



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

School for Global Leaders

Middle School M378

**145 Stanton Street
Manhattan
NY 10002**

Principal: Carry Chan

**Date of review: May 24, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Gary Knight**

The School Context

School for Global Leaders is a middle school with 264 students from grade 6 through grade 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 15% Asian, 23% Black, 58% Hispanic, and 2% White students. The student body includes 8% English Language Learners and 33% students with disabilities. Boys account for 56% of the students enrolled and girls account for 44%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 92.3%.

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	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	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	Focus	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school leader consistently communicates high expectations to the entire staff and provides training for those expectations. The school leader and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

The consistent communication of high expectations by the school leaders and staff has resulted in a culture of mutual accountability for those expectations. The school successfully partners with families to support student progress toward those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leader's expectation is that staff demonstrate highly effective teaching practices that engage students in rigorous academic tasks, resulting in exemplary student work. The school leader has defined academic rigor as quality instruction that engages students in intellectual inquiry that results in multi-level thinking, the construction of new meaning, and the recognition and application of patterns. Rigorous is relative to learner. The expectations are communicated in many ways, such as, professional development on higher-order thinking, lesson plan review and feedback, rubrics for rigorous tasks, a staff handbook and newsletters. In a newsletter, the school leader wrote, "As you plan the next unit, think about what you need to teach and what students will be doing With that in mind and the standards, plan backwards. ... This way, students can demonstrate the unit skills and have the opportunities to engage in rigorous learning that reflects how School for Global Leaders students learn best."
- The school leader holds staff accountable for implementation of high expectations via lesson plan rubrics and feedback, unit plan feedback and classroom observation and feedback. Teachers hold each other accountable for the high expectations by providing peer feedback on lesson and unit plans. For example, a unit-plan, peer feedback, specific to the selection of texts that grow in complexity as the unit progresses stated, "If a text moves down in complexity, indicate why. Is it because skills have become more difficult so students should attempt an easier text?"
- The school leader and staff communicate expectations to families in a plethora of ways including: the Jupiter online grading system, individual parent meetings, and parent workshops. The school also sponsors a grade 8 parent night to discuss grade specific information, to review promotion requirements, and to distribute high school applications. Additionally, parent cafés are held once a month to address concerns, to provide homework help ideas to better support their children at home, to discuss parent volunteerism, and to visit classrooms. The school has a school-wide "come and learn with your child day," and staff conducts parent inquiry meetings to review children's progress over the semester, to identify obstacles such as students' being easily distracted and lacking focus, and to offer parents suggestions for support at home. For example, the meetings provide activities to reinforce children's focus and note-taking ability, and how to teach children to prioritize and sift through information for what is important.

Area of Focus

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

The majority of teachers engage in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused.

Impact

The structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations have strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers. The teacher teams' consistent analysis of assessment data and student work typically results in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students. However, mastery of goals for groups of students is not evident.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's teacher team structures include department, grade team leaders, English as a New Language (ENL), instructional cabinet and school leadership. Teachers conduct inquiry around student data, discuss patterns, and trends, identify noticings, and determine next instructional steps. The teacher teams are guided by the school improvement cycle of sharing lessons learned, planning, implementing, reflecting and adjusting. A review of agendas indicated such topics as: reading stamina, book talks, determining an instructional strategy to try with students to address gaps found in student work, English Language Arts (ELA) performance tasks and math pre-assessment analysis. Teachers' capacity is strengthened through the analysis of data and the sharing of best practices during meetings. Teachers are better able to identify specific student needs. As a result, strategies are used to guide future lessons that target the needs of students. A grade 8 class visited used student data to group students based on the following skills, simplifying radicals, adding and subtracting radicals, multiplying radicals, and irrational vs. rational numbers.
- The ENL inquiry team was observed during their team meeting. Teachers received student work and a student work analysis template, which captures what the student is able to do, gaps evident in work, revised area of focus, and instructional strategies to try by when. Some gaps identified in student work were inconsistent evidence and inference, and irrelevant evidence. The revised area of focus was consistency. The instructional strategy to try was to give student three skills to practice during the week (character traits, theme, mood) and to focus on consistency using a checklist as a guide. A review of inquiry meeting documents showed other next steps including reviewing comparing and ordering inequalities based on data that showed 50% of students had difficulty with comparing and ordering rational numbers.
- As a result of teacher team practices, students have shown progress. For example, 75% of students were able to successfully provide a lead as evidenced on a grade 7 ELA task analysis, and 70% on grade 6 ELA were successful with dialogue. Although students are showing growth, there is limited evidence to show mastery of goals for groups of students. 75% of students were not able to successfully use writing craft with precise vocabulary and formal tone on a grade 7 ELA performance task, and 60% were unsuccessful with using formal structure on grade 6 ELA performance task.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The school leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in curricula, and academic tasks are embedded in a coherent way.

