Quality Review Report

2016-2017

Dr. Jacqueline Peek-Davis School
Elementary 17K012
430 Howard Ave.
Brooklyn
NY 11233

Principal: Nyree Dixon

Dates of Review:
February 15, 2017 - February 16, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Valerie Taylor
The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Celebration** to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the **Area of Focus** to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as **Additional Finding**. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

Information about the School

Dr. Jacqueline Peek-Davis School serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</strong></td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff in weekly newsletters and memorandums and provide training to meet those expectations. School leaders effectively communicate expectations connected to college and career readiness and student progress.

**Impact**

Faculty and staff receive training on schoolwide expectations and are held accountable for these. Families are provided with ongoing information about the progress their children are making toward college and career readiness.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders communicate high expectations for instruction to faculty and staff via staff handbook, weekly newsletter, professional development sessions. In three teacher meetings, teachers agreed that the principal communicates high expectations weekly in specific, detailed emails which outlined the focus and findings from walkthroughs and observations. A review of emails and newsletters revealed that checking for understanding during instruction and high order questions are schoolwide focus. There are also expectations for classroom environment with attention to anchor charts and prompts to strengthen student discussions, increase rigor, and deepen student thinking. Teachers were provided professional learning sessions on the following topics, digging deeper with questioning, looking at student work and checking for understanding. Teachers are held accountable through walkthroughs, one on one conversations, and observations feedback. One teacher’s observation included next step such as, “Circulate the class for a purpose. Develop a system to capture the information gathered as you check for understanding. I will be visiting you in two weeks to see the implementation of this recommendation.”

- Teachers participate in professional development sessions during professional Mondays, provided by the instructional team and from outside facilitators. Teachers are expected to incorporate new practices into their instruction. A review of a memorandum asked teachers to visit a colleague’s classroom to observe the introduction of rubrics to allow students to self and peer assess. In addition, teachers were required to reflect on the visit and write a short narrative of how they would implement the strategy that they observed. One teacher’s reflection stated that introducing the rubric at the beginning of each lesson helped to focus the students’ thinking. She noted, “It was very helpful to see the students using the rubric as a checklist to assess their work. I will be using that strategy in my class.”

- Parents shared that school leaders communicate with them via progress report, phone calls, flyers, and workshops. In addition, they receive communication regarding the schools’ expectations for their children through opportunities such as, parent orientation, curriculum nights, and meet and greet. Parents stated that the workshops they receive and the opportunity to meet with the teachers on Tuesdays have been very helpful. They noted that the workshops on test taking strategies have made them more aware of the Common Core Learning Standards and what students are required to learn. Furthermore, parents all agreed that as a result of the workshops they feel confident when helping their child with her homework. On parent noted that she tries to use some of the same language used at school such as main idea and character traits when checking her child’s reading comprehension. Another parent stated, “My daughter struggles with explaining her math problem. After the teacher explained it to both of us, I am able to check to make sure she includes everything and she is doing better.”
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings
Teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curriculum allowing for learners to engage in conversation and produce meaningful work products.

Impact
While entry points allow for students to demonstrate high order thinking in appropriately challenging tasks, these entry points are not strategic thus, student conversations and work products do not yet reflect student ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- In a third grade math lesson, students discussed strategies to solve a word problem including division. Students were asked to find all the possible ways they could seat thirty students in equal groups in a theatre. Students prepared by highlighting key words indicating the operations to solve the problem. Some students used cubes to make models, drew pictures, and made arrays. In one group the students debated which arrangements would be more appropriate. One student commented, “I think thirty in one row would extend across the aisle.” Another student explained how his five by six array would be easier because that is how the seats look in the theatre. In a third grade lesson, students read Fox by Margaret Wild and use close reading strategies to answer whether they think Magpie is a good friend. One student stated, “Magpie is not a good friend because she betrayed dog when she left with fox.” Another student noted, that although dog was a good friend to Magpie all she wanted was to fly again. “I don’t think she really wanted to leave dog but fox ran faster and it made her feel like she was flying.” However, this level of thinking and participation was not evident in the vast majority of classes limiting student’s ability to take ownership of their learning.

- Multiple entry points were consistently used across grades. A second grade science lesson, on living and nonliving things, required students to classify various objects and write a summary explaining how they are different. Students used notebooks, chart paper and graphic organizer to record their findings. In a kindergarten math lesson, students were required to complete a word problem putting addends together. Some used rekenrek, counters, and cubes to show addition facts. One student explained, that he liked using the cubes because they have different colors. He used green for one addend and red for the other. Another student demonstrated how the rekenrek helped her by moving the counters to show how she puts them together. However, practices to provide multiple entry points into lessons was not evident across the vast majority of classes. In a fifth grade math lesson, students were required to solve the same word problem involving multiplication of fractions. In this classroom, there were missed opportunities for students to demonstrate higher order thinking skills in work products.

