



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 212 Lady Deborah Moody

Elementary School K212

**87 Bay 49 Street
Brooklyn
NY 11214**

Principal: Rina Horne

**Date of review: May 4, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Audrey Madison**

The School Context

P.S. 212 is an elementary school with 689 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 34% Asian, 15% Black, 32% Hispanic, and 18% White students. The student body includes 19% English Language Learners and 20% students with disabilities. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 92.8%.

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	Celebration	Well Developed
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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Teaching strategies, including questioning, scaffolds and routines, strategically provide multiple entry points and high quality supports and extensions into the curricula. Student work products and discussions reflect engagement in meaningful tasks.

Impact

Across ability levels, the needs of all learners are met so that students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and discussions and produce meaningful work products that push them toward high levels of student thinking, participation and ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- In a kindergarten class, the mathematical concept of comparing heights was modeled with pictures of two buildings and two dolls, which were measured using connecting cubes. A written reason for the taller items was displayed with the pictures and included numerical measures. The teacher worked with a targeted group as students were asked to explain “how many cubes tall” and identify which is taller or shorter. Another group of students used connecting cubes to measure a given set of items and place objects into taller and shorter groups on a math mat. An extension task was offered for this group of students to locate two tall and two short objects in the classroom and record their answers on a worksheet. In another kindergarten class, groups of students also measured given items. Students then completed a “Comparing Heights” worksheet, adding their answers to sentence starters. Space was provided for students to write their own responses. The teacher worked with a group of students, including English Language Learners, (ELLs) who sorted objects into groups of taller and shorter. Students then affixed labeled pictures of those items into appropriate groups on a worksheet.
- A video was viewed during a fourth grade lesson about underwater earthquakes before students read and discussed the text. The teacher reminded students to use domain specific vocabulary in their discussions, and students were overheard in discussions about energy, pressure, tsunamis and destruction. In an integrated co- teaching fourth grade class, one student explained he could define a tsunami because he can see a picture and read the definition on the word wall. As the class discussed the text, one classmate stated, “I’d like to add on. The video showed a lot of damage to buildings and boats.” Grouped with a same- language peer for translation, and another student, one ELL student shared his knowledge of tsunamis which he learned about in China.
- Across several classes, students were observed referring to anchor charts, such as one reminder to apply the school- wide RACES format for written responses to text dependent questions. Additionally, student notebooks show the application of each step as students regularly write R- then they Restate the topic from the prompt, and A- then write their Answer the question, C- as they Cite specific evidence from the text and more. One teacher of second grade students with disabilities created a learning chart with her students as they used key details to analyze character traits. Fifth graders collaborated on group charts to note inferences about characters, support their inferences with text evidence and explain the significance of the inferences. Different groups had to respond to different text dependent questions with varied supportive graphic organizers. An extension question about the main character and his parents was assigned to one group.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All teachers use and create common assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's standards-based curricula, in order to create a clear picture of student progress and make curricular adjustments as staff track student progress.

Impact

Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students, teachers and school leaders regarding growth, so that all students including students with disabilities and English Language Learners demonstrate increased mastery. Nevertheless, there are some missed opportunities to analyze results more deeply.

