Department of Education
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 057 Crescent

Elementary School X057

2111 Crotona Avenue
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Mary Blandino Sanchez

Date of review: December 11, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Daisy Concepción

The School Context

P.S. 057 Crescent is an elementary school with 579 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 0% Asian, 24% Black, 71% Hispanic, and 1% White students. The student body includes 13% English Language Learners and 21% students with disabilities. Boys account for 50% of the students enrolled and girls account for 50%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 90.4%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
To what extent does the school…	**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	**Celebration**	**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 *Framework for Teaching*, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	**Additional Findings**	**Developing**
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**	**Proficient**
School Culture		
To what extent does the school…	**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**	**Developing**
Systems for Improvement		
To what extent does the school…	**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**	**Developing**

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking.

Impact
Newly aligned curriculum and revised units build coherence and provide students across grades with the opportunity to engage in Common Core-aligned, rigorous tasks that emphasize higher order skills.

Supporting Evidence

- *Ready Gen*, the chosen curriculum resource, was revised to align with the Teacher's College writing units to include extended writing pieces as opposed to just short response. Teaching points are identified for both readers and writers workshops. For example, a grade 5 unit on biography culminating in "a biography of a famous person or an important person in your life that you know a lot about" listed 24 teaching points, mostly aligned to the instructional shifts such as: "Writers will understand how to cite resources as references in Works Cited", and "Readers will understand the elements of non-fiction texts".

- A review of lessons demonstrates that teachers have modified teaching points to be better aligned to the Common Core and to reflect the school's instructional focus of having explicit and measurable teaching points that students can articulate. Additionally, as the school added essential questions to their units, they realigned their teaching points with their essential questions. For example, a *Ready Gen* unit on identifying the main point of a story included the following teaching point, "Students will be able to identify key facts in a text." The school changed this to "Students will be able to locate key details in a text about specific topic/process by describing a sequence of events using a graphic organizer." This teaching point aligned to the essential question "How do readers compare and contrast two facts on the same topic."

- A grade 3 math unit based on chapter 2 of *Go Math!* on data collection, layered tasks to align with the instructional shift of deep understanding. Students had to generate an investigation question such as "What do you watch on TV?" and collect data by surveying classmates and develop multiple representations such as tally charts, frequency tables, pictographs, bar graphs and line plots for the information gathered. Students had to write an interpretation, describe patterns across the data, and provide an analysis of their work. This task engaged students in using place value understanding and properties of operations to perform multi-digit arithmetic, represent and interpret data and write an informative/explanatory text to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Developing

Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations. Teacher teams are beginning to analyze assessment data and student work.

Impact
Teacher teams are beginning to develop an awareness of how their pedagogy has an impact on student progress, but their work has not yet improved teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- In a teacher team meeting examining short responses after reading a complex, grade level text, teachers realized that many student responses were literal, comprised primarily of students copying directly from the text. The teachers reflected on their class performance and realized that the students who struggled the most were those with an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) and particularly English Language Learners (ELL) who did not know the word “gondola” and thought that the term American girl referred to the toy doll. As a team, they decided that they would raise this with the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher so that she would address the problem. When some teachers were questioned they shared that they felt that although they had English Language Learners in their classes, the ESL coordinator was responsible for providing scaffolds for these students. They shared that when the ESL teacher pushes into their classes she brings checklists, rubrics and visuals to these “low level” students and they are able to demonstrate an understanding of the work.

- Teachers have target populations connected to school goals. In the team observed, one teacher stated that her target population was ELL students, another teacher mentioned students who had been previously retained in the grade, and another mentioned students with IEPs. As the team moved into the inquiry phase of the meeting, the teachers developed a list of student challenges such as academic vocabulary, problems with comprehension, stamina, and understanding the question. While the team identified broad areas where students struggled, such as 35% of students copying cite-based evidence directly from the text and not integrating the evidence into their essay, the team did not use this information to adjust instruction. The teacher team focused on looking at the individual students in the 35% who were struggling and talked about how they were waiting for these students to be placed into special education.

- In two teacher meetings, teachers voiced their struggle moving from inquiry to their practice. They stated that despite their work in inquiry and the identification of student challenges, they did not have the expertise to move the work to the next level. In an open moment of reflection, a teacher from an Integrated Collaborative Team said, “I wonder if students are not elaborating on their responses because we have been rigidly telling them to stick to the question because we are worried they would go off task.” This led to another teacher asking if the ELL students in her class did better with the ESL teacher because she came in with scaffolds that gave “these students voice.”

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and common assessments that are aligned to the school curricula. Common assessments determine student progress toward goals across grades and subjects.

