



# Quality Review Report

## 2015-2016

**P.S. 375 Jackie Robinson School**

**Elementary School K375**

**46 McKeever Place  
Brooklyn  
NY 11225**

**Principal: Schwanna Ellman**

**Date of review: November 24, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Anne Alfonso**

## The School Context

P.S. 375 Jackie Robinson School is an elementary school with 453 students from grade Pre-Kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 3% Asian, 62% Black, 30% Hispanic, and 4% White students. The student body includes 25% English Language Learners and 24% students with disabilities. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 90.3%.

## 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>Celebration</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>Developing</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</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>Developing</b>

## Area of Celebration

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

The school effectively aligns its curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards. Teachers utilize student work to plan and refine curricula and academic tasks.

### Impact

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

### Supporting Evidence

- Unit plans and teachers' lesson plans are aligned to specific Common Core Learning Standards and include essential questions, a mid-point assessment to target all students, and various assessments to be employed. The Hess Rigor Matrix is utilized in planning to assess rigor. All plans include three-level pivotal questions to assess, vocabulary development, and tiered tasks providing access to all learners to engage in the lesson. Background knowledge is activated to provide conceptual and linguistic support for all learners. Across all content areas and grades, teachers' plans reflect the components of the workshop model, where mini-lessons, guided practice, and independent or group tasks are clearly outlined to reflect the "I-do, we-do, you-do" model.
- Curricula and academic tasks are designed to engage students, advance them through the content, and assess their understanding as evidenced by their work products. Within grade meetings, teachers are using results from looking at student work and the data from the unit assessments to modify the tasks to access all students. For example, teachers adjusted the informational/explanatory writing task for grade 3 struggling students to include a small setting, provide an exemplar and checklist, and a graphic organizer to complete the task. In grade one GoMath!, students are actively engaged in four differentiated tasks to master several math strategies to solve addition fact problems within 20. Math boards, counters, cubes, and the iPad are scaffolds and support learning.
- The school has used the GoMath! program in grades K-5 and is currently using Core Knowledge curriculum units for k-2, and Expeditionary Learning curriculum units for grades 3-5. School leaders and teachers are unpacking the respective curriculum units to identified key shifts; building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction and informational texts, reading and writing grounded in evidence from the text, and regular practice with complex text and its academic vocabulary. Based on the analysis of last year's English Language Arts (ELA) state assessment and other formative data collected, the school made a purposeful decision to these curriculum units steeped in CCLS and the instructional shifts. Evidence is seen in curriculum units and lesson plans reviewed.

## Area of Focus

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

Teaching practices are becoming aligned to set of beliefs about how students learn best. However, across classrooms the quality of student discussion and work products is uneven.

### Impact

Students are not consistently engaged in high levels of thinking and participation.

### Supporting Evidence

- Although school wide beliefs include the practice of student led discussions, this practice was observed in a third grade classroom where the small groups were student facilitated. The student held the team members accountable through questions and discussion to respond to the task. The class was differentiated with four levels of tasks. The teacher captured the discussion and provided feedback. Student led discussion is an emerging practice across classrooms.
- Text-dependent questioning is articulated as a school wide approach and is emerging in practices across lessons based on the instructional shifts for ELA. Although in most classes there were groups of students discussing a common text, there was little evidence of text-based answers in most classrooms. In a second grade science classroom, students were engaged in evidence-based conversations about text in their discussion about natural resources by citing the text to support their responses to their questions and leveled task.
- In a fourth grade science lesson, students responded to a series of questions regarding biotic and abiotic factors affecting the environment. Although in the whole class discussion, students used discussion prompts such as, "I agree", in "my opinion" there was little opportunity for students to discuss in a smaller group setting as well as little feedback provided by either the teacher or students to clarify a misconception regarding the term "affect" in ecosystems. Uneven questioning yields inconsistent levels of participation in higher order discussions.

