Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Harry Eichler
Elementary 27Q056
86-10 11 4 Street
Queens
NY 11418

Principal: Ann Leiter

Date of review: November 20, 2014
Lead Reviewer: Shirley Wheeler-Massey
# The School Context

Harry Eichler is an Elementary school with 412 students from grade 2 through grade 5. The school population comprises 7% Black, 39% Hispanic, 11% White, and 39% Asian students. The student body includes 12% English language learners and 11% 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 94%.

## 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>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<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>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>Additional Findings</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
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### Systems for Improvement

<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>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>Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
Across the school, grade teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data, student work products and to share teaching strategies. Teacher leaders work collaboratively with school leaders to make curricula and instructional revisions.

Impact
The work of teacher teams has led to increased teacher collaboration, sharing of best practices and the improvement of teacher practice. Teachers’ involvement in key decisions around curriculum and instruction have allowed for engaging learning opportunities for all students that have resulted in student demonstrated success.

Supporting Evidence
- Grade five teachers engage in the analysis of mathematics assessment data and discuss different teaching approaches and strategies to meet the needs of different subgroups on the grade. For example, teachers discussed the need to incorporate specific academic language into their lessons and encourage its use by students in their written and verbal responses.

- Teachers articulated their observations that students are coming with more skills having had one year of mathematics instruction supported by the Go Math program. As a result, teachers were able to modify one of the chapters from last year and eliminate some lessons that students were already secure with.

- During teacher team meetings, teachers expressed how their collaborative work allows them to be reflective in their teaching practices and focus more specifically on students’ specific learning needs. Teachers shared their process for creating tiered mathematics tasks and different scaffolds that support student learning, and allowed many students to demonstrate progress from their beginning of unit 1 assessments in Go Math to the end of unit assessments.

- Within grade teams, teachers take on the role of the Depth of Knowledge or Common Core Learning Standards expert to ensure that unit plans and lessons are aligned and have rigorous tasks and higher order thinking questions. The principal and teachers both shared how they collaboratively work to make adjustments to academic tasks and units based on assessment results in order to make learning more engaging and to increase students’ critical thinking skills.

- Teachers expressed that they feel empowered to share their ideas with school leaders and have flexibility in revising or changing units based on students’ needs. For example, grade five teachers revised a Human Rights unit from Expeditionary Learning to include more real-life connections to the texts and offer more student choice in their end products and presentations.
Area of Focus

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

Findings
Teaching practices across classrooms are aligned to the curricula and reflect the school’s core beliefs around student learning. Teaching strategies include some multiple points of entry, scaffolds and questioning that support student learning.

Impact
As a result of teachers sharing a common belief around student learning, there is coherence across classrooms where most students are actively engaged in their own learning process. Though teaching strategies include the planning and some implementation of multiple entry points and scaffolds to support student learning, high quality supports and extensions were not consistently provided to meet the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence
- While there was evidence of scaffolding strategies to support student learning, more strategic and targeted supports were necessary to address the needs of English language learners and students with disabilities. For example, in one class, while the teacher worked with a small group of English language learners and provided them with sentence starters and definitions to unfamiliar words, the other English language learners within the classroom worked on an independent task with supports that didn’t specifically address or assist them with the task they were engaged in.

- During class visits, students were provided the opportunity to turn and talk with a partner or to explain their thinking during whole class discussions around their approaches to solve a problem or opinions around a topic. However, there were instances in two of the seven classes visited, where some students were not fully engaged in the discussion and didn’t take responsibility for their roles within group discussions.

- Although some teachers planned extensively for differentiated instruction and multiple points of entry, in only three of the seven classes, students were provided with targeted, differentiated, tiered tasks that were aligned to their specific learning needs. While students in some of the other classrooms were exposed to challenging tasks, there were missed opportunities to extend the learning of top tier students.

