Quality Review Report

2015-2016

P.S. 007 Samuel Stern

K-8 School M007

160 East 120 street
Manhattan
NY 10035

Principal: Jacqueline Pryce Harvey

Date of review: March 31, 2016
Lead Reviewer: Clarence Williams

The School Context

P.S. 007 Samuel Stern is a K-8 school with 371 students from grade pre-kindergarten through grade 8. In 2015-2016, the school population comprises 3% Asian, 30% Black, 63% Hispanic, and 3% White students. The student body includes 12% English Language Learners and 27% 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 90.2%.

School Quality Criteria

Instructional Core		
To what extent does the school…	**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	**Additional Findings**	**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 *Framework for Teaching*, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products	**Focus**	**Proficient**
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	**Celebration**	**Well Developed**
School Culture		
To what extent does the school…	**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		
To what extent does the school…	**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:	2.2 Assessment	Rating:	Well Developed

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. The school uses common assessments to create a clear picture of student progress toward goals across grades and subjects, track progress, and adjust curricular and instructional decisions.

Impact

Students and teachers receive and use meaningful feedback, leading to academic achievement, and instructional adjustments are made to improve instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use school wide assessments, which include, Measure of Student Learning, (MOSL), performance tasks, running records, Degree of Reading Power, (DRP), and interim assessments. The data from the assessments are used to adjust the curricula. An example was seen in a grade 6 unit on test preparation. Based on the results of an interim assessment showing students struggled in citing evidence to make inferences, the unit was revised to include compare and contrast texts from different genres in similar themes and topics. Grade 6 students also struggled in determining the theme of a literary text. The use of graphic organizers to understand how a story's plot unfolds as well as how the character responds to the change in plot was added to the curriculum.

- Data is used to provide feedback to students so that they have an articulated knowledge of their performance levels. They have instructional conversations with academic advisors and teachers, and as students in multiple grades stated, information from their assessments enables teacher to provide them with consistent help in all subject areas during class and after school. As a result, students' work samples show growth in areas of English Language Arts and social studies, from drafts to mastery, as evidenced by teacher comments attached to work. A grade 8 social studies student work shows an essay with "grows and glows" comments suggesting next steps, and actionable and meaningful feedback.

- During a grade 7 ELA class, the teacher was monitoring and randomly asking questions of students working in heterogeneous small groups. During a grade 6 integrated co-Teaching class (ICT) on algebraic expression, the special education teacher worked with small groups to assess student comprehension by asking high-order thinking questions and adjusted the instruction based on student feedback and previous assessments.

Area of Focus

Quality Indicator:	1.2 Pedagogy	Rating:	Proficient

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Teachers reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation, however, student ownership is not evident in the vast majority of classes.

Supporting Evidence

- Students in an ELA grade 7 class worked for 15 minutes in various stations doing a compare and contrast task. Students were engaged in higher order thinking skills and utilized peer-to-peer questioning and answering to check for understanding and respond to inquiry. Classes demonstrated Do Nows which required students to independently engage in task-based assignments and peer discussions. Teachers intervened using clarifying questions. In a grade 1 reading Teachers' College workshop class, the teacher started with vocabulary, transitioned into the read aloud, and introduced a new book previewing it by getting students to predict. Students identified the vocabulary words and were able to demonstrate higher-order thinking when presented with the challenging task of relating the vocabulary words to real life experiences.

- During a grade 7 ELA class, the teacher was observed focusing on the use of comprehension strategies to determine the author's purpose for writing informational text, asking questions of students working in heterogeneous small groups. During a grade 6 ICT class on algebraic expression, the special education teacher worked with small groups, assessed student comprehension by asking high-order thinking questions, and adjusted the instruction based on student feedback.

- High levels of student thinking and participation were seen in classes; however, student ownership was not evident in the vast majority of classes. An example was seen in a grade 3 English Language Arts class, the objective was "students will answer short response questions about characters point of view, they will base their answers on evidence gathered on what the characters said and did." The teacher was observed asking a small group, "What do we look for when reading about characters?" Student answers included "I look for what the character says, I look for what the character does." Students engaged in an independent reading and circled vocabulary words. They were responsive to the teachers' instruction, however there was no evidence of students initiating their own dialogue, creating their own questions, or engaging in dialogue beyond the teacher's instruction.

