



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 083 Luis Munoz Rivera

Elementary School M083

**219 East 109 Street
Manhattan
NY 10029**

Principal: Frances Castillo

**Date of review: May 24, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Rosemary Stuart**

The School Context

P.S. 083 Luis Munoz Rivera is an elementary school with 436 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 13% Asian, 20% Black, 64% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 9% English Language Learners and 20% 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 93.2%.

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	Additional Findings	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	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	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	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders and staff effectively communicate with parents and students about the expectations that children are preparing for college and career.

Impact

Parents partner with teachers and school leaders to support children in meeting expectations. Students are prepared for the next level of schooling.

Supporting Evidence

- Parents are informed about the work their children are doing through regular progress reports that include reading levels as well as performance on State tests. Parents receive a handbook with detailed information about interpreting reading levels for each grade. In addition, some teachers use an online reporting system that parents and students can use to track homework assignments and grades. Every Wednesday, teachers send home a red folder with current information about how each child is performing. Parents reported the constant communication helps them understand how they can help their children improve in developing good academic and personal habits.
- Parents receive a brochure outlining college and career readiness expectations that encourages families to talk about the future with their children by asking “thinking questions” and to help them set goals and work to achieve them. The brochure gives detailed information about standards-based skills that students should master in English Language Arts (ELA) and math on each grade. It further outlines that in the lower grades, “students learn about what it means to be a good worker” and in the upper grades, students use informal career inventories to identify career interests. Parents partner with teachers and paraprofessionals one day a week to provide literacy intervention and tutoring to struggling students using the Reading Rescue program.
- One student stated, and others agreed, that they are prepared for the next level by participating in “college readiness” activities in which they learn the importance of taking responsibility for themselves and visit local middle schools. One student stated that he always submits his homework on time and then added, “I would feel terrible if I missed my homework.” Students indicated that they are expected to track their reading improvement by keeping a reading log. The log, included in the college and career readiness newsletter to parents, includes the number of pages and the amount of time read. Ninety-two percent of this school’s former fifth graders passed all core academic classes in grade 6 at their new middle school.
- Parents, teachers, and students participate in student-led conferences several times each year. In their home language, students present and discuss the progress they have made, the goals they have set for themselves, and the support they want in order to succeed. Teachers reported that students express ownership of their learning and are often harder on themselves than are their teachers. Students discussed how they set goals for themselves during regular conferences with teachers. They review their portfolios and the feedback they have received from teachers and peers. Upper grade students act as role models to encourage reading with younger buddy students and provide math tutoring.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teachers create and use rubrics and assessments that are aligned with the curricula. Teachers use common assessments, but the results are not always aggregated and analyzed to determine schoolwide progress.

Impact

Students and teachers receive actionable feedback on student achievement. Analyses of assessment results are used to adjust curricula and instruction on the classroom level.

Supporting Evidence

- Student work is assessed using standards-based rubrics by highlighting the descriptions that most closely match the qualities of the student work. Some teachers compute an average of the performance levels to determine the overall score. Teachers also provide written feedback to students. A grade 1 student was reminded to include the ending sound “ed” on past-tense verbs. On a grade 2 on demand writing task, the teacher provided a glow, a grow, and an example to model how the student could conclude the narrative with a description of what the character is feeling. Not all student work is accompanied by such detailed feedback. A grade 4 student indicated that his teacher told him he had done well on a report on volcanoes, but there was no written feedback included. A grade 3 student was praised for using dialogue and reminded to include more descriptive details and given a score of 2.7 with no indication on the rubric how the score was calculated.
- Students use grade appropriate checklists and rubrics to guide them as they write and to remind them to include important details. One checklist uses smiley faces and frowns for young students to indicate how they did on the assignment. One first grader used a checklist rubric to provide feedback to a peer adding, “I love that you added a lot of details.” Two fourth grade students were eager to share exemplary work posted on a bulletin board showing that they use rubrics to improve their writing between first and final drafts.
- Teachers regularly analyze information about individual student performance on common assessments to determine if students are making progress and to identify skills that need extra attention. Across grades and content areas, they form small instructional groups according to common need. In one class, groups were focused on sequencing events, providing closure, or adding vivid details. Students are also identified for targeted cycles of interventions using Response to Intervention strategies. Teachers share their class level information from pre- and post-assessments using an online document-sharing program. However, other than reading level data, information about longitudinal performance from baseline to mid-year to end year is not aggregated to see grade-wide patterns in order to provide a clear picture of mastery.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Curricula are aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards and address the instructional shifts. Academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits for all students.

