



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

The Michael J. Petrides School

K-12 School R080

**715 Ocean Terrace
Staten Island
NY 10301**

Principal: Joanne Buckheit

**Date of review: May 24, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier**

The School Context

The Michael J. Petrides School is a K-12 school with 1,331 students from pre-kindergarten through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 8% Asian, 20% Black, 21% Hispanic, and 48% White students. The student body includes 1% English Language Learners and 25% students with disabilities. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 95.2%.

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	Focus	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	Celebration	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

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. Across the school, grade teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data, student work products, and to share teaching strategies.

Impact

Teacher engagement in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations has strengthened their instructional capacity and promoted implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. Systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers' collaborative design of common "I Can Do" checklists as well as Success Criteria checklists resulted in school-wide coherence. One teacher reported and all present agreed, "It was great to get together and share what we use and then get on the same page. On our intervisitations and when students transfer, there's a common language." In addition, teachers across grades and subjects are visiting each other in order to strengthen coherence around student to student discussion techniques. A grade eight science teacher said "I observed the eighth grade social studies class and saw the Socratic seminar in practice. Now I'm doing it and we're constantly visiting each other and sharing."
- The kindergarten - grade 2 teacher team analyzed data around the school's monthly complex text assessments. Analysis revealed a drastic drop in grades from grade 2 to grade 3. The resulting inquiry cycle led to the realization that this was founded in the lack of coherence around grading processes. Whereas grade 3 teachers were using a Common Core Learning Standards aligned rubric, grade 2 teachers were using a rubric published by non-Common Core aligned *ReadyGen*. As a result, grade 2 students were not held accountable to the use of supporting details. The grade 2 teachers therefore adopted the Claim, Detail, Detail (CDD) strategy, already in use in grade 3. The inflation of grading practices resulted in coherence to Common Core grading standards as well as increase in student mastery. Although these students will not take the New York State (NYS) exam until next year, common assessment data reveals, across all grade 2 students, the inclusion of supporting details in writing.
- The Middle School Impact teacher team found that students were having difficulty breaking down text and identified that successful students were using annotation as a tool for understanding. The teacher team focused on strengthening students' use of annotation, specifically, with the target students with disabilities group. Lessons on annotating, including the annotation of rubrics, were designed and delivered. All target group students showed improved scores from the September 2015 baseline to the assessment in January 2016 assessment in the areas of multiple choice scores and short written responses. These findings have resulted in expansion of this work to include annotation in social studies, math and science classes for all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs).

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula, reflecting a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across these same classrooms, teaching strategies strategically provide multiple entry points and high-quality supports.

Impact

Teaching practices and strategies reflect school beliefs that all students learn best through active discussion, engagement, reading, and writing grounded in evidence from text. However, in some classes, teacher centered instruction resulted in missed opportunities for student engagement and active discussion.

Supporting Evidence

- In a combined grades 1 and 2 self-contained classroom, students were instructed to scour the classroom and collect all items they could find that correlated with the geometric shape to which their groups were assigned. Prior to this, students were asked to turn and talk with partners about the similarities and differences between the three dimensional shapes projected onto the interactive white board. In a grade 5 math lesson, students applied math to real world situations as they determined the parameters of a person's training regimen for a triathlon.
- In a grade 4 class, one work station instructed students to talk with their partners around whether they would travel to an earthquake prone area shortly after an earthquake had occurred in preparation for an opinion writing assignment. In a grade 10 Advanced Placement World History course, students were engaged in a Socratic seminar through which they discussed the role of nonviolence in contemporary society. However, teacher centered instruction resulting in missed opportunities for student engagement and discussion was observed in two class visits. During a math class, multiple opportunities for student conversations were missed around teacher asked questions such as "How do you define interval?" and "What steps will we take to find the average?" During a different math lesson, individual student responses were directed at the teacher around the question "Let's identify two dimensional shapes." Additionally, review of the do now activity that involved seven multiple choice questions was restricted to individual students identifying the correct answer, without any subsequent student conversation.
- In a grade 4 Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classroom, student groups cycled through four stations. Stations were divided into the following four general tasks: reading, writing, peer assessment, and team talk. Students were grouped heterogeneously based on data from running records and from the school-designed monthly complex text comprehension assessments. In a grade 9 ICT English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were in homogenous groups based on from an argumentative writing assessment. One student group was designated for reteaching while the other groups worked on annotating one of three Shakespearean sonnets. Students could utilize any of the following accommodations: highlighters, a Shakespearean dictionary, or a graphic organizer. Additionally, the ICT teacher checked-in with all students, including students with disabilities and general education students to offer assistance.

