areas. Using common assessments, teachers evaluate and track student progress and implement curricular and instructional adjustments.

Impact

Assessment practices result in all teachers developing an accurate picture of student mastery of grade level and content area goals. Teachers' effective use of data provides all staff and students with meaningful and actionable feedback that they use to improve levels of achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams reported that all teachers use benchmark and culminating assessments, aligned to Common Core Standards and shifts, to evaluate student performance. The school leader presented spreadsheets indicating that teachers use *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP)* running records and New York City Periodic Assessments to gather and track data on student progress towards mastery of targeted skills and standards across grades. Embedded on-demand and beginning-and end-of-unit assessments linked to *Journeys* and *GO Math!* curricula, along with technology-based assessments in *IXL*, *Think-Central* and *Raz-Kids* provide additional data that teachers use to make curricula and instructional adjustments. Adjustments include the addition of more complex texts for close reading and modification of *GO Math!* unit assessments to infuse more open-ended, multi-step word problems, based on identified student learning needs.
- Using a variety of task-specific rubrics, all teachers provide students with actionable and meaningful feedback about their strengths and next steps for progress in achieving learning goals for all grades and content areas. Teachers also use a schoolwide grading policy linked to Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) data from *TCRWP* assessments and unit assessments, to set goals and learning targets for and with all students. During the meeting with students, all of the students exhibited work samples to which a task-specific rubric, such as a narrative writing, math problem solving, and/or group work rubric, was attached. Further, all students interviewed during the Quality Review pointed to rubric-based teacher feedback with next steps in the form of "Glow" and "Grow". On a work sample with a grade 2 student's report about whales, the "Glow" commended the student for using facts to create a detailed report. The "Grow" for a grade 4 student was a reminder to use paragraphs to organize the information about the explorer described in her report.
- Teachers' assessment binders illustrate the use of a common template to capture data on student reading levels and a tracking sheet that highlights individual and class level progress across iterations of pre-and post-unit assessments in literacy and math. The school leader's assessment folder contains item skills data charts and spreadsheets with class and school level data that illustrate ongoing tracking of student growth in proficiency in reading, as per average levels of growth on *TCRWP* assessments and growth in math proficiency by standards, as per benchmark assessments. Further, conference logs and teacher reflections on results of assessments indicate that all teachers chart growth in student performance and identify areas for enrichment and intervention in all disciplines and grades. Teacher team meeting records also show analysis of assessment data, leading to adjustments such as grouping and re-grouping students and incorporation of online resources to further support all students towards improved levels of mastery.

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

Teams of teachers systematically analyze their instructional practices and develop strategies for improving staff and student achievement. Distributive leadership structures facilitate teacher collaboration with school leaders to make critical decisions about teaching and learning.

Impact

Through extensive teamwork, teachers regularly reflect on their pedagogy and play an integral role in key decisions that improve teacher capacity and student outcomes across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- All teachers meet weekly during common team planning periods and at designated times on Mondays and Tuesdays for professional learning activities. Tasks during these meetings include all teachers collaborating to examine and refine units of study to embed additional challenging tasks for all students. Based on findings from assessment data and student work, teachers make adjustments to curricula and instruction by sharing lessons ideas, texts and links to online resources. Given a finding that many students struggle with solving word problems, math teachers revised math curricula to incorporate additional word problems and strategies to help students tackle multi-step problems. Teachers also added more complex texts to improve the rigor of tasks and to further support all students in evidenced-based writing across all content areas. Teacher team tracking tools and logs of meeting activities capture all data and team activities, allowing for the sharing of information and strategies across teams, and amongst teachers and school leaders who support the teams with resources and relevant feedback.
- A grade 4 teacher team analyzed data from a benchmark literacy assessment to assess student growth from a prior assessment to the current one and identify student needs and strengths. Using a rubric, teachers took turns discussing the characteristics of the work samples, compared data across both assessments for the students, highlighted areas of growth in specific skill areas and determined next steps for improving student performance. Strengths included growth in decoding vocabulary and improvement in re-phrasing the question prior to answering it. Weaknesses included students not answering the questions asked and not zooming in on the key words that suggested the correct response to each question. Next steps included re-grouping to move advanced learners to another group and creating a more concise checklist and visuals for those students who need additional support to further improve their mastery of the targeted skills.
- The school utilizes teacher leaders across a variety of teams such as the School Leadership, grade leaders, mentors, professional learning, C-30, inquiry, PBIS and MOSL teams. The teacher leaders collaborate with peers and school leaders to plan grade meetings, facilitate intervisitations, model instructional strategies and plan lessons with peers. They meet regularly with school leaders to share ideas about instruction, assessments and professional learning activities and needs. They provide critical input in evaluating the effectiveness of all programs, decision-making about instructional resources, and coordination of supports for policies and initiatives, such as the development of schoolwide instructional foci and a new grading policy. The school leader credits teamwork for improvement in teacher practice, as measured by ratings on targeted components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, and by gains in student achievement, as per benchmark data on specific skills targeted by teacher teams.