



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 196 Grand Central Parkway

Elementary School Q196

**71-25 113 Street
Queens
NY 11375**

Principal: Susan Migliano

**Date of review: May 31, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier**

The School Context

P.S. 196 Grand Central Parkway is an elementary school with 900 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 37% Asian, 2% Black, 13% Hispanic, and 40% White students. The student body includes 6% English Language Learners and 11% 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 96.2%.

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	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs and how students learn best. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation and ownership.

Impact

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classes reflect school beliefs that students learn best through the facilitation of student discussions coupled with cooperative learning. Student discussions and products evidence the high levels of thinking and student ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers facilitated lessons in which students were highly engaged and actively participated in cooperative learning and discussions with each other. In a grade 4 math lesson, students were discussing their questions about the work with a partner until the teacher asked students to bring those conversations to a close so that they could then reflect on and discuss their partners' questions. In a grade 3 math class, students discussed their rubric-based self-assessments with partners while focusing on the next steps that their self-assessments should have determined they take during the lesson in order to maximize their rating on the post-assessment. In a grade 2 reading lesson, each group conducted a read aloud that was facilitated by a student moderator. In a grade 2 STEM class, students cooperatively worked in small groups in the creation of terrariums.
- Students are evidencing high levels of thinking. In a grade 3 math lesson, a student explained, "We're working on a project to use math in a real world situation. So we're making a movie that involves a horse. We need to use time to create the schedule for the horse. We need area and perimeter to know how much space the horse needs and we need distance to know where to put the camera so we can make sure the horse is in the shot." In a grade 2 STEM class, a student explained, "We're working on earthquakes. We're building houses that are supposed to be earthquake proof. This is also connected to our reading assignment. We're reading about the San Francisco earthquake. They didn't have earthquake proof houses! Also, we made the rubric we'll use to rate the houses we build."
- Students are owning their academic growth through the creation and updating of goals as well as thoughtfully self- and peer-assessing. Across grades and subjects, students create goals and subsequently assess their progress on those goals. Often, they update their goals which then leads to modification of student groups, evidencing student ownership of their growth as well as integral role in determining classroom design. Examples of peer reflection are "Next time, you should give more details," "Good job including specific details," and "You used voice well, Next time, watch your punctuation. It made this confusing." Examples of self-reflection are, "I think I mostly need to work on geometry because I sometimes mix up area and perimeter," "Next time, I should organize better and not jump around," and "I have spelling errors and didn't include linking words."

Area of Focus

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

Across the school, grade teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data, student work products, and to share teaching strategies. Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that there is effective teacher leadership and teachers play an integral role in key decisions.

Impact

While systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in mastery of goals for groups of students, transitioning this practice to focus on larger student groups in order to increase the impact of teacher teamwork is not evident. Teachers have played an integral role in decisions affecting student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- The grade 3 teacher team analyzed the *GO Math!* pre-assessment and noticed that students were deficient in word problem solving skills. Further analysis revealed that students needed help with developing academic vocabulary, showing their work, and using processes for checking work. After common planning and review of student progress over the course of this inquiry cycle, the culminating assessment showed that 100% of the focus group showed improvement.
- The kindergarten teacher team found that students with disabilities were not progressing in writing at the same pace as the general education students. Using students with disabilities as a focus group, teachers launched a cycle of inquiry to positively affect their writing. Teachers developed graphic organizers and commonly planned lessons, resulting in improvement among all students in this group in the following areas, labelling pictures, writing words, writing individual sentences and writing multiple sentences. While mastery of goals for targeted student groups results from teacher team work, students will benefit when the school expands the scope of its teacher team work to go beyond focus groups that are grade based and identify focus groups that include students across grades in order to identify and address school wide trends.
- Teachers have played an integral role in the school wide development and use of student self-assessment tools. The vertical literacy teacher team has led this effort in the design of checklists and rubrics specifically designed for student self-assessment. These tools have been adapted for use in math, science and social studies and were observed in use by students across all grades and subjects. Additionally, the school's expansion of its Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program has been led by one of the school's science teachers and is expanding in scope as a result of her leadership. Due to the program's success and the lead teacher's efforts to develop her practice and expand the program, a second STEM classroom was opened for grade 2 in March 2016. Other initiatives affecting student learning across the school are growing use of Plickers as an assessment tool and the collaborative tools embedded within Google Apps for Education (GAPE).

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

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

Impact

Curricula alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts results in coherence across grades and subject areas promoting college and career readiness for all learners. All students have access to the curricula and are cognitive engagement.