Additional Findings

Quality Indicator:	1.1 Curriculum	Rating:	Proficient

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact

Teachers and leaders make purposeful decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students, and cognitively engage English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- A grade 6 social studies curriculum on westward expansion evidenced literacy Common Core Learning Standards which include citing textual evidence, determining central ideas, and distinguishing among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgement in a text. English Language Arts shifts include, academic vocabulary, balancing informational text, and text-based answers. An example of academic vocabulary in the unit included cholera, settlements, manifest destiny, and homestead. The unit states that students will balance informational and literary text by using their textbook to assist with map labeling of expansion territories and dates.

- A grade 8 science unit demonstrates rigorous habits and high-order thinking skills. Cognitive skill development includes making connections across science strands, drawing conclusions from several informational strands, and writing informed opinion based on science material. The unit plan states that students should be able to explain in writing the design implications of each lab and write a coherent narrative explaining the content and relationship sequence of each concept map.

- To promote college and career readiness, the English Language Arts team created a unit entitled test sophistication to prepare students for State assessments and high school preparation. The unit includes obtaining and interpreting information using text features and analyzing how an author develops a key individual, event, or idea, in informational text through facts, examples, and anecdotes.

Quality Indicator:	3.4 High Expectations	Rating:	Proficient

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations including professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, to the entire staff and provide professional learning. School leaders and staff consistently communicate to students and families expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact
School leaders and staff provide training, have a system of accountability for expectations, and offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations.

Supporting Evidence
- During Monday professional development sessions, teachers have an opportunity to meet with leadership to discuss areas of instruction, culture, and accountability. The principal also meets with teacher leaders twice per month. The principal also sends out a newsletter highlighting events and promoting school culture. An example was given in a December 15 newsletter. The principal highlighted interim assessment dates, school leadership team meeting dates, and dates for professional development for teachers.

- Teachers and administrators partner with Union Settlement to provide many assemblies and workshops, which are well attended by parents. Topics include the high school selection process and high school requirements. Parents organize and run a college resource room that is available to parents, teachers, and students. SUNY visited the school for a presentation, introducing seniors to their colleges, and the programs that are available. This year the school also sponsored a college road trip and a college fair. A fair planned for May, made available by Union Settlement, includes 50 colleges that are expected to participate. The school currently has four advanced placement courses for students to help prepare for college.

- Parents have expressed their support of Union Settlement as being instrumental in supporting higher education prospects. Parents also have participated in college application writing workshops to assist their children being accepted to the colleges of their choice. They have also expressed that other grade levels besides seniors are exposed to fairs and workshops.

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

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures are in place so that teachers have built leadership capacity.

Impact

Teachers promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards, (including the instructional shifts), strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams work collaboratively to build and improve on instructional practices for students. Using data and targeting student work, teams discussed areas for development and shared insights on instructional practices that are designed to develop successful strategies. A focus of one particular team meeting was to discuss medium and low performing students in the kindergarten class and to discuss their progress and areas of needed intervention. Teachers noted that student language relating to numbers has improved. Student work showed the ability to decompose using numbers from one to four, while work samples showed they struggled using the number five. Members discussed instructional practices to improve counting. One method was to have students draw examples and verbalize their answers to help them find their errors

- During an interview, teachers stated that a function of the teacher team was to develop instructional practices that allow students to see the relationship with numbers, building fluency and helping students build on their ability to think out the strategies enabling them to verbalize their work, as students are required to explain their work based on drawings or equations. This oral foundation model is used in kindergarten.

- Teachers interviewed felt comfortable sharing ideas and practices that continue to improve student performance. They share and discuss the data with school leadership, discuss additional resources and materials they need to improve performance outcomes, they display the adjustments to the curriculum, and the leadership provides the team with the resources they need to address the needs of the students. Teacher teams meet regularly with the principal for purposes of updating and support. Teacher teams shared that the principal has an opened door policy with the entire staff. They stated they had impact in decision making by having lead teachers organize teachers to develop and revise the curriculum.