



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

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

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. X811

Secondary School X811

**1434 Longfellow Avenue
Bronx
NY 10459**

Principal: Rose Nieves Greene

**Date of review: March 29, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Robin Cohen**

The School Context

P.S. X811 is a secondary school with 646 students from grade 7 through grade 12. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 2% Asian, 34% Black, 59% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 29% English Language Learners and 98% students with disabilities. Boys account for 64% of the students enrolled and girls account for 36%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 92.0%.

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	Focus	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	Additional Findings	Well Developed

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Well Developed

Findings

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classes reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best as embodied in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Lessons are well designed with essential questions and student specific support to ensure all students have the opportunity to produce meaningful work products.

Impact

Discussions at teacher team meetings have fostered teacher collaboration in cultivating a common language to describe best teaching practices. Teaching strategies engage all students in challenging tasks that meet the needs of all students to produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Throughout the school, there is a consistent belief, both stated and written, that students learn best when they engage in activities that address different modalities, foster independence, and promote high levels of questioning as they relate to real life situations. This belief is a direct result of teacher teams defining and fostering best teacher practices across classrooms visited that are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and instructional shifts. They reflect the consistent use of scaffolds, interactive activities and lesson adaptations to challenge and push the thinking of all students in the various populations. In a 12:1:1 high school class, students viewed a power point lesson teaching the skill of editing and revising. Throughout the mini-lesson, the teacher asked a variety of leveled clarifying questions to verify student understanding. Students practiced the skill in two small groups, based on their cognitive ability and the need for minimal or frequent prompts then, worked independently to complete their checklist. Students from group 1 used a checklist with pictorial cues; group 2 used a checklist with written steps.
- Lessons are designed to challenge and push the thinking of all students in different service categories. Lessons include differentiated activities, multiple entry points through leveled texts, graphic organizers such as KWL (Know, Want to know, and Learned) charts, first and next sequential charts, and compare and contrast diagrams. Teachers use the workshop model in designing their lessons and the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), as an approach to ensure access to the curriculum for all students. Student work products, writing notebooks, and bulletin board displays provide evidence of high quality work. In a 12:1:1 high school class, the lesson addressed the Common Core standard “making connections among and distinctions between individuals.” Students read two articles, differentiated to meet the cognitive level of the students, about Gandhi and Martin Luther King. The teacher asked the students to think about one thing they learned about both leaders. Students were then asked to, “Think about how Gandhi and Dr. King were similar, and how were they different.” Students shared their thoughts verbally, then created sentence strips and placed them on the class Compare and Contrast chart. This activity asks students to “infer” and addresses Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) level 2 questions.
- All teachers received extensive professional development on Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK). Teachers incorporate each student’s level of questioning into their lesson plans and include essential questions to cultivate during the lesson. Teachers work with paraprofessionals in understanding DOK and include specific questions to ask during small-group instruction. In addition, teachers and speech teachers work together to develop cognitively challenging questioning techniques.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

Across all classrooms, the school uses common assessments and rubrics aligned to its curricula to analyze student work, make adjustments to curricula at the team and classroom levels, and focus on extending the depth of real-time student data analysis.

