



**Department of
Education**
Carmen Fariña, Chancellor

**Office of School Quality
Division of Teaching and Learning**

Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 180 Hugo Newman

Elementary - Middle School M180

**370 West 120th Street
Manhattan
NY 10027**

Principal: Lana Fleming

**Date of review: December 4, 2015
Lead Reviewer: Daisy Concepción**

The School Context

P.S. 180 Hugo Newman is an elementary - middle school with 593 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 1% Asian, 57% Black, 30% Hispanic, and 8% White students. The student body includes 5% English Language Learners and 16% students with disabilities. Boys account for 52% of the students enrolled and girls account for 48%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.2%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
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	Celebration	Proficient
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 <i>Framework for Teaching</i> , aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	Focus	Developing
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	Additional Findings	Developing
School Culture		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	Additional Findings	Proficient
Systems for Improvement		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	Area of:	Rating:
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	Additional Findings	Proficient

Area of Celebration

Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum

Rating:

Proficient

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills.

Impact

Students are engaged in Common Core-aligned curriculum that makes interdisciplinary connections.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricula demonstrates the school's purposeful decision to align units of study with field trips and to address the instructional shift of balancing literary and informational text. In April, grade 1 will study non-fiction in a *Ready Gen* immigration unit paired with a fiction unit called "A picnic in October", and participate in field trips to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty.
- A review of a middle school grade 6 unit shows that it is aligned to both the Common Core aligned program *Connected Math Project 3* and *Engage NY*. This unit focuses on statistics and data distribution highlights the mathematical practices of constructing viable arguments and critiquing the reasoning of others, reasoning abstractly and quantitatively as well as attending to precision. The school fortifies mathematical thinking with a program called "Math Talks" which it uses grades K-8 so that students engage in mathematics discourse school wide.
- A review of a grade 8 unit for a position paper for research and argument shows that students will be required "to acknowledge conflicting view points while using varied types of evidence to support their own opinion". The unit includes writing a thesis statement and how to discern "the most persuasive and reliable point of view" and to "determine the validity of the research for the viewpoint".
- A grade 7 math performance task called "Go Take a Hike" asked students to estimate travel based on a rate of feet per minutes and length of time needed to move from a higher elevation to sea level. The task required students to compute unit rates associated with ratios and fractions and assess the reasonableness of their answers using estimation as a strategy.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Developing

Findings

Across classrooms teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points. Student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking.

Impact

All students do not have the support they need so that learners' engagement in challenging tasks requiring demonstration of higher order is uneven across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- In a grade 4 class, the teacher used partner talk as a scaffold for students to engage in a conversation on energy and the importance of the food chain. The teacher began by reviewing the previous day's learning on how plants created energy from the sun and were eaten by herbivores. The teacher asked questions such as, "Let's look at plankton in the ocean that use sunlight to create energy. How would the food chain be effected if they did not have sunlight?" before assigning students a task to explain how "energy flow changes in various eco systems". However, not all scaffolding at the school results in appropriately challenging work. For example, in a second grade class, students were creating fictional characters for a writing project. All students had strings of yellow post-it notes on their desk and each post-it showed a highly detailed stick figure used to stretch a story out. When asked why all students needed to do these drawings, one student replied, "Oh, I can write the story by myself and don't need to do this, but if I do, my teacher makes me go back and draw the pictures." A review of the student notebooks reflected many students had already written many long essays previously.
- In a grade 7 science class on plate tectonics, students used two wooden boards to represent tectonic plates, sliding the boards against each other to represent the earth's movement and made predictions on how this movement would impact clay sculptures that represented landforms. Scaffolds for this lesson included pictures of earthquake damage displayed on the SMARTboard and a worksheet that asked "What three pieces of evidence did Wegner propose use the theory of Pangea?" The teacher worked with only one group and asked them to look at the clay and predict the kind of damage that was happening. When students were questioned about what the boards represented, five out of the eight groups did not understand that the boards represented tectonic plates. When asked directly if the board represented a tectonic plate, one student replied, "No, this is just a board with clay. The tectonic plate is the picture on the board". Although vocabulary was listed on the board, students interviewed were not able to define "tectonic" and "divergent."
- In a grade 5 social studies class studying trade routes, students were assigned to groups by topics, "God", "Gold", and "Glory" to make a creative persuasive poster from the point of view of explorers to convince other sailors to sail with them. Students read two paragraph hand-outs before beginning the assigned task. The teacher encouraged students to use humor and imagination in developing the poster. Students drew pictures, colored, cut, and pasted pictures based on the hand-out read. One student took her pencil and began to shade her paper so that it would look aged. The teacher stopped the class and praised this shading saying it was "creative". Other students immediately began to shade their papers as well. When asked how he would use the text to support his work, a student stated that he was going to color and cut out the picture from the hand out and paste it on his poster.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to all staff and provide training and have a system of accountability for those expectations. School leaders communicate high expectations to families connected to career and college readiness but do not always successfully engage parents in understanding and working with the school regarding all options available to support meeting of expectations.

