



Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 051

Early Childhood School Q051

**87-45 117 Street
Queens
NY 11418**

Principal: Magdaly Saint Juste

**Date of review: April 1, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Evelyn Terrell**

The School Context

P.S. 051 is an early childhood school with 253 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 1. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 36% Asian, 3% Black, 42% Hispanic, and 13% White students. The student body includes 23% English Language Learners and 8% students with disabilities. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 82.0%.

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	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	Celebration	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	Additional Findings	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:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Teaching practices express a coherent belief system about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Teaching strategies strategically support students at their instructional levels with high quality support and extensions.

Impact

There is on-going discussion in aligning curricula with belief systems. 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 products.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers regularly engage in discussions about alignment of tasks to the curricula. For example, in February, grade 1 teachers focused on designing more rigorous instructional questions in English Language Arts (ELA), specifically creating the questions “How can we use details in a text to identify the reasons an author gives to support his or her points?” and “How can we use information to support an opinion?” Teachers use the workshop model to conduct shared readings around an essential question and use guided small group instruction to support academic vocabulary development and text-based evidence reading skills. In kindergarten, a task required students to choose their favorite food from the book *One Land Many Cultures*, draw the food, and provide details through pictures and words.
- In a kindergarten Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, the teacher posed the question, “How can we count and write 20 with words and numbers?” One group of students used the Mathletics computer program to find number patterns to 20 in a rainforest themed math activity. A second small group worked on writing the number 20 in their workbooks. In a pre-kindergarten classroom, the students worked on assigned center tasks, while the teacher worked with a student on developing the concepts of more and less using goldfish counters. Students at the computer center interacted with a program requiring them to quickly identify numbers and amounts shown on the monitor as being more or less than each other supporting development of their math fluency skills.
- In a grade 1 classroom, the students engaged in a discussion of the book *Miss Rumphius*. The teacher focused the students on the details the author provided about the character. The students engaged in a turn and talk to answer the questions “What is the story about?” “How can Alice make the world more beautiful?” and “What does Alice want to do when she grows up?” As a follow-up to the lesson, the students worked in small groups or with a partner to respond to the statement in their writing notebooks, “Alice lives...” In a grade 1 science lesson, the teacher engaged the students in a discussion around the book *Why Frogs are Wet*. The teacher developed academic vocabulary for prey, frog, predator, and snake. The students work in small groups using a T-Chart and tree map graphic organizers.

Area of Focus

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, consistently analyzing student work and assessment data within their grades.

Impact

While teachers' capacity is strengthened through collaboration and progress is made toward goals for groups of students, the lack of systematized analysis across the school affects school-wide instructional coherence for increased achievement of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, all teachers meet in grade-specific teams during designated common-period preparation periods to analyze and evaluate students' work and data. Additional time is allocated during the week for each grade to meet to engage in curriculum planning and to make revisions to the consensus map, which is the school wide curriculum map that reflects units of study across the school. While the school has provided time for each grade to engage in horizontal inquiry with teachers on their grade, there is no evidence of an ongoing school-wide team to look at data across the school.
- Teachers on the grade 1 inquiry team evaluated math data for the concept of greater than and less than, concluding that some students are struggling with word problems and an understanding of ten more and ten less. Additionally, it was noted that students with disabilities are struggling with number sense. To support struggling learners, teachers discussed potential strategies such as circling numbers within word problems, creating T-charts, and comparing numbers using less than and greater than symbols. Grade 1 teachers meet with the grade 2 teachers from a nearby school once a month during the extended Monday professional development for discussion of writing strategies to prepare students for the grade 3 curriculum. Teachers state that this process has proven to be successful for students articulating to grade 3.
- The school was selected to participate in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* Clusters Pilot. The principal shared that their goal is to improve professional growth in order to support the school's instructional goal of increasing student intellectual engagement. The team attending the workshops is comprised of the principal and four staff members. The goal of the team is to foster teacher reflection and professional conversations using a common language. At this time, the principal shared that the team had not consolidated the data to determine the impact on teachers' professional growth and the school-wide goal to support increased student intellectual engagement.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The curricula are aligned to the Common Core and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Higher-order tasks are purposefully emphasized across grades and subjects.