- Teachers posed questions to engage students in group and whole class discussions and provide guidance to move thinking forward in conversations. In a self-contained, social studies lesson students worked in groups to research Egyptian culture, food, clothing, and homes. The teacher circulated throughout the classroom and used questioning to guide students thinking, “Why do you think the Egyptians used bricks instead of mud to build their homes?” One student stated that the brick was stronger. Students were heard discussing that bricks were made of rocks. In the class share, teacher asked, “Is there a connection between the Egyptian culture and another culture?” One student noted that the Egyptians and Nigerians ate with their fingers. In most classrooms, the level of thinking and participation was high but students have yet to lead the discussion without teacher prompting and guidance.
**Findings**

Curricula across grades and subject areas integrate the instructional shifts by exposing students to fiction and nonfiction text with a focus on academic vocabulary and citing evidence. Additionally, curricula emphasize rigorous tasks and high order skills across grades and subject areas.

**Impact**

Curricula emphasize career readiness and require all students including English Language Learners and students with disabilities to demonstrate high-order thinking.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leader and faculty develop curriculum maps, lesson plans, and pacing calendars aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and incorporated the instructional shifts. A review of unit plans indicates that teachers plan to use shifts such as writing from source, academic vocabulary, and procedural knowledge in math. This was evident in planning documents requiring students to read *Frog and Toad* as a central mentor text to examine the essential question “How are the characters alike and how are they different?” A fifth grade math unit reflects the focus on academic vocabulary such as, “factors” “distributive property” and equation.” The unit also required students to justify their mathematical thinking by explaining their answers. In a grade three science unit, student learn the academic vocabulary of “energy”, “motion” “force” to be able to respond to the essential question, “Why is force important?”

- Strategies for providing access to the content for students with different learning style are incorporated in most lessons. Lesson plans demonstrated that teachers make modification to units through the use of instructional grouping, small group work, scaffolds and manipulatives so that all learners have access to rigorous tasks. For example, a grade four math lesson plan identifies students to work in a group with teacher on solving word problems involving addition and subtraction of fractions with like denominators while other students would work independently using various scaffolds such as teacher model, group discussion, and various manipulatives to solve the problem. A lesson in a self-contained class for students with disabilities, focusing on writing informational pieces, outlined tasks for specific students noting that five students will work independently to write their essay with details to support. The same lesson identifies students for working in small groups with adult support. Reading lessons include leveled texts, group discussion, graphic organizers, questioning and notetaking to ensure that all students including English Language Learners and students with disabilities are engaged.

- Task across grades and subjects emphasize rigorous habits for all students. A fifth grade reading task indicates that students will read multiple texts and use close reading strategies to make judgments about the characters and develop theories about how secondary characters relate to the main character and how that relationship helped to move the story along. A grade four writing lesson, requires students to research a text to write an analytical essay on how the author writes powerful introductions and conclusions. A third grade social studies lesson indicates that students will be asked to read a text and make annotations to engage in text-based discussions. This pattern of task that require higher order thinking skills was seen across the curricula.
## Additional Finding

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<thead>
<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 rubrics and checklists aligned to the school’s curricula and ongoing checks for understanding to determine student progress toward goals.

### Impact

Teachers use assessment rubrics and checks for understanding to provide actionable feedback to students. The use of ongoing checks for understanding results in effective adjustments to instruction.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers adopted student-friendly rubrics that are aligned with curricula as well as checklists across subject areas to provide actionable feedback. A four-point jigsaw problem solving rubric assesses math knowledge, thinking, application, and communication. Feedback on a fifth grade math rubric on multiplying whole number and fractions was “It is clear that you have a good understanding of the problem and you used math language to explain your plan. Your next step would be to make a noticing about your solution and show how this problem is like another problem.” Feedback on second grade short response two point rubrics, included comments asking the student to cite text evidence by going back to the text to support her answer. On the same task, another student was asked to restate the question and answer in complete sentences. A third-grade writing rubric provides the following feedback, “Good job stating your claim, let’s work on finding relevant supporting evidence.”

- Across classrooms visited, teachers used checks for understanding by asking targeted questions to assess student’s comprehension of the concept. In a second grade self-contained science class, students compare and classify living and non-living things. The teacher asked pointed questions to check for understanding such as “Why did you classify these objects as non-living?” “Why did you classify this as living?” The teacher picked up a pine cone and asked students who classified the cone as living, to explain their answers and those who had a different answer to explain. She then referred the students to the anchor chart and invited other students to justify their answers. One student stated that he changed his answer because it did not need air or water to grow. As a result, all students agreed that the dried pine cone was no longer a living thing. In a second grade social studies lesson students read secondary sources to answer questions on Egyptian culture and highlight text evidence to support their answers. The teacher observed that a number of students were highlighting whole paragraphs and asked, “Why did you underline this paragraph?” After a number of students were observed highlighting whole paragraphs, the teacher used a mid-class interruption to her model and demonstrated that she only underlined the sentence that supported her answer. This type of effective adjustment to meet student needs was observed across classrooms.

