Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Sunset Park Avenues Elementary School
Elementary 15K516
4222 4 AVENUE
BROOKLYN
NY, 11232

Principal: JILL SMITH

Dates of review: December 4, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Kristine Mustillo
The School Context

Sunset Park Avenues Elementary School is an elementary school with 197 students from Pre-Kindergarten through grade 1. The school population is comprised of 0% Black, 62% Hispanic, 2% White, and 36% Asian students. The student body includes 74% English language learners 10% special education students. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-14 was 95%.

School Quality Criteria

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

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

Findings
The school consistently communicates high expectations to staff and families around student expectations and success.

Impact
Mutual accountability results in students developing strong foundational skills in literacy, mathematics, and social emotional development.

Supporting Evidence

- As a new school, there will be ongoing hiring of teachers. Each summer the principal revisits the school's mission and core values with teachers during summer planning. Teachers participate in the hiring process to determine elements of the hiring rubric by which candidates are assessed. The process includes interview, writing sample and a demonstration lesson.

- Teachers collaborate with the principal on personal goals aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Feedback and professional development are specifically designed to promote teacher growth. Professional development includes support from a Teacher's College consultant along with calendar days and focuses on maintaining a rigorous curriculum while supporting a student population comprised of over 80% English Language Learners. In school coaching and network support focus on improving instructional practice.

- Parents receive information regularly around school events, class activities and student performance. While newsletters inform parents of the current units of study, First Fridays are opportunities for parents to explore the curriculum alongside their child in classrooms each month. Parents receive materials to use at home to support their child and to strengthen literacy and math skills.

- Approximately thirty-eight percent of kindergarten and first grade English language learners are on track to reach or exceed grade level in literacy and mathematics by June. School-wide, sixty percent of students are performing on or above grade level. These are well above city-wide averages and evidence that the school is closing the achievement gap.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings
Across classrooms teaching practices give students multiple entry points into curricula. Student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact
While scaffolds are built in for all students, extensions can be strategically put in place so that all students, including higher performing students are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- Classroom environments contain labeling and a large amount of visual supports, which students refer to regularly during daily instruction. Students have individual cards with text and pictures to identify which reading strategy they are practicing during independent/guided reading.

- Across classrooms teachers regularly provide discussion opportunities for students. In a first grade classroom a teacher was working with students on identifying cues the author gives to bring attention to important words in non-fiction. When coming to a highlighted word the teacher had students stop, turn "knee to knee" and "eye to eye" to discuss why the word might be important to the content.

- Across classrooms teachers use the workshop model to provide modeling, guided practice and independent practice. In a kindergarten classroom students worked with the teacher on a shared writing activity extending writing from labels to sentences and phrases.
Additional Findings

<table>
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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**  
School-wide common formative and summative assessments are used in ELA and mathematics and analyzed in teacher teams.

**Impact**  
Teachers have a clear portrait of student mastery and adjust pacing and instruction to meet the individual learning needs of each student.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school administers common assessments in ELA and mathematics, using Teacher’s College benchmark assessments in reading and writing and Engage for math.

- Formative and summative data is tracked and monitored by teacher teams and the principal. Classroom data is used to inform student groupings and instructional next steps. School-wide data is used to determine Response to Intervention and other student services.

- Students receive feedback and self-reflect through the use of checklists with large print and visuals. Student color in boxes on strategies they have mastered. Each student also has an individual notebook with the conference notes from all teachers who interact with the student, noting what skill was worked on and what the next steps are.
Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum  
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
Curriculum is Common Core aligned in all content areas and includes rigorous tasks with higher order tasks.

Impact
Student work across content shows that students have multiple means to access content and express understanding.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses Teachers College Reading and Writing for literacy instruction and Engage NY for math. Teacher teams work collaboratively in school and with external staff to ensure curricula is rigorous and accessible to all students. Specifically, language supports are embedded across units of study to ensure access for the English Language Learner population which makes up over 70% of kindergarten and first graders.

- Across classrooms teachers provided students with multiple ways to demonstrate understanding. Math problems ask students to solve linear equations and create two visual representations. Students also have the opportunity to work with manipulatives and engage in mathematical conferences with teachers.

- Each unit of study contains word work in content and academic vocabulary. Each unit plans for trips, guided conversations, and center activities in order to immerse student in content and provide connections to the real world.

- Teachers plan within a workshop model and make units relevant to students. FOSS and Teacher's College are both strong language heavy programs. Teachers work to ensure students are exposed to rigorous content but modify units to make them more relevant to students' life. For scientific observation in the month of October, teachers changed to a pumpkin study.
Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development | Rating: Well Developed

Findings
All teachers engage in professional collaborations around teacher practice and student work analysis.

Impact
The work of teacher teams strengthens teacher capacity and results in improved student performance.

Supporting Evidence
- All teachers are engaged in inquiry work and lead professional cycles. Teacher teams meet several times each week and each teacher leads a 6-8 week professional learning cycle. Teachers work in consultations with the Teacher’s College staff developer and principal. Leaders create agendas, facilitate discussions, and ensure outcomes are shared on google docs and at in person forums.

- Teacher teams use protocols to look at student work. They group students by performance and look for commonalities in the group around strengths and next steps. This information is used to plan future lessons for whole group and small groups of students. It is also used to reflect on curricula and make changes to pacing, delivery or supplemental content as needed.

- Upon analyses of student reading assessments, teachers identified a need for increased word study. Teachers met with TC staff developer and created a revised schedule, allowing for 20 minutes of direct word work instruction but also increased and strategized questioning and discussion opportunities.