Impact

The school's strategic integration of instructional shifts and alignment of curricula result in coherence across grades and subject areas that promote college and career readiness for all students. All learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, must demonstrate knowledge.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Common Core-aligned curricula that are supported with professional development sessions to further alignment. Teachers collaborate at the grade, team and school level to develop a school-wide process for unit planning and to ensure benchmark goals are aligned to school-wide instructional goals. To further build coherence, teachers peer-review unit and lesson plans, provide each other feedback, and conduct department walkthroughs specific to looking for evidence of benchmark goals. Teachers conduct meetings specific to curricular coherence across grades and subjects, to address the implementation of instruction shifts and the teaching of required skills. A review of meeting minutes included a discussion of voice in students' writing and the use of mentor texts to help students show voice in their writing. A review of curricula documents indicated the integration of real-world applications, academic vocabulary, fluency, deep understanding, writing from sources and text-based answers. A grade 8 social studies map plans for students to cite specific evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- Curricular documents consistently emphasize and embed essential and high-order thinking questions. The questions are leveled based on Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK). A grade 6 math curricula plan asks, "How do we represent real world situations mathematically and can there be more than one response to an expression? Prove your claim. Can you disprove your claim?" Differentiated materials and scaffolds are also planned and include leveled worksheets, visual and audio aids, and grouping. Barriers to learning are anticipated with possible solutions given. For example, a barrier such as, students' disorganization with numbers would be addressed by color-coding numbers that line up. In addition, extensions are planned to push critical thinking as students are further challenged with tasks.
- A review of a grade 6 arts curriculum showed essential questions, high DOK levels and the infusion of instructional shifts. Some of the essential questions were, "How do we define identity? How can we exhibit our identity through art? And what are the characteristics?", "Students will be expected to cite evidence in artwork to interpret, discuss, and analyze," and "Instructional activities will vary and include questionnaires, identity molecule [sic], identity name art, characteristics hand collage and a characteristics handout." An ENL curricula map states, "Students will listen, speak, and write English for information and understanding." Essential questions planned for were: "How do my background experiences influence my culture and identity?", "What communities or groups do I identify with?" and "How is this similar to or distinct from the experiences and identities of others?"

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching strategies strategically provide multiple entry points and high quality supports and extensions into the curricula.

Impact

Teaching practices are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts, as well as by discussions at the team and school levels. All learners, including English Language Learners and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work.

