



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 189 The Bilingual Center

Elementary - Middle School K189

**1100 East New York Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11212**

Principal: Berthe G. Faustin

**Date of review: December 4, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Tracie Benjamin-Van Lierop**

The School Context

P.S. 189 The Bilingual Center is an elementary - middle school with 1,043 students from grade kindergarten through grade 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 3% Asian, 72% Black, and 25% Hispanic. The student body includes 16% English Language Learners and 12% students with disabilities. Boys account for 46% of the students enrolled and girls account for 54%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 93.9%.

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	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	Additional Findings	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	Celebration	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

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 for students they share or on whom they are focused. Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that there is effective teacher leadership.

Impact

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

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams identify student strengths and needs through use of student work analysis protocols such as a norming protocol for working with student responses to performance assessments, a protocol for looking at students' thinking, and one for analyzing gaps. In response to item analysis, which identified gap areas in solving problems by applying whole-number division with up to four-digit dividends and two-digit divisors, and interpreting remainders, the grade 5 and 6 teams' guiding inquiry question was, "What practices do you implement during math to promote cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies for your students?" Looking at student work, teams noticed some of their students with disabilities were able to divide by one-digit and demonstrate their thinking by drawing diagrams which connected to their written explanations and assisted in their making sense of the math problems. The teams realized students were not using quotients and this was an area that had to be re-taught. Additionally, in English Language Arts (ELA), teachers articulated students were improving in their writing because they were incorporating teacher and peer feedback as well as utilizing different graphic organizers to structure their thoughts.
- Teachers constantly analyze data and use a form titled "Got Data Now What?" to inform their teacher practice and instructional decisions for their students. After teachers receive their monthly data item analysis graph that connects to grade specific Common Core Learning Standards, students are given remediation folders and teachers make the necessary changes in their practice. For example, in ELA, teams identified open responses and multiple choice questions as areas they've focused on with their students. The science team is working to promote inquiry work in their subject area and to share strategies with teachers in different content areas.
- There is grade leader representation for every grade on the school leadership team, which meets weekly. During grade team meetings, teachers create their own agendas and take turns facilitating the meetings which are attended by a member of school leadership. Teachers feel supported and state there is always an open door policy and that their voices are respected. For example, teachers decided to create a consultation committee, which includes representation from each grade level, and through this committee, dismissal procedures were revised and an improved plan was put in place to ensure a seamless and safe transition for students. Furthermore, the consultation committee makes recommendations on professional development opportunities for the school both through internal and external experts. Through this committee, data driven focus of students performing in the lowest third percentile is a focus for the current school-year.

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 supports and extensions into the curricula vary so that not all learners are able to engage in challenging tasks where they can demonstrate higher-order thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Develop, Reflect, Engage, Assess, and Make Connections (DREAM) is an acronym that the faculty has created and embraced. This acronym speaks to their belief system. A staff member stated, “We develop our students in all of these areas and it’s integrated in everything we do.” Teachers across all grade levels explain the learning target, reflect on the relevance of the content and/or skill of the lesson, demonstrate and provide guided instruction that uses prompts, cues, and questions to lead students to new skills and understanding.
- In a lower grade math lesson, students were asked, “How can we break apart addends of tens and ones?” The lesson integrated technology using BrainPop and allowed for students to engage in whole group discussion and demonstrate their higher-order thinking skills using accountable talk stems, “I agree with you because” or “I disagree with you because”. Students were directed into their leveled groupings including the “Green Monkeys” or “Blue Barracudas,” where they worked on tiered assignments with their peers. In a grade 4 science class, students were asked to define energy and identify different forms. The student groupings were homogeneous and all students worked together to engage in station work and respond to questions such as “What did you discover about energy with your object?”, “How would your object work if energy was not available?”, and “Based on the energy walk, how does energy affect the world around us?”
- In an upper grade English Language Arts class students were expected to ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers. Students with disabilities and English Language Learners were engaged in Depths of Knowledge (DOK) level one and two activities and questioning limiting the opportunities for some students to apply a concept in other contexts and synthesize information. The classroom activities and questioning included, “Describe what happened,” and “Explain who was involved, where, and when it happened, and why it happened.”

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

A diversity of learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged in tasks designed to promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- In a Core Knowledge listening and learning ELA unit, teachers made revisions to incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and the instructional shift, text-based answers. The revised unit included pictures, varied graphic organizers, and an on-stage performance component to provide additional options for student choice and accessibility in order to support students who are learning the English language and students with disabilities who have cognitive delays.
- In a grade 5 unit, the sequence of different content areas modules were changed in in order to provide better alignment. For example, the ELA unit comparing two or more characters, and events and themes in a story was moved to coincide with an upcoming social studies and nutrition unit and allowed for increased cross-content connections. Additionally, teachers agreed moving the ELA unit would address the weaknesses identified in a previous unit and allow for deeper exposure and more rigorous interaction with the assigned texts. In a grade 1 unit on fables and stories, teachers changed the amount of time spent on an authentic task because it was not rigorous based on their review of student work and data that evidenced students completed the assignments much sooner than expected.
- The faculty integrated Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) curricula across the school to develop students' critical thinking, literacy, and math skills in an effort to make college access and success available to all students. For example, the school uses this curricula to support their students in considering audience and purpose, and thoughtfully using text based evidence to demonstrate their understanding. The writing strategies included in their unit plans include peer evaluation, quick writes and reflections, and process writing.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula. The school uses common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress toward goals across grades and subjects, track progress, and adjust curricular and instructional decisions.

