



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 134 Henrietta Szold

Elementary School M134

**293 East Broadway
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Daniel Kim

**Date of review: November 10, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Michael L. Schurek**

The School Context

P.S. 134 Henrietta Szold is an elementary school with 258 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 22% Asian, 20% Black, 55% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 11% English Language Learners and 32% students with disabilities. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 91.0%.

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	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	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 consistently communicate high expectations and provide training around professionalism and instruction in alignment with the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to the entire staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations for all students related to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families.

Impact

The clear communication of high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations and enables parents to support their children's progress toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's overarching goal this year is to develop highly effective questioning and discussion techniques in direct alignment with Danielson *Framework of Teaching* Domain 3 expectations. This goal was designed because teachers and school leaders noted that students were lacking the expressive language needed to be able to communicate their thoughts to each other. To address this, teachers from pre-kindergarten to grade 5 have focused on building the skills of their students on academic conversations with peers through a school-wide set of expectations. The school has hired a professional coach who regularly provides training to teachers on supporting student academic conversations and their use of higher-order questioning techniques. School leaders provide frequent feedback and next steps in this regard and teachers conduct intervisitations both on-site and off-site to improve their craft, thereby establishing mutual accountability for these expectations.
- During the parent meeting, parents praised the fact that the school provides them with strategies they can use with their children to support their learning and the social-emotional and health supports available to them. Monthly principal's parent breakfasts, parent workshops, and content area newsletters highlight school vision and themes, and include suggestions parents can use to support their children while they are not in school. For example, a parent of kindergarten students explained how she was helping her children improve their letter recognition skills by pointing out and discussing letters in signs and advertisements while traveling, walking, reading. Parents also receive on-going support through an on-site partnership with the Henry Street Settlement organization where they have access to family counseling and community health resources and participate in workshops that are determined through a needs assessment and designed to help them support their children, such as the recent workshop entitled *Effective Co-Parent Strategies*. The school also partners with a local food bank to provide health and wellness workshops that emphasize and teach healthy eating for students and families.
- The school is co-located with another elementary school within the building. Professional development, including class and school intervisitations, school partnerships, community resources and parent engagement practices have been coordinated and are shared collaboratively by both schools, establishing a culture for learning and communication that extends beyond school boundaries.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

While across most classrooms teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, these practices are not yet evident across all classrooms.

Impact

Multiple entry points facilitate student learning; however, the level of questioning and scaffolding has an impact on the efficacy of entry points in the support of each learner.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers employ a variety of entry points to engage all students in learning. In a first and second grade general education bridge class, the teacher organized students into two writing groups with different goals based on student needs. While the lower-skilled writers concentrated on using finger space, word wall words, capital letters and periods, the more advanced group focused on writing stamina, revising, editing and spelling. In a fourth grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) math class, students worked collaboratively on multiplying three- and four-digit numbers by one-digit numbers applying both the standard algorithm and partial products methods. While one group of students worked with one teacher on solving worksheet multiplication examples utilizing the help of a multiplication chart, the second student group worked with the other teacher to solve multiplication word problems that they in turn used to explain their thinking to the other students in their group. Conversely, a self-contained special education class spanning three grade levels containing two adults and ten students used the same materials and supports to teach a math lesson on ordering. However, the teacher controlled questioning did not result in high levels of student-to-student discussion or higher-order thinking.
- Aligned to the instructional shifts, students have conversations with each other that are dependent on common text. During a lower grade literacy lesson, students used textual examples to explain their thoughts about exaggeration using text evidence from the story, *Paul Bunyan*. In addition, the school utilizes school-wide strategies such as R.A.C.E., Restate, Answer the question, Cite support from the text, and write an Ending sentence, to ensure that reading and writing practices are grounded in evidence from text.
- Supports for students with disabilities and English Language Learners ensured that students participated in the same challenging assignments and tasks through the addition of entry points such as small group instruction, guided reading, and 1:1 Reading Rescue work with paraprofessionals. For example, a third grade ICT literacy/math stations class provided literacy support for students demonstrating problems with simile, math support for students with subtraction issues, and an independent station for students to use R.A.C.E. to answer comprehension questions from a *Time for Kids* magazine article.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty adopt common core aligned curricula across grades and subjects and integrate the instructional shifts. The curriculum is tailored to emphasize higher order thinking skills.

Impact

Purposeful curricular decisions by school leaders and faculty build coherence across grades and subjects and engage students in challenging tasks that promote thinking and prepare them for college and career.

