



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 015 Roberto Clemente

Elementary School M015

**333 East 4 Street
Manhattan
NY 10009**

Principal: Irene Sanchez

**Date of review: April 21, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Deborah Burnett-Worthy**

The School Context

P.S. 015 Roberto Clemente is an elementary school with 176 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises of 5% Asian, 32% Black, 60% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 9% English Language Learners and 31% 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 93.7%.

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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	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 leader and faculty decisions ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Varieties of learners have access to aligned curricula, which is designed to cognitively engage students, while preparing them for college and future careers.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders decided to use Teachers College curricula for the foundation of the kindergarten through grade 5 English Language Arts (ELA) classes because of its focus on informational text and thoughtful attention to student self-assessment. The math curricula for kindergarten through grade 5 classes are based on TERC Investigations, a hands-on math program that is Common Core aligned. FOSS is a hands-on science program that also features rigorous tasks in alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards. The City social studies scope and sequence is the foundation for the social studies curricula because leaders valued its alignment to the ELA curricula.
- Chosen curricula require students to complete rigorous tasks that mandate the use of higher-order thinking skills. A grade 5 writing unit requires students to write opinion pieces on topics and texts and support a point of view with reasons and information. They are also required to write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. A grade 4 reading unit requires students to read about a time and place in history. The level of reading must rise to a level of mastery while reading increasingly complex historical fiction. Students then synthesize evolving settings with plotlines and subplots of leveled texts and draft, revise, and elaborate upon possible interpretations of a text as they read and discuss books with their classmates. A grade 3 reading unit requires students to describe characters in a story, their traits, motivations or feelings, and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
- Regularly documented review of student work and data provides the basis by which curricula is refined and adjusted. Every month, kindergarten through grade 5 teachers review student progress and then determine if students should remain on the same reading level or be moved to more or less challenging material. Once this is determined, the new-leveled material is utilized and curricula is refined accordingly.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school's instructional focus reflects a school-wide belief in how students learn best and across most classrooms, teachers utilize scaffolds and teaching strategies to ensure that most students are engaged in challenging, Common Core-aligned tasks. In some classrooms however, teaching practices do not include extensions or next steps for high-achieving students.

Impact

Questioning and discussion techniques have resulted in improved outcomes for students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners. However, there are not yet consistent strategies in place for extensions into the curricula for students who have achieved the learning objectives.

Supporting Evidence

- Key components in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* are leveraged within professional learning opportunities and teacher feedback in order to support ongoing implementation of the school's instructional focus. In one grade 4 classroom observed, students were working in trios and through the teacher's planning of scaffolded questions, they were able to assess character traits of a main character and explain how other characters within a story help a reader develop a deeper understanding of a character's actions and decisions.
- To provide equal access to rigorous curriculum and instruction, teachers meet bi-weekly with special education and teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs) to share best practices around the use of multiple entry points that are brought back to the classrooms. For example, in one math classroom visited, students participated in clear systems, such as working with the teacher, working in partnerships, working with manipulatives, and selecting enrichment problems, to provide entry and autonomy for all learners in the class. However, in another math class and one English Language Arts class, teaching strategies were not focusing on the progress of high achieving students. All students were required to complete the exact same exit question and task with no further challenge provided. Students who achieved the learning objective early were not given an additional task or instructions on how to proceed onto a new academic learning skill or level.
- All grade teams are planning tasks that are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, using the New York State two-point rubrics, administering tasks to students, and using this data to inform their instruction in designing small group and individual supports for students. In review of teacher task design and student work, there was evidence of clear alignment to standards, students' ability to respond to the task using text evidence, as well as a self-assessment scoring guide where students had to answer questions related to task expectations such as, "I supported my inference with two pieces of textual evidence."

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and teacher teams have developed aligned assessment tools, rubrics, and consistent practices to monitor student learning. They use rubrics to assess interim and final student progress towards the key standards.