- Even though there has been a school-wide focus on questioning for teachers and students, teacher questioning did not always lend themselves for follow-up student-generated questions or opportunities for them to fully articulate or express their thinking around the content. For example, in one class, the students were asked to turn and talk to a partner to share their thinking about a poem the teacher had read, however, the question posed, "what are your thoughts about the poem?" wasn’t targeted or encouraged students to think critically or question each other’s responses.
**Additional Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**
The school leaders and teachers effectively align curricula to Common Core Learning Standards and ensure the incorporation of the instructional shifts. Across the school, teachers utilize student work and data to plan and refine curricula and academic tasks.

**Impact**
The use of Expeditionary Learning, Journeys and Go Math programs has allowed for coherence across the grades and a focus on college and career readiness skills for students. The planning and refinement of units and academic tasks based on students’ specific needs, has provided them with access to learning opportunities in which they are cognitively engaged.

**Supporting Evidence**
- Teachers meet weekly in grade teams to examine units of study, design differentiated questions based on Depth of Knowledge and create tiered tasks to provide multiple entry points for all students.

- Lesson plans include tasks that incorporate the instructional shifts such as solving multi-step problems, engaging in close reading strategies, responding to questions using text-based evidence and developing higher order thinking (HOT) questions through some tiered-task activities.

- Teachers utilize pre-assessment data from Go Math and student Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) writing tasks to develop tier-tasks that address students’ strengths and deficits. During common planning time, teachers look at results to identify patterns and trends of student or concept errors. Based on their findings, teachers revise their lessons, units and tasks to address students’ specific needs.
Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  
Rating: Proficient

Findings
Across classrooms, teachers align assessments to curricula and use rubrics to provide students with ongoing and consistent feedback. Common assessments are used to track student progress, to make adjustments to curricula, as well as academic tasks and instruction.

Impact
The use of assessment data and rubrics provides teachers and students with a clear portrait of students’ strengths and next steps for learning. The tracking of student progress across the school, allows staff to develop tier-tasks and modify instruction in response to learners’ needs.

Supporting Evidence
- Across the school, teachers use assessments from selected curricula and I-Ready to determine student understanding and arm them with specific information on their skill strengths and areas they need further support in and to revise performance tasks.

- Standard and task-aligned feedback to students on their work products include an area to celebrate and a next step for improvement. Students expressed that they look forward to their teacher’s feedback on their work because it allows them to know what they are doing well and areas they need additional help with.

- Teachers track unit assessment data by skills, standards and for accuracy. They identify whether students are partially correct, unclear or obtained mastery of concepts taught. This information is used to determine flexible groups and develop tier-tasks that support students’ learning.

- Students shared that they are provided with rubrics and anchor papers prior to getting a performance task, which allows them to know what is expected for the assignment and to strive for the top grade.
FINDINGS

High expectations regarding teaching and learning are consistently conveyed to teachers and supported through various professional learning opportunities. The school provides regular feedback to families in order to support and position all learners on a path towards college and career readiness.

IMPACT

As a result of school leaders’ ongoing feedback around teaching and learning, teachers are furnished with supports that address their instructional needs, which are followed up through classroom visits to monitor implementation. The school’s ongoing feedback and communication to families around student progress, has equipped them with the knowledge to understand and support their children’s learning.

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

- At the beginning of the school year, the school sponsors a Meet the Teacher Night where families are provided with a school handbook that outlines the roles and expectations of all stakeholders to support student learning and achievement.

- Staff is provided regular updates and an outline of instructional expectations at faculty conferences, team meetings and through general concern memorandums which are aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

- School leaders have outlined a year-long professional learning plan which provides staff with on and off site training opportunities that address various instructional foci, which are sometimes facilitated by teacher leaders.

- Teachers maintain an assessment recording sheet that outlines student performance from baseline, unit and mid-chapter assessments that is sent home for parents to review. Parents are also provided with Fountas and Pinnell reading level updates three times per year after children are formally assessed.

- Parents shared that the school has provided them with various workshops related to the Common Core Learning Standards, the school’s science curriculum and the middle school articulation process. They also expressed how they are pleased with the school’s most recent creation of a student and parent after-school Book Club for second graders.