Quality Review Report

2014-2015

P.S. 009

Elementary-Middle Q009

58-74 57th Street
Queens
NY 11378

Principal: Robert Wojnarowski

Date of review: March 25-26, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Beverly Ffolkes-Bryant, Ed.D.
# The School Context

P.S. 009 is an elementary-middle school with 616 students from kindergarten through grade 8. The school population comprises 34% Black, 36% Hispanic, 18% White, 2% American Indian/Alaskan Native and 10% Asian students. The student body includes 16% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 68% of the students enrolled and girls account for 32%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 85.5%.

# School Quality Criteria

## Instructional Core

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
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## Systems for Improvement

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<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
The school conveys high expectations to students and parents. Workshops and performance updates keep families apprised of student progress towards independence and career readiness.

Impact
Structures that support the school’s high expectations build buy-in and accountability amongst staff, students and their families, thus providing a clear path towards increased student achievement, independence and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence
- At Individual Educational Plan (IEP) meetings, teachers explain the student’s goals and the focus of the curriculum, and they reinforce expectations regarding work ethic, behavior and attendance, providing parents with strategies to help their children study and meet performance targets. As a result, there is a consistent message to families on expectations and their roles in assisting their children to advance.

- A quarterly published newsletter is a collaborative effort produced by cohort teams and administration that communicates the consistency of the instructional practices across all classrooms.

- Analysis of parent responses from the last Learning Environment Survey indicating a low engagement score led to the school’s creation of new forms of communication. A parent handbook outlines the Power of Choice program as well as the positive behavior supports that the school utilizes to influence improved student outcomes. It also includes site-specific information for communicating with site supervisors, related service personnel, medical and teaching staff. It explains how the school now communicates to families daily as well as the code of discipline along with cell phone and attendance policies. It also identifies which staff to contact about instruction, IEP development and parent engagement. Parents mentioned how they appreciate this handbook at the parent meeting. This ongoing communication exemplifies the school’s conveyance of high standards and expectations.
Findings
While pedagogy provides instructional supports, the use of strategic entry points and extensions that foster deep reasoning in student work products varies across the school. While students are engaged in some classrooms, teachers often miss opportunities to challenge students at their level, and to ask questions that elicit higher-order thinking to extend their learning.

Impact
The uneven provision of multiple entry points and extensions limits students’ ability to learn from one another and maximize academic growth. Since pedagogy is inconsistent, some students experience rigorous classes that push their thinking and other students do not.

Supporting Evidence
- The use of protocols to examine student work in teacher teams is just taking root. It is evident from observed lessons that teacher leaders need additional support in using these protocols effectively and in working collaboratively with colleagues to refine and raise the rigor of academic tasks to more fully engage students and not have them merely comply. A significant number of students said that the work they were doing in school was too easy.

- Whereas the school ascribes to inquiry as the most important vehicle for learning, the practice of providing students with multiple opportunities to fully engage in learning activities is limited. Few teachers demonstrated the ability to offer a strong lesson with multiple entry points for students. Many observed lessons consisted of whole class instruction, with one activity for all students regardless of their performance level or learning style, with limited opportunities for student interaction and dialogue.

- Currently, teaching practices vary widely across the school. Some teachers use data strategically to inform pedagogy and provide multiple entry levels for students, but the practice is not consistent. In some classrooms, students were unchallenged and passive and some teachers articulated no or little use of data. For example, in two 6:1:1 classes that were supposed to be doing an activity about the class news, students in one class were doing random math workbook pages while the teacher was writing the outline for the class news. The other class was copying the class news in their notebooks and the teacher asked those students who finished to copy their vocabulary words ten times.
Additional Findings

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
Students benefit from a curriculum aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact
The school’s curricular decisions build coherence and promote independence for all learners. The curricular modifications and refinement of academic tasks utilizing student work and data enables diverse learners to have access and be cognitively engaged in their own learning.

Supporting Evidence
- After administration analyzed last year’s standardized test results in English Language Arts (ELA) and math, as well as student work, the school found that students needed a more rigorous curriculum aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. The school purchased the Ready Gen and Codex ELA curricula for elementary and middle school, respectively, and the GoMath! and Connections math curricula after attending the district’s core curriculum showcase. The school has modified and refined all four programs based on the needs of their students in terms of closure lessons, which summarize each unit. These programs have supported student progress based on the unit assessments, which indicate improvements in student performance.