Impact
Common assessments are used to adjust curricula and instruction. Students receive actionable feedback; however, the feedback is not always understandable and meaningful.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of the assessment calendar indicates that the school is collecting many forms of data including Degrees of Reading Power (DRA), end-of-chapter unit exams in all subjects and Performance Based Assessment (PBA) on all grades in order to analyze the data and make revisions. Recently analyzing all data collected, a school report called “Data Analysis Findings” with instructional implications was created, and identified target populations. An end-of-analysis looking at student performance and implications was also analyzed by teachers to determine if the performance-based question for the unit was actually aligned to what they had intended to measure.

- A review of student work in classes and on bulletin boards reveals that while students are provided with actionable feedback, it is not meaningful feedback as it is often at the lowest leverage point. For example, a student rubric which reminded students “to use commas and other punctuation marks to organize your ideas” listed the student score as 2.4375. On the student work next to it the teacher gave the student feedback of “proof read to make sure you use capitalization and punctuation” and reflected a score of 1.625. Peer assessment sheets included the same remarks on punctuation as the feedback to fellow classmates. During student interviews, students spoke about punctuation as a definite next step and could not articulate what the rubric grading system meant.

- Students were observed working with rubrics and checklists of different kinds such as “Our Summarizing Guide”, an “informative writing rubric”, a math content-standard rubric, glow and grow charts, peer assessments and self-assessment checklists such as a “criteria for success” chart.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Developing

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for teachers using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and are developing training for teachers. School leaders and staff are developing expectations that are connected to career and college readiness.

Impact
A system of accountability for teachers based upon the Danielson *Framework* and feedback to families regarding student progress toward meeting expectations are evolving.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's instructional focus is designing coherent instruction. The principal stated that she believes students learn best when there is a clear and focused, intended outcome and teaching point for the lesson and students know what they will learn and why. This expectation is clearly reflected in teacher feedback, for example, one teacher observation stated, "As we discussed…[you are responsible for] ensuring that the teaching point you develop explicitly states what the learning is." The observation states that as a result of the teaching point not being clear, "…your students were confused as to what you wanted them to do."

- Parents stated that they are apprised of student performance via progress reports, teacher meetings, letters sent home, the Tuesday Parent Engagement nights and through the online program *Class Dojo*. They indicated that teachers were always accessible and supportive. Parents stated that although they could easily see how well their student performed on a certain task or assessment, they were not aware of the grade level expectations. One parent asked, "Is there some booklet that can tell me what my child needs to know or be doing in both math and reading by the end of the grade?"

- Two parents stated that they had been told by teachers that their child was advanced. They stated that when possible, the teachers tried to send extra homework with the student. One parent stated, "My child does the extra homework packet in one night and then has to wait a whole week for more work." When another parent asked her why she did not meet with the teacher about this, the parent responded, "My child is one in a class and I can't ask her to do all this work just for my child. I need to do some research on how I can help to push my child along."

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Developing

Findings
Across classrooms, teaching strategies (including questioning and scaffolds) inconsistently provide multiple entry points. Across classrooms student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking.

Impact
Not all students, especially English Language Learners, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and, therefore, not able to demonstrate higher order thinking and participation through discussion and student work.

Supporting Evidence

- In a grade 4 social studies class on the Ice Age, students worked on a bubble map with the bubble in the center labeled “hardship” and on the borders were the words “shelter”, “food”, and “safe”. Students had to, “Write a story about an Ice Age family crossing Beringia”, and “Tell of the challenges on their journey using information from the text.” Students were observed in conversations using the academic vocabulary for the unit and making inferences on the struggles that the Ice man faced. However, a review of the work revealed very little writing. In one group, students were engaged in a discussion about the work. One student stated that in the Ice Age man struggled to stay warm. Another student challenged her by asking, “Do you think that or do you know that? Where does it say that in the text? Remember this is text-based. Nowhere does it say that in the text.” The other student replied, “I know, a lot of the questions we have to answer cannot be found in the text. This text is no good for this work because it does not have the information that we need, but it is the only one we have and you cannot answer what you think even though we know that they must have been cold.”

- In a grade 2 science class on roots, students were drafting a non-fiction essay on different types of root systems including buttress, prop, and pencil and knee roots. Charts in the room listed different types of bacteria such as archaebacteria and eubacteria. One student declared, “I am an expert. I can tell you everything about the seven kingdoms of classification.” as she flipped through the books on her table and used the academic vocabulary to explain the variations in these kingdoms. However, not all students were appropriately engaged or able to demonstrate their understanding or own their learning as evident at the next table where one teacher sat with English Language Learners and translated the book into Spanish and simply showed students where on the English language organizer to place the statement that she had just read.

- In a grade 2 class reading *Charlotte’s Web*, students worked in pairs and were charged with supporting their neighbors. They had graphic organizers, a focus question, accountable talk stems and charts to support conversation. The teacher reminded students to use the charts and pictures displayed, work from previous conversations on this book. However, in a grade 4 class studying bone structure, students were asked to open their notebook to a clean page and answer the question; “Can a dinosaur leg resemble ours? Why not?” There were no charts or pictures displayed in the room. A review of student notebooks revealed that students had only copied the question and had not provided any answer.