



**Department of  
Education**  
*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

# Quality Review Report

## 2014-2015

**Florence Nightingale**

**Elementary M110**

**285 Delancey Street  
Manhattan  
NY 10002**

**Principal: Karen Feuer**

**Date of review: February 26, 2015  
Lead Reviewer: Kristine Mustillo**

## The School Context

Florence Nightingale is an elementary school with 410 students from Pre-kindergarten through grade 5. The school population comprises 10% Black, 46% Hispanic, 30% White, and 14% Asian students. The student body includes 5% English language learners and 17% special education students. Boys account for 51% of the students enrolled and girls account for 49%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 95.0%.

## School Quality Criteria

<b>Instructional Core</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
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	<b>Celebration</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>School Culture</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students, and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
<b>Systems for Improvement</b>		
<i>To what extent does the school...</i>	<b>Area of:</b>	<b>Rating:</b>
4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning	<b>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>

## Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.1 Curriculum**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills are embedded across grades and subject areas. Curricula and tasks are refined using student work and data.

### Impact

All students, including English language learners and students with disabilities, are supported in accessing and engaging in rigorous tasks and have multiple opportunities to be engaged cognitively.

### Supporting Evidence

- The school utilizes Expeditionary Learning in grades 3 through 5 and teachers work in teacher teams to strengthen and expand the writing component across upper grades, as Expeditionary Learning requires mainly short responses to text. A teacher created English language arts curriculum grounded in some social studies' themes for students in kindergarten through grade 2 is implemented school wide. Across English language arts, all learners are able to demonstrate their thinking as opportunities for close reading, student discussions, the exploration of content through multiple sources, and student choice in topics and presentation formats are embedded throughout units of study. For example, a fourth grade unit in which students studied colonial America, required students to create their own historical fiction pieces. Students conducted research on all aspects of colonial life and shorter time periods within the colonial era using text and visual media. Students utilized non-fiction along with other historical fiction pieces to understand the time period and ensure their work products were historically accurate. Student choice was embedded throughout the unit and students produced a range of stories.
- In math, teachers use Common Core Inc. Mathematics in kindergarten through grade 5. Teacher teams meet weekly to ensure integration of the instructional shifts across the math curriculum and use student work products to determine planning and pacing. Teachers have compacted the math curriculum to improve pacing and increase opportunities for students to engage in additional higher-order thinking opportunities such as Context for Learning in grades 4 and 5, and Illustrative Mathematics project-based learning tasks and robotics in early childhood classrooms. Such programs allow students to engage in the application of math to real world situations.
- Unit plans provide opportunities for students to demonstrate understanding through a range of collaborative learning opportunities. In a third grade unit on frogs, students had to become an expert on one type of frog. Students conducted research, created diagrams, and written reports. Students then participated in a jigsaw activity where they presented to other groups of students to teach them about frogs. As an extension, students created their own frog species and had to not only create and illustrate their frog but also explain how their frog was a hybrid.

## Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:

1.2 Pedagogy

Rating:

Proficient

### Findings

Across classrooms teaching practices promote high levels of student thinking and participation but at times misses out on providing multiple entry points into the curricula.

### Impact

Across classrooms teacher practice promotes students work products and discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation. However, sufficient use of strategies to ensure engagement by all students was not fully evident.

### Supporting Evidence

- In a second grade math class, students worked on a math problem that asked them to determine if they would like to receive a total prize of \$20 or \$2 a day for 15 days. Students had to demonstrate a strategy and make a conclusion. While students largely recognized that \$2 a day would give them more money, they were also able to entertain ideas about why a child might select the immediate \$20 prize. In a fourth grade math class students worked on creating angles. One student was coaching a peer on how to go about the process. A female student was recognized for having an efficient strategy for creating a 66 degree angle and modeled her thinking for the class on the projector. Students then practiced the skill further playing Angle Tangle with a partner. While the design of the math blocks allows all learners to engage in challenging tasks, there are limited extension opportunities for higher-level students to extend their thinking.
- Student work products across the school show high levels of student choice and engagement with content. Students explored character evolution in *Esperanza Rising* and demonstrated their understanding through essays and timelines. Throughout the work products there was evidence that students collected information from various text sources, received instruction on selecting and utilizing graphic organizers that support their thinking, and had choices in presentation format, which typically included a presentation to peers to share information. A fifth grade student, studying Native Americans, presented a project where she compared and contrasted the practice of human sacrifice across various tribes. While high level engagement in writing was largely evident, it was noted that a second grade class working on small moments struggled with extending their writing. Support structures such as note taking, peer conversations, planning, and organizing, prior to the creation of final products were not fully introduced as strategies.
- In a first grade class, students were working in pairs to create literacy products based on their previous studies. Students had explored elements across fiction and non-fiction texts. Two students were creating an informational brochure about the planets in the solar system. Some other partnerships were creating flip books that focused on the beginning, middle, and end, of each story. Students had checklists to guide them through the process. A student pair creating an informational book about whales noted, "We only have one more thing to do. We don't have to talk about theme because this is a non-fiction book." In a third grade class, to engage students during a read aloud of *Peter Pan*, a teacher used questions about character motivation. However, the read aloud went on for an extended period, was highly teacher focused, and limited student participation in the discussion along with opportunities for them to demonstrate their thinking.

## Additional Findings

**Quality Indicator:**

**2.2 Assessment**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, results from common assessments and in classroom assessment practices allow teachers to track students' progress towards goals, and to make curricula adjustments.