Supporting Evidence

- Rubrics are widely used with many different kinds of tasks across all content areas. Component parts of standard-aligned rubrics are checked off to indicate the student's level of performance for each criterion. Yet, a fifth grade student was given an overall score of Level 3 although four of the nine criteria were checked off for Level 2 performance, indicating the student is not yet meeting standards on all components for writing opinions. A fourth grade student's fraction task was scored Level 3, however no component parts of the rubric were checked or highlighted, limiting feedback. The rubric of a kindergarten student showed all criteria were Level 4 on an opinion task and provided feedback that stated, "Next time try to give more than one reason why you liked the story," which advances the student by addressing an element of the first grade standard.
- School documents reveal school-wide ongoing monitoring of student progress of English Language Arts (ELA) and math units of study throughout the year. Teachers maintain tracking sheets for their classes that indicate rubric-based performance levels on pre-assessments, formative task assessments embedded within each unit, and culminating unit assessments, then compare pre-assessment results to culminating assessment scores to determine improvement. For example, the data of a third grade integrated co-teaching team indicates that 11/12 students with disabilities have made at least one performance level of growth on the ELA unit focused on writing opinion/argumentative essays. 24/29 third grade general education students have improved by one grade level, while three of five other students continue to score at Level 2, one student remaining at Level 3.
- School leaders analyze class and student data as well, and additionally determine growth to evaluate grade and school wide data through two measures. In one instance, comparison of the sum of pre-assessment scores to the sum of culminating scores, which produces results such as, 124 total pre-assessment points compared to 329 culminating assessment points, shows growth but may lack significant insights regarding student achievement in a fourth grade ELA unit. The second example, calculating average performance scores for each class, then determining the average for the grade, and comparing those results for pre-assessments vs. culminating assessments, leads to outcomes such as 116% growth within the math unit for first grade, vs. 81% growth in grade three. However, the average performance levels are similar, 2.55 and 2.50 respectively. These figures may not provide the levels of meaningful feedback as perhaps evaluation of class and student data.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and faculty strategically integrate the instructional shifts and ensure curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

All students, including lowest and highest- achieving students, are cognitively engaged in rigorous tasks and have access to coherent curricula that promotes college and career readiness for a variety of learners.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teacher teams have met their goal for revision of unit plans in ELA and math to enhance alignment to Common Core Learning Standards, reflect instructional shifts, and include modifications to focus on meeting the needs of students with disabilities and ELLs. Review of ELA units reflect the reading standards for informational text as well as literature and relevant connections to content area standards. Student goals aligned to the reading and writing standards, are written as “I Can” statements. Unit plans for lower grades now include reading foundational standards and correlation to the *Foundations* curriculum. Anchor and supporting texts, as well as specific anchor charts to be utilized are explicit. Math unit plans provide literature connections and supporting center activities such as games and activity cards. Examples of revisions to a fifth grade math unit plan include, additions to enduring understandings, chapter specific academic vocabulary, digital resources, problems of the week and problem solving strategy plans. Universal Design for Learning accommodation guidelines are embedded within every unit plan for teachers to incorporate into class lesson plans. Academic and content vocabulary are evident for all units.
- A lesson plan template is commonly used across the school and all teaching points align to essential questions from the unit plans. Evidence of collaborative planning is reflected in the lesson plans of fourth grade teachers, which include the same academic vocabulary, teaching strategies, mini lesson and questions for discussions. Materials include representation accommodations such as an earthquake video and power point, cause and effect chart, and differentiated Lexile- leveled articles. Differentiated group tasks and supports identify consideration of student needs, although all students would be assigned a text dependent questions, “What is the effect that the sun’s gravity has on planets in their orbit?” For example, Group 3 in an integrated co- teaching class would be facilitated by the teacher and supported with the use of a graphic organizer, while Group 3 in a general education class would review vocabulary, re-read the article and complete the graphic organizer as a group.
- Lesson plans for a fifth grade integrated co- teaching class indicate a re- teach lesson for two of five groups to support students to use given data to complete a graph. Students will answer teacher- posed questions about trend, scale and differences of data, then work as a group to create a line graph given a different set of data. Another group of students are given the task to analyze a data table based on questions provided, including “What error did Mary make when she graphed her data?”