- Teacher teams supplement the gaps found in the ELA and math programs they use from various resources. For example, one of the annex sites utilizes the Treasures ELA curriculum and that program’s website for supplemental materials. Teachers also use the Attainment and Equals math program because of the manipulatives that it provides. The principal talked about how the teacher teams’ analyses of instructional materials have resulted in the identification of appropriate supplementary materials that provide targeted support for students.

- The school uses each publisher’s curriculum maps, which list the addressed Common Core Learning Standards. In addition, there are maps in place that include reading skills and strategies that teachers should focus upon for particular weeks. They also note the associated Common Core Standards. The school emphasizes the teaching of reading and writing with feedback from teachers and alignment with the Common Core standards through the use of Ready Gen as the primary tool in the elementary school’s literacy curriculum.
**Findings**
Administrators and teachers use common assessments to monitor school-level needs, student progress and to adjust curricula and instruction. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

**Impact**
The school’s use of data analysis and progress monitoring tools combined with actionable feedback allows teachers to evaluate students’ progress towards goals and adjust instruction and resources to meet the learning needs of students.

**Supporting Evidence**
- Weekly teacher team meetings provide a forum where the analyses of assessment results take place. The assessments include the Scantron Performance Series, Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI), Formative Assessment of Standards Task (FAST) and Brigance, which measures student growth as well as the student’s social and communication skills. A central instructional team comprised of administration, data specialists, site liaisons and unit coordinators monitors and evaluates the work of teams, resulting in successful leveraging of positive school wide change.

- Almost all teachers value SANDI assessment data, which captures students’ present levels of performance on the IEP. It assesses all areas of student performance. This information is integrated into teachers’ lesson plans to determine student groups as well as to prepare standards-based classroom instruction. Teachers also use this assessment to measure incremental progress with frequent periodic multiple measures assessments. As a result, teachers, students and engaged parents are aware of students’ progress towards their IEP goals.

- The previous Quality Review cited the school’s use of a wide range of rubrics for defined populations. The school followed recommendations and created a standard set of rubrics for specific curricula areas based on the rate of performance on modified standard objectives. These efforts support student alternate and standard self-assessment for early childhood, elementary and middle school. The objectives remain standard but modified ratings in three categories indicate degree of functionality, face icons, checks in various colors and numerics. This provides meaningful information on instructional practices, which further informs instruction to enhance the full engagement of students and ownership of their own learning.
Findings
Teachers engage in structured, inquiry-based collaborations to examine student work, plan together and visit each other’s classrooms to share ideas and best practices. Leadership structures provide a means for teachers to have input on key decisions about curricula and teaching practice.

Impact
The work of teacher teams has resulted in improved pedagogy and student progress on assessments. Shared leadership structures are effectively building capacity within the school that is improving student learning.

Supporting Evidence
- The principal used data from observation reports and the scores of students on previous assessments to identify “master teachers” to serve as site liaisons. These teachers attend the district’s workshops and meetings and are responsible for turn-keying the information at their sites. Site liaisons also mentor and provide workshops on various curricular areas to staff as well as parents.

- Teachers share best practices with one another within their teams as they look at student work. At the grade 2 6:1:1 teacher team meeting, teachers were sharing how they adjusted their anchor text in the Attainment curriculum based on the students they taught and their needs. One teacher mentioned how the Attainment program limits her students’ IEP goals, which is why she added having the students do story maps to the text. Teacher teams also meet to understand the expectations of the various cohorts to inform their curriculum planning.

- A majority of full-time staff members are involved in inquiry teams. Teams aggregate and review multiple forms of data facilitated by the data specialist to target and track a specific population of students that are either low performing or not showing adequate academic progress. Teachers at a math inquiry team meeting shared the results of a math practice test on graphing and analyzed the results compared to the students’ learning goals. One teacher shared that both of her two inquiry students could create graphs but were having trouble putting in the information. Collaboratively, teachers offered suggestions to help those students while teaching to their learning goals. This creates an effort to boost student performance.