### Impact

Assessment practices result in increased mastery for student groups and effective adjustment to meet the learning needs of all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Fountas and Pinnell is used school-wide to track reading fluency and comprehension. As of the mid-year assessment 96% of students were making progress towards their literacy goals. Administration utilizes this information to plan for tiered intervention services for those students not making progress and/or not making adequate progress. At the start of the school year, eight students were identified for Reading Recovery and the first half were discontinued after a 20-week period. The school continues to track these students to assess if they are sustaining progress.
- In a module where students had to write an action\reaction story, noting that a significant number of students had demonstrated mastery of concepts, teachers created an additional module to support cognition that involved engineering and robotics to provide opportunities for higher-level students to extend their thinking and apply their math knowledge to a real world situation. Students created structures, wrote about, and programmed them to function.
- Teachers use exit tickets along with pre- and post-assessments in math. In a fourth grade class, teachers noticed about five students who were immediately proficient with the concepts of the unit. The teachers created a geometry project for these students where they were able to apply their knowledge to an architecture project. The rest of the grade also utilized this project for advanced students.
- In a fourth grade Integrated Co-Teaching classroom, teachers noted from formative assessment data that students struggle with lengthy complex text. Prior to an Expeditionary Learning lesson that asked students to read a text about Susan B. Anthony, teachers pulled text excerpts from shared readings about the same time period to give students an opportunity to apply the same comprehension strategies to a less overwhelming text. This also enabled teachers to assess student ability across text complexity levels to better target instructional needs.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>3.4 High Expectations</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### **Findings**

The school has established a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations to staff and families supporting students achieving college and career readiness.

### **Impact**

Structures for communication and collaboration result in mutual accountability for student achievement and school improvement.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- The school has been utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching for four years. Teachers have calibrated videos, received professional development in unpacking each domain, and presently are identifying how the expectations are “live” at the school. Teachers self-select to participate in inter-visitations as well as host inter-visitations. Teachers express that through these observations they realized that the more effective instructional practices involve increasing student talk and work time and opportunities for students to take ownership of their learning. As a result, teachers have implemented increased student discussions, collaborative tasks, and student choice.
- Teachers and administrators note that there has been a major shift in conversations that take place at the school, from previously focusing heavily on what students were not doing, to now looking at how instructional strategies impact student performance. Staff attribute this shift to collaborative practices around student data, where administration and teachers examine student performance across classes and look at the instructional practices that limit or accelerate student growth.
- At the beginning of the school year, parents are invited to curriculum night to get an overview of the expectations for the school-year. Throughout the year parents receive newsletters which discuss the happenings in each classroom for each month. Koffee with Karen is an opportunity for parents to meet with the principal in an open forum to discuss progress towards school goals. Parents have opportunities to come to the school to, observe and share in learning with their children during open school week, math mornings, and shared literacy. Parents receive reports at the end of each module to inform them on what their children did well and what the next steps are in alignment with the standards studied. In some classrooms, students create their own report cards and increasingly lead parent teacher conferences which lets parents partner with and help their children towards understanding and progressing. Furthermore, parents are active on the School Leadership Team and along with teachers and administration they are involved in examining school and student data. They engage in discussions to establish school goals, develop action plans, and align the budget, to support goals allowing students to meet the school’s expectations.

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>4.2 Teacher teams and leadership development</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Well Developed</b>
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### **Findings**

All teachers are engaged in professional inquiry that focuses on curricula coherence, instructional practice, and the achievement of all learners.

### **Impact**

The work of teacher teams results in instructional coherence, strengthened teacher capacity, and improved student performance for student groups.

### **Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher Teams meet six times each month. Teacher teams use an inquiry lens to teach content in both literacy and math. In an observed meeting second grade teachers looked at small moments created by their students. Two teachers recognized that while the students wrote about important moments, their stories covered the entire day from the time they woke up until the time they went to bed. A third teacher noticed that her students created very brief writings that were not necessarily connected to meaningful moments in their lives. Teachers spoke about the mentor texts they used and the planning strategies that supported students in selecting their moments and producing voluminous pieces. The third teacher realized she needed to include more modeling and more drafting time for students. In the next unit, the teacher implemented these strategies and the team noted that the student work products were more engaging and more reflective of grade level writing standards.
- Teacher teams regularly analyze formative and summative assessment data to support students in attaining proficiency and to support the school goal of extending learning for students performing at Levels 3 and 4 on State exams. Teachers look at this information across grades and discuss what instructional practices accelerated or limited learning for different student groups. Teachers and administration notice that progress levels for students in the lowest third are much greater than the progress of students in the gifted and talented program in the school. Teachers have implemented increased opportunities for student collaboration and choice throughout content units along with increased opportunities to extend student learning in the example of the robotics and architecture units. Observational data shows an increase in teachers' effective and highly effective practices in instructional domains as a result of this process.
- Teacher teams monitor reading levels school wide. As a result, they were able to ascertain that overall, 96% of students school wide made progress in reading levels from the Fall to Winter administrations. Students in first grade not performing at grade level proficiency and/or not making progress in reading were targeted for intervention services that include Reading Recovery. Consequently, for each cycle of Reading Recovery, between 90 and 100% of students attain grade level proficiency by the end of the 20-week cycle, making progress towards reaching identified student goals in this instructional area.