



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 033 Chelsea Prep

Elementary School M033

**281 9 Avenue
Manhattan
NY 10001**

Principal: Chingchien Wang

**Date of review: May 6, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Buffie Simmons**

The School Context

P.S.033 Chelsea Prep is an elementary school with 639 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 25% Asian, 12% Black, 30% Hispanic, and 26% White students. The student body includes 4% English Language Learners and 11% students with disabilities. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 95.5%.

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	Focus	Proficient
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	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	Celebration	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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

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 training tied to expectations about a path to college and career readiness. The school's culture for learning ensures that all students are prepared for the next level.

Impact

A culture of mutual accountability for high expectations exists at this school and students are supported in reaching goals.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leaders have created high levels of expectations that are communicated to staff via workshops, a handbook, the website, progress reports, orientations, and study groups. In addition, systems of peer-visitations and observations with feedback, including next steps and suggested workshops, emulate a culture where accountability is reciprocal between all stakeholders. Frequent cycles of observations hold staff accountable for meeting expectations for pedagogical practice.
- The school has an open door policy. Caring and respect is modeled by everyone. Based on the interview, the principal believes that collaboration among parents, students and staff sets the stage for attaining the school's high expectations, such as the school's focus on academic rigor and critical thinking. For example, teachers engaged in cycles of professional development with a consultant from Southern Cross Consultancy to unpack updated units from the Teachers College curriculum. Through this collaboration, teachers added supplemental lessons providing skills that students need based on data. Teachers have also hosted visits for new teachers and fellow colleagues on concentrated expertise, such as writing workshop.
- Teachers and other staff have articulated high expectations and shared information with students, leading to student progress towards mastery of Common Core Learning Standards and college and career readiness expectations. All students participate in research for the college fair. Students are provided with information on their choice of colleges, choice of study, favorite part of the college fair and why college is important. The lower grades participate in a scavenger hunt and use college information boards to answer questions, such as find a college with a mascot as a mule or name two colleges that are not in New York. College readiness is demonstrated through college tours, students completing a medical school application, and participation in a student-led conference. In addition, students are aware of the skills needed to advance to the next level and are able to set goals and record their progress. For example, each grading period students set up a binder with sections for 4 selected learning targets in 4 content areas. Students select their learning target from a short list or teachers pre-select. Examples of learning targets for pre-kindergarten through grade 2 include, "I have learned to use picture clues to help me when I am reading" and "I have learned to add two numbers."

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school's curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate rigorous tasks and instructional shifts across grades and subjects.

Impact

Opportunities for targeted instructional supports and extensions for all learners are not yet embedded across grades and subjects for all students, thus missing opportunities for all student to demonstrate their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses units from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and Teachers College Writing Pathways. In math, NYS Story of Units is used as the base of curriculum overview. Using pre-assessment data, teachers determine the priority standards for the unit and uses various program resources such as *EngageNY*, *GO Math!*, and *Singapore Math* to construct meaningful and rigorous learning experiences for students. However, supports and extensions are not yet evident across all classes. The principal stated that the school is in the process of reviewing, modifying and revising the curriculum to strengthen access for all learners and engagement in rigorous tasks.
- The school is focusing on creating a unified science curriculum. Science and social studies non-fiction content has been incorporated in English Language Arts (ELA) units. For example, in the interdisciplinary curriculum pacing calendar for kindergarten, animals compared to humans and geography are incorporated in the unit for science and social studies. Grade 2 students are piloting a bridge study through Center for Architecture. Similarly, students in grade 5 are using resources from *Engineering is Elementary* to study bridges as part of a project-based learning unit. In addition, students participate in energy challenges connecting to outdoor learning via school garden and yearlong agriculture via hydroponics systems in the classroom.
- Lesson plans across subjects cite essential questions aligned to Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* and include domain specific vocabulary. Learning objectives are aligned to the Common Core and content standards. In addition, some lessons include the use of multiple representations and strategies to model teachers' thinking, guided practice and independent practice. For example, a grade 1 writing lesson plan includes tasks to support diverse learners. Supports include modeling, small group instruction, visuals, rubrics and checklists indicating the expectation of the task, though these are not yet evident across all classrooms.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations aligned to school goals and opportunities are embedded to empower them to assume leadership roles.

