



**Department of  
Education**

*Carmen Fariña, Chancellor*

Office of School Quality  
Division of Teaching and Learning

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# Quality Review Report 2014-2015

**Walter Damrosch Day Treatment Program**

**75X186**

**750 Jennings Street**

**Bronx  
NY 10459**

**Principal: Ava C. Kaplan**

**Date of review: January 8-9, 2015**

**Lead Reviewer: Robin Cohen**

## The School Context

P.186X is an elementary-middle school with 582 students from grade K through grade 8. The school population comprises 40% Black, 55% Hispanic, 3% White, 1% Asian, and 1% other students. The student body includes 28% English language learners and 100% special education students. Boys account for 72% of the students enrolled and girls account for 28%. The average attendance rate for the school year 2013-2014 was 81.0%.

## 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>Focus</b>	<b>Proficient</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>Additional Findings</b>	<b>Well Developed</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>Proficient</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>Celebration</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

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

High expectations, mutual respect and accountability are evident throughout the school. The school has established systematic structures that engages and informs all stakeholders of best practices and provides focused feedback, via the use of the Danielson Framework, leading to a path to college and career readiness.

## Impact

Structures that support the school's high expectations results in effective academic and personal growth for students and adults.

## Supporting Evidence

- High expectations are communicated, through verbal and written structures, to all constituents such as the Staff Handbook, weekly emails from the principal highlighting professional development offerings, curriculum and assessment updates and due dates. School leaders build a culture of accountability which is shared amongst all stakeholders by actively participating in collaborative team meetings, planning workshops with input from staff and parents and making collective curriculum decisions.
- Throughout the school, teachers articulated the belief that every student has the ability to be college and career ready by ensuring their academic and social-emotional needs are met. Students stated they are taught to “think”, “problem-solve” and “show” appropriate behaviors. Every morning, the practice of “shout-outs” is implemented. Students are acknowledged over the loud speaker for earning 200 points for both their academic work and appropriate social behaviors.
- Student Council promotes high expectations by empowering the student body and creating a culture of accountability. Students assume many school-wide initiatives such as Spirit Week, Field Day, engaging in community service and providing mediation between students.
- Parents stated they feel “supported and informed” by the teachers, related service providers, the parent coordinator, other parents and most importantly the principal’s “open door” policy. Parents participate in the school’s “Meet and Greet the Staff” day held at each site, receive monthly newsletters, attend celebrations, assemblies and workshops, such as understanding what does “college and career readiness” mean for their child. Staff has dedicated Tuesdays, their extended day, for the primary focus of ensuring ongoing communication with parents about their child’s current functioning level and progress. In addition, teachers generate a school created Interim Reporting Form, every six weeks, providing parents the academic and behavioral progress of their child.
- The school creates multiple opportunities to promote family participation in a culture of high expectations connected to college and career readiness, English as Second Language (ESL) teachers provide weekly workshops for parents of English Language Learners (ELLs) during the Title III afterschool program. Parents stated this helps them in “understanding what are the academic expectations and how to support their children at home.

# Area of Focus

<b>Quality Indicator:</b>	<b>1.1 Curriculum</b>	<b>Rating:</b>	<b>Proficient</b>
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## Findings

All curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) and integrate the instructional shifts. Academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data; however, structures to deepen, expand and refine curriculum maps are in progress.

## Impact

The school's curricular decisions build coherence across grades and content area subjects, promoting college and career readiness skills resulting in increased student achievement.

## Supporting Evidence

- The school makes purposeful choices about curricula based on periodic assessments such as Students Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) for students in alternate assessment classes and Fountas and Pinell for students in standardized assessment.
- The school uses Amplify's Core Knowledge for Learning, Expeditionary Learning and Mathematics in Focus for students in standardized assessment. For students in alternate assessment, the school uses Attainment and Equals (math program), aligned to CCLS. The school uses the curriculum maps from these programs to promote college and career readiness skills. Teachers stated that professional development was provided by the vendors as well as going to workshops provided by District 75 coaches.
- Lesson plans include the integration of the instructional shifts across all content area subjects. For example, during a kindergarten class visit for students with cognitive disabilities, the focus on the mathematics lesson was to build academic vocabulary of "more or less" by providing strategies such as word/picture walls and mathematics cue cards.
- Pacing calendars have been adjusted to ensure content and instruction meet students' identified needs. Lesson plans are adjusted to provide access to the curricula and tasks. For example, in an elementary 3-5 class, extra time was provided for the "red" group to complete their mathematics assignment, the "green" group was supported with a paraprofessional and the "blue" group received an enrichment activity. However, systems to formally embed the trends and patterns that they have uncovered and refine their curriculum maps to plan specific strategies to meet the need of individual students were absent.
- Students demonstrate growth based on assessment data from September 2014 – January 2015, it was noted that progress was made in the mean average weekly assessment scores; Mathematics increased by 9% and English Language Arts increased by 7%.

## Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:**

**1.2 Pedagogy**

**Rating:**

**Well Developed**

### Findings

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classrooms reflect an articulated set of beliefs that promotes higher levels of student thinking and problem solving in challenging tasks that are differentiated, have multiple entry points and strategically provide high quality supports.

### Impact

Across classrooms, teaching practices support students to produce cognitively appropriate work products. Teacher ratings demonstrate an increase in the areas of questioning and discussion techniques.

