



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. K771

K- 12 All Grades K771

**1075 Oceanview Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11235**

Principal: Denise D'Anna

**Date of review: February 3-4, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Audrey Madison**

The School Context

P.S. K771 is a K-12 all grades school with 427 students from grade kindergarten through grade twelve. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 11% Asian, 40% Black, 22% Hispanic, and 25% White students. The student body includes 15% English Language Learners and 99% students with disabilities. Boys account for 72% of the students enrolled and girls account for 28%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 87.3%.

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	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	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 targeted students. School leaders have embedded shared decision making practices throughout the school.

Impact

Structured professional collaborations have resulted in collective improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students as teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers of alternate assessment students, are members of site-based learning communities working towards improvement in operations and algebraic functions. As evidenced in the SMART plan for one inquiry team, fifteen students have been targeted for additional time and support in specific Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) skills. Team members analyze student work and identify skill areas of struggle and agree to commit to the common strategies of incorporating skip counting and providing additional support during the individualized instructional period. Similarly, teachers at another site focus on the same school goal, yet identify different areas of struggle for their eight targeted students, and commit to the common use of hands on materials and applications to every day routines. Tracking sheets reflect progress monitoring toward goals and adjustments to add the use of picture symbols with vocabulary, incorporate objects of student preference. Site to site sharing is promoted through the use of an online document sharing system. School leaders report gains for targeted students of these teacher teams.
- Curriculum units are co- created by a teacher team composed of teachers from each site, representing respective populations, in addition to a school- based coach and an administrator, as presented in the School Self Evaluation Form. Learning communities at each site adapt units further to create their weekly objectives. Interviewed teachers share protocols they use to analyze student work and adapt instructional strategies, stating that rotating roles of facilitator, presenter, documenter, and supporters of analysis, “Give each of us opportunities to take leadership roles.” One team member attended a workshop on Autism Spectrum Disorder programs and expresses that the learning community “is the perfect opportunity to share those resources.”
- The Professional Learning Opportunities team (PLOT) is a school-wide inquiry team comprised of instructional lead teachers from each site. This team contributes to the development of the School Comprehensive Education Plan (SCEP) goals in collaboration with school leaders. Members were observed in collective analysis of key ideas about student intellectual engagement exploring Danielson Cluster Four materials. Team members share that they facilitate professional development for their colleagues, including Danielson Cluster One materials, which has resulted in instructional adaptations such as a focus on targeted math skills, school- wide encouragement of turn and talk activities, the use of checklists and increased self- and peer- assessments.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Teaching practices informed by the Danielson *Framework* reflect beliefs that students learn best when they engage in academic tasks and discussions using appropriate and effective means of communication. Teaching approaches strategically provide multiple entry points and supports into the curricula, yet teachers strive to offer opportunities to further advance student thinking.

Impact

Across ability levels, the needs of all learners are met so that students are engaged in suitably challenging tasks and discussions and produce meaningful work products that push them toward their learning targets and goals.

Supporting Evidence

- During a fifth grade 6:1:1 math lesson, students followed a recipe and measured ingredients to make bread. The teacher asked one student, “Why do we use cups to measure? For big or small amounts?” and posed to another, “How many ‘one cups of flour’ do we need to make two cups?” Pictures of the students engaged in measuring were used to prompt answers to the question, “What did you practice measuring yesterday?” The teacher encouraged student discussion by saying, “Tell ___ what you measured.” “Tell ___ you agree the tablespoon is for smaller amounts.” In a fifth grade 12:1:4 lesson, students measured ingredients to make lemonade. Programmed communication devices, including yes/ no devices, were used to answer questions such as, “What did we measure?” “What are we making?” “Do you like lemonade?” Some students responded verbally, other students responded by pointing to pictures.
- In a third and fourth grade 12:1:1 science class, the teacher asked students to turn and talk in groups and use vocabulary from the video to explain why they need to understand layers of atmosphere. One student mentioned, “We need oxygen to breathe, for our lungs and our bodies.” Another student responded, “And airplanes and helicopters fly in the troposphere.” Independent/ group work required all students to create foldables of the layers of the atmosphere and identify different objects in each layer. Provided with egg cartons, paper towel rolls, pencils, straws, plastic and cardboard wheels, fourth and fifth grade students created individual simple axle and wheel machines in their 6:1:1 science class. The teacher asked students to tell a friend what you made and explain how it works. One student pointed out the wheel and axle to her peer. Another student told his friend, “I made a snow plow to push the snow.” Another student responded through the use of a communication device.
- Students in a 6:1:1 kindergarten class were observed identifying facts about the black and yellow garden spider. As the teacher posed questions such as, “What do spiders make?” “What do spiders eat?” “Where does the black and yellow garden spider live?” She facilitated students taking turns at the interactive white board to choose between two options. The teacher also used flash cards with picture symbols and google images for students to post their facts about spiders on a charted graphic organizer. During a kindergarten to second grade 12:1:1 English Language Arts lesson, students worked in groups facilitated by paraprofessionals as the teacher rotated to each group. One group was given multiple word cards to choose describing words to complete sentences presented on strips. Another group was asked to write describing words they found in an informational text and explain what the word described.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Rigorous habits and higher- order curricula and academic tasks are emphasized in a coherent way across grades, subjects and populations. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

