



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 018 Winchester

Elementary School Q018

**86-35 235 Court
Queens
NY 11427**

Principal: Laurie Ann Careddu

**Date of review: January 20, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Joan Prince**

The School Context

P.S. 018 Winchester is an elementary school with 660 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 72% Asian, 10% Black, 11% Hispanic, and 6% White students. The student body includes 7% English Language Learners and 8% 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 96.3%.

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	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	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 for professionalism and instruction to the entire staff aligned with elements of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and partner with families to support student progress.

Impact

Structures and training that support high expectations build accountability among stakeholders and students provide a clear path to understanding expectations, thus increasing student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal and teacher leaders use the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to provide meaningful feedback to teachers based upon formal and informal visits and observations, as evidenced by documents reviewed. There are focused trainings on the domains of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* at team meetings and at school-wide professional development. Curriculum resources, assessment data and grade-specific portfolios are maintained to provide a unified system connected to college and career readiness. Rigor has been defined as challenging children to think at a high level and to expose students to grade level text, using Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* questioning to open doors to student understanding. A review of teacher team agendas showed a focus on using rigorous questioning and discussion with tiered activities. Students have increased math fluency in order to solve problems more accurately as shown by interim assessments. Students with disabilities have increased their reading levels as measured by classroom assessments.
- There exists a strong relationship between families and the school, starting from when new students enter and continuing through the end of the school year. The principal holds monthly "Coffee and Conversation" meetings with families to discuss student progress and pending initiatives in classrooms and current information on testing. Additionally, reminders about events and protocols being implemented are sent home on a regular basis.
- The school and each class have their own web site which is constantly updated with student projects, goals and expectations and information. Teachers stated that they are happy to have opportunities to share their expertise and best practices with their colleagues and with parents thereby providing a culture of high expectations. Each grade selects a charity project, for example collecting food for a food pantry or taking a trip to a nursing home to sing and bring cards.
- Parents shared that the school does an exceptional job ensuring that they are aware of the school expectations to improve student performance. School leaders effectively communicate the expectations connected to a path for college and career readiness by providing monthly, day and or evening workshops for parents facilitated by teachers and external partners to give relevant information. Parent workshops have included curriculum nights, explaining the Common Core Learning Standards, and Middle School expectations conducted by the guidance counselor. With parents having the tools to monitor and support their children, high expectations are supported, embraced and reinforced by all stakeholders leading to increased student outcomes and career and college readiness.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, though do not yet reflect, across a vast majority of classrooms, a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Teaching strategies that provide scaffolds, extensions and multiple entry points for diverse students vary across the grades.

Impact

While teaching strategies are aligned across most classrooms, in some cases there are missed opportunities to engage all students and push students to demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms teachers provided small group instruction. In some classes, students participated in discussions by responding to teacher-generated questions, but in-depth analysis and peer to peer interaction was not required of all students. Evidence of higher-level thinking in purposeful class groupings and pairs, to assist in scaffolding for struggling learners, English Language Learners (ELLs) or students with disabilities was inconsistent. In most classes, students used research skills, including citing text-based evidence as they discussed and defended their positions in groups. In a grade 3 general education class with ELLs, the students were comparing and contrasting characters across texts. Different graphic organizers were used to organize thoughts and help student thinking. Student pairs were asked to share the maps they created. The ELLs were asked to orally justify a character trait using details from their book. However, in a fifth grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class the teacher read all the information and the students received the same work, rubrics, and charts. The teacher also read the checklist to model group discussion in the class, missing the opportunity to have students be active participants.
- Classrooms had rubrics and checklists on display and they were supplied if needed. All students were asked to respond in full sentences and sentence starters were available in some classes. Teaching strategies in most classes visited provide scaffolding and multiple entry points into the lesson. Students justified responses by citing textual evidence, as in a grade 2 math class on problem solving using coins with real work connections. There were peer interactions and students focused on backing up their statements. In most classes, connections to the real world by explicitly connecting concepts to everyday experiences while encouraging inquiry were present.
- Teachers were often conferring with groups. Students at the student meeting expressed that they are comfortable talking with each other and discussing their thoughts on a subject, as well as peer assessing using rubrics. It was stated that often stronger students take over discussions therefore limiting the opportunity for all students to participate. While many teachers encourage students to frame their own questions and respond to other students, there were instances of teachers serving as the leader and answering student questions, missing an opportunity to reframe and redirect the questions to other students for discussion.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

2.2 Assessment

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, assessments and rubrics utilized are aligned to the school's curricula and clearly highlight student progress toward mastery. Teachers consistently check for understanding.