## Additional Findings

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

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

### Impact

The tracking of student data allows for actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and instructional adjustments to meet the needs of all learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers utilize various assessments, such as Fountas and Pinnell running records in grades K-5, NYC performance tasks, pre and post assessments for Core Knowledge, Expeditionary Learning and GoMath!. End of unit writing assessments as well as NYC performance writing tasks across grades are used to assess student progress in reaching their goals. Additionally, the school is piloting MyOn an online Lexile reading assessment program to meet and track student progress in grade three. Information from the assessments provide teachers with feedback regarding student mastery of the key standards and student achievement both individually and as a grade. Information yields growth and gaps in student's knowledge based on assessments aligned to the CCLS. The JRS Instructional Core Team and Action Plan provides actionable feedback based on the Focused Instruction Protocol in grades K-5 for ELA. The pre and post assessments inform students on their achievement and next steps for their learning and goals.
- Across classrooms, teachers use a variety of methods to check for student understanding of content and concepts presented in the lessons. For example, in a grade 3 ELA lesson the teacher asked students to complete an exit slip and pose a question to the character, the Book Woman. In a first grade classroom students were asked to assess their own learning by waving if they agreed with the answer and the thinking in making 20. In a grade two class, students peer-assessed by providing the rating for their partner based on the rubric and their explanation in writing for natural resources in science.
- Teachers provide feedback to students through conversations, individualized conferences about their work, and in written comments that align to elements on task-specific rubrics. Feedback is evident within student portfolios, and on work displayed in classrooms and hallway bulletin boards. Teachers provide the next steps and use rubrics to help students identify the criteria for improving their work. In classrooms across grades, students self-assess when they set their goals for reading and math.
- During the students meeting, students across grades articulated and demonstrated how rubrics for writing provided feedback to self-assess and adjust their writing. Students also stated that rubrics provided feedback and details of their progress. Students from grades 3 and 4 added that they also receive feedback about their work from peers.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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**Findings**

School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

**Impact**

Ongoing communication and support has increased teacher’s understanding of school leader’s expectations around teaching and learning. The school’s communication with families provides opportunities for them to understand student progress towards academic readiness beyond elementary school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders communicate high levels of expectations to staff through the JRS Staff Handbook and Weekly as evidenced in the discussion of professional learning goals, which highlights the professional activities including, but not limited to workshops, inter visitations, demonstration lessons, professional literature, lesson study, peer coaching, and horizontal and vertical inquiry team work. The instructional core team sets the main focus of professional learning for the year: Looking at Student Work and Lesson Study. The school leader also communicates to staff through the JRS Weekly the approved CEP goals and the February Benchmark goals presented at monthly staff meetings.
- School leaders provide training to support staff in meeting the professional expectations for teaching. The instructional focus incorporates components of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, 1e: Designing Coherent Instruction and 3c: Student Engagement. The focus on designing coherent instruction is evidenced in the horizontal grade team’s lesson plan and through the scheduled planning meetings. Teachers expressed that they value the ongoing feedback and support from school leaders and that it has helped them hone in on their pedagogical practices.
- In an effort to keep parents informed of their child’s progress, the school provides families with progress reports three times a year which outline progress in all content areas detailing progress in meeting the standards for the marking period. Parents expressed that they appreciate the ongoing communication from the school. This year, families have been involved in workshops to assist in their understanding of Common Core Learning Standards, as well as on-line resources to support families with homework.

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

The school is developing its structures for the majority of teachers to collaboratively engage in inquiry work, including the analysis of student work and student data.

**Impact**

The impact of teacher teams has yet to reach the instructional practices of the majority of teachers, thus limiting opportunities for increased student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Although teacher teams are looking at student work at meetings this year, there is little evidence for looking at student data to monitor progress towards goals. Even though there is a school wide assessment calendar, there is no reference or discussion on how it is used or its impact on teacher practice.
- Teachers noted that there is opportunity for partnering with an outside agency for professional development in science; teachers follow the Tuning Protocol process for their grade meetings.
- School leaders are beginning to build distributed leadership by identifying a model classroom in the school and by setting the goal for 10 teachers to lead professional opportunities for peers and families. In addition, the newly created Instructional Core Team will be comprised of teacher members as well as leadership to view the impact of assessment and professional learning.