



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

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

# **Quality Review Report**

## **2015-2016**

**P.S. 008 Luis Belliard**

**Elementary School M008**

**465 West 167<sup>th</sup> Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10032**

**Principal: Washington Hernandez**

**Date of review: December 4, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Heidi Pierovich**

## The School Context

P.S. 008 Luis Belliard is an elementary school with 560 students from grade kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 0% Asian, 4% Black, 96% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 31% English Language Learners and 15% 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 93.3%.

## 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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>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>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations that have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and promoted the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards. Distributed leadership structures are embedded within the school community.

### Impact

School-wide instructional coherence and increased student achievement for learners has resulted due to effective teacher leadership. Teachers' integral role in key decisions positively affect student learning across the school.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers sit on multiple collaborative teams such as grade level, literacy, mathematics, technology and grant writing. All teachers were given a survey that allowed them to select which teams they would like to serve on in addition to grade level teams. Teachers spoke to a shared collegiality whereby they share best practices and then commit to implementing them in their own classes. One teacher shared and others agreed, that an outcome of their grade level meetings where they analyze student work and determine next instructional steps, is the implementation of the strategy that is best for their group of students, demonstrating a commitment to school wide instructional coherence.
- This collegiality extends to teachers sharing that their instructional practice has definitely been strengthened. One said, "As a first year teacher I would not have survived without support from each and every teacher across the school, not just my grade team." Other teachers agreed that the collegiality, collaboration, and support are part of the fabric of the school from teachers to coaches and administration, working together to improve teaching and learning.
- Teachers shared that the administration is "very good at listening to us and giving us the opportunities to make decisions." For example, two years ago teachers wanted to revise the implementation of *ReadyGen* by incorporating higher-order thinking questions and activities. Another teacher stated, and others agreed, "The administration trusts, respects, and empowers us to do our best to meet our kids where they are and move them forward." This empowerment is evident across teacher teams, where each grade, "translanguaging", technology, or other team makes instructional decisions that are data-determined. Whether selecting the performance task, vertical alignment of tasks, implementing the number-talk initiative, or supporting language learners the team members determine what is implemented.
- Teachers share the roles within the teacher teams, rotating the roles weekly to support growth across the school. Teachers have common planning time and meet in their grade teams weekly. There is a schedule for the other team meetings as well. The cabinet, literacy, and math coaches have modeled the leadership and facilitation of these team meetings through training, and shared professional reading.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices reflect the school's belief that students learn best in a student-centered environment. Teachers implement strategies that provide access for all learners including English language learners and students with disabilities.

### Impact

Across classrooms, there are consistent opportunities that are aligned to the Common Core and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, resulting in all learners engaging in meaningful discussions and producing meaningful work products. However, high performers are not as yet always challenged to their full potential, thus limiting opportunities for all learners to engage in higher-order thinking tasks to accelerate and own their learning.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school wide belief is that students learn best in small group instruction in a supportive print-rich environment, with access to resources, peers, and the teacher. Tiered entry points are provided so that students can engage in productive struggle and increase their achievement levels. To this end, the staff focuses upon student-to-student discussion using accountable talk stems, with the goal of students holding whole class discussions.
- Although accountable talk stems are posted in every classroom and most students use them, few demonstrated the school wide focus of “playing off each other” during discussion. In a grade 4 math class, students worked in groups on tasks with manipulatives to model using factors. Students collaborated and discussed their tasks. In a second grade science class students worked in groups to determine how rocks are alike and different. The groups determined what happened to rocks when placed in water and discussed the changes they observed. However, when they shared whole class, the discussion was teacher-driven and the pacing was rushed, which did not permit all learners to own their learning.
- Multiple entry points provided for students range from bilingual classes to support language acquisition using “translanguaging” techniques, to tiered math groups with differentiated hands-on activities. Although most classes had student-centered activities, the use of extensions for students to challenge themselves was only seen in a few classes.
- The structure of a lesson across the school is guided by specific components that allow for explicit modeling through the "I do" portion of the workshop model, opportunities for guided practice in the "we do" portion, and independent practice in the "students do section". In some lessons observed, teachers moved through these sections of the lesson in a seamless manner that permitted student discussions to unfold. However in some classes, for example, in a grade 3 bilingual science class, some opportunities for conceptual understanding were missed because of the pacing of the lesson. In a grade 5 Dual Language class, the teachers' questions were answered by one or two students, who used limited content vocabulary in their responses. In a grade 1 ICT class, students were in data-determined groups, but the noise level coupled with the lack of roles precluded the advanced group from working independently. Thus, the acceleration of student learning and the use of academic language by students are sometimes limited.

## Additional Findings

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

The school's curricula is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate instructional shifts across grades and subject areas. Rigorous habits and higher order skills are coherently emphasized across the school's curricula and academic tasks.

