



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2015-2016

**P.S. 262 El Hajj Malik El Shabazz Elementary  
School**

**Elementary School K262**

**500 Macon Street  
Brooklyn  
NY 11233**

**Principal: Joeletha Ferguson**

**Date of review: February 9, 2016  
Lead Reviewer: Gary Knight**

## The School Context

P.S. 262 El Hajj Malik El Shabazz Elementary School is an elementary school with 435 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 2% Asian, 83% Black, 13% Hispanic, and 2% White students. The student body includes 4% English Language Learners and 21% 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 91.9%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff, and provide training for those expectations. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

### Impact

The school has developed a culture of mutual accountability for high expectations and successfully partners with families to support student progress.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate expectations at the onset of the year by providing each staff member an electronic, return receipt requested, emailed copy of the staff handbook. Expectations are further communicated via memos, ongoing professional development and during pre and post observations. Specific workshop topics include: “Set High Expectations and Standards,” differentiated instruction, teaching higher order thinking, and essential questioning. The leaders have also implemented “walk-throughs” as an additional method of norming the lenses of all staff around classroom/instructional organization, student engagement, alignment of instruction, rigor of instruction and an observation protocol with accompanying rubric for each component. Teachers are also given a form that clearly details non-negotiable expectations for elementary and middle school, respectively.
- Communication to families is done through monthly newsletters, dedicated parent engagement time, principal chats, celebrations of academic achievements, Class Dojo which is an interactive online program that provides parents immediate feedback on their children’s performance. A newsletter sent in January informs families of the various activities the students are doing in all content areas and upcoming Learning Leaders workshop information and provides online resources to support their children’s learning at home. They were also provided strategies on how to connect writing at school and home. A fourth grade newsletter included an invite to parents for College Awareness Day and additional information on signing up for the Class Dojo online program.
- The school leaders, guidance counselors and parents partner to cosponsor school events. Some events include, career day, a day with dads, and health awareness. Parents also serve as volunteers with the school assisting with day-to-day duties, and, in kindergarten, parents work in support of classroom publishing parties.

## Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.2 Pedagogy</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn. Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula for all learners.

### Impact

Teaching practices are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts. All students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher order thinking skills in student work. However, across the vast majority of classrooms, higher order thinking questioning was not present.

### Supporting Evidence

- It was evident based on classroom visits that teachers' lessons consistently included instructional shifts. For example, a grade 4 math lesson targeted expected students to deeply understand and operate easily within a math concept by explaining why fractions are equivalent. In a grade 6 English Language Arts (ELA) lesson students were to cite textual evidence to support analysis of what text says explicitly as well as inferentially.
- Across the classes visited, students were provided access to the concepts being taught in multiple ways. Lessons included: the infusion of technology, graphic organizers, the use of counters in math, students thinking, pairing and sharing, and differentiated instruction. Some examples of differentiated instruction included a grade 6 ELA lesson where students were working in groups on three different readings that were leveled based on students' abilities. The choice of article topics was also meaningful and relevant to students. Throughout the visit, students were repeatedly stating, "I can make a connection." The article topics were; "No TV on School Night!" and "Do you Think a Longer School Calendar Is a Good Idea?" and "Kids Who Skip School are Tracked by GPS."
- The lessons included essential questions. The use of Webb's Depth of Knowledge questioning was used as a support in some classes. However, due to the mixed level of higher order thinking questioning observed, there were missed opportunities for some students to engage in higher order thinking. In some classes, questioning was not present during visit or was based on recalling facts, while, in some cases, did aim at pushing students' thinking. For example, in one math lesson, questions asked were "What is a factor?" and "The answer in multiplication is called?" In another math class, "What is the inverse operation of division?" However in other classes observed, the questioning aimed at critical thinking. For example, a grade 2 science class had to explain and answer how to change a liquid state of matter into a solid state of matter as they experimented in making ice cream from milk and journaling their findings. Two questions were, "If we were to change the container, will it make the ice cream quicker? Why or why not?" and "Do you think the rock salt is helping to turn the milk into ice cream? Why?" Students were also asked to make predictions as to what they thought would happen (end result) and to provide their reasoning.

## Additional Findings

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and integrate the instructional shifts and build coherence. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits.