Impact

The strategic creation and use of assessments and rubrics by all teachers allows for ongoing analysis of student performance and adjustments to classroom practices. Student self-assessment tools guide instructional decisions and provide clear learning goals.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers believe that assessment data is an effective approach to drive instruction, create Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals, and monitor student learning. Following each unit of study, assessments are administered to capture student progress for targeted skills. In all classes visited, student binders are used to maintain varied data such as vocational assessments, monthly unit assessments, and student work samples.
- Across all classrooms visited, teachers and para-professionals record data daily and monitor student progress. Teachers use strategies such as: *DOK*-leveled questions, exit slips, end-of-unit assessments, and provide time for students to self-assess using teacher team-designed, three-tiered rubrics and checklists based on specific tasks. This practice fosters shared accountability for each student. In a 12:1:1 high school class, a student used his checklist to evaluate his work and wrote, "like the new words I used, my writing sounds fluent, I found evidence in the text, I used correct punctuation."
- Teachers participate in progress monitoring every other Friday to determine if students are showing growth in meeting their goals. Teacher teams selected key standards and instructional shifts to focus on, and identified the essential skills. The school's curriculum maps reflect pre-assessment day and the progress-monitoring day. For example in March, the unit skill was sequencing. Teachers utilized *Attainment's* pre-assessment sequencing checklist. Data analyses and review of student work products provide teachers the opportunity to reflect on their own practice and to further develop rigorous and challenging tasks. In addition, teachers use data to purposefully group students for targeted instruction that leads to achievement of IEP goals for all students. For example, in a 6:1:1 class, students were learning to sequence the steps required for the scientific method. The students were grouped based on their understanding of sequencing skills.
- Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) data reveals that from fall 2014 to spring 2015, students have shown growth in all content areas. There is a 6.8% increase in reading scores, 8.7% increase in writing scores, 10% increase in math scores, 7.3% increase in social-emotional scores, and 5.1% increase in career development scores.
- Teachers stated, "The school's focus is the design of a real-time *iCloud data collection system*, so that all teachers can immediately access student performance in a different classroom, such as art or science." The intent is to specifically create and extend formative assessments which are designed to inform minute-to-minute decisions by teachers during instruction to make on-the-spot adjustments in the classroom.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

All curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and purposefully integrate the instructional shifts. The school continues to deepen, expand and refine their curriculum maps and units of study, using student work and data, to ensure a range of learning experiences for all students.

Impact

Strategic curricular decisions build coherence across grades and subject areas that are cognitively appropriate and challenging, engaging all students in academics and life skills. All students have access to curricula and tasks that are relevant, foster and support student independence, academic and behavioral growth, and college and career readiness skills.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's curriculum teams make purposeful choices about curricula, with input from staff, based on student performance and periodic assessments such as Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI). The school has invested in *Attainment* as its primary curriculum, ensuring instructional cohesion across all sites. The inclusion students use the same materials as their peers and prepare for Regents exams.
- Throughout all classrooms visited, emphasis was noted in making content relative to real life situations, addressing the school-wide focus on vocational training. In preparation for career readiness, many students are given the opportunity to participate in work programs such as: New York Public Libraries, Bainbridge and Pelham Parkway Nursing Homes, Gap Outlet, CVS, Staples and Lehman College. Presently, 90% of the graduates have post-secondary placements. Data collected while students are at work programs allows the teacher and the transition team to help guide students as they move towards their careers.
- Unique to the school is their Horticulture Program. The school developed an indoor/outdoor facility to educate students about healthy eating habits, issues concerning the environment, and developing essential work skills. The program includes a farmer's market staffed by students, a hydroponics grow lab, managed by a 6:1:1 autism class, a culinary arts program and a horticultural cluster teacher. School leaders stated approximately 225 students participate in the horticulture program.
- The school's curriculum teams are very vigilant in planning and refining the school's monthly instructional guides/curriculum maps and units of study based on the maps provided by *Attainment*. Teachers use student work, daily monitoring of student progress, data from SANDI, and student self-assessments to refine units, support targeted instruction and develop tasks that allow students to increase independence. The school's curriculum maps and units of study are organized according to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles and include performance tasks to expose students to higher-order thinking skills. Embedding with key Common Core Learning Standards, Career Development and Occupational Studies (CDOS) standards, the unit skill being taught, and DOK leveled questions, curriculum maps are created across grades and subject areas. To support the diversity of the student population, a three-tiered system was designed, thereby, addressing all service categories. This design supports the diverse needs of the student population with differentiated performance tasks ensuring access to rigorous curricula across disciplines.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Well Developed
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Findings

School leaders have created a culture for learning, via the use of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, which consistently communicates high expectations for instruction and provides opportunities for professional learning and support. Teachers and staff systematically communicate a unified set of high expectations and provide focused and effective supports for all learners.

Impact

Embedded structures that support the school's high expectations result in effective academic and personal growth of students, who take ownership and are prepared for the next level, and adults in a culture of mutual accountability.

