Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Joseph Lanzetta School
Elementary-Middle M096
216 East 120th Street
Manhattan
New York 10035

Principal: David Pretto

Date of review: February 25, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Alexandra Estrella
The School Context

PS 96 Joseph Lanzetta School is an elementary school with 464 students from grade pre-k through grade 8. The school population comprises 28% Black, 69% Hispanic, 2% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 18% English language learners and 29% special education students. Boys account for 53% of the students enrolled and girls account for 47%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 89.0%.

School Quality Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>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>Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>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>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Culture</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems for Improvement</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
School leaders and faculty communicate a culture of high expectations for teaching, professional collaboration, and consistent communication focused on best teaching practices and supporting the advancement of learning.

Impact
Across the school community, a professional learning opportunity for all stakeholders conveys a set of high expectations for teaching and learning and ensures mutual accountability for all students to meet and exceed expectations.

Supporting Evidence
- School leaders consistently communicated high expectations for teaching and learning through regular trainings and coaching teachers around best practices aligned to the Danielson framework that are consistent with the development needs of students. This takes place through modeling, coaching cycles, and daily debriefs where actionable feedback for shifts in teaching practice is provided. The school leader and staff hold students accountable for behavioral expectations through the use of the PBIS structure which has been expanded to be inclusive of the entire school. The school leader also communicates high expectations to staff through the staff handbook, staff weekly professional development meetings, and through emailing feedback from observations commending positive work and identifying areas of focus.

- Teachers share that school leaders support their development through frequent professional learning focused on high expectations for all students through utilization of the Mindset model, intervisitations (on-site and off-site), and ongoing feedback, allowing them to meet the schools rigorous set of expectations for teaching and learning. Teachers communicate the impact of the growth Mindset book, which has facilitated the creation and utilization of effort rubrics where students are allowed to gauge and monitor their progress and “perseverance” toward identified goals. Through the Mindset culture established, students use positive supportive language and hold themselves accountable for mastering objectives and completing tasks.

- Parents communicated that information is provided to them through workshops facilitated by the teachers that helps them support their children at home with Common Core Learning Standards. A parent of a student with disabilities discussed how a teacher walked her through the IEP process, informs her consistently about her child’s progress and identifies learning goals for her child and next steps to reach the goals that can be supported at home.

- Students communicated teachers consistently provide them with feedback and provide samples of student work that show teacher feedback, student reflections, and student revisions made as a result of targeted feedback provided. Teachers offer students after school tutoring, lunch and learns, advisory and Saturday academy for targeted students to receive additional support. Students communicated, “We use a lot of DBQ’s. Teachers are always there and challenge us with harder work because they see our potential.”
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: | Developing |

Findings
School is in the process of aligning curriculum to the Common Core and the instructional shifts. Teachers are starting to refine academic tasks using student work and Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) assessment data to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

Impact
Curricula are becoming Common Core aligned and beginning to promote college and career readiness for all learners. Curricula adjustments and modifications beginning to ensure that all student needs are met and that tasks cognitively engage all learners.

Supporting Evidence
- Teachers are in the process of aligning units of study, some of which already include content from Go Math, ReadyGen, CMP3 and Expeditionary Learning, with the Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, school leaders and teachers are in the process of ensuring that the units are responsive to student data and inclusive of strategies for at risk students and English language learners (ELLs) by incorporating student data and modifications tied to specific students or groups of students.

- Teachers are starting to include modifications of tasks to include scaffolds that support students’ individualized needs as evidenced by sample curricula maps. Social studies and science teachers design tasks that mirror MOSL and utilize text sets for students to learn content. Text sets allow for student choice and deeper extension.

- As the school transitions their work to align to the instructional shifts, some lesson plans emphasize higher-order thinking and provide a menu of strategies or leveled resources. For example, a 7th grade social studies lesson plan showed the use of key vocabulary, higher order questions, graphic organizers, and document-based activities to support students to build a better understanding of the subject matter.

- Curriculum and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills inconsistently across grade and subject areas for ELLs and students with disabilities. Minimal differentiation and multiple entry points were provided across classrooms. Most students had the same assignment and product outcome expectations with limited choice options to meet their individual academic needs.
**Additional Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Instructional practices across classrooms did not consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula with challenging tasks to engage all learners. Furthermore, high-level student work products and discussions were not yet evident across all classrooms.

**Impact**

Lack of scaffolding limited the engagement of some learners and opportunities for high levels of student thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms there were limited scaffolds for various subgroups, missing opportunities for multiple entry points. In the 5th grade social studies class, all students were asked to establish a definition of custom and tradition, and by the end of the lesson they were to connect it to the *Esperanza Rising* they were reading. However, the tiered activity given to students only differentiated the topic of research (land, people, animals) and did not support the objective or possess a level of complexity to demonstrate higher-order thinking. In the 8th grade science class, students were asked to figure out the structure of DNA and why it is important. All students were provided the same article to read and create T-Charts while working in groups. Some students completed the tasks and were ready to tackle a more challenging task, yet were not provided with extensions.

