



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 222 Katherine R. Snyder

Elementary School K222

**3301 Quentin Road Street
Brooklyn
NY 11234**

Principal: Theresa Olivieri

**Date of review: May 10, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Anne Alfonso**

The School Context

P.S. 222 Katherine R. Snyder is an elementary school with 883 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 19% Asian, 15% Black, 20% Hispanic, and 45% White students. The student body includes 4% English Language Learners and 21% 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 95.2%.

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	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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders systematically communicate high expectations to the entire staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The school leaders and staff effectively communicate ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

Impact

Structures that support high expectations have increased teachers' understanding and awareness of the school leader's expectations around teaching and learning resulting in a culture of mutual accountability and trust. The school leaders and staff successfully partner with families to support them in understanding their children's progress towards meeting those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The P.S. 222 Handbook, updated and distributed at the beginning of each year, communicates the school's goals, the instructional focus, and provides a detailed overview of instructional best practices for literacy and math. The staff is expected to include the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) strategies, as well as the structures for using complex texts, and engaging students in challenging tasks. *The Habits of Mind* strategies and academic behaviors are infused into the curriculum with a focus on the habit of "Thinking Interdependently" along with organizational skills. These academic behaviors support the instructional focus, which is to increase student engagement through improved questioning practices and discussion techniques. The goals were developed using school wide data. Teachers stated, "There is a cohesiveness among staff and everyone knows the expectations." Teachers have affirmed that they hold themselves and each other accountable for their teaching practice and student outcomes.
- Through frequent classroom visits, the teachers receive timely feedback regarding their practice. Feedback is also provided through learning walks and inter-visitations. New teachers are provided mentoring to support their development. Ambassador teachers are selected to attend monthly content area meetings at the district level and then present the information to the staff to ensure coherence across the grades and content areas.
- The school website and a monthly newsletter provide consistent communication of school wide expectations and happenings. The school leaders highlight and support the repertoire of reading strategies that are being taught to their children. A Family Engagement Night is held in September to provide parents an overview of the curricula and the expectations for each of the grades. Parents are connected and informed through the principal's email list as well as *Remind.com*, an online communication program. Workshops are provided parents to help them support their children at home. Read and Greet for early childhood, Preparing for Middle School and Understanding New York State Tests are some examples.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across classes students engage in discussions.

Impact

Students are consistently engaged in high levels of thinking and participation to demonstrate higher-order thinking in their work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The instructional focus centers on the planning of rigorous lessons, which include questions designed to assess and advance student thinking; engage students in high quality peer to peer discussions; and the use of text-based evidence to support arguments. Across all grades and content areas, teaching plans reflect the components of the workshop model and use the to-with-by lesson format. In a grade 5 Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, groups engaged in peer-centered discussions on comparing and converting units of weight by using multiple operations. Through the content rich discussion, students determined they must multiply to move from a larger to smaller unit. In other groups, students challenged each other by asking whether they agreed and asked for explanations of their solutions. When students experience difficulty they join the teacher's group while the higher achieving students work collaboratively on more challenging questions. In a grade 4 reading lesson, purposeful grouped students discussed completing charts, posters, and responses with text-based evidence from an article about animals in captivity, while analyzing the evidence from the article that presents the author's point of view.
- Across all classrooms, students are given opportunities to engage in high-level conversations with each other. In a fifth grade math class, students solved word problems involving money by identifying the hidden question with real-world applications and problem-solving activities. Students worked in differentiated groups and worked on the cost of a party while the teacher acted as the facilitator. Students led the conversation and addressed costs for a large order of food, and other items. Questions discussed centered on money saved if items were purchased on a sale day; the least expensive way to order; and benefit from creating a large order. In a grade 3 reading class, students were in book club groups where they described a character by asking questions, and then recorded important details from the text. The teacher facilitated a guided-reading group with selected students.
- Students in a grade 1 ICT class, engaged in a discussion of shapes by identifying and creating new shapes. Students also discussed with a partner, which pattern blocks created the new shape manipulating them until they were successful. The students completed different math problems and answered higher-order thinking questions using the task from the text. Students used pattern blocks to replicate and create shapes. After working with a partner and independently, students were given a leveled math task to assess their learning.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school leaders and staff strategically align the curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and ensure the incorporation of the instructional shifts. Teachers utilize student work and data to plan and refine curricular and academic tasks.