### Impact

The rigorous curricula and academic tasks result in promoting higher order thinking as well as college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- A vast majority of lesson plans and tasks indicate the Common Core Learning Standards, "I Can..." learning targets, big idea concepts, essential questions, vocabulary, small and whole group questions, and assessment. There are whole group and small group activities and discussions that are planned in lessons. With a focus on small group communication, a vast majority of the lessons incorporate team talk and questions to pose to peers. In math lessons, math talk is included as this is a school wide focus to support proficiency in the instructional shifts of the Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers stated that the math and literacy pacing calendars guide the work and help keep classes on the same content concepts.
- Data-determined student grouping is listed in lesson plans as well as the small group activities and a sharing of student work products to the whole group. Staff used New York State assessment data to determine the focus standards in English Language Arts and math. These focus standards are evident in lesson plans across vast majority of lessons and unit plans. An agreed upon format for similar subjects across grades is utilized. Together, these planning practices have resulted in coherence across grades and subject areas.
- *ReadyGen* and *GO Math!* as well as the *New York City Scope and Sequence for Social Studies and Science* are the programs used and are all Common Core aligned. To support the goal of accelerating all learners in meeting their literacy goals, especially learners of English, students with disabilities, and struggling learners, the school uses *Accelerated Reader* for all students both in school and at home.

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

Across the school, common assessments are utilized to identify student progress and adjust instruction. Teachers use school-wide rubrics to provide feedback to students with actionable next steps.

### Impact

The use of various assessment data has resulted in teachers grouping students based on learning needs. This use of data also assists in the adjustment of curricula and instruction leading to improved student performance.

### Supporting Evidence

- The administration and staff have determined the common assessments that are used to create data-determined student groups in classes consistently across the school. Students know they are in groups that are based on previous assessments, including the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) and New York State assessments, and also know that these groups are flexible, changing according to these and other data results. A group of students explained STAR-leveled groups together, “We are in this group because our math levels are similar and we have similar goals. I’m a 4.3 in math and a 4.7 in reading.” Another stated, “I’m a 4.5 in math and a 4.8 in reading and we have similar goals for reading. Students in this math class also offered that they have the choice to select the ‘challenge’ assignment from their task or one from a higher-level group.
- Student work receives actionable feedback on how to improve, with glows and grows. Teachers stated, “Everyone has the opportunity to redo an assignment for a higher grade.” A school wide grading and promotional criteria by grade, published in Spanish and English, is communicated to parents and staff.
- Across classes students use rubrics and checklists. For example, in a grade 2 class, students used a “Text Club Buddy Reading Written Response Checklist” to guide pair work while reading nonfiction text. Teachers use Common Core-aligned math and literacy task rubrics. Teachers across grades use common assessments, such as project-based assessments to demonstrate student growth for both math and literacy. This also leads to adjustments in curricular and instructional decisions, whereby they regroup students to reteach skills that the data shows are gaps in student achievement. For example, in a grade 3 class, the teacher used the Unit 1 Module A Performance Based Assessment in narrative writing to determine the next steps in re-teaching students using scaffolds and graphic organizers to improve the writing, in some cases a whole grade band.
- During professional development or common planning time, teachers receive their class data profile sheet from the math or literacy coaches. While teachers have access to Stars Classroom, a web-based system that automates the collection of course marks from teachers, this data profile sheet combines the larger common summative assessments, such as the results from the New York State assessments in math and English Language Arts (ELA), Measure of Student Learning (MOSL), DRA, and the smaller formative assessments like the Fountas and Pinnell running records. This data sheet provides teachers with information regarding students and class so they can make adjustments to lessons. To date this data has revealed a school wide upward trend in both math and ELA.

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

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness and offer ongoing feedback.

### **Impact**

School leaders provide training and have a system of accountability for those expectations. School leaders and staff help families understand student progress toward those expectations.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Above and beyond the weekly parent engagement contact, via phone, email, or in-person meetings, staff also communicates with the home through monthly grade team newsletters. These newsletters, which are sent home in both English and Spanish, provide families with information about the instructional focus in all subjects, what students will be learning, important dates, expectations, and ways to support their child's learning at home. Parents stated that they are very pleased with the level of communication from the teachers and administration. Several parents shared, and others agreed, that when they work with their child at night on homework, the child often teaches the parent.
- Parents shared the strong support they receive with the middle school selection process through workshops, attending middle school fairs and tours, as well as the completion of the application. Students agreed that the school helps to prepare them for college and career. Students spoke about attending the college and career day where they listened to many presentations by people from different careers and different colleges.
- Administration provides staff with consistent messages regarding expectations. There is an "Administration matters routines and language of instruction manual" that is provided to all staff yearly that addresses response to intervention and academic intervention services, class data binders, the literacy and math coaches support, assessment calendar, and classroom expectations.
- There is a professional development committee that includes the coaches. Teachers create and present professional development to their peers, conduct inter-visitations, and share best practices. To monitor the implementation of these professional learning sessions, a system that includes professional learning cycles followed up with frequent classroom observations and actionable feedback ensure that staff are working toward the school wide achievement of the goals that have been set.