Impact

Coherence across grades and subjects promotes college and career readiness for all students, who engage in challenging activities that enable them to demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Yearly consensus maps and monthly curriculum maps are created across all content areas. These curricula maps are developed to reflect the Common Core Standards across all grades. More specifically, the principal shared that *ReadyGen* was selected to support the English Language Arts (ELA) curricula, as it targets the integration of the instructional shifts, provides more access to non-fiction texts, and supports more close reading through use of auditory strategies. *Foundations* is incorporated across grades as a resource to build phonics comprehension. *GO Math!* was selected as the program to support math fluency and problem solving. Teachers use the *FOSS* science curriculum and the New York State social studies curriculum across grades. Field trips are included in the science curriculum, such as trips to Forest Park in the fall. All teachers have been trained in the art of storytelling and the *Blueprint for the Arts* curriculum is supported with ongoing residencies that are designed to support speaking and listening skills for all kindergarten and first grades students. Music and movement is provided daily to support the arts curriculum, which is programmed through the school's cluster schedule.
- A Reso-A grant supports the curriculum through additional technology resources. All students have access to interactive whiteboards and desktop computers. Students with special needs are supported with the addition of a sound-enhancing system in the first grade ICT classroom. The principal further supplements the literacy and math curricula through intentional selection of computer programs such as Imagine Learning and RAZ Kids to support the school's English Language Learners population, as well as students with disabilities. Mathletics, an online computer program, supplements the math curriculum by providing additional tasks with number concepts, problem solving, and fluency.
- A review of the grade 1 science curriculum reflects that students will develop the skills of summarizing observations of how air interacts with objects. Instructional activities require students to use bubble wands to blow bubbles, construct parachutes, and investigate how air resistance slows the fall of objects. Enrichment tasks require students to use Google images to brainstorm weather vocabulary. In a kindergarten lesson plan, students were required to construct a graphic organizer to compare and contrast the information they learned about caterpillars from a non-fiction magazine and the book, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, in order to use these details in leveled writing tasks.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

The vast majority of teachers use assessments that are aligned to the school's curricula. Across classrooms, teachers use ongoing checks for understanding and students use self-assessments.

Impact

Teachers and students have meaningful feedback so that teachers make effective curricula adjustments. Students are aware of their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has established a grading policy with guidelines on how students are assigned grades in each curricula area. A grade of four indicates that the student exceeds grade-level performance. A grade of three indicates that the student meets grade level-performance. A grade of two indicates that the student is approaching grade-level performance and a grade of one indicates that the student is far below grade-level standards. Teachers are required to have evidence to support the grade given to the student and grades are reviewed by the administration.
- In reading, data collected from *Fountas and Pinnell* benchmark assessments, which are administered three times a year, is used to plan activities and adjust curriculum maps. Common Core aligned benchmark writing assessments, in addition to monthly portfolio writing assessment pieces and New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) writing tasks, are used to evaluate students' writing performance in kindergarten and grade 1. In math, teachers use Common Core-aligned benchmark assessments, monthly portfolio math pieces, and NYCDOE math tasks. Social studies and science benchmark assessments, as well as portfolio tasks, provide data on students' growth in these content areas. Data for pre-kindergarten student performance is accessed using the NYCDOE recommended work-sampling assessment.
- One-to-one student conferences are used to maintain on-going checks on students' understanding of concepts and skills taught in lessons. Teachers were observed taking notes on a clipboard formatted with individual students' names and skills taught, as they observed students engaged in small group tasks. The principal shared that this data is used to form and reform groups to support students at their instructional levels. Teachers use unit assessment and conference notes to inform decisions for at-risk students to receive additional supports such as intervention programs, Recipe for Reading, Reading Recovery, and an after-school program for targeted students. Students stated that they use rubrics to check their work and grade themselves. Across classrooms checklists are posted within content areas. Students articulated that they use the checklists to help them know what they need to do for their next learning goal. One student stated that her next goal was to "understand characters' feelings and their traits." The students shared that they get feedback from their teachers to help them know when they have met their goals.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

High expectations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* are consistently communicated to all staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate to families their expectations for students' college and career pathways and provide resources to support student achievement.

Impact

Teachers share mutual accountability to support students' achievement and their own professional growth. Families partner with the school on a path to college and career readiness skills.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal conducts daily walkthroughs in every classroom to support teachers in their implementation of the curricula, focusing on increasing coherence in rigorous implementation of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* domains on questioning and discussion, student engagement, and assessment practices. Additionally, the principal gives feedback as to how well teachers have followed-up on previous recommendations. Teachers also meet with the principal at the beginning of the school year to review their areas of strengths and needs and to craft professional goals. The instructional coach provides workshops, which are planned to support identified needs across the school such as balanced literacy and supporting observation and feedback systems. Teachers shared that they engage in inter-visitations to observe their colleagues implement specific strategies such as higher-order questioning. New teachers are paired with the Reading Recovery teacher and communicate weekly at after school professional learning regarding the additional instructional supports provided for their students.
- The principal emails a weekly letter to the whole staff based on observed practices within classrooms to communicate best practices and her expectations for instruction. In addition, the principal highlights effective practices noted across the school to support all student's achievement, and especially English Language Learners such as the implementation of *Foundations* to support students' development of decoding and fluency skills.
- The school has instituted *Math Fridays* and *Literacy Fridays*, in which parents are invited to visit their child's classroom. Parent state that this allows them to have a better understanding of the strategies teachers are using to teach math and literacy, which they can replicate at home. In addition, families were provided accounts for Imagine Learning and Mathletics so that they can access these online supports to work with their children at home. Parents were invited to participate in math workshops through the *GO Math! Parent Academy*. This family support was an outgrowth of parents' concerns communicated to teachers and the administration that parents did not know "this new math." Parents participating in the *academy* have the opportunity to engage in lessons and tasks aligned to college and career readiness skills and try strategies that are taught to their children. A monthly calendar communicates events planned across the school and progress reports are provided to inform parents of their children's performance. Translation services are provided to support parent engagement on Tuesdays and in communications sent home. Parents described the school as "warm, motivational, encouraging, welcoming, personal, awesome, and peaceful."