



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2015-2016

**I.S. 075 Frank D. Paulo**

**Junior High-Intermediate-Middle School R075**

**455 Huguenot Avenue  
Staten Island  
NY 10312**

**Principal: Kenneth Zapata**

**Date of review: May 17, 2016  
Lead Reviewer: Jennifer Eusanio**

## The School Context

I.S. 075 Frank D. Paulo is a junior high-intermediate-middle school with 1,382 students from grade 6 through grade 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 9% Asian, 1% Black, 10% Hispanic, and 79% White students. The student body includes 1% English Language Learners and 22% students with disabilities. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.9%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Proficient</b>

## Area of Celebration

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate and provide training on high expectations for staff. Structures are in place to effectively provide information to families on their children's progress in school.

### Impact

School-wide systems result in a culture of mutual accountability for staff and successful partnerships with families in supporting students towards college and career readiness.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders communicate their expectations using emails, which directly point to the school-wide instructional focus. Along with emails, strategies and articles provide context and meaning for staff communications and support for teachers. In one email promoting student-to-student discussion, an article and a list of sentence starters for student use was provided. Similarly, another email names an article for teachers to read and which provides strategies such as grouping, using guided notes, and suggesting project work to support teachers' understanding of the school's expectations on engagement and discourse.
- A review of observation feedback reflects that teachers are provided with support by school leaders through sharing articles and strategies including turn-and-talk strategies for discussion and student use of success criteria as part of their debriefing sessions. Future observations reflected the use of these strategies and teachers demonstrating progress towards areas of improvement. In addition, learning walks are conducted regularly throughout the year. School leaders expect all teachers to attend at least one learning walk per semester and to implement those strategies in classrooms. Teachers reported that the feedback from learning walks helps, and holds them accountable for the school's instructional focus. Some strategies they have implemented are additional annotation strategies and use of the shape strategy.
- Parents reported that the school has several modes of communication including emails, newsletters and phone blasts that inform them of the standards and expectations for learning in middle school. During grade 6 orientation meetings, parents and students obtain information about the following year's curricula. Parents stated workshops like this help with "summer slide" when students regress on academic levels over the summer due to lack of reading. In addition, grade-level workshops called *Math Night*, provide parents with information on the curricula through interactive tasks where parents engage and solve math problems with their child. Parents shared that these workshops assist with understanding the types of questions being asked on state tests and the new strategies being implemented that align with the Common Core Learning Standards.
- Parents shared that online systems provide information on student grades. One parent reported that when her child was struggling in science, conversations with the teacher helped her follow up at home on ways to prepare for his tests. With this new information, the student has shown progress in this subject area. Similarly, teacher conferences were reported as helpful for the other parents in providing support at home using teachers' suggestions and resources as well as the school website which contains online links.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

Teaching practices are in the process of reflecting a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and instructional shifts. Student work products and discussions are beginning to reflect ownership.

### Impact

Discussions and work products have yet to demonstrate student independence and higher-order thinking in the vast majority of classrooms.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and staff shared that students learn best when they are actively engaged in their own learning in “an academically demanding student centered environment in which the questions are planned to promote higher level thinking and stimulate conversation.” In an Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) math class, students were using what they know about the Pythagorean theorem after reading a text to determine whether the theory was true. Using tiles and different types of triangles, the students calculated the perimeter and solved their assigned math problem. Across all groups, students used questioning to clarify and challenge one another on problem solving. All students took turns in applying their knowledge to the task.
- In a grade 6 social studies class, students engaged in conversations around the question, “Have the Olympics been successful in achieving its mission?” In groups, students used text evidence from documents to support their claims. However, during a share out, the teacher led questioning and discussion where students did not have an opportunity to further expand their thinking with each other.
- In a grade 7 science class, questioning from the teacher on the characteristics of birds led to low *Depth of Knowledge (DOK)* level responses from students to complete a web. Student responses consisted of naming parts and teacher explanations of how the part helped birds. After, discussion groups were formed for a matching activity in which responses varied in *DOK* levels for students.

## Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Well Developed

### Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher order thinking are emphasized in the curricula across grades and subject areas.

### Impact

Curricula and tasks demonstrate rigor where students must demonstrate their thinking, which results in school-wide coherence that promotes college and career readiness for all learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes the *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP)* curricula for English Language Arts (ELA). This year, school leaders formed a partnership with *The Core Collaborative* to provide training for staff on the unpacking of standards and revising units of study to reflect learning objectives known as success criteria across grades. In math, the school uses *GO Math!* along with *EngageNY* as a supplemental resource to further support alignment to the content and practice standards. Both the science and social studies units align to the *New York City (NYC)* scope and sequence units.
- Across units and tasks, emphasis on citing text evidence is reflected. In a social studies unit, one research task requires students to provide text evidence and explain their thinking on whether or not there should be a Columbus Day. In an ELA class, students are required to use text evidence to support their inferences and to examine literary elements after reading, *Lord of the Flies*, as part of their *Reading for High School Unit*. In addition, real world application word problems are reflected in math units. Success criteria reflect the use of multiple strategies to solve word problems that connect to real life situations. Furthermore, the arts and science curricula focus on Tier 2 and 3 vocabulary words.
- Unit task questions and prompts are aligned to *DOK* levels 3 and 4 where students have opportunities for demonstrating their thinking. In a grade 8 ELA lesson plan for English Language Learners (ELLs), students are provided choices of questions, “How does the central message of this song represent the mindset of a specific character from the *Lord of the Flies*? Be sure to include details from the text to support your thinking,” and “Based on *Lord of the Flies*, would William Golding agree or disagree with the following quote from Isaac Watts, ‘One sickly sheep infects the flock’? Include details to support your thinking.” In a grade 7 social studies class for students with disabilities, after reading the lyrics to a song and using their prior knowledge about the *Bill of Rights*, students are asked to answer the following question for a whole group discussion, “How does this song *For What It’s Worth*, relate to the *Bill of Rights*?”