- In a student meeting, the majority of students were able to explain the purpose of the rubrics and say how they use it to improve their work. One student showed a math task with feedback recommending that she show her work and explain her strategy. She explained how that feedback supported her in getting a better grade. She stated that the rubric showed her that she needed to use math vocabulary to explain her work and show used a second strategy to solve the problem as extension. Another student, stated, that she used rubrics to check her writing before she turns it in. “Rubrics tell you what you want to include in your writing. I always check to see if I include details, use complete sentences, and that my topic is clear.”
Findings

School leaders support teacher development with effective feedback and next steps from frequent cycles of observation. An effective system drives the use of observation data in the design of professional development as well as inform decisions as to staff members assignments.

Impact

Frequent cycles of observations provide teachers with effective feedback that improves pedagogy and data. These cycles of observation drive professional development and selections for teacher leadership roles.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct at least four cycles of formal and informal observations for all staff and provided actionable feedback for next steps. A review of observations demonstrates that school leaders provide teachers with prompt written feedback aligned to the school wide focus. One observation included feedback recommending that the teacher use the Common Core Mathematics Companion to plan lessons that meet the needs of the students. Another observation report includes feedback that the teacher should, “Focus on designing lessons that include questions that allow students in discussion and high order thinking." A follow-up observation commends this teacher for having begun to infuse student discussion in her lesson which was a recommendation in a previous observation. The teacher was guided further when the school leader wrote, “Use the conversation prompts to allow students to take ownership of the conversations.”

- The professional learning team comprised of grade team leaders and administration meet bi-weekly and review data analysis from all grades to identify gaps in student learning. Analysis revealed that students across grade were having difficulty with problem solving. A decision was made to use the Exemplar math program to supplement the math curriculum. Additionally, a bi-weekly assessment plan was agreed upon to address deficits in a timely manner. Professional development documents indicated that teachers received training on how to implement the Exemplar program including using the rubrics to provide students with feedback. The use of Exemplar math problems and rubrics was observed across grades and classes.

- The data and professional learning teams meet with school leadership after each cycle of observation to look for patterns and trends that emerged from teacher observations. This information is used to design professional development. Analysis of the first cycle revealed that many recommendations were focused around the use of scaffolds to support students learning. Professional development documents for February indicated that teachers received professional training in the use of scaffolds in instruction. In addition, administration also use teacher observation data to the identify teachers who demonstrated highly effective practices in specific domains. Feedback on observation reports evidence that highly effective teachers in areas of questioning and discussion were encouraged to facilitate schoolwide and small group professional learning for their colleagues and serve as mentors for new teachers. A second grade teacher was assigned as mentor for a new teacher.
**Quality Indicator:** 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development  
**Rating:** Proficient

### Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations. There are distributive leadership structures in place.

### Impact
Professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards, strengthening teachers’ instructional. Distributive leadership structures have ensured that teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning.

### Supporting Evidence
- The majority of teachers are engaged in grade and vertical teams, as well as common planning time. Teacher teams meet and used formative assessments to determine commonalities of student success and areas for growth across grade. In one teacher team meeting, fifth grade math teachers used a protocol to look at student work to discover why students were having difficulty dividing fractions. The team selected student work from the bottom, middle and top third to see if there were commonalities among the groups. Teachers discussed what the task required and what students needed to do to demonstrate mastery. One teacher stated, “I notice that the students in the two bottom groups attempted the problem but were unable to complete it.” Another teacher noted that one student did complete the task but transferred the answer incorrectly. The team then referred to the fourth grade standards to see what is required of the students at that level. The team identified skills that were demonstrated with proficiency and areas in need of improvement. They determined that students were having difficulty solving word problems using division of fraction. Instructional next steps included re-teaching, using anchor charts, and providing scaffolds.

- Teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity through team collaboration. In one case, a teacher emulated a colleague’s lesson using anchor chart to model the writing process. Since implementing the chart in her room, the teacher noted an improvement in her student’s writing. School leaders, stated that the impact of these collaborations resulted in a large group of teachers implementing the techniques in their classrooms to varying degrees of success. One teacher shared and others agreed, “collaboration gives us a common language so when students transition to another grade they are familiar with some techniques such as how to engage in accountable talk conversations.” After I observed my colleagues guiding their students through turn and talks, I started implementing the strategies in my class and students’ conversations have become more focused.

- Distributive leadership opportunities and teacher voice are present throughout the school. Inquiry teams and grade level meetings have teacher leaders who represent them on instructional matters as needed and facilitate workshops. Some teacher leaders are selected by administrators based on their leadership and facilitation skills. Teachers have also volunteered to lead the initiatives such as the program which allows students and parents to practice strategies taught in school using the new tablets that were donated to the school. This project includes researching appropriate programs and ensuring internet access for families. Teacher leaders have also taken ownership of the data system and are engaging other teachers in using the program effectively to change the way they look at student work. Thus, demonstrating how teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.