Supporting Evidence

- The school selected *Core Knowledge* in kindergarten through grade 2 and *Expeditionary Learning* in grades 3 to 5 as the curricular resources for English Language Arts, and TERC Math Investigations supplemented with *GO Math!* and *EngageNY* modules for math. New York City scopes and sequences serve as the overall curricula for science and social studies that are embedded in English Language Arts, physical education, dance, theatre, visual arts, and music curricula across all grades.
- Written units in reading and writing provide evidence that students engage in challenging tasks in writing and are required to support their written arguments with evidence from texts they read. Across grades, teachers have created customized writing work books that require students to use textual evidence in their writing to increase the volume of writing as a supplement to the school's chosen literacy curricula. For example, a third grade class read *Rain School* by James Rutherford, a story in which the main character goes to school in Chad, Africa where they have to rebuild the school every year. Students wrote compare and contrast essays about how their school is similar or different to the school in Africa. In addition, to further align to the demands of the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts, students are expected to follow the writing process and produce on-demand writing regularly.
- Teacher lesson plans provide evidence of planning for the use of a variety of modalities, hands-on manipulative objects, and graphic organizers to meet student needs. For example, a kindergarten plan used "air writing" for letter recognition while a first grade science lesson plan provided students with a plastic skeleton to manipulate to learn about the human body's skeletal system.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The school's grading policies and common assessments are aligned to the curricula and are used to determine student progress toward goals.

Impact

Common assessments and the analysis of data inform adjustments in unit and lesson plans and provide actionable feedback regarding student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Students and teachers use checklists and rubrics both designed and adopted by the teachers to establish expectations, set goals, provide feedback, and monitor achievement. For example, a fifth grade personal narrative rubric lays out explicit expectations in the measured areas of conventions, word choice, voice, and ideas along a one through five rating scale, while a first grade class uses an acronym checklist to answer short-response questions.
- Teachers use curricular-aligned assessments to provide students with actionable feedback. Feedback that is provided informs students of needed areas for improvement. For example, a review of student work reveals feedback to students that addresses key areas of writing such as: spelling, punctuation, use of capital letters, elaboration, development, citing text evidence, and word choice.
- Teachers, students and families use information gathered from common assessments such as: bi-monthly *Fountas and Pinnell* running record measurements, math baseline, mid-year, end-of-year assessments, pre- and post-unit assessments, and on-demand writing assessments to determine student progress toward goals. The analysis of data informs adjustments to written curricula and is evident in written units. For example, close perusal of student on-demand writing samples enabled teachers to identify a trend in that many students were not able to write structured paragraphs that would enable them to craft effective essays, stories and research reports. As a result, curricula now requires students to regularly practice extended writing assignments utilizing more open-ended tasks across grades.
- During the student meeting, students stated they have set personal goals and have at least three academic goals at a time that are based on their work products and determined with the input of their teacher during conferencing time. As students master goals, the teachers help them set new ones. This practice was clearly evident in classrooms where we observed teacher conferencing notes for each student and various forms students use to track their writing, reading, and math goals.

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

Teacher teams engage in structured professional collaborations and meet regularly to examine student work and other assessment data for students they share.

Impact

Teacher team collaborations have resulted in improved teacher practice and progress for groups of students performing in the lowest third on New York State English Language Arts assessments.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams on every grade meet up to three times weekly to conduct inquiry meetings, adjust instruction and curricula based on student data, design performance tasks, and look at student work together. All teams have established norms, protocols and targeted outcomes. Teaching practices are monitored using *Advance* data from cycles of observation.
- School leaders and teacher teams further align English Language Arts curricula to Common Core Learning Standards. For example, teachers embed additional writing opportunities into the *Core Knowledge* and *Expeditionary Learning* units of study and determine the need to strengthen the writing process in these curriculums based upon continued analyses of student work.
- Teacher teams analyze student work using a description of the task along with the accompanying rubric and text to identify student strengths and challenges and make adjustments to practices. For example, during an observed team meeting, teachers reviewed a pre-informational writing assessment based on a particular reading selection and decided to provide additional supports in the form of word banks, picture vocabulary cards, and checklists for lower achieving students to ensure comprehension of the story and the task.
- Teacher teams conduct English Language Arts and State math exam item analysis and use this information to modify curriculum scope and sequence, pacing calendars, and common assessments. Ongoing perusal of student progress enables teachers to adjust curricula while embedding both leveled and complex texts, graphic organizers, and strategy charts into units of study. In addition, as a result of assessment outcomes, teachers group students accordingly to further support student progress.