Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 029 Bardwell
Elementary School R029
1581 Victory Boulevard
Staten Island
NY 10314

Principal: Linda Manfredi

Date of review: January 21, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Jennifer Eusanio
**The School Context**

P.S. 029 Bardwell is an elementary school with 701 students from grade prekindergarten through grade 5. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 16% Asian, 9% Black, 22% Hispanic, and 52% White students. The student body includes 3% English Language Learners and 19% students with disabilities. Boys account for 54% of the students enrolled and girls account for 46%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2014-2015 was 94.9%.

**School Quality Criteria**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<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</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Culture</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>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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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems for Improvement</th>
<th>To what extent does the school…</th>
<th>Area of:</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>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>
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</table>
Findings
Structures are in place to communicate high expectations to staff and effectively provide information to families on their child’s progress in school.

Impact
A culture of mutual accountability and partnerships with parents foster high expectations and prioritize a path towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence
- The administration communicates their expectations through emails, handbooks and meetings with staff. The handbook known as the Red Check Book, contains information on assessment policy for the development of exams, rubrics, and performance tasks, principles of learning and portfolios. Assistant principals provide planning sessions for teachers. These sessions are meant to explain their expectations for planning and support for them. One school notification for these sessions asks teachers to bring their unit of study books and states, “Please join me so we can plan for the rigorous work required of our students towards the Common Core Learning Standards.”

- The professional development plan provides training opportunities on the creation of learning targets which is aligned to the school’s instructional goal. Workshops and coaching are listed which entail topics such as dissecting Teachers College units of study to plan learning targets and use learning progressions, reviewing math lessons for essential tools needed for target standards and students, and learning how to incorporate the new Envisions 2.0 program technology. Teacher-led professional workshops are provided in English Language Arts (ELA) and math towards the school’s goals.

- Teachers stated that team protocols hold each of them accountable to provide evidence of agreed upon next steps per meeting. They reported that they work together during their grade level meetings to develop and refine learning targets. All of them agreed that creating learning targets was essential and their goal was “to ensure there is a common language for discussing instruction across the school”. A review of school documents including team binders and revised curricula with learning targets reflects how teachers follow up on team decisions and new learning targets for upcoming units of study.

- Parents reported that the school offers workshops to assist in their understanding of the Common Core Learning Standards and their alignment with new instructional programs such as Envisions Math 2.0. The workshops clarified the structure of the units of study and how each unit of study is designed to target specific performance standards. Strategies to support their children were shared, as well as the format of tests. Parents reported that rubrics are sent home which help explain how students are performing towards the standards. Parents reported that these tools, as well as communications with teachers via email, the phone, progress reports, and school messaging services provide information on school events and how to support their children. One parent responded how one of their children was demonstrating difficulty with math and after conferring with the teacher was able to further support her child at home. Other parents reported similar situations where they are able to help their child with their homework and were provided with online tools by the teacher. One parent stated, “And now, my child is flourishing.”
Area of Focus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings
Teaching strategies and scaffolds have yet to serve as strategic multiple entry points, high-quality supports and extensions and demonstrate high levels of ownership for all students in discussions and work products.

Impact
Levels of independence and higher order thinking in tasks vary across the vast majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence
- Across classrooms, students were mostly grouped for independent practice for a variety of subject areas. In a grade 4 English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were also grouped by ability and provided tiered tasks around the same learning objective which was to develop a story arc which introduces the character and organizes the events correctly. Each group was able to share how their arc was helpful in developing their own stories. Students were observed agreeing on the sequence of events and characters emotions before placing them on the chart. While some groups used the strategy the teacher taught them on placing all the events first then the emotions, others plotted their arcs using another strategy which led them to the same objective adding multi-color post-its for different story elements.

- In a grade 3 math class, students worked on a developing a bar graph using gummy bears to determine the representation of numbers and how to scale their data. Students worked together to decide which scale would work best for the groups of gummy bears they had and at times, when disagreement occurred in groups, some students took the lead to explain why one scale was, “better” than what was presented. One student said, “You have to group by fives cause it will be more accurate.” Others used their knowledge of odd and even numbers to scale their graph. Additionally, in each group, at least 1-2 students took the lead in assigning roles when graphing. In a grade 1 math class, students were also working on creating tables using tally marks. Many of the students were able to complete the task correctly and completed early and were given an option to complete a word problem. However, this opportunity was not presented to many students even when they completed their tasks. In addition, opportunities to further extend challenging tasks to students completed with their word problems, were not presented and allowed for a few students to become disengaged.

- In a grade 5 math class, students were asked to develop a catering menu using a supermarket flier for a Super Bowl Party. Many of the students were able to explain what they were doing and stated the rationale of the lesson. Each student created a chart of expenses and worked with each other when demonstrating difficulty with the math concepts. Although all of the students were engaged in the lesson, the task was the same for all students as demonstrated by their work products. Opportunities for extensions for higher achieving students were not evident. In a grade 4 science class, students worked in groups to develop and present a case for why one type of power, solar, wind, water or energy from a power plant is the best sources to obtain electricity. Although many students showed interest in the task, topics were mainly teacher selected. Further addition supports were needed for a few students who demonstrated difficulty in their research skills.
Additional Findings

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
The school uses curricula that is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards, that strategically integrate the instructional shifts and embed rigorous habits in units and tasks.

Impact
Rigorous tasks result in school-wide coherence across grades and subject areas which lead students to demonstrate their thinking and promotes college and career readiness for all students.