Impact

While the school is providing high expectations to both staff and families connected to career and college readiness including offering Regents and second language classes, there is not yet a fully successful partnership with parents.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers participate in job-embedded math professional development tied to the school goal of improving math scores. Teachers stated that school leaders provide support with implementing a new program called Math talks to help strengthen teacher practice in supporting students with ongoing practice with computational fluency and number relationships. Teachers spend a lot of time for planning these lessons with support from an outside consultant. School leaders hold teachers accountable through classroom observations of teachers using this program.
- A review of Danielson observations demonstrates that teachers are provided with targeted feedback on Danielson's *Framework For Teaching* 3b and 3c, which are tied to the school foci of improving student engagement and student discourse. High levels of student discussion were observed in an Integrated Co-Teaching Class (ICT) math class. One example of principal feedback aligned to this high level of student discourse seen on an observation report read "provide a clear objective for your mini-lesson and incorporate more think, pair, share to maximize student engagement and talk".
- Parents stated they are informed on the Common Core curriculum and that student work was rigorous. They spoke about math workshops run by teachers and a math consultant where they learned the value of looking at multiple ways to solve problems and gained a better appreciation of both the Common Core, as well as strategies that they could use at home to help students. They spoke about the transparency of student progress through the use of Engrade, an online program that allows parents to see homework, assignment scores, test grades, and receive email and texts. Parents stated that they are in constant communication with their teachers. They receive information such as newsletters and flyers on such items as curriculum night by backpack. However, there is a full range of services of which parents are not aware. For example, many of the parents in the interview did not know that the school offers Regents to students that allow the students to receive high school credit. Additionally, all parents stated that they would like to have their child be in the Dual Language Program because of their beliefs in the importance of biculturalism and bi-literacy. They wanted to know how the school could expand this program to ensure students learned another language. They were unaware that the school had just opened up several second language classes this school year based on parent input and requests.

Quality Indicator:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Developing
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Findings

Across classrooms teachers use assessments that are loosely aligned with the school's curriculum. Teachers' practice inconsistently reflects the use of on-going checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Misalignment between tasks and rubric criteria measured, assessment trackers without criterion and inconsistent use of on-going checks for understanding hinder teachers' ability to make effective learning adjustments to meet student needs so that teachers make inconsistent adjustments to meet student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- While a Grade 5 , Module 3 math tracking sheet listed columns that clearly specified skills, like adding fractions with unlike denominators by making equivalent fractions, with checks by the name of each student that demonstrated this understanding, not all tracking sheets listed the criteria being measured. In a science class on plants, the "Assessment Data" sheet, had the title "Literacy" crossed out and written over in pencil with the words "Understanding Energy". This sheet contained four columns labeled "Got it", "Almost there!", "Needs Assistance!", and "Conference Necessary" with check marks under these columns. It did not specify what criteria was being measured, what students achieved or what students needed conferencing on.
- In a grade 5 social studies lesson on trade routes, students were engaged in making posters of reasons that sailors journeyed to trade. The teacher informed the students that they would be measured on "persuading" the reader to join a ship and on how "creative" they were with their posters. The teacher provided student with a "persuasive poster rubric" as a guide to receive a Level 4 on the project. A review of this rubric revealed misalignment for the project that students were engaged as it was a rubric for an essay and not a project. For example, this rubric asked students to provide sufficient text-based evidence yet the poster did not call for students to display such evidence.
- In an ICT sixth grade math class, students worked in small groups and in pairs on various activities such as math games, and extensions, as the teachers conferenced with the various groups and asked students to explain their thinking that prompted some children to self-correct. Additionally, the class was provided with an exit slip. However, in a seventh grade science class, the teacher sat with one group and did not check on the other groups. In a grade 2 class the teacher asked on student up to her desk to review his work while others waited at their tables. In discussions with the groups, students neither understood the investigation nor the academic vocabulary for the unit.

Quality Indicator:	4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development	Rating:	Proficient
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Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based conversations that promote the implementation of the instructional shifts. Distributive leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Instructional pedagogy to meet the instructional demands of the Common Core Learning Standards and shifts is strengthening. Teacher teamwork is influencing decisions in student instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Inquiry has been a school priority and focus. Teacher teams engage in a yearlong study on math inquiry to address the school math needs. This included looking into results in the use of “Cognitively Guided Instruction” in math focusing on mathematical modeling and representation, which were strands where the students did not do well on the state exam. Teachers stated that they work with a consultant to address the math shifts of fluency, numeracy, and deep understanding. With support from this consultant, teachers developed professional learning goals on using student work to plan for differentiation and revise lessons.
- During a grade 2 teacher team meeting, teachers reviewed student work on number operations in base ten to identify gaps in performance. They discussed how using a first grade pre-assessment to screen for misconceptions helped them identify skills that they needed to “teach into” before this unit. Also, teachers discussed how the *GO Math!* assessment helped them identify 10 students struggling with place value when adding three two-digit numbers. Teachers discussed how they used a math checklist to analyze student work to generate possible misconceptions that may have contributed to student misunderstandings. They used these possible misunderstandings as the basis for adjustment and to plan intervention strategies.
- Teachers stated that they belonged to various teams that help shape the learning and the culture at the school. For example, they participate in vertical teams, Positive Behavior Intervention Services, technology, and parent involvement committees. One group of teachers spoke about their influence in increasing the variety of text selections in classroom libraries by working with school administration to ensure that textbooks have supplemental non-fiction reading materials.