Quality Review Report

2014-2015

Public School 306
Elementary 10X306
40 West Tremont Avenue
Bronx
NY 10453

Principal: Darryl Harrington

Date of review: January 6, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Kristine Mustillo
The School Context

Public School 306 is an elementary school with 755 students from kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 26% Black, 72% Hispanic, 1% White, and 1% Asian students. The student body includes 17% English language learners and 13% special education students. Boys account for 49% of the students enrolled and girls account for 51%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 92%.

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

<table>
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<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>Proficient</td>
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Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
All teachers engage in structured professional collaborations with a focus on building teacher’s instructional capacity and increasing progress for student groups.

Impact
The work of teacher teams has resulted in improved pedagogy and progress towards goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence
- Teacher teams meet collaboratively each week to plan instruction with in-house coaches working to align program tasks to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts across content areas. This work has resulted in an increased use of questioning and discussion techniques on the part of teachers along with an increased focus on planning and preparation, modifying curriculum units and tasks to support their students in accessing more rigorous content.

- Teachers meet once a month with a focus on planning for English Language Learners and once a month with a focus on planning for Students with Disabilities, recognizing that the majority of students in the lowest third of performance levels fall into these classifications. Increasing access for students through the integration of language and organizational supports has resulted in gains for the school’s lowest third in literacy.

- Teacher teams meet around academic and personal behaviors to support college and career readiness. During unit planning, which occurs every six to eight weeks on a Saturday, teachers work to embed these skills in unit plans. As a result students are participating more in self-monitoring and collaborations on tasks improving their college and career readiness skills. Students were able to speak to using rubrics to self-monitor and working with their peers on tasks in literacy and mathematics.
Findings
Pedagogical practices are informed by and becoming aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching but do not yet consistently engage and support students in rigorous tasks.

Impact
Across classrooms there were uneven levels of student thinking and participation as well as an inconsistent use of engagement strategies.

Supporting Evidence
- A 1st grade class was reading from a text about children’s first days of school around the world. The teacher read aloud while the students were seated on the rug with their own copies of the text. The teacher told students that she was looking for key details as she read. There was limited questioning and limited student engagement. There were no opportunities for students to interact with the text, chart and organize information or engage in conversation with their peers.

- A 4th grade mathematics class had students working in rotating mathematics centers focused on division. Students completed quick division sheets and tackled division word problems of varying complexity. However, in one mathematics center where students used laptops to explore mathematical concepts, students were working on a self-selected low level activity matching cubes to numbers and minimally exploring multiples of 3 and 5.

- Students in a 3rd grade literacy class were using key details to determine the main idea of a non-fiction text on the Athabagon people. While students used the same text and graphic organizer, select students benefited from visual supports connected to content vocabulary as well as small group instruction from classroom teachers.

- Across classrooms there were attempts to use turn and talk and questioning to build student conversations and promote engagement. We saw teachers beginning to use small group work but then monitoring the groups rather than providing strategic support to increase engagement with tasks and with peers.
Additional Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings
School leaders and faculty work collaboratively with consultants to design Common Core aligned tasks and differentiated instruction within newly adopted curricula programs.

Impact
Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning to provide students access to curricula, however there are inconsistent levels of rigor and cognitive engagement across units.

Supporting Evidence
- The school has adopted Ready Gen for English language arts and Envisions Mathematics. Coaches and staff developers work with staff to modify curricula tasks which vary in their level of rigor. In mathematics specifically, staff noted that the performance based assessments were not matching the rigorous asks of the state exams. The staff has begun using Engage NY resources to create tasks that are multi-step and include more academic language.

- Staff participates in Saturday planning before the launch of each new unit using Universal Backwards Design. However some lesson plans lack focus and coherence. For example a 2nd grade literacy lesson had an objective of, “using illustrations to understand plot”. The teacher built in opportunities for student discussion that were focused on a large number of comprehension topics including character analysis and problem solution. Additionally, the lesson planned for 3 groups asking mid-level students to fill in the blanks.

- A 5th grade mathematics lesson planned for three groups of students to work on a reteach sheet, practice sheet, and enrichment sheet in order to prepare students to mentally multiply decimals. Reteach sheets had computation equations, practice sheets had computation and word problems and the enrichment sheet was purely word problems. Students working on the word problems were engaged in conversation. Students working on additional sheets worked primarily in isolation with teacher check-ins.

- The school devotes one Monday planning session each month to English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities. Teachers are beginning to plan for speaking and listening opportunities across content.
Findings
High expectations for staff are conveyed through the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching in observations and trainings. Progress reports, newsletters and curriculum nights keep parents informed of expectations and their child’s progress towards them.

Impact
Structures for collaboration and communication build buy-in and accountability among staff and families supporting students on the path to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence
- Teachers receive a staff handbook as well as regular updates through newsletters and collaborative planning sessions. Staff shares information on Google docs in an effort to spread best practices and keep teachers informed about what occurs in the grade above and below.

- Teachers have been trained in the Danielson Framework for Teaching and receive regular feedback aligned to the framework during cycles of observations. Administrative meetings among staff and teachers focus on the domains of instructional practice and planning and preparation. Staff discussions examine the links between effective and highly effective practice and student performance data emphasizing staff accountability for student performance.

- Parents receive monthly progress reports to inform them of their child’s progress in English language arts and mathematics along with ways they can support their child at home. Parents report that the recommended support is largely in the form of at home on-line learning programs that provide students with leveled practice in literacy and mathematics.

- The school holds a grade level curriculum night for parents in the beginning of the year to inform parent of grade level expectations and units of study that their child will be participating in.
Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  
Rating: Proficient

Findings
Teachers use common assessments aligned to curricula along with benchmark assessments aligned to Common Core Learning Standards to provide feedback to students and make adjustments to curricula and instruction.

Impact
The school’s process for utilizing multiple data sources is resulting in adjustments in curricula and instruction as well as increased actionable feedback to students.

Supporting Evidence
- Teacher teams use benchmark assessments and state exam data to modify curricula and tasks. In an observed teacher team meeting teachers examined English language arts benchmark results, focusing on questions where a high percentage of students selected incorrect answers and discussed potential misconceptions, question design, and instructional implications for future tasks.

- Across classrooms teachers utilize program based rubrics along with teacher created, student-facing checklists to give students feedback on their next steps. Rubrics and checklists are used prior to task completion in order to set a standard for student work and give students feedback throughout their process. These mid-task check-ins are also opportunities for teachers to collect information on student progress towards the learning standard.

- Teachers use state exam and Engage NY resources to refine curricula tasks from adopted programs. These resources are used as models in question design to increase the rigor of tasks and exposure to academic language.

- Across classrooms, teachers use program unit assessments to track and monitor student achievement and make grade level decisions around next instructional steps in upcoming units. For example, after noticing that students were struggling with inferential questions in literacy, teachers focused on increasing inferential questioning across fiction and non-fiction studies.

- Following a review of NYSESLAT data, teachers began incorporating speaking and listening opportunities within their lesson plans.