Supporting Evidence

- High expectations are consistently communicated to all staff through a variety of means, both verbally and in writing such as: the revised staff, student, and parent handbooks, emails, instructional memos, faculty meetings, and collaborative team meetings as stated by teachers. School leaders and staff work as a team in study groups supporting best practices identified in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. In addition, school leaders and staff work together to develop and plan for workshops such as: linking assessment to instruction, lesson planning, differentiation, Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS), and writing meaningful Individualized Education Plans (IEP). Staff members hold themselves accountable by submitting feedback from workshops to inform future workshops and activities. Paraprofessionals are supported and receive training in PBIS, *Attainment*, data collection and *ReThink*, a program in which videos of classroom instruction are presented and then discussed.
- High expectations for classwork and behavior are modeled by all staff seen in classrooms visited. Students are reminded of academic and behavioral expectations for instruction as lessons are introduced. Unique to the school is their daily "Gotcha" program with "shout-outs" highlighting positive behaviors of students throughout the building. Skills such as self-awareness and self-management are actively taught through their PBIS and the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs, thereby, addressing college and career readiness skills. During classroom visits and the student meeting, students exhibited and stated they are aware of the school's PBIS expectations (Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be Responsible) and play a crucial role in designing their classroom charter/rules. Students stated how they "earn" privileges and rewards as a result of meeting the expectations, thereby, fostering student's ownership of their behaviors.
- Students are encouraged to participate in their transition planning as it relates to their IEP goals, possible career choices, and living situations. The school provides and supports ongoing communication with students and their families to deepen their understanding of college and career readiness expectations. The school has established transition teams and counselors to share information and continue to develop appropriate social behaviors. Staff members consistently support students with clear next steps assuring student accountability for their goals and ensuring their ownership and responsibility in the learning process. For example, student academic self-assessment rubrics, leveled using the school's three-tiered system, ensures student understanding and ownership of their learning.

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

All teachers are participate in inquiry-based professional learning communities that consistently examine data, student work, and instructional practice. Embedded leadership structures encourage effective teacher leadership in making key decisions.

Impact

The work of teacher teams strengthen teacher practice ensuring a shared commitment to attaining school goals resulting in school-wide instructional coherence and increased student progress. Teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- The school supports three collaborative inquiry-based teams meeting three times weekly, three out of four weeks every month. The fourth week, they meet with their supervisor for further professional development opportunities requested by staff and/or initiated by school leaders. In addition, Professional Learning Communities (PLC) focus on addressing teachers needs as they pertain to curriculum and pedagogy.
- Teacher teams use multiple sources of data including student work, Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) baseline and end-of-year assessments, and *Attainment* unit assessments. In addition, teachers use social/behavior assessment data to create a complete picture of each student and understand trends across the school, grade, classes and individual students. Curriculum maps, units of study and lesson plans demonstrate data-driven planning aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and highlight the instructional shifts. For example, teacher teams analyzed the SANDI scores of students in the most restricted environment. The 12:1:4 population showed a 9.7% increase in reading, a 14% increase in writing, a 13% increase in math, and 10.7% in social-emotional measures. The 6:1:1 students had a 9.5% increase in math, and a 6.5% increase in career development.
- Team members suggest collegial inter-visitation based on teachers' stated area of need to strengthen pedagogical practices. Teachers stated this form of professional development provides them with opportunities to observe specific teaching strategies and classroom structure. Teachers designed an Intervisitation Request Form, noting the instructional strategy to observe. To support this initiative, school leaders compiled a Classroom Teacher Strength Profile list providing teacher's identified strengths as a menu of intervisitation.
- The school embeds leadership structures within its day-to-day operations Teachers take on leadership roles such as instructional coaches and mentors. The school participates in the Master/Model Teacher Leadership program. Presently, the school has one master teacher and three model teachers. Through this program, lead teachers in collaboration with school leaders, facilitate weekly inquiry meetings. School leaders stated, "This program has provided teachers the opportunity to expand their impact beyond their classroom, by sharing best practices and facilitating deeper collaboration."