Impact

Curricular decisions have resulted in coherence across the grades and a focus on college and career readiness skills for all. The planning and refinement of units and academic tasks based on students' specific needs has provided all learners access to the curriculum.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers and school leaders collaboratively create all unit plans and teachers' lesson plans so that the curricula is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, include essential questions, assessments, scaffolds, and differentiated tasks based on student needs. Across all content areas and grades, teachers' plans reflect the components of the workshop model. School leaders and teachers integrate the instructional shifts by making purposeful connections between the shifts and the topics in each subject. In a grade 4 literacy unit, staff have embedded reading strategies such as, questioning the author's purpose, asking questions to clarify confusion, and using context clues. Additionally, the literacy units are created using the grade level "big ideas," which are refined for each grade. For example, the big idea for one of the units for kindergarten reads, "Authors utilize the relationship among characters to reflect the importance of community."
- Within grade and vertical teams, teachers are using the results from their analysis of state assessments, baseline assessments, unit assessments, and performance tasks to make modifications and revisions to the curricula and performance tasks. For example, the kindergarten team, in direct response to assessment results determined a need for adding foundational skills and rhyming and created a new unit entitled, "Our Time with Rhythm and Rhyme." The unit is comprised of nursery rhymes and foundational skills designed to provide explicit instruction for phonemic awareness. UDL strategies are included in all maps across the grades to ensure that English Language Learners and students with special needs have access to the curricula. Strategies include flexible grouping activities, tracing of words, the tapping out of words, and the two-finger rule for spacing for the early grades. The unit for opinion writing for grade 5 was also adjusted based on student assessment data. Scaffolds include student choice, guiding questions, differentiated graphic organizers, writing tools, a student checklist, as well as a rubric to ensure that all students have the necessary support to be cognitively engaged.
- The vertical mathematics team reviewed data, and refined the pacing calendars, lessons, tasks, and supports. The team targeted improving students' ability to demonstrate their thinking and construct an explanation to support their reasoning. To ensure that students had opportunities to explain their thinking, the staff incorporated Number Talk into the mathematical routine vertically across grades. In a grade five lesson, students were required to discuss how convert units of weight.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use and create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies aligned to the school's curricula. Common assessments are used to track student progress towards goals across grades.

Impact

The tracking of student data allows for actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and instructional adjustments to demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- The school administers common assessments including *Fountas and Pinnell*, monthly assessments, unit tests, and culminating tasks, the Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) in addition to the New York State yearly exams. These are used as key benchmarks to measure student progress in meeting their goals, and providing actionable feedback to students and teachers. Data is analyzed and shared school wide to provide feedback and make adjustments to curricula and plan differentiated professional development. Upon reviewing grade 4 math data, staff determined the need to provide additional pedagogical support and modeling. Additional strategies such as, Number Talk, partner and group work, and use of manipulatives were implemented. Latest data indicated an increase of 10 to 18 points per student. Additionally, the kindergarten team decided to increase time allotted to counting from a given number, provide students with a visual chart to show steps to count correctly, model during a number talk, and change the question format based on data from a chapter test and analyzing extended responses.
- Teachers use rubrics and provide written and oral feedback to students through conversations, and reading and writing conferences. Feedback, rooted in the language of the rubric gives students actionable feedback with next steps as evidenced within student portfolios, and student work displays on classroom and hallway bulletin boards. A grade 5 student discussed the process he used in the drafting and revising of his informative essay on Mexico. He used both teacher and peer feedback, and the rubric to guide the organization of his writing piece. Another grade 5 student shared how the conferences, checklists, and using the rubric helped him enhance the mood and tone aspects of his essay. Students stated that the rubric-based feedback provides them with guidance for their subsequent draft and helps them score at a higher level. Students also receive feedback from peer assessment and conferences, and through self-assessment rubrics and checklists. Students shared that they consistently reflect on their work and what next steps have to be completed to reach and exceed standards.
- The teacher teams reviewed the data for the literacy units of study from unit one to three for each class on grades 3, 4, and 5. The analysis of data resulted in teacher teams determining the need for additional close reading lessons and student-led discussions in grade three; changing the single passage to include an unseen "Paired Passage" for grade four; and varying questioning techniques for grade five.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teacher teams engage in structured inquiry-based collaboration and consistently analyze assessment data for students they share or on whom they are focused.

Impact

Teacher collaboration is improving teacher capacity and progress towards goals for groups of students

Supporting Evidence

- During the vertical collaborative inquiry team meeting, teachers analyzed grade 4 student writing performance tasks and found that there was a 10% increase in the number of students scoring on levels three and four. They analyzed work samples, discussed possible explanations for the varied students' performance, and brainstormed potential instructional strategies that could benefit the lower performing students. Some of the strategies proposed for adjusting and strengthening instruction included; using a pre-writing four-step planning page and providing students with a choice of graphic organizers to help them plan their writing. Additionally, the team surfaced trends for low, medium, and high performing students through the analysis of an embedded social studies task and recorded data for each grade.
- Each grade represents a horizontal team who works collaboratively to adjust curricula, assess impact on teaching and learning, and investigate the latest research on educational practice. The third grade team evaluated and compared the data for a performance task from the first literacy unit with the results from the third performance task. Double-digit score increases were noted and they agreed that the work they did on improving their ability to scaffold questions resulted in raising student engagement and increasing their performance. Similarly, grade 5 teachers reviewed data and decided to change the unit task in order to focus their teaching on the skills needed to infer the mood and tone in a text.
- Teacher teams' investigation of curricula and pedagogy led them to make curricula and pacing calendar adjustments to create better alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards. The kindergarten team shared a form used to analyze individual student math results that included next steps for students and teachers. Teachers share best practices with teacher teams and include paraprofessionals to deepen their instructional knowledge and ensure stronger supports for students with disabilities. For example, a teacher presented best practices for implementing the Socratic seminar and how it is connected to close reading and the development of argumentative thinking skills.