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 cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Elementary grade curricula calendars are constructed using the *ReadyGen* and *Go Math!* programs. Middle and high school teachers have ensured alignment to Common Core Learning Standards within their respective content areas. The school also ensures curricular coherence with the New York City (NYC) Social Studies Scope and Sequence and the science NYS Standards, where applicable. Teachers meet in grade level teams during common prep periods to plan common units that integrate the Common Core Standards and instructional shifts. For example, to align with the math instructional shift regarding real life application, in a combined grades 1 and 2 self-contained class, the math unit plan asked students to search their classroom for examples of the geometric shapes covered during class. Students were also asked to determine the amount of miles run and the number of days spent during a training regimen for a triathlon. In the same plan, there was planning for the use of textual evidence is a Socratic seminar, where students needed to support their arguments around the topic of nonviolence.
- Review of curricular materials evidences a wide variety of modified tools as well as extensions. Multiple lesson plans included checklists, rubrics, and graphic organizers aligned to the specific academic tasks in which students would be engaged. A grade 4 ICT lesson plan organized stations to meet students' needs as evidenced by assessment data with one station designed around reteaching. A grade 9 ELA lesson plan also involved station learning, wherein one station is devoted to reteaching while other stations included four accommodation options, including access to visual aids, a Shakespearean dictionary, a reference sheet as well as a completed graphic organizer to use as a model. In a grade 6 ICT ELA lesson plan included a station devoted to the extension of learning for students already having achieved the unit's goals. In that station, students were to develop questions based the text representing each level of Webb's Depth of Knowledge wheel.
- The transition from Integrated Algebra to Common Core Standards based math led to a drop in NYS Regents exam success from 89% in June 2014 to 56% in June 2015. The grade 7 curriculum map was then revised to contain grade 8 Common Core Standards so that the rigor of the grade 8 algebra curriculum could be refined to better match the level of work expected for the Common Core algebra Regents exam. Preliminary data predicts a minimum pass rate of 66% for the Common Core algebra Regents exam.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use and 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 rubrics with comments, that include written feedback with next steps from teachers, students then conference with teachers on the feedback and how it impacted their writing. Students were then given the opportunity to improve upon their writing by implementing the next steps detailed in the feedback and turn in their assignments to their teachers. One student reported that he will “use the feedback for other writing assignments.” An example of teacher feedback on math work reads “Show your work to display your ability to identify, classify and draw polygons.” Another example reads “Be sure to properly label the degrees and use a straight edge.”
- Across the school, students use checklists and rubrics as tools of self-assessment. Additionally, teachers have increased the value of rubrics by guiding students through the habit of annotating them before their use. This practice was observed in a grade 5 math lesson as well as a grade 4 ICT class. In a grade 9 ELA class, students were asked to use the school developed “Theme Continuum” to assess their responses. Each of the three statements on this self-assessment tool are “I Can” statements that pose each level of achievement in a positive manner. Also in use across classes are self-assessment tools such as a writer’s reflection worksheet, graphic organizers where students can “Unpack Learning Targets” by indicating the standard addressed and writing a statement, and using the standard sentence starter “I can” to describe his or her progress toward meeting that standard. Additionally, self-assessment tools, such as the Opinion Essay Success Criteria rubric, along with other checklists are used by students for self-assessment and evidencing awareness of next steps.
- In a grade 4 ICT class, students were grouped based on running records assessment data along with data from teacher developed monthly assessments of students’ understanding complex-texts. In a grade 9 ELA class, students were grouped based on data resulting from an argumentative writing assignment administered earlier in the week. In a grade 6 ELA class, one student group was entirely composed of students who had already evidenced mastery of the grade 6 standards. Their task design was based on grade 7 standards.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning.

Impact

Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. High expectations for all students are maintained and supported through clear, focused and effective feedback so that students are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as the standard for professionalism and high quality instruction. Each rated item on classroom observation reports includes language from the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* rubric along with specific detailed evidence from the observed class to support the rating. Next steps for teacher improvement are included at the close of each observation report, often evidencing teacher growth. For instance, one teacher's ratings increased in the areas of using questioning and engaging students in learning from a classroom observation in late 2015 to a subsequent observation six months later from effective to highly effective. Another observation included an acknowledgement of the growth made between the classroom observation in late 2015 and a subsequent observation six months later. The administrator commented, "This lesson was exemplary. I would like to encourage you to share your planning and practice with your colleagues."
- The instructional team engages in case studies of teachers' advance classroom ratings observation reports over the course of 3 school years. These case studies result in a feedback letter issued to the teacher/subject of the case study that includes findings of patterns and trends along with timed, actionable next steps. One feedback form acknowledges improvement over the last two years along with actionable feedback along with a recommendation to visit a particular teacher "... during ELA stations and notice the pacing and flow of instruction. Also note the differentiation of delivery for groups of students." Additionally, links to Teaching Channel videos are included with the request that they be viewed prior to their follow-up meeting scheduled to take place two weeks after the date of this feedback form.
- All grade 11 students take part in a student-run college fair to allow students to research particular colleges. Students then facilitate the college fair for fellow students wherein they run the tables, attempting to recruit fellow students to attend their respective institutions. During the meeting with students, one reported that the school's schedule for high school students prepares them for college in that "... periods 1, 2, and 3 are each one hour long and there are free periods that mimic the free time you get in college between classes." In addition, one parent reported, "My son just took the SAT and afterward, he said that the school prepared him for the SAT in even their regular classes, even though he is also in [Advanced Placement] AP classes." To date, 87 of the current 94 graduating seniors have received college acceptance letters and scholarship money totaling 4.5 million dollars. Whereas during the 2014-2016 school year, a total of 86 students earned college credit through the school's partnership with the College Now program at Kingsborough Community College, 69 students have already earned college credit through the same program during the fall 2015 semester with 55 students are enrolled for the spring semester.