### Supporting Evidence

- Classroom instruction/lesson planning includes differentiated activities and multiple entry points through leveled texts, manipulatives, graphic organizers, visual aids and assistive technology. The school community believes students learn best by being engaged in purposeful lessons that directly relate to their lives and include embedded opportunities to engage in productive conversations with peers and adults. Teachers emphasized this belief in their teacher team meetings.
- In a middle school 6<sup>th</sup> grade class, students were directed to view a photo displayed on the Smartboard from the Great Depression. They were asked to make inferences as to what they were seeing, discuss their assumptions and then share with the class. Students were provided with the book, “Bud, Not Buddy” and asked to cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. Class instruction provided supports and extensions such as purposeful grouping, based on reading levels and compatibility with the other students, vocabulary prompts and visual cues.
- High expectations for classwork and behavior are modeled by teachers as seen in classrooms visited. Teachers conferenced with students to communicate what they did well and what next steps to take. During a science lesson for students with emotional disabilities, students were asked to “describe, analyze and connect” how the moon moves around the earth and how long it takes. Students were required to work in small groups, listen to one another and come to consensus.
- Certified English as a second language teachers collaborate with classroom teachers to plan lessons during scheduled common preparation periods. They supplement content area instruction by providing explicit academic language instruction to make content more accessible for English language learners. Speech teachers and other related service providers promote the push-in model.
- The Danielson Framework for Teaching via the ADVANCE System, indicated an increase of teachers rated Highly Effective from school year 2013-2014(24%) – school year 2014-2015 (55%) based on Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP).

**Findings**

The school uses common assessments in all subject areas, and rubrics aligned to the curricula, that provide actionable feedback and consistent checks for understanding.

**Impact**

School leaders and staff have an ongoing understanding of the performance and progress of all learners that effectively inform instructional practices at the team and classroom level.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In all classrooms visited, benchmark folders include student background data, the targeted behavior from the school-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support system, formative and summative assessments and the student's Academic Intervention Supports (AIS) records. In addition, student work samples are maintained to provide evidence of student mastery of their Individual Education Plan goals and objectives. The folders are an integral tool used by all teachers to collect and plan instruction and close the educational achievement gap.
- The administrative team and teaching staff collaborated to develop an Interim Reporting Form (IRF), generated every six weeks, to provide data to all constituents on the academic and social /emotional growth of all students. This enables administration, teachers and clinicians to analyze trends in order to provide necessary intervention for students at risk.
- In classes visited, teachers conferenced with students to communicate what they did well and what next steps to take. Students were able to tell me during the small group meeting, what they were working on, why they "got the score", and what they needed to do to get a "4". In addition, teachers conference notes indicated that their use of informal assessments lead to instructional adjustments, such as regrouping students, use of audio-visual aids and re-teaching concepts.
- Ongoing checks for understanding include; pre-planned questions for paraprofessionals to use during small group instruction, the use of checklists, rubrics to meet the cognitive level of students, picture symbols and assistive technology.

<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 participate in inquiry-based/professional collaborations that have strengthened school-wide instructional practices and fostered the implementation of CCLS and the instructional shifts. In addition, the teams consistently examine student work and analyze data promoting improved student outcomes.

**Impact**

Professional collaborations continuously strengthen teacher practice; promoting standards based instruction and increases in student achievement.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams meet at least twice weekly and are grouped according to grade bands, academic content areas, and student populations. Teacher teams use student work samples and focus on the rigor of the tasks, how lessons are differentiated to include all learners and the level of questioning used by the teachers. Teachers stated, as a direct result of professional collaboration such as lesson study and inter-visitations, that there is a strong coherent focus across the school on increasing student led discussions.
- Teacher teams look for alignment to the standards and how teachers incorporate the instructional shifts when writing their lesson plans. For example, in a 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> grade class, students were asked to write a narrative to demonstrate real experiences of events using descriptive details and clear event sequences based on informational texts (4/5W.3). During teacher team meetings, data revealed a trend indicating grades 4-5 students were struggling with sequencing skills. As a result of a school-wide focus on sequencing, EdPerformance Series for subgroup Non-fiction for Grade 4 increased from 1995 to 2131 and Grade 5 increased from 1997 to 2069.
- The school uses the Atlas Protocol to guide teachers in discovering what students understand and how they are thinking. Teachers choose student work products that demonstrate student thinking and allows students the freedom in how they approach the task. Another approach was discussed during a teacher team meeting. Teachers decided to plan a classroom activity together, however, each teacher would teach the lesson independently. Teachers would then bring the student work back to the group for discussion. The team felt this approach would be another way to examine teaching practices based on what the group has learned from looking at student work.
- The Positive Behavior Intervention Support team created and implemented a system that encourages positive and appropriate behavior to foster student achievement in learning. The team's core belief stresses the importance of maintaining a safe and structured environment based on clear expectations and a system of positive reinforcement in order to allow learning to take place. For example, during a team meeting facilitated by the school's psychologist, the team looked at a particular student's Daily Point sheets, Daily Progress Monitoring of Behavior Intervention Plan, staff interviews and student interview, to uncover trends. It was noted that the student had done well behaviorally at the beginning of the school year, but after November, issues surfaced impacting on academic achievement. The team brainstormed ideas how to support the student both academically and behaviorally.
- As a result of Teacher Team Meetings, all progress monitoring is standards-based for 100% of students. The Benchmark Folders goals and school year promotion is based upon the CCLS, as opposed to generalized Individual Education plan goals.