### Impact

The school's aligned curricula promote college and career readiness. Higher order skills are activated across grades and subject for all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school has adapted *GO Math!* and Journeys curricula for English Language Arts (ELA) in grades k-5. The New York City Scope and Sequence is the core curriculum for Science and Social Studies. In grades 6-8, the school uses Collections for ELA and Glencoe for Math. The Grade 8 history curriculum is U.S. History. The leadership provides professional development opportunities to support teachers in further aligning and building coherence with curricula. The school's professional development calendar highlights indicate dedicated time set apart for teachers to align curriculum, review the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, lesson planning and writing across the curriculum.
- Teacher planning documents include Socratic questioning, use of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK), and Bloom's Taxonomy question starters and essential questions and instructional shifts. For example, an upper school unit of study reflects accommodations (one on one support) and modifications (checklist) made in planning to meet the needs of all learners. Additional elements on planning documents are CCLS, reading and writing grounded in evidence from text as per the instructional shifts, DOK 3: strategic thinking, DOK 4: extended thinking, and assessment.
- The curricula intentionally plan for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities (SWDs) by scaffolding learning and providing the necessary instructional supports. For example, the related services team collaborates with the instructional team to discuss students and to provide strategies to help teachers effectively differentiate instruction. Similarly, the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher collaborates with colleagues to provide strategies for language acquisition. In some instances, visuals and headphones with recordings were provided students to complete a task similar to other students, but at their level.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### **Findings**

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

### **Impact**

The use of aligned assessments allows teachers to provide actionable feedback to students regarding their achievement. The results of the common assessments are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school's assessment practices include the school leaders working with teachers on component 3d of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* on how to properly align formative assessments. The assessments that are administered are, the Measures of Student Learning (MOSL), Benchmarks, interim assessments, teacher created, peer- and self-assessment. The results of the various assessments are analyzed by teachers, and findings are used to adjust curricula. For example, data revealed that students, particularly in grade 6, were missing key steps in solving word problems and fractions. As a result, teachers identified that as a part of re-teaching. They had to be more strategic in planning the next instructional activities by deliberately identifying and focusing on the steps involved to solve word problems and by providing scaffolds to help students understand the process itself.
- The school's grading policy, rubrics and performance tasks are also used to help determine student progress across grades and content areas. For example, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade performance task addressed the Common Core Learning Standard Expressions and Equations; Expressions and Equations work with radicals and integer exponents. The results of student work are then reviewed by teachers, and a conference is held with students where the teacher and student create math goals together. Three goals were developed: Expressions and Equations: analyzing and solving linear equations and pairs, simultaneous linear equations; Functions: define, evaluate and compare functions, and Geometry: understand and apply the Pythagorean theorem.
- Rubrics are used school wide to help students and teachers assess the quality of their work. Feedback is provided students to help in determining areas that they performed well in and areas for growth. Students were able to clearly articulate the use of rubrics as common practice, that it is a tool used to set expectations for an assigned task, and that teachers use them to evaluate the students, and the students use it to self-evaluate. The students also stated that rubrics are introduced at the beginning of a lesson and they focus on level 4 to guide them on ways to excel. A grade 8 student shared the feedback she received on her level 4 essay titled, "Dreams and Nightmares." It stated, "Good use of prior knowledge and great connections made with text to media and text to Literature."

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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**Findings**

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). Distributed leadership structures are in place so that teachers have built capacity.

**Impact**

The school’s structured inquiry-based professional collaborations have strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers. Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school’s structure has allowed for the development of various teacher teams. Teams include but are not limited to, professional development, middle school, math, English Language Arts (ELA), grades 3-5 and pre-K. These professional collaborations allow for teachers to have conversations on teacher practice and its implications. Teachers discuss challenges they experience with lessons and help each other by sharing and/or identifying best practices. For example, the math team recognized that students were entering the upper grades lacking some of the skills necessary. They decided to conduct walkthroughs into lower school math classes to help discern areas where they can provide support to team members by giving feedback and offering instructional strategies for the teaching of specific skills.
- A middle school team meeting, which included general and special education teachers and the Special Education Teacher Support Services (SETTS) providers, was observed where they introduced the commenting protocol and the purpose of the meeting which was to address higher-order thinking questions, and the integration of questioning into practice. This area of focus was determined based on the fact that students’ essays that are problem/ solution oriented, require higher order thinking solutions, and students are experiencing challenges. Each teacher shared classroom data as teacher comments were recorded. The teachers then discussed an article and determined next steps to implementing one common strategy across the classes. As teachers examined student work, they identified one student’s growth in writing, while another was making connections in the writing. Teachers agreed that higher order questions would be produced with scaffolding provided for students. The students would create questions with the use of a “Jeopardy themed” activity along with Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) chart and question stems.
- Structures to support distributive leadership and teacher voice are present throughout the school. The team structures have helped teachers to develop leadership skills and to offer suggestions and recommendations that affect student learning across the school. Two examples are the school wide shifts in curricula in both ELA and math. Based on the teachers’ input, the Journeys program replaced ReadyGen for English Language Arts and CMP3 was replaced with Glencoe math curriculum.