Impact

Actionable and meaningful feedback is provided to students and teachers regarding student achievement. All students, including English Language Learners (ELL's) and students with disabilities demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- The 2015-16 school-year assessment calendar guides the work for all teachers in examining and tracking student progress toward individual student goals. For example, in grades 1-8 there are ELA diagnostics, math baselines, and ELL fall benchmarks, which occur at the beginning of the school year. Additionally, in grades K - 2, teachers use running records to assess their students. All students receive quarterly progress reports in October, December, February, and May that allow teachers and students to track progress. Teachers have used this data to identify trends in grades 3-8 in math and ELA and strategically focus on gap areas in grades 6-8 where there was a decrease in student performance based on math unit one assessment results. Trends for challenge areas in math surfaced included key ideas and details and in math, numbers and operations, fractions, and measurements.
- Grade 3-5 Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) teams base their student groupings and instructional decisions on on-going formative assessments. Students are assigned to one of the following groups for math and ELA: bottom thirds, middle thirds, and high thirds. The bottom thirds represent, "I'm Not There Yet," middle thirds, "On Target," and high thirds, "Above and Beyond". In grade 2, data revealed students struggled with the use of collective nouns, key ideas, and details using who, what, where, and why. In order to increase mastery for all students, in particular ELL's and students with disabilities who represent approximately thirty percent of the population and struggle with academic vocabulary, there has been an increased focus to supplement instruction. Technology-based instructional support programs such as Discovery education, Imagine Learning and Achieve 3000 allow students additional time on task to increase their mastery of skills while working at home.
- In grade 4, item analysis revealed that students struggled with providing sufficient details, determining the meaning of words and phrases in text differentiating between compare and contrast, and understanding point-of-view. In grade 6, teachers recognized that students struggled with interpreting figurative language and determining the meaning of words and phrases, and incorporated tiered graphic organizers and graphics into their lessons.
- Students use rubrics to assess class and homework, class conversations, note taking, and writing across content areas. A whole class conversation rubric evaluates participation, focus, and rigor; and a writing rubric, introduction, main idea, supporting details, conclusion, mechanics, sentence fluency, and word choice. A science unit on frogs and their adaptations included feedback to a student stating, "Your writing has a clearly stated introduction. Many supporting details are evident and your conclusion is clearly defined."

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. School leaders and staff communicate 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 to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Communication of high expectations occurs via weekly articulation through the staff handbook and Monday Matters, a weekly newsletter that highlights the school's events and reminders about the weekly instructional focus. For example, Monday Matters, Issue 13 highlighted integrating ELA shift one regarding balancing informational and literary text and math shift one, for establishing a focus and spending more time on fewer concepts. Teachers also receive on-going memos regarding non-negotiables reminding them to inspire children to learn, to have lesson plans readily available, to integrate test sophistication, and to have students use journal entries in literacy and mathematics.
- In addition to the weekly professional development plan for all teachers, the school developed a professional development calendar based on Advance data and self-identified staff needs in order to differentiate staff support. All teachers participate in training for Danielson's *Framework for Teaching* in weekly study groups. Additionally, teachers are expected to facilitate teacher-led professional learning committees aligned to goal setting for teachers and understanding how the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* can be used to support professional development as part of the observation and feedback cycle. There is also a new teacher group, which supports faculty with a beginning to intermediate knowledge of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and Common Core Learning Standards.
- The principal stated that the school strongly believes that, "Parents are our partners. When we look at our families, our goal is to increase the quality of our partnerships and meetings, not the quantity. The meetings have become very focused." For example, grade 8 parents wanted more information on the high school articulation process and as a result of the school working with families; five parents facilitated this year's workshop, which was attended by 70 parents. In grade 5, families requested a literacy workshop highlighting how to better support their children at home and with support from the parent coordinator, school leadership and teachers, the school hosted a literacy night for all grades.
- Parents stated, "Upper grade students benefit from the school's relationship with Medgar Evers College where students are exposed to work that ensures their children will be ready for the real world." Parents also reported that the school leadership team and teachers always have an open door policy and are invested in their children. Parents attest to teachers doing their best every day, keeping parents informed of their children's academic progress via telephone, text messages, email, and in-person meetings.