Impact

The curricula consistently promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use *ReadyGen* for literacy instruction and *Go Math!* for math instruction in all grades. There is a schoolwide policy that students must engage with fiction and non-fiction equally. School leaders review unit and lesson plans and tasks and provide feedback to teachers to strengthen the alignment with the Common Core and inclusion of the instructional shifts. Teachers use *Foundations*, for students with disabilities, and *Recipe for Reading* for phonics instruction in the lower grades. *Fountas and Pinnell* is used schoolwide to measure reading levels. Teachers use *Waggle*, an online program, to challenge high-achieving students to explore new skills individually.
- Teachers create additional curricular resources to address gaps in the published curricula adopted schoolwide. They use materials from *EngageNY* and adapt items from past State math and ELA exams to incorporate pertinent vocabulary. A math lesson incorporated a graphic organizer to guide their problem solving efforts on which students will note important information they need to understand, make a plan to find the solution, show their work, and check to make sure their solution is reasonable.
- Most lesson plans reference the relevant Common Core standards or content standards and include essential questions, learning targets, and rigorous tasks that incorporate the instructional shifts. A grade 4 lesson plan requires students to engage in text-based discussions. A task in a grade 5 math lesson has students identify and generate patterns from sequences of numbers and graph the resulting ordered pairs.
- Strategies for providing access to the content for students with different learning styles are incorporated in most lesson plans. A grade 3 lesson plan identifies students to work in a group with the teacher on identifying character traits while other students would be working independently to create character trait webs. A lesson, in a self-contained class for students with disabilities, focusing on writing opinion pieces, outlined tasks for specific students, noting that four of them will be pushed to write a five-paragraph essay with multiple details for supporting evidence.

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Teaching strategies provide multiple entry points into the curricula for all students.

Impact

All learners are engaged in challenging tasks and demonstrate high levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers reported and document review confirmed, that they maintain notes from ongoing conferences conducted with individual students, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, while other students are in small learning groups. They refer to prior conferences to remind students what they should be working on to improve their performance. One teacher said that these conferences help her to ensure that all students are supported and monitored for the appropriate level of challenge. Another teacher indicated that issues surfaced in conferences can result in immediate changes to a students' assignments.
- Tasks are challenging and engaging in all content areas. Sometimes the instruction is differentiated so that the teacher provides choice of activity or text. In a social studies class, a group of grade 5 students created a job description for a person to "make the dangerous ride through the countryside to warn the people that the British troops were coming." Other students in the class were creating a chart of Paul Revere's character traits. In some classes the task is the same for all students as when students were actively engaged in a science lab to observe how the stem of celery absorbs water. They used the scientific method to make predictions and drew pictures to illustrate how they conducted the experiment. In a class for students with disabilities, teachers, paraprofessionals, and tutors worked with small groups of students to write opinion essays on the topic of mandatory school attendance.
- Many students engaged in high-level discussions during which they expressed and debated their opinions and shared their thinking. In a third grade class, two students drew pictures on a white board to illustrate their differing opinions about whether two line segments intersect if they meet at a vertex to form an acute angle. In the same class, students discussed how a square and a rhombus are similar, and how they are different.
- Students in a literacy class used a graphic organizer to identify the central message and important key details as they prepared to write an essay. Students made predictions about what would happen to a character by recalling details from the text. One student stated that, "A trait is something you always have, a feeling is something you have for a short time."

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

Teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based collaborations. Teacher teams analyze assessment data.

Impact

The instructional capacity of teachers is strengthened. Students make progress toward meeting their goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers plan together in professional learning community (PLC) grade teams to plan units of study across the grade and to coordinate lesson planning. Teachers organize and facilitate the PLC meetings that are attended by school leaders and lead teachers, who are then able to share decisions and practices with other grade level teams in order to identify trends across the school.
- Teachers participate in a central initiative, Collaborative Action Research Project (CARP), to support the inquiry process. They identify a problem of practice to present to the group. For example, the grade 2 team looked at ways to increase math fluency and automaticity through mastery of basic math facts.
- PLC teams look at student work, and collect and analyze data on student performance to determine implications for their teaching practices. They use the analysis to inform grouping for the next units of study, to identify students for interventions, and refine lesson plans. Teachers videotaped student-led conferences to capture best practices and to identify ways to improve the experience for students and parents. These teachers will share the videos as part of an upcoming schoolwide planning retreat.
- The first grade PLC was observed looking at student work to examine the use of temporal words. The task asked students to continue the story of *Miss Rumphius* emphasizing the sequence of events and including details. They referenced criteria from the grade 1 rubric for writing narrative essay to determine if each work had been assessed consistently. They noted that the difference between level two and three is not clearly defined with respect to how well students provide closure to their narrative. They refined lesson plans to push students into level four performance by modeling the use of vivid details to describe events.