Impact

Assessment practices inform students of their next learning steps, instruction, and allow teachers to track student progress. Checks for understanding and student self-assessment lead to effective lesson adjustment for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- A majority of teachers monitor progress through data analysis of formative and summative assessments, using this information to provide meaningful feedback to students and to guide adjustments to units and lessons. The principal stated that teachers adjust curriculum based on diagnostics of incoming students, teacher-developed assessments, standardized test results and previous grades to make informed decisions about student learning. There is a uniform grading policy that incorporates four categories used to calculate grades. Teacher teams work with the administration to create unit plans and lessons that are fully aligned with the school's curricula and embedded with assessment and rubrics. End of unit assessments give teachers formative data that they use to adjust instruction and change the emphasis of an upcoming unit if needed. Students in a grade 5 ICT class using thinking prompts created their own outcome rubrics and were able to self-assess and develop next steps and set personal learning goals.
- Teachers College reading assessments are used in kindergarten through grade 5 to measure students' independent reading levels. Kindergarten students are also assessed on concepts of print and high frequency words. This has provided the teachers with formative and summative data to further planning and instruction in literacy. Exemplars in math used for problem solving and assessment of mathematical strategies are used across grades. It was noted while visiting classrooms that conference notes, checklist and rubrics are used across reading writing and math. There are social studies culminating tasks for each unit with areas for student choice. Exit slips and quick writes are used as checks for understanding. Students are used to peer assessing as a means to better their work and provide next steps to each other.
- In math, across grades 2-5, teachers are working with groups of students on implementing different problem solving strategies. In a grade 5 math class students were working in workbooks at their own level, giving answers including the process and strategy used to find the answer. Students were using manipulatives, thinking maps, and graphic organizers to further their thinking therefore assisting teachers checking for understanding. Teachers use the results to adjust assessment and to assess the need for re-teaching.

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

All curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Higher-order thinking skills are consistently emphasized for all learners across the grades and content areas.

Impact

Curricular decisions build coherence and rigorous habits for all learners, including students with disabilities and ELLs. Across grades and content areas, academic tasks push student thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula maps provide evidence of rigorous academic tasks aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and Danielson *Framework for Teaching* through the adaptation of the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and the enVisionmath2.0 program. In addition, supplemental programs and materials to better meet the needs of the various student populations are being incorporated such as number talks, *Foundations*, *GO Math!*, Spanish classes, and academic vocabulary initiatives.
- The integration of the instructional shifts and college and career readiness skills has been facilitated by teacher-led staff development on gifted and talented programs, special education programs led by an Individualized Education Program specialist and an English as a New Language teacher providing feedback to teachers on their practice and lesson planning for ELLs. Adjustments to materials used for instruction in order to promote cohesiveness across grades are evidenced in lesson plans and curriculum maps.
- Unit plans in all content areas illustrated multiple designs of academic tasks with numerous scaffolds and entry points and extensions for the advanced learners. The school has focused on promoting higher-order thinking skills via workshops on improving accountable talk through the use of partner and group work. Examples include a progression of literacy skills that begin with students expressing their opinion of stories and noticing patterns, such as in the kindergarten class reading *What Do You See* by Eric Carl. Grade 1 progresses to writing their opinion and then there is a transition to argumentative and persuasive essays in the upper grades. Students are asked to self-reflect using subject-area rubrics and peer feedback protocols are used across classrooms. Focus on differentiation and multiple entry points to challenge student to think critically has been supported by teacher leaders and part-time coaches who are assessing and refining the curriculum maps to promote higher-order thinking skills.

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

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based structured professional collaborations that systemically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment data and student work. Leadership structures are embedded across the school.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has resulted in school-wide instructional coherence, improved pedagogy, and has strengthened teacher instructional capacity. Leadership structures provide a means for teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula and practice.

Supporting Evidence

- All grades have a common prep time which is used to discuss practice with peers and make timely adjustment to curriculum and instruction. There is extensive collaboration and it is the driving force in the school. Teams work together and often share out with the entire staff. Google Docs are created to serve as a resource for best practices. Fifth grade teachers and science clusters visit the local middle school to view math, English Language Arts and science lessons. Practice and curriculum are adjusted as needed. Vertical alignment has been a school-wide focus. Teacher teams look at student work and content goals focusing on what they need to know, be able to do and be able to explain to highlight student need and inform teacher practice.
- Teachers are given the opportunity to observe the practice of a peer through intervisitation and then reflect on best practices. Teacher teams schedule these intervisitations in conjunction with administration. There is also a part-time coach that provides modeling and small group instruction with protocols to evaluate data. Opportunities and roles are assigned allowing teachers to engage in, and make school-wide instructional decisions. Lead teachers facilitate professional learning workshops and ensure that teacher teams use protocols in order for all members to participate. Teachers go to outside venues for workshops and subsequently turn-key training to the school staff. Leadership roles are on every grade level and each grade level meeting has an agenda, roles are delegated and next steps notes are taken. Teachers are collaborative and within this framework lead teachers are given autonomy. This structure promotes teacher leadership and decision making capacity to plan academic tasks that improve classroom instruction.
- Shared leadership focused on improved student outcomes is seen in agendas and goals, resulting in school-wide instructional coherence. At the math vertical inquiry team meeting, student work and math exemplar word problems were examined through a lens of differing learning approaches. Common language and communication were discussed as a part of the steps of the process. It was determined that the use of graphic organizers on different levels to support the students deconstruction of multi-step addition and subtraction problems will help increase skills, as evidenced by pre- and post-assessments. These focused meetings are yielding increased student outcomes for all learners as evidenced in student work portfolios and school-wide math and literacy assessments. Performance assessments show student growth in comprehension skills and movement towards reading at grade level and increased conceptual understanding of key math concepts ensuring preparation for the next grade level.