Impact

Teachers identify and respond to trends revealed by student work and provide feedback to students. However, this work has not yet transferred to all students' ability to use these assessment tools to reflect on their overall learning or progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use a variety of formative assessment techniques to monitor progress of student learning and check for understanding, including exit and entrance slips, recording student responses on interactive white boards, as well as individual and group conferences.
- Teachers are currently working with Teachers College staff developers, the United Federation of Teachers Teacher Center, and City Department of Education coaches to examine and refine current rubrics and tasks to deepen alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts.
- Common assessments, such as Teachers College running records, and pre- and post-writing and math unit assessments are used consistently within and across grades. Teacher teams consistently use these tools to gauge student learning and curricular alignment throughout the school.
- Some students interviewed stated they were working on how to make connections between the feedback they received from teachers, the examples of high-quality work provided, and their own learning. While all students at the student meeting had rubrics and checklists attached to their work, opportunities for peer editing and feedback were not always provided across all grades. When questioned about the content of the rubrics and asked to align their work to the expectations, most, but not all, of the students were able to demonstrate their learning.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff about professionalism, instruction, and communication and provide training. In addition, school leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families.

Impact

Teachers receive high quality, structured, and on-going training and professional development and are held accountable for expectations. In addition, families take an active role in the school community to create successful partnerships throughout the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are surveyed at the beginning of the year to identify professional learning activities and topics that best suit their individual professional learning needs. Results of the survey are used to determine the professional learning offerings throughout the year.
- School leaders meet with teachers to review elements of the *Danielson Framework for Teaching* and conduct frequent cycles of observations. They provide teachers with support and feedback for next steps as evidenced by the school’s professional development plan, walkthrough feedback, and identifiable next steps to improve teaching and learning in formal and informal observations.
- The school leaders, in collaboration with parents, provide a variety of workshops and meetings for families across all grades. Workshop topics include Power Brain, a program to assist parents with strategies to help students self-regulate, and many other content-based workshops so that families understand how to help their children in ELA, math, science and social studies. Parents participate in “Second Cup” open discussion forums to establish partnerships with the school based on need. Additionally, parents take ownership of projects to engage their children in developing a sense of community.
- School leaders and staff effectively communicate high expectations that support the successful partnering with families to further student progress towards college and career readiness. Parents collaborate with teachers to help improve their children’s progress. For example, the school shares updates about student reading levels, samples of student work, and assessments. Parents are held accountable by the school for helping their children achieve learning targets.

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

Teacher teams are engaged in teacher led, structured, and inquiry-based professional collaborations and there are opportunities for staff to have a voice in instructional decisions.

Impact

Instructional capacity of teachers has strengthened and their involvement in instructional decisions has improved student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet weekly and have developed structures to support student progress including agendas, student work protocols, team notes, and supplemental materials. The focus of these meetings encompasses an integration of the school goals around using student data from varied assessments, such as benchmark baselines, Rally examinations, and New York State tests, to determine student strengths and learning needs, and the development of strategies to support active engagement and academic achievement. Additionally, feedback from school leaders is provided to teacher teams via email to improve the quality of the instructional work and provide suggestions for future meetings.
- During a teacher team meeting, teachers used student work and a structured protocol to determine next steps for teaching practices. For example, teachers reviewed graphic organizers completed by students, to determine their understanding of the main idea of a story and how to provide supporting details as evidence. One teacher determined that although her students improved in their understanding of main idea, some students were still having difficulty with that concept. As a next step, the presenting teacher decided to reteach the concept during guided reading using specific guiding questions and partnership work to support student understanding. The team decided to try these methodologies with their students by having them use the same graphic organizer and bring the information to the next team meeting for review.
- The professional development team, which consists of teachers across grades, meets to determine the teacher training topics and to work on special instructional projects. For example, this year, the team developed a survey to identify professional learning topics and to develop school goals. A review of the responses demonstrated a need to support teachers in engagement and classroom management. Therefore, the professional development plan was constructed to reflect these areas. Additionally, a review of teacher team minutes across grades reflects a focus on identifying and implementing new teacher strategies to further engage students and address learning needs. For example, teams examined the use of the “box and bullets” strategy during close reading and the use of the Frayer model for vocabulary acquisition. Teachers made a school-wide decision, with the full support of school leaders, to use these graphic organizers as a means of instructional support for students.