Supporting Evidence

- The teachers believe students learn best through the promotion of rigorous work, the use of mentor texts, high quality accommodations and interventions, and the use of various data sources to provide targeted instruction. Teachers discuss teaching practices during curricula cohesion meetings. Teaching practices of the classrooms visited included the integration of instructional shifts, such as: building knowledge in disciplines, citing evidence and justifying a response with supporting evidence, and academic vocabulary. In a grade 7 class, students were engaged in analyzing author's craft through poetry by paying close attention to the techniques poets use to convey a theme. Students worked on completing an activity, "goal post-it," and explained how the poetic move helped authors reach their goals. Students shared that authors use figurative language to support theme and to set mood.
- A math lesson on simplifying expressions involved radical notation for rational and irrational values. Lesson vocabulary included: radicals, radicands, square roots, rational numbers and irrational numbers. The lesson included a mentor text, a reference guide, guiding questions and a video. The lesson was differentiated in a myriad of ways to include students with disabilities (SWD), and English Language Learners (ELLs) such as providing an anchor chart, sequential steps with work broken down into chunks for small group intervention, and graphic organizers, visual models, vocabulary and first language narration or response for ELL students. Students worked diligently in groups talking through problems to solve the task at hand. At one point, a student was heard saying to his peer, "Wait, we can't leave it like that." In addition, extension activities were provided, one of which required the students to determine the area or volume of various geometric shapes where each answer had to be expressed using multiplication.
- One math lesson engaged students in making predictions around "fairness" by finding the probability of simple events. Vocabulary included theoretical probability and experimental probability. Students used work notes, math journals, rubrics, talking prompts, manipulatives and iPads to complete performance tasks and to chart their findings. Scaffolds for lesson included: a visual reference sheet, fair/unfair cheat sheet, academic vocabulary sheet, bingo balls and dice. Some students were intentionally given particular games to predict outcomes based on their skill levels as identified from previously collected student data. As students worked, they were able to articulate that an experimental probability is based on when you are actually doing experiment. They were also able to explain that outcomes were not fair because there was only a 60/40 chance of winning. The lesson extension was for students to create their own "fair" game using one of the given props from the extension bag.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers' assessments practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and self-assessment.

Impact

The teachers' assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students' needs, and students are aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers administer pre- and post-tests, unit assessments, monthly benchmarks, and running records. They also use a school-wide common assessment analysis protocol to get a clear portrait of student mastery. The school has a grading policy of 60% Common Core-aligned summative assessments such as projects and unit exams, 20% collaborative practice such as inquiry tasks, accountable talk, and guided practice of skills and strategies, and 20% individual practice like exit slips, homework, quizzes, and writing logs. School-wide rubrics and learning progressions, such as, informational and narrative reading, reading notebooks, transformation activities, argument writing, and converting decimals and fractions, are used. Feedback on a grade 6 literary essay included, "Let's work on adding context before the evidence," and "Give more background information." Feedback on an argument writing task stated, "You have a clear claim and strong evidence to back it up! You elaborated by showing critical thinking about the issue. Let's work on your counter-claims, and making sure all of your body paragraphs provide as much detail as the first."
- Teachers check for understanding via exit slips, questioning and through the systematic use of a skills tracker as evidenced in classrooms visited. For example, a grade 8 math skills tracker indicated which students grasped the skill of slope and y-intercept and of interpreting scatter plots. The teacher determined that small group intervention was necessary to re-teach scatter plots to several students. A group was also identified as needing additional support in reading graphs. Another math teacher recognized that some students needed to review topics such as equivalent fractions and operations with integers. Verbal and visual representations, manipulatives and question formulation techniques were identified as some of the guiding practices for future lessons.
- Teachers also used unit-plan reflections as an opportunity to adjust future instruction and meet students' learning needs. Similarly, based on student data, small group lessons were embedded within a math unit to assist students with adding and subtracting integers, ratio tables, creating tables of values and solving equations. Based on ELA data showing that students struggled with paraphrasing, next instructional steps included small-group instruction on how to paraphrase evidence correctly.
- Students self-assess, complete reflection sheets and conference with teachers, and are aware of next learning steps. An example of student reflection stated, "The thing I did best on with this task is use of transitions. What I can improve upon next time is voice in my writing." Conferencing notes included comments such as, "Use context clues to understand unknown words, idioms, and text features," and "Use the discussion protocol."