



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 001 Alfred E. Smith

Elementary School M001

**8 Henry Street
Manhattan
NY 10038**

Principal: Amy Hom

**Date of review: May 13, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Buffie Simmons**

The School Context

P.S. 001 Alfred E. Smith is an elementary school with 399 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 64% Asian, 12% Black, 22% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 25% English Language Learners and 22% students with disabilities. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. 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	Celebration	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	Additional Findings	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	Focus	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	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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards. Lessons are consistently planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

As a result, there is coherence across grades and subjects that promotes college and career readiness for all students. Refined curricula ensure that all learners, from the lowest to the highest achieving, have access to rigorous academic tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- All curriculum plans and lesson plans are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Each grade has a yearlong pacing calendar in which the units of studies in reading, writing, math, science and social studies are planned out. The pacing calendars reflect a balance of informational and literary units, a progression across grades, and integration of social studies/science content into reading and writing units. The foci for the school leaders is making critical thinking public and exposing and developing academic vocabulary around shades of meaning that is more challenging with pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students. The school is using data from Teachers College reading assessments to inform small group reading instruction. All grades are designing curriculum lessons from *10 Minute Math* to align with the Common Core and planning additional math lessons from *Mathematics in the City*.
- Across all grades, students are required to cite evidence from texts they read or use during their research to respond to questions or in the projects and writing pieces they create. Informational texts are used in guided or small group instruction. Lesson plans ensure that English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities participate and engage in classroom learning through the use of different texts and modified task criteria. Plans also included guided instruction by teachers with additional checklists, visual resources such as thinking maps and graphic organizers, and sentence frames to support student learning needs.
- Tasks are planned and refined so that all students can access an engaging curriculum. For example, math tasks and questions were refined to provide the highest achieving students more opportunities to explain and demonstrate their thinking. This was visible in grade 4 and 5 lesson plans which contained activities for strategically grouped students. Both included prompts for students to highlight the development and synthesis of ideas in problem solving and to explain their thinking. The lesson plans that were reviewed included a variety of open-ended questions that would allow students to think critically regardless of their entry point.
- Teachers' lesson plans that were reviewed included higher-order essential questions crafted to stimulate critical thinking and tasks directly tied to concepts being taught. For example, a grade 4 lesson depicted a unit on data. Students collected data on student heights, represent it in a line plot and described what they learn about the line plot to help them predict the typical height of a fourth grader.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teachers use common assessments, rubrics, and grading policies aligned to the school's curriculum. However, meaningful feedback is not yet consistently provided to students.

Impact

While student assessment results provide actionable feedback to both student and teacher regarding achievement, it lacks specific details to inform students of their next steps.

Supporting Evidence

- Student portfolios contain rubric-based feedback. Students stated they use the rubrics and checklists to guide their work. One student stated, "We use rubrics to determine how much we've improved from the beginning to the end." In addition, students could speak to feedback they received and what they were working on. One student stated they had to remember to write the entire response and another student stated that they were working on improving their conclusions.
- The school uses a variety of common assessments such as running records, Teachers College student progressions, performance exams, and unit tasks to monitor student progress. The school has expanded the use of performance writing tasks connected to standards-based rubrics across grades to better evaluate student progress. Teachers shared that at the beginning of the year, students struggled with multi-step problems and were literal thinkers. Units and lesson plans have been adjusted to provide supports for a variety of learners and are connected to the needs of the students. For instance, grades three through five teachers noticed a need for reconstructing and deconstructing words. Teachers have looked at student progress in these areas throughout the year.
- Student data is collected and analyzed. School leaders and teachers break down assessment data by standards and identify student groups for instructional purposes, interventions, and after school support. Grouping based on teacher data was evident in the majority of classrooms. Although student feedback was actionable, it lacked meaningful direction for students. On a math task, for example, a student received 3/9 and the feedback stated, "You gathered some evidence of the sides and its area but start sorting those that fit together." Feedback observed lacked clarity and did not inform the student what they have done differently than before or provided necessary steps or examples to assist the child to overcome their deficiencies. Administrators and teachers are working on establishing purposeful feedback mechanisms to inform students on how to improve their work as well as developing a systematic approach to recording and tracking ongoing progress.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide professional development connected to those expectations. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path of college and career readiness to families.