Impact

As a result, there is schoolwide instructional coherence and teachers play an integral role in decision making that increases achievement for all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work. For example, the inquiry team breaks out into small groups to discuss the menu choices, research topics, essential and guided questions. Teachers provided feedback to each other through intervisitations to ensure coherence across content areas. As such, student proficiency has increased over the last three years and 83% of student reading on or above grade level according to March *Fountas and Pinnell* data.
- Teachers stated that honest communication happens all the time as part of the teacher team learning culture. They enjoy working together and sharing information. Additionally, they believe that one of the most effective forms of professional development is visiting classrooms to look at environments and to observe colleagues. Teachers regularly visit classes independently or request a more formal visit scheduled with the administration. One teacher stated, "I can tap into how smart my colleagues are during team meetings and during intervisitations to their classes. For example, I have learned so much about guided reading through sharing information and strategies across grades and meetings. Hearing everyone else share their strategies as well as watching a colleague in action has helped me to step out of my comfort zone." Another teacher stated, "Student choice plays a vital role in developing autonomous students." Across classrooms, lesson plans reflect opportunities for student choice and the use of checklists for students.
- Teachers stated that team meetings have led to thoughtful teacher planning in regards to what the students need to be successful and increased expectations for all students. One teacher said, "I have changed my mindset and I have shifted from a remediation model to a focus on building on what the student knows."
- Teachers share responsibilities including facilitating planning in their particular content area and act as liaisons with administration in regards to communication and record keeping. The writing of the monthly newsletter is shared by all teachers in the grade. Grade teams and leaders also conduct learning walks using protocols such as Ghost Walk to surface consistency of practices and next steps for the school community.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Teaching practices are aligned to the Common Core and student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation across classrooms.

Impact

As a result, teaching practices reflect a coherent set of beliefs and opportunities for the demonstration of high-level student thinking, participation, and ownership extend across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- Across a preponderance of classrooms, teacher practices consistently reflect and support schoolwide beliefs about how students learn best. The school community believes that all children learn differently and that students learn best when they are aware of their own learning needs and are actively engaged in their learning. School leaders utilize the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to align teacher pedagogy with the curricula. The principal stated that they support students in taking responsibility for their learning which gives students the confidence to work at and beyond their zone of proximal development. To support this initiative, students are given prompts to assist in building ownership such as, “I can ask for help when I need it” and “I can use resources around me to problem solve.”
- Students have opportunities to engage in rich structured conversations during small group instruction. They use questions, prompts, and protocols to engage in discussions. The principal notes that there are increased opportunities for student talk, with a focus on building on classmates’ responses and making thinking visible. For example, in a grade 5 class, students were observed working in small groups discussing different questions posted by the teacher.
- Across classrooms, students have opportunities to engage in Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* level three and four tasks on their own, in pairs, or in groups. Teachers facilitate and support students in explaining their thinking. Classroom visits reveal that students are provided with questions to use with their partner to engage in high-level work. Students in grade 4 engage in literature circles. Students select a book and are placed in reading groups. Students were observed demonstrating high levels of participation and engagement posing questions to one another and analyzing clues from the text.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across vast classrooms, teachers create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned to the Common Core and the curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

The school provides actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and adjusts curricular and instructional decisions so that all students including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, demonstrate increased mastery.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses a range of common assessments that include Running Records, rubrics, and Teachers College on-demand writing assessments. Teachers administer running records to assess student fluency and comprehension of fiction. This data is used to determine strategic groups, refine whole class instruction and determine student need for additional instructional support. The analysis of assessment results has led to the development of instructional goals for teaching and reinforcement of skills across all subject areas. Teachers gather data that includes formative assessments, rubrics and student work to ascertain levels of student learning. The use of data to inform and adjust instruction in all content areas is consistent across classrooms and classroom checks for understanding lead to instructional adjustments that support all learners. As such student proficiency has increased by 2.6% in ELA and 6.4% in math based on the 2014-2015 New York State assessment.
- Classroom visits and meetings with teachers and students revealed that feedback on student work includes next steps. Teachers were observed conferring with students and providing them with strategies for improvement. During the student meeting students shared work products that included rubrics, conferencing and checklists, and teacher feedback. For example, feedback on an ELA task asked students to include text-based evidence in their writing and details for clarity in writing. Students compared earlier writing to more current pieces and explained how the feedback from the rubrics helped them improve in writing. Students explained that they are adding more details, writing more complex sentences and using text evidence to support their claims. Across subjects, feedback is detailed and provides the student with clear next steps. A child received a 13/15 on a reading comprehension activity. The teacher provided the following feedback, "Let's continue practicing short responses and extending the details that match the question." Additionally, on a math performance task, students answered the questions and explained why their response is reasonable. A student stated, "My answer is reasonable because it is very close to my estimate of 1,120 boxes."
- All teachers utilize item analysis and disaggregated data to identify learning gaps, trends and patterns. Analyzed test scores of specific subgroups of students has enabled teachers to pinpoint the level of which standards have been mastered and which group of students require re-teaching, remediation, and enrichment. Based on the school's snapshot, student performance exceeds city averages in ELA and math.