- During various classroom visits, the academic needs and supports of the high achieving learners were not being met or addressed to promote and push higher order thinking. In an 8th grade English language arts (ELA) class, students were asked to engage in a discussion using the close reading approach to determine the author’s point of view or purpose in the informational text “Equal Rights for Women” by Shirley Chisholm. Students received the same line of DOK level 2 questions and with no upward spiraling to engage them in deeper discussion about the text. They were asked, “What is prejudice? What does Shirley Chisholm mean by the happy little homemaker and the contented old darkey? What is Shirley Chisholm thinking and saying about discrimination of women?” All student groups utilized the same protocol to answer the same questions and a few groups completed the task early. Once students were done with the discussion, they had no extension questions or higher-order questions to continue the conversation and were left waiting while other student groups finished.

- In the 7th grade social studies class students were asked to read and analyze a primary source to identify and evaluate an issue at the Constitutional Convention. The teacher asked a series of level 2 recall questions that did not represent use of the Hess matrix, such as “What was the constitutional congress? What were some of the issues in the new nation?” and did not scaffold up to ensure students were challenged. Also, the task were not differentiated to meet the needs of English language learners and SWDs.
Findings
The school’s faculty has started to use common assessments across subject areas to determine student progress toward goals. Ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment were inconsistent across classrooms.

Impact
Data analysis based on common assessments, checks for understanding, and student self-assessment is beginning to inform guided adjustments to units, lessons and instruction to better meet the needs of students.

Supporting Evidence
- During the 4th grade teacher team meeting, teachers analyzed student work and identified target areas of growth for students using the LASW protocol. Teachers noticed that in order to impact a larger group of students, they would need to look at multiple student work samples rather than just one. For example, teachers analyzed the mid-unit quiz data and noticed that the students were only including basic details in their writing, but were not citing evidence or incorporating effective topic sentences. As a result, teachers decided to utilize graphic organizers and exemplars to support students in their writing.

- Teachers are starting to utilize a variety of assessments to monitor student progress in all content areas. For example, teachers utilize running records, conferencing notes, exit slips, and Measures of Student Learning data to modify units to support student needs. This was evident in some of the lesson and unit plans reviewed.

- Teachers are also starting to utilize rubrics, checklists, Post-Its with feedback or next steps, one-on-one conferences with notes, and exit tickets to monitor student progress and check for understanding during lessons. A review of teachers’ conference notes indicated that in some cases, formative assessment leads to instructional adjustments. During instructional visits, there was minimal evidence of adjustments being made when opportunities where provided. For example, during a group discussion in an 8th grade ELA class, some students had completed the task and were ready to engage in deeper higher level discussion, but the instructor did not infuse opportunities to assess student learning consistently, thus missing an opportunity to provide students with directed instruction to challenge them at their level.
Findings
Teachers participate on structured teacher teams targeting the school’s instructional focus and lead professional learning for colleagues around the implementation of the Common Core and researched-based teaching practices.

Impact
Participation by all teachers on structured teacher teams has resulted in school-wide efforts to effectively implement the school’s instructional focus, thus continuously strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers and promoting improved achievement of all learners.

Supporting Evidence
- During both teacher team meetings, teachers articulated that school leaders promote an environment whereby teacher team discussions and professional development, led by teachers around the book Mindset, drive the work of school improvement efforts and establish a collaborative culture focused on student achievement. The school provides many opportunities for distributive leadership through the various leadership teams within the school including a Leadership Cabinet, PBIS Team, Special Ed Teacher Leader, IEP Team, and a Consultation Committee.

- During the teacher team meetings, teachers utilize a protocol to analyze student data. The meeting was facilitated by a designated team leader and there are defined roles. Teachers discussed and shared targeted strategies to use with students during instruction that transferred into the classroom lesson as evidenced during the classroom visit. The 4th grade teacher discussed the necessity of having students engage in challenging word problems within the Go Math! curriculum and discussed strategies to build student capacity through scaffolded instruction and utilization of manipulatives. During the classroom visit, the teacher implemented the strategies that were discussed to provide students with support needed to master the objective.

- Teachers are divided into grade bands that meet on a monthly basis and extend their work during professional development time on Mondays and Tuesdays to engage in inquiry work. The focus this year is around increasing rigor utilizing the Hess matrix to infuse higher order questions to promote high levels of student thinking, and work around shifting mindset. Grade teams meet weekly analyze student work and data as evidence by the 4th grade team where teachers examined student work to determine next steps for student support.