Quality Review Report

2014-2015

The Bay Terrace School
Elementary School R053
330 Durant Avenue
Staten Island
NY 10308

Principal: Annette Esposito

Date of review: January 7, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Jessica Jenkins
The School Context

The Bay Terrace School is an elementary school with 707 students from pre-kindergarten through grade five. The school population comprises 2% Black, 12% Hispanic, 79% White, 4% Asian and 3% other students. The student body includes 4% English language learners and 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 2013-2014 was 95.5%.

School Quality Criteria

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

Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations  
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
School leaders and staff utilize a wide array of strategies and provide thorough supports that exemplify a culture of mutual accountability for the school’s high expectations that are connected to a path of college and career readiness.

Impact
School leaders and staff take ownership for creating true partnerships with parents that result in increased student achievement towards stated expectations. Students are motivated and own their own educational experience and support their peers. Students are empowered and student voice is at the heart of the school’s commitment to creating a positive learning environment for students.

Supporting Evidence
- Parents spoke encouragingly about The Leader in Me Program and student-led conferences where students explain their performance in their classes to their parents, as well as their process of learning. Parents spoke to how teachers, through this Leader in Me program, work with students to support the internalization of the 7 Habits and stressed that this regular practice of teacher support is a proactive and effective way of partnering with them to help support their children.

- The principal facilitates monthly book clubs for fifth grade students utilizing books with a focus on character building and that tie into The Leader in Me program. “Wonder”, the most recent selection, chronicles the life of a fifth grade boy who was born with a rare combination of genetic anomalies. This carefully planned book study addressed perseverance, tolerance, and acceptance. Students spoke at length about the impact of the book study. One student in particular shared, “The opportunity to sit with the principal and have meaningful discussions about our reading helps us learn to communicate better and brings us together as a school community.”

- The school’s website is used as a tool of information for families, as well as a way to celebrate student leadership, recognition, and positive behaviors. Parents appreciate the advanced notification via weekly newsletters and the website with regard to upcoming units of study, pertinent vocabulary, and content to be taught.
| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |

**Findings**  
Across most classrooms, teaching strategies and academic tasks immerse students in rigorous work and discussions that foster higher-order thinking. Instructional strategies illustrate some use of extensions that enrich discussions.

**Impact**  
In most classrooms, cognitively demanding tasks promote consistent student progress towards mastery of standards. In a few classes, there are missed opportunities to deepen student learning with tasks that allow all students to demonstrate high levels of discussions and ownership of learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All lesson plans and unit plans include extensive planning for struggling and advanced learners, along with supports for English Language Learners. In a second grade gifted and talented classroom, students with IEP’s were provided with flip-charts and visuals to solve multi-step word problems and worked in mixed-ability groups to create and solve various word problems.

- In a fourth grade integrated co-teaching class, students solved fraction word problems with unlike denominators. Results of solving on-grade and above-grade level word problem reflected that day’s grouping. In like-ability groups, students then used math stems and conversation starters to share, praise, ask questions, and make suggestions to their peer’s work.

- In a first grade classrooms, students explored the essential question, “How do readers retell text to understand the central message?” using the book, *A Fine, Fine School*. Although the lesson plan indicated students would be working in close reading groups, the questions the teacher posed removed students from the text. For example, the teacher asked, “How would you feel if Mrs. Esposito said this is a fine school and then asked for you to come to school on Saturday?” and “What do you like about your weekends?” These discussion prompts did not engage students in high-order thinking or require that students use evidence from the text to uncover the central message.
Additional Findings

| Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings
Across grade and content areas, lesson and unit plans are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and promote college and career readiness for all students. Instructional shifts are strategically implemented throughout curricula tasks to engage all learners.

Impact
All learners are provided access to rigorous tasks and supported in the development of the personal and academic behaviors associated with college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence
- A network coach works with the entire staff to implement Math in Focus, with a focus on problem solving and in depth conceptual understanding through real-world, hands-on experiences. The implementation of Math in Focus supports the school-wide focus on student ownership of discussion and discovery. A first grade curriculum map embeds higher-order thinking questions such as, “How can we construct addition stories and solve real world problems by writing addition sentences?” Students with disabilities are provided multiple entry points including a problem-solving framework and diagrams while accelerated students delve right into the construction of multi-step real-world problems.

- A fourth grade non-fiction unit focuses on students becoming researchers, uses “The Tarantula Scientist” as an anchor text and several supporting texts such as “The Boy who Drew Birds” and “The Frog Scientist.” Students are required to become scientist assistants, traveling through the rainforest in search of tarantulas while explaining events, procedures, and ideas that occur to them while searching for tarantulas.

- To enhance the school’s common-core aligned literacy curriculum, teachers have implemented myOn, an online reading system that provides students access to books according to their lexile reading level. This highly interactive and engaging program promotes independent reading and embedded higher-order thinking questions encourage close reading of texts.
Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development  
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
All teachers are engaged in structured, collaborative professional learning communities. Teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment, and student work.

Impact
Well-structured inquiry and investigative collaborations establish school-wide instructional coherence, increased learning for all students, and shared improvements in teacher practice.

Supporting Evidence
- A comprehensive school-wide professional development plan supports the work of teacher teams in inquiry, sharing of best-practices, inter-visitations, and lesson study by providing frequent and structured opportunities for teachers to engage in these practices. Several meeting agendas and minutes highlight the school's focus on lesson study in math which incorporates inter-visitation, reflection, and modifications to the unit of study.

- In the vertical instructional team meeting, teachers debriefed a math gallery walk, a multi-grade strategy the school has implemented to promote meaningful discourse among students. Teachers noted how the THINK framework was instrumental in promoting independent thinking and began to plan a lesson based on the framework for lesson study.

- Specific looking at student work protocols guide teacher teams in looking for trends and planning lessons around those trends. Noting that inference can be made only when the requisite general knowledge necessary to make that inference is available, the team planned a series of lessons incorporating the boxing strategy to analyze Rachel Carson's actions in *Pioneer of Ecology*. As students collectively learned about Rachel Carson's character, they added to each layer of the graphic organizer, contributing to their increased success with the ability to use inference in text.
Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  Rating: Well Developed

Findings
Across the vast majority of classrooms, assessment practices ensure that actionable and meaningful feedback regarding student mastery is generated, and that student self-assessment, peer assessment and ongoing checks for understanding are in place.

Impact
Students are well aware of their next steps toward improvement and teachers make effective instructional adjustments. Across grades, opportunities for self and peer assessment are maximized.

Supporting Evidence
- The successful implementation of MyOn, the online library of digital books based on lexile levels, embeds three assessments that teachers use to track, measure, and forecast student reading growth. End of book quizzes provide data for comprehension, inference skills, and higher-order thinking skills, as well as benchmark tests that assess growth over time.

- Writing checklists are used across grades along with a comprehensive peer editing process. A fifth grade narrative checklist ensures that the author reads and re-reads their work and places a check mark with a blue marker in each of the indicators for success once they've included that indicator. The peer editor then reads their partner's work and uses a yellow marker to place a check over the author's if the author included what was necessary. Look for's include a leading engagement, clear narration, sequence, transitional words, and dialogue.

- The DRA is used to track reading progress four times per year and teachers maintain spreadsheets of which students have progressed and those who have made minimal progress. This data is used to form student reading groups and set goals for groups of students. Students articulate their DRA levels and shared how small reading groups along with individual conferences with the teacher has helped them master individual learning goals.