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>2.2 Assessment</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### Findings

Across the vast majority of classes, teachers use rubrics, grading policies and other assessments that are aligned to the curricula and reflect a clear portrait of mastery. Assessment practices consistently reflect varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

### Impact

Effective, in-the-moment adjustments and meaningful feedback lead to students' having an awareness of their next learning steps.

### Supporting Evidence

- Rubrics, success criteria and performance tasks across subject areas are aligned to the curricula. Similarly, formative pre- and post-unit assessments are aligned to the standards and curricula. Grading policies contain a combination of percentages and performance levels, which reflect the use of assessments weighing heavier than other areas. Students noted that most of their teachers often provide rubrics at the beginning of the unit to set the criteria and form goals so that they are aware of the expectations and can work towards them. In addition, students stated that they understand the value of obtaining a level 4 using rubrics and strive to meet the criteria in all their subject areas.
- Students determine their goals using reflection sheets based on the feedback received by their teachers and peers. One student shared that she uses the time to set goals based on where she, "want[s] to be by the end of the year and need[s] to learn." Another student stated in ELA that she has to read more to develop her stamina and uses free-writing especially at home to help her improve in reading comprehension. A grade 6 student stated he wasn't proficient in writing, especially with crafting strong introductions and conclusions, at first. Now the student relies on strategies such as lead, information and thesis (LIT) and closing sentence, main points and realization (CMR), which are provided by the teacher, and keeps these acronyms in mind as he improves his writing over time. Other students reflected on their goals and shared similar ways in which their teachers' feedback and strategies have helped them grow throughout the year.
- Bulletin boards reflect glows and grows from teachers and peers using success criteria based on rubrics. After reviewing some of their feedback on prior tasks, students shared ways in which they are using certain strategies to improve their grades towards a level 4. One student stated, based on teacher feedback, she needs to improve the quality of her thesis to make it more formalized. The student continued to state that she needed to make a stronger claim based on her point of view as compared to others.
- Teachers were observed checking for student understanding using questions, Do-Nows and exit slips. In a grade 8 ICT math class, both teachers conducted one-to-one conferences with students to provide support when students demonstrated difficulty with using the Pythagorean Theorem. In a grade 8 ELA class, students reviewed each other's writing using a rubric and provided feedback to each other in order to enhance the quality of the work product. One student shared to the other that based on the success criteria in the checklist, her partner should consider adding a few more details to support her answer. A review of student folders reflected the use of learning continuums and success criteria checklists for the purpose of self-assessment. In addition, after reviewing their checklists, students wrote glows and areas for growth towards improving their own work products.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry based professional collaborations which analyze data and work products towards promoting the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and school goals.

### Impact

Teacher teams are improving instructional practices and grade-level capacity leading to the progression of goals for groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Content teams meet weekly to analyze data and student work, share strategies to implement and modify curricula and tools to support students. Several teams follow a school-created protocol, which asks them to reflect on a problem, implement a practice and reflect on the results. In the social studies team, teachers focused on claim and supporting details with logical reasoning, text evidence and credible resources using grade 7 students as their target group. To support their inquiry, teachers created quick writes to formatively assess student progress across units of study. In addition, the use of boxes and bullets, as well as annotation strategies, have assisted students in making progress across the year.
- In ELA, teachers engaged in implementing of small group literacy strategies after reading a professional text, *The Reading Strategies Book*. After reviewing data from *Performance Series*, teachers chose strategies from the book to implement such as understanding the author's theme and work with groups of students in their class. In addition, as the development of success criteria come to fruition this year, teachers are reviewing student on-demand writing tasks to determine and modify unit maps to accurately portray what students need focus on based on data. During a team meeting, teachers added to a unit map the following target areas: writing conclusions and using transition words.
- In math, teachers reviewed data from the *Prosper* assessment and determined that grade 8 students needed more support in comparing functions. The team developed strategies including spiraling back to seventh grade standards in solving multi-step equations as part of homework and warm ups, and revisiting subtraction integer rules to support them in acquiring the skill. Based on a comparison of the unit assessment used to determine the area of improvement and the midterm as a progress measure, each class made substantial gains of 30 points or more.