



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

I.S. 528 Bea Fuller Rodgers School

Middle School M528

**180 Wadsworth Avenue
Manhattan
NY 10033**

Principal: Carlos Pichardo

**Date of review: March 11, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Tracie Benjamin-Van Lierop**

The School Context

I.S. 528 Bea Fuller Rodgers School is a middle school with 204 students from grades 6 through 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 1% Asian, 2% Black, 97% Hispanic, and 0% White students. The student body includes 20% English Language Learners and 22% students with disabilities. Boys account for 47% of the students enrolled and girls account for 53%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.6%.

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 and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families to support student progress toward those expectations. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students.

Impact

A culture exists where clear, focused, and effective guidance and advisement supports are in place so that that students, including high-need subgroups, accept responsibility for their learning and are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- The school believes that ongoing communication is essential to promoting a culture of high expectations. The new school leader, along with faculty, started the school year engaging with families and students during weekly orientations for each grade level. Training on PupilPath was provided through the school's partnership with Power My Learning, an organization that extends learning beyond the classroom and affords families with home learning center stations with computers. During the parent meeting, parents stated that having access to grades and teacher comments in Skedula has been beneficial in seeing how their children are developing academically and behaviorally. A parent, who is also a college student stated, "My child is being prepared to do college-level work. My son is helping me with my writing, especially with formatting in MLA and AP styles." Another parent reported through a translator, "My daughter's essays are being constructed like a college level paper."
- The school staff hosted a high school application process workshop for families and students. They attribute this support as a contributing factor in that 100% of their students received their first choice school selection. In preparation for the application process, the guidance counselor met with groups of students and families based on their interest areas. The principal and counselor also discussed expectations, the differences between Regents and Advanced Regents diplomas, and how they connect to credit accumulation at the high school level.
- An eighth grade student stated that he did not start the school year off strong, but has improved in his grades, motivated by the encouragement he receives from his teachers, stating, "This year I am checking PupilPath all the time to see how my grades are improving." A sixth grade student commented, "They tell us all the time how hard work connects to good grades and college." Students, across the grades, reported knowing what to do when they are unclear about an assignment or task, often speaking with a teacher or classmate. Students explained that they have a choice in selecting projects from topics such as cyber bullying, mental disease, recycling, global warming, and animal welfare. They stated that they are given choice in selecting the manner of project presentation, choosing from a PowerPoint presentation, essay, or website design.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts. High levels of student thinking and discussion are evident across classrooms but pedagogy does not always ensure equitable participation opportunities for all students.

Impact

While belief systems support discourse and critical thinking across classrooms and student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation, unevenness in including all students within classroom discussions limits opportunity for some students to build capacity.