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations, ensure training is provided for all staff, and effectively collaborate 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 and actively support their children to further enhance academic achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- With an identified school goal to strengthen teacher practice through professional development and collaborative teamwork, school leaders have provided focused training on Danielson *Framework* components which have led to over 80% of teachers receiving ratings of effective or highly effective in each targeted area. Analysis of school data from November through April reveals that planning coherent instruction has increased by 14%; use of questioning and discussion techniques has improved by 26%; 20% gains in student engagement; and growth of 16% in the use of assessment in instruction.
- An instructional coach was hired to support the growth of new teachers. The self-assessment summary of one new special education teacher identifies her goals for growth in lesson planning, in areas such as chunking the content into manageable sections, increasing interactive hands- on activities, and pacing. The teacher logs of the instructional coach document support. For instance, in several sessions the coach modeled math lessons with explicit manageable steps, including students showing their work at the board. Other sessions provided opportunities for lesson planning or co- teaching. School leaders arranged an inter-visitation between fifth grade colleagues as one teacher demonstrated a lesson to highlight the Danielson practices of planning and preparation and instruction. School leaders provided a note taking tool and followed up with a debrief and discussion about application. A paraprofessional reflection sheet indicates an expanded understanding of her role beyond support for one student and application of new learning to allow her targeted student increased independence.
- Interviewed parents expressed that this school truly collaborates with parents and strong communication keeps them informed. Parents on the School Leadership Team stated the Comprehensive Education Plan was examined as a team and revisions were made to the goals and action plans with parent input. Monthly newsletters keep families informed about what their children are learning. During Math Night, parents and children worked at different stations, which provided parents with different insights into how their children think. Parents state they learned how to multiply in different ways or know what books are good for their children to read because they have attended literacy and math workshops, which have helped families, “know how to help our kids.” Some parents who have attended Family Fun Fridays have experienced their children presenting books they authored, conducting science experiments and building models. One parent exclaimed she saw the moment her son, “Understood that some liquids do not mix because he saw it visually.” Another parent described her son’s progress in reading levels from level C to level J. Additionally, parents convey that at home their children log in to online programs, such as *Raz- Kids* and *myOn* and want to read without interruption.

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

Teachers are engaged in inquiry- based, structured professional collaborations that have strengthened teacher capacity with the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. School leaders have embedded shared decision-making practices throughout the school.

Impact

School- wide instructional coherence promotes increased student achievement for all learners as teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Interviewed teachers explain that the focus of their collaborative work is to examine student work within inquiry cycles that alternate between ELA and math. Through anonymous samples of high and low performing students across classes, teams note the given task, analyze student work, identify each students’ strengths and areas of need, and pinpoint patterns and trends as evidenced across team minutes. For example, as the second grade team focused on a culminating ELA task, teachers identified trends such as, everyone gave or attempted a topic and closing sentence, yet areas of need are for students to use varied sentences, use more transitions words, cite evidence and include more details. Inquiry analyses are used to modify teaching points, set goals for students, and adjust support strategies, which are revised in curricula plans. Kindergarten adjustments include adding more lessons for students to learn number patterns, write numbers that correspond with objects drawn, and practice the concept of two greater or less than. Revisions to a fifth grade unit consist of re-teach informational reading standards, use an exemplar piece in the mini lesson, and provide individual anchor charts of inference sentence starters.
- The grade leader vertical team, comprised of teacher representatives from each grade, including teachers of special education and academic intervention services, supports facilitation of grade level inquiry work. Minutes and agendas reflect that grade leaders guide school- wide implementation of initiatives such as the math Problem of the Week, (POW), established by school leaders to embed the instructional shift which requires students to understand concepts, and apply knowledge to real world situations. Expectations for POW, such as teaching explicit strategies for problem solving, requiring students to use a drawing or diagram to show their thinking, resources for selecting POWs and deep dives into the problems for three to five days each week, were enfolded into grade team meetings by the grade leaders. Team members share that students across grades are more confident and apply more skills to problem solving. “Students do more than try to find an answer. They analyze, annotate and break down the problems, talk accountably and show different ways of solving their problems,” leading to better grades.
- The professional development team was established with constituents across grades, content areas and services. The team reflects on the needs of staff members based on data, interest and the results of a survey which was developed by the team. Survey results were used to structure the PD calendar, which teachers expressed was valuable as they received training they needed. The PD calendar provides evidence that teachers facilitate a multitude of professional development opportunities. School leaders state that offerings are differentiated to support teaching, application or assessment.