Supporting Evidence
- The school uses the *Teachers College Reading and Writing Project* (TCRWP) curricula in ELA and *Envisions 2.0* for math. In science, the school uses *FOSS* and in social studies, they use the *Harcourt Mifflin* program and the *New York City Scope and Sequence*. All programs are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and content standards. For technology, the school develops unit plans which integrate math and ELA standards to align with content taught in those subject areas. One unit plan on *Microsoft Word* focuses on ELA standards in writing on producing clear and coherent writing using technology and multiple resources to engage in research. Another technology unit plan on *Microsoft Excel* combines both ELA and math standards on using media sources to collect information to organize information, use formulas and produce tables and graphs.

- This year, the school decided to revise the focus of their unit plans in ELA and math to prioritize specific standards based on a review of student data from state exams and current work products. In teams, teachers develop specific learning targets and success criteria for each unit and use the support of consultants to revise objectives per standard. After a review of unit plans and grade standard progression planning documents in math, there is an emphasis on subtraction in grades kindergarten – grade 2, and multiplication concepts in grades 3 – 5 which aligns with the instructional shifts on focus and fluency. Unit plans reflect an emphasis on text complexity which is integrated across subject areas using annotation strategies such as highlighting and the Circle, Underline, Box (CUB) method in math. In addition, the use of fiction and nonfiction, and using text evidence to support claims is reflected in ELA and social studies unit plans.

- The school uses tools such as the lesson structures from *Uncommon Schools* to align lesson plans and unit plans to emphasize rigorous habits. In a grade four science unit plan, students were required to determine the best source of energy by conducting research using multiple resources, and develop an argument using pros and cons for a presentation. In grade 2 social studies units, questions include: “Why and how do communities develop differently?” and “What is the relationship between local government and the community?” Tasks include students creating speeches to persuade others on the reason why to vote. In a grade 5 technology unit, students are required to create and present PowerPoint presentations that include images, sounds, animations and hyperlinks to present to their class.
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**
Across classrooms, teachers use performance tasks, rubrics, grading policies and other assessments that are aligned with the curricula. Teacher assessment practices consist of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment to determine student difficulty.

**Impact**
Effective adjustments and actionable feedback lead to meeting students’ learning needs.

**Supporting Evidence**
- As part of the school’s instructional focus, the school has taken the initiative to revamp their rubrics to construct those that contain specific learning targets and grade progressions in literacy. The teachers use the new TCRWP rubrics along with their on-demand performance tasks to assess student performance four times throughout the year. In math, students are assessed using end of unit assessments and data is collected on a monthly basis. Performance level rubrics aligned to the units of study in science and social studies provide teachers monthly feedback on student achievement.

- During an interview, students shared their feedback from teachers which was in the form of “glows” and “grows”. Most of the students were able to understand how to read their rubrics and determine their own grades. In addition, students work on goals in reading and math based on their feedback from teachers. One grade 5 student mentioned that his goal was to work on writing more than one main idea. Another student stated, “I have to work on improving how to explain why a character did what he did.” Students reported different types of feedback they had received from their teachers. One student stated that feedback suggested using a chart with more transition words to make her writing better. Another stated he needs to add more details to his writing.

- Students engage in peer feedback during classes. One student shared a rubric that was used to provide feedback to a partner. Responses from peer feedback include, “I like how you give a lot of details.”, and “I like how you wrote with the lens of Grace in mind.” A review of student work consists of self-reflection and peer checklists to assist students.

- Teachers use student conferences to provide in-the-moment support at times of difficulty. Conference notes are kept by all teachers to capture information on student progress. During a grade 3 math class, the teacher worked with one group as they were attempting to create a bar graph and used the two times table as their scale. The teacher asked the students to share their numbers and prompted them to reflect on the graph determine if the scale could be changed. The students decided to change their scale and use the five times table so “it wouldn’t look so sloppy”. This level of guidance through in-the-moment conferences were viewed across several classes.
### Findings

The majority of teachers engage in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and allow for teachers to have a voice in school-wide key decisions.

### Impact

Professional collaborations lead to teachers strengthening their instructional capacity and decisions which affect student learning outcomes across the school.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet weekly to discuss the student progress and revise unit learning targets in literacy and math. The teams utilize protocols to analyze student work and maintain agendas and notes to keep track of meetings. Teachers review standards-based learning targets to adjust student work to determine whether students are meeting them. Based on a review of team notes across grades, teachers review work for patterns, contradictions, themes, questions and implications for instruction. For example, in note taking documents for one team, teachers listed strategies and methods such as, the use of games and demonstration using dry erase boards to assist students with fluency strategies.

- During a grade 5 team meeting, teachers reviewed student work and determined that the target student was in need of further support in using multiple main ideas. In addition, the teachers noticed patterns where students could use more support in inferring, cross text and perspective analysis as per the learning targets for their current unit of study in literacy. The team decided to develop teaching toolkits in these target areas. Based on team notes, teachers have used a similar structure to determining next steps and following up on team decisions throughout the year.

- Literacy school-level teams consisting of teachers and the administration took a lead role in making changes to the literacy curriculum from ReadyGen to the TCRWP program. During team meetings, teachers reviewed curricula options and collectively decided to change it. In addition, with the new curriculum, teachers reviewed unit objectives and determined which to target school wide across literacy units. Information on the unit progression and student responses are discussed at the team and school level to make revisions to learning targets. A review of math team meeting notes reflect similar structures with the Envisions 2.0 program and how to utilize technology to increase student engagement in tasks and assist with lesson demonstrations.