Supporting Evidence

- The school believes students learn best when they are engaged in discourse and high levels of thinking. Teachers are expected to engage students of all levels including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) who comprise 22% and 20%, respectively, of the school's total student population. In a social studies class on religion, students presented a PowerPoint on Hinduism and Christianity. The majority of students observed and provided feedback to the presenter and asked questions. Some students did not participate in gathering feedback or asking questions. Some of the teacher-generated questions on the plan for the accompanying lesson included, "Does your religion follow a specific lifestyle? Explain.", "Why do you think they follow that lifestyle?", and "Does your religion celebrate a specific date?" However, these questions were not discussed during the actual lesson.
- In an Integrated Co-Teaching math class, students on levels one to three, including ELLs, were grouped heterogeneously based on *Connected Mathematics* data from their most recent assessment on math fluency. Students differentiated between a unit rate and an average, while connecting the corresponding mathematical concept to a visual representation. During the lesson, both teachers circulated the room checking in with students as the paraprofessional worked with a group of students. The mini-lesson activity centered on students completing a table to find the hourly calorie consumption of a man, woman, teenager, and child which connected to the do now activity. Although there was an effort to increase participation by cold calling on students, the same students continued to dominate the discussion.
- During a United States history class on World War I and purposes of propaganda, students viewed visuals on an interactive white board depicting types of different propaganda. Upon presentation of a picture of "Rosie the Riveter", students were asked, "Why is her positioning in this picture so important?" The teacher attempted to expand the numbers of students participating in the discussion but despite the teacher's attempts, one student continued to dominate the classroom discussion.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Purposeful decisions build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities have access to cognitively engaging curricula and tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has adopted and implements Teachers College Reading and Writing Project curricula for the English Language Arts (ELA), *Connected Math* and *EngageNY* for math, and the New York City Scope and Sequence for science and social studies. The school has revised the curricula based on their assessment data, in specific for their ELLs and students with disabilities. For instance, based on interim assessment data math teachers revised their lessons because they realized students were not using tables and graphs to demonstrate their understanding of the problems. As a result, teachers embedded more focus on strands four and five of the Common Core focused on ratio and proportion. In ELA, teachers have incorporated more student pairings for their ELLs who are identified as being on the commanding or expanding proficiency levels.
- Teachers of students with disabilities, in collaboration with their general education peers, provide question stems and essay templates to their students. A teacher stated that she is seeing an improvement in one of her students who has been using myON, a literacy program that creates individual dashboards for students based on their specific interests and reading abilities and provides writing opportunities to enhance student experiences.
- Reviewed lesson plans showed that teachers make post-lesson adjustments such as decreasing the number of different graphic organizers in a math plan and increasing the level of student questioning in a social studies lesson plan. Some unit plans included Universal Design for Learning guidelines and principles with lessons that incorporated use of visual picture charts, translation, repetition of instructions in Spanish and English for ELLS, and student turn and talk discussions.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement is derived from school assessments and used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use the Student Instructional Plan (SIP) to assess and monitor student academic performance across content areas via GoogleDocs. The school assessment data captures both quantitative and qualitative information such as student strengths, next steps, and opportunities. For example, a seventh grade student plan noted for math, "understands ratio and proportions at a proficient level" and for science, "is able to analyze and examine scientific facts and synthesize information." Next steps for this student in ELA included working on grammar and punctuation and applying evidence and analysis to a five-paragraph essay.
- An English as a New Language teacher uses a color-coded *Fountas & Pinell* reading levels ladder of progress chart when conferencing with students to provide feedback on their current academic standing and to explain what is needed for students to progress. Teachers across all content areas track progress of their students, however, they use different data collection methods.
- During the student meeting, students connected the use of rubrics and meaningful feedback to performing well in class. A student remarked, "I needed to improve upon my word choice and I learned this through the feedback from my teacher. I now use a thesaurus when I write my essays." Another student expressed valuing the importance of rubrics, stating, "If I get stuck on an assignment, I know I can look to the rubric for guidance. I also know, when you use the rubric, you tend to get a higher grade." A sixth grade student concurred, "I randomly completed an assignment and didn't use the rubric and scored a level two. Now I always use the rubric." Most student work reviewed included actionable feedback that students were able to incorporate and inform their next drafts. However, some student work had comments such as, "Everything looks great, just a few computation issues", or checks or "x" marks without comments or further feedback.

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

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

Impact

Strengthening collaborative inquiry has resulted in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams engage in four-week cycles of analysis of student work and vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment. During the math team meeting, teachers used a protocol to evaluate student work, reviewing a math lesson taught earlier in the week, and provided the presenting teacher with feedback based on the misconceptions noted in student work. The team examined work samples of below-level, on-level, and above-level work and noticed a pattern with the majority of students performing below grade level. They recommended that the teacher incorporate a different graphic organizer for these students with increased writing space, as although answers were correct, students did not explain their thinking. The majority of the meeting focused on supports for ELLs and students with disabilities.
- Teachers are focused on ELA skills such as evidence-based responses, debate, and inferencing across all content areas. One teacher stated that, “We are basing our instructional decisions on data and looking at mid-year assessments and item analysis in a way that we didn’t previously.” The school is using New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test scores and reading assessment data to inform how planning for this group of students by incorporating increased visual supports and academic vocabulary supports in English and Spanish. The collection and analysis of data across subgroups and grades is evident and discussed using GoogleDocs, however, the monitoring of student progress toward mastery levels varies across the school.
- Teachers stated that across content areas, student discourse and the way in which students engage with each other is improving, and that, “There is noted improvement in student writing as well.” An ELA teacher shared that student essay structures have improved, and that work includes more academic vocabulary and language resulting in students “becoming more confident in their academic abilities.” According to the New York City Department of Education Renewal Benchmark Data Update, the school is “on track” for their average math proficiency rating and performance on the State math exam. Additionally, former eighth graders currently in the ninth have “met early” the student achievement benchmark for earning credits.