All learners, including the lowest and highest achieving students, have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged in tasks that require students to demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Learning objectives from curriculum documents reveal that kindergarten alternate assessment students are expected to create an informational text using text features. Second through fifth grade alternate assessment students are required to use measurement tools to follow a recipe to make bread. Kindergarten students in an alternate assessment class are asked to make observations about the black and yellow garden spider.
- Students who participate in standardized assessment in fifth grade are required to cite evidence from informational text to support more than one main idea. In an eighth grade English Language Arts lesson, students will use text based evidence from, *To Kill a Mockingbird* to analyze aspects of a character's personality. The science objective for an upper elementary student is to analyze an informational text to create a graphic representation of the atmosphere.
- One kindergarten lesson plan identifies specific students in each group, the staff member expected to facilitate the group and differentiated student means of expression. For example, one group will verbally express their observations and facts about animals, while another group will kinesthetically use real world objects, picture symbols and a communication device. A lesson plan for second and third graders indicates one group will write a sentence describing why they chose to use a specific measuring tool, while another group will use a sentence starter to explain their reasoning. A third grade English Language Arts lesson plan indicates differentiated texts, varying graphic organizers and students' preferred mode of communication to support student access to the learning objective "identify key details in an informational text."
- One culminating task from a grade six Expeditionary Learning module, indicates that students used the text, *The Hero's Journey*, to create their own characters and write narratives. One student's culminating task was to interview her assistant principal, as her chosen community helper to answer the question, "How can we become better writers by learning about places in our school community?" A lower elementary student's task is to create his own book using pre-made story elements. The social studies unit plan for upper elementary standardized assessment students indicates the culminating task is to, "Create a story as an explorer to New York City during the colonization era."

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 toward goals and make curricula adjustments as staff track student progress.

Impact

Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback regarding student achievement so that all students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use individualized instruction tracking forms to document student progress toward school goals. For example, one teacher's form indicates daily tracking of progress in operations and algebraic functions over time and mastery of SANDI item # 39 in week four. Another teacher's form shows successful strategies and additional strategies to promote more progress. In a mid-year update regarding school goals, school leaders share, "As evidenced by data collected from the Learning Community SMART Plan, the vast majority of students demonstrate gains by moving one or more SANDI levels through the task analyzed SMART goal."
- Another school goal, "to increase student achievement in reading comprehension, all kindergarten through grade eight students in standardized programs, will increase one letter grade in their reading level as evidenced by running record assessments." Academic Intervention Services (AIS) are provided to targeted students, with Wilson instruction determines for identified students across grades. AIS tracking forms reveal adjustments to skills or strategies. Data forms show that teachers compare results from running records of September and January. School data analysis indicates 76% of standardized assessment students have increased one level and 8% of students have moved up two levels, which surpasses the mid-year goal of 55% students demonstrating one level of growth. Through further analysis of the data, the school determined the need to focus more on decoding for those students reading at the lowest levels.
- A photographic portfolio document provides evidence of an alternate assessment student working on component parts toward the culminating task for a story elements unit. Teacher comments indicate that the student is able to demonstrate identification of characters through participation in a puppet show by pressing switches and engaging in singing a song, identify two characters from the book by touching and holding, and identify the setting by matching and pointing, and lastly create a book using pre-made story elements. The task-aligned rubric assesses the degree of conceptual understanding of story elements, student levels on the reading and writing continuum, prompt support level and socialization.
- Multiple drafts of a standardized assessment student's narrative writing reveal ongoing teacher feedback such as, "Good use of the planning page, Next steps, write a draft using transitional phrases." "I enjoy the details and different obstacles of your excellent draft, next steps, make narrative more compelling by adding dialogue." "More next steps, stronger conclusion." Based on the rubric the student's final draft is scored level 4 in introduction and organization and varied transitions, with a level 3 for conclusion.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and ensure training is provided for all staff. Students are supported toward next levels by an established culture for learning that provides effective and focused guidance toward next levels.

Impact

School leaders and staff are mutually responsible for attaining high expectations for themselves and students. All students, including high needs subgroups, own their education and are prepared for success at next levels, including post- secondary settings.

Supporting Evidence

- With identified school goals to engage all students in Questioning and Discussion and increase communication skills for alternate assessment students, school leaders determine this would be evidenced by increased scores for 20% of teachers moving from “Developing” to “Effective” in the Danielson *Framework* component 3c- Engagement. Instructional lead teachers, participants in the Danielson Cluster Pilot training, state that the pilot training has helped them and their colleagues understand the expectations of the Advance system of accountability, as they study the clusters to further develop highly effective teaching practices. In a mid- year update regarding school goals, school leaders share, “8/14 teachers observed have been rated effective or highly effective in Engaging Students in Learning.”
- The principal explains that as a result of professional development in questioning and discussion, teachers of non- verbal students have developed charts of step by step indicators of increasing engagement. Posted charts display pictures of their students at current levels of engagement. Training for paraprofessionals and related service providers are offered on the use of communication devices as evidenced in agendas. The principal shares that 20% of the new teachers had been paraprofessionals in the organization.
- Guidance counselors support the articulation process for middle school students providing assistance with high school applications. The pupil personnel committee helps students and families with decisions regarding appropriate placements such as transition to their high school inclusion program, other programs in community schools or District 75 settings. The school’s Special Education Teacher for Support Services works with high school students to prepare for Regents exams as per their Individualized Education Plans. Data from the School Profile indicates twenty- five passing scores achieved on last year’s thirty- six Regent exams.
- The school further documents movement of thirty- three students to least restrictive environments (LRE), as reflected in a school- wide tracking form, which presents a summary of LRE changes at each site and for individual students for the last school year. Seven students were moved to inclusion programs; four students were moved to community schools, including high schools; seventeen students were moved to less restrictive populations. Modifications are made to related services. Additionally, the services of three alternative placement paraprofessionals and three crisis management paraprofessionals are no longer needed. 100% of the school’s graduating twelfth graders went to college last year.