Supporting Evidence

- Units are constructed using the *ReadyGen* and *GO Math!* programs. The school also ensures curricula coherence with the New York City (NYC) Social Studies Scope and Sequence and the science NYS Standards. Teachers meet in grade level teams during common prep periods to plan common units that integrate instructional shifts. One example of the inclusion of the math instructional shift in which concepts are applied to real world situations is in a grade 5 math lesson in which students are to plan a school-wide trip to a theme park. Given four distinct rules, students are to determine the number of busses, school faculty members and other adult chaperones required so that the trip could happen. Other examples of this instructional shift can be found in a grade 4 math lesson plan in which students are to either design a bedroom using graph paper and geometric shapes or create a recipe for a new juice drink and determine how to modify that recipe if they were to produce that drink on a massive scale.
- A grade 3 math lesson plan is centered on having students apply math to real world situations. Each group is to use math while assuming one of the following roles: producer of a movie that will include horses, designer of skateboards, a designer of zoo habitats, or jewelry designer. Each station includes modifications for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities as well as extension activities for higher learners. For example, each station includes extension questions, a graphic organizer serving to scaffold instructions as well as provide multiple entry points for ELLs and students with disabilities.
- Lesson plans from all observed classes evidenced teachers' planning for the cognitive engagement of all students. In a grade 2 reading lesson plan, methods of differentiation are listed for ELLs as well as students with disabilities. In addition, student groups are homogenously grouped based on reading levels and each group has a tiered reading passage. A grade 2 Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) lesson plan includes vocabulary cards with pictures for ELLs, step-by-step direction cards for each station as well an extension activity for high-level learners.
- The grade 2 reading lesson plan indicates that based on a writing piece that came out of a prior unit on Charlotte's Web, data revealed that students needed to "strengthen their skills of finding evidence to how characters respond to major events by digging deeper into the text." A grade 5 math lesson plan lists as the rationale, "When reviewing data, it was determined that the majority of students in fifth grade need more practice making sense of word problems, solving word problems with multiple steps, and keeping track of multiple pieces of information."

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. In addition, teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

High quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers' assessment practices result in effective instructional adjustments to meet all students' needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Students came to a quick consensus when reporting on the use of assessments and rubrics with regard to written assignments and clarity around students' attainment of mastery. After receiving detailed rubrics with comments that include written feedback with next steps from teachers, students then conference with teachers on the feedback and how it can impact their writing. Students then improve upon their writing by implementing the next steps detailed in the feedback and again turn in their assignments to their teachers. One student reported, "My teachers' feedback helps me know where my Achilles heel is." One example of feedback reads, "Next time, I'd like to see you challenge yourself and create a table to help organize all of your data." Another example reads, "You need to explain the purpose of the geometric features."
- Across the school, students use rubrics and checklists as tools for self-assessment. This data is used by students in their academic growth and by teachers in modifying lessons and student groupings. One student reported, "We usually give ourselves a self-reflection before giving the work to our teacher. That helps me because it forces me to really think about what I'm writing and see if it makes sense. Then I can fix it before I give it in." Evidence of the use of rubrics and checklists for peer and self-assessment were observed in all classrooms and in work portfolios. For example, there were ample samples of student writing on which students posted self-assessments on yellow post-it notes. Directly next to those self-assessments were peer-assessments also written on post-it notes. Additionally, rubrics for self-assessment were specific to grade level with those for the lower grades including faces indicating levels of satisfaction with the work being assessed.
- Upon entering a grade 5 math lesson, the teacher was observed checking-in with each group. After this was done the teacher drew all students' attention to announce, "I am hearing many of the same questions and observing many of the same issues in your work and every one is addressed in the checklist you all have. Don't forget to use the checklist." In a grade 4 math lesson, student groups were homogenously designed based on shared student goals. Groups were focused on either multiplication, fractions or geometry. A student reported, "Once a month we look at our goals and they sometimes change. So when we get into our groups based on our goals, the groups are different." In a grade 3 math lesson, the teacher asked students to use the rubric to pre-assess themselves with the knowledge that at the end of the lesson, they would assess themselves again using the same rubric. Additionally, at the beginning of a grade 2 reading lesson, the teacher identified a group that would sit in the front with the teacher for extra support based on the prior lesson.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff. Additionally, school leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

Staff maintains and benefits from a culture of mutual accountability around high expectations. Partnerships with families support students in their progress toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are provided a clear and descriptive outline of the expectations around teaching and learning, organized into categories by the different domains in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Feedback on Advance observations reveals high expectations for teacher practice, even where teachers are receiving Highly Effective and Effective ratings. The feedback is time-bound and specific to improving teacher practice and student outcomes, and shows that administrators will look for improvement in these areas the next time they visit. For example, in an observation report conducted on September 29, 2015, the rating of “effective” was accompanied by the next step “Students should have a rubric so they know what is expected of them. This will help them monitor their own understanding.” This teacher earned a rating of “highly effective on a subsequent observation on January 15, 2016 in which school leadership noted that “you went over the challenge packet, the rubric for the project and each part of the project they would be assessed on.”
- School leaders and staff members use tools such as *Remind*, emails, texts, phone calls, monthly and weekly newsletters, the school’s website as well as a parent-student handbook to communicate high expectations to all students and families. Interim progress reports are shared with parents and students in addition to citywide report card distribution. One parent reported, “We get a review packet before every unit begins, letting us know what they’re learning. It’s helped me because I didn’t understand the math. We went to coffee with the principal and told her that we couldn’t do it. She then had her teachers run workshops on Common Core math. Sure enough, I went back to the first grade and now I can help my daughter.” All parents concurred on the value of the review packets. Another parent reported, “My daughter is doing very well, but her teacher was able to tell me exactly where she needed help. I was impressed that even though she is doing well, her teacher still identified areas where she could grow.” The school also hosts a Saturday class on Common Core catered to parents and their children.
- Eighteen parents are scheduled to serve as guest speakers at the school’s Career Day on June 7, 2016. Parents will be speaking at this event from a wide variety of careers such as attorney, finance director, paleoanthropological researcher, college English professor, electrical engineer, and pharmacist. One parent reported, “My child wants to be an FBI agent after meeting with an FBI agent at last year’s Career Day.” Commenting about the previous year’s Career Day one student reported, “Different parents came in from multiple jobs. They showed us their passion and got me to plan out what I want to do. I don’t know yet, but I know I have to plan.” All students agreed with this statement.