Impact

High expectations for all have resulted in mutual accountability among staff and families so that students are supported in meeting goals and expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate expectations of college and career readiness. For example, students and families from grades 3 to 5 engage in a series of workshops with PricewaterhouseCoopers to learn about different financial opportunities. Parent leaders are an important part of school culture and ensure that the community is embedded within school practices. Newsletters in various languages that highlight extensive offerings at the school, including academic and artistic celebrations as well as curriculum highpoints, are sent home. Parents are invited to publishing parties, class presentations and special assemblies, during which students have opportunities to showcase their culminating unit projects and artistic talents. During the annual Career Day for grades 4 and 5, parents and other invited speakers who work in different kinds of jobs share their stories. Students ask questions as they explore future possible careers. In addition, there is parental appreciation for arts education and students are encouraged to apply for programs outside of school, such as visual arts contests and visits to museums, to extend their talents and skills.
- The school conducted a survey of parent needs in the beginning of the year. The results were reviewed in the Parent Teachers Association and School Leadership Team meetings. One request shared by parents was to understand the Common Core Learning Standards. The school created a series of workshops across subjects. One parents stated, "The workshops are like a class, teaching us so we can teach our children at home." For example, for family workshop night, topics included math at home, playdough fun for pre-kindergarten parents, and multiplication tic-tac-toe and partial products for grade 4 families. Due to the many workshops offered to the families, a group of 15 parents are attending a 15 week cycle of English language classes with volunteers from the International Center. The weekly three-hour classes were increased due to demand. In addition, there is an increase in Learning Leader volunteers at the school, working specifically with English as a New Language (ENL) students to build fluency in literacy.
- School leaders and the professional development team review Advance observation data, staff surveys, and teacher input to design professional opportunities for teachers. Lab-sites have provided opportunities for teachers to observe the development of strategies and oral discussions as ways to engage students in higher-order thinking and communication of their ideas. Walkthroughs and intervisitations also provide data to collectively identify staff needs. Teachers provide support for each other. A teacher stated, "Our instructional focus is making our critical thinking public, so we support one another by offering feedback and suggestions to support our schoolwide goal."

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

Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused. Distributed leadership structures are in place so that teachers have built-in leadership capacity.

Impact

Teacher team work typically results in improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students. Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams have been reorganized for the purpose of building coherence to support the needs of the teachers’ professional development for literacy and math. A teacher team consists of two kindergarten teachers, one first grade teacher, one second grade teacher and an English as a second language teacher. Teachers meet in grade teams and also meet in teams across grades on Mondays to look at student work using protocols and to create action plans based on their findings. A teacher team was observed reviewing assessment results and making instructional decisions. An outpour of the analysis is that students are grouped by needs not by class for extended-day support. In addition, teachers discovered a need to collaborate on their own grade-wide math assessments by allowing students to explain their thinking by making it visible through work products and discussion. The results have been used in team meetings to change classroom practices such as scaffolding problems of the day, manipulative use, modeling, and classroom discussion.
- Teacher team leaders are part of the consultation committee and professional development committee and give feedback to school leaders. To support families with math, teachers plan to implement Family Workshop Math Night where all grades choose two math activities that align to a vertical school wide math strand to present and to teach families to deepen their understanding of math alignment to the Common Core.
- Teachers shared that they present rationale and support their rationale with assessment data during team meetings. A teacher stated, “Based on common assessments, I noticed that my students are struggling with multi-step problems. At the next team’s meeting I shared the data and realized many of my peers felt the same way about their students.” As a result, they created lessons to support their students. Teachers also request additional supports and opportunities for professional learning, such as support in questioning and discussion and mentor teachers for new teachers. For example, a grade 4 teacher with more than 15 years of experience mentors a first year teacher. A mentee stated, “I am so happy to have a support mechanism here not only with my mentor but also with my colleagues.” As a result of the success of the program, mentors continue supporting their mentee over the annual assignment.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teaching practices are rooted in an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Tasks and teaching strategies provide multiple entry points and supports.

Impact

Coherence in teaching practices aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* ensures that students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Questioning and discussion is a schoolwide focus. The staff has been working on posing questions that require students to be more critical and analytical in their responses as well as to synthesize the information using evidence from resources they use. In many classrooms, there is evidence of process charts and visual supports for students to independently refer to or use. Some teachers were using charts as an interactive tool for observational data to group students for small groups. Across classrooms, teachers provided students opportunities for discourse and to productively struggle in articulating their viewpoints using evidence support their claims.
- Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide access into the curriculum. In an Integrated Co-Teaching writing class, students observed an incident closely, wrote about what they witnessed and revised their writing to be published. Students shared that journalism is fast-paced and made the connections that writers edit their work frequently. Teachers co-taught in stations and grouped students heterogeneously. Students shared their writing with their partners. In another class, the teacher explicitly modeled for the students and provided visual supports. The teacher demonstrated that 100 grids represented boxes of paper clips then asked students how many paper clips were represented. Using visualization, students made predictions and completed multi-step problems.
- Across classrooms many academic tasks provide students with opportunities to demonstrate higher-order thinking. In an English Language Arts class, students previewed the beginning of a mystery book, and read the title, the blurb and the chapter titles and asked themselves, "What will be the big mystery in this book?" and "Who will solve this mystery?" Students shared their opinions with reasoning. The teacher asked, "With your partner ask yourself the question, 'What is this telling you about the character?'" The students were tasked with coming up with 3 things that they can know about the character just by looking at the title and the cover illustrations.