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


### School Quality Ratings

#### Instructional Core

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

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

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

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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Area of Celebration

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings

Teacher teams consistently analyze the assessment data they collect from their collaborative reviews of student work. Grade band leaders, who make up one part of the school’s distributive leadership structure, have a voice in professional development and adjustments to teaching practice.

Impact

As a result, groups of students make progress towards meeting set goals. Teacher input that is considered when adjusting curriculum and teaching practice has an impact on student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The Weeksville School has several teacher teams that consistently meet on a weekly basis. The teams follow an established protocol that requires them to review, reflect, brainstorm, and then come to a consensus around implementation of an adjustment to a highlighted teacher practice based on revealed needs of students. The observed fourth and fifth grade team concentrated on both student writing and how student discourse could be used to impact improvement. Teachers, after closely observing students during classroom discussions, reviewed their written work for their opinions expressed. Teachers’ reflection and brainstorming revealed the need for differentiation in student discussion procedures in order to successfully include a variety of learners. An action plan was created to adjust teacher practice to support students with different learning styles, using various teaching methods. Teachers decided that having some pairs, some small groups, and some larger groups creates an optimal situation for sharing out writing assignments. It was also proposed that students who expressed a preference to work alone should be given a certain amount of independent time and allowed to join a smaller group or partner later in the lesson for the share-out. The team reached consensus and included these adjustments to teacher practice in an action plan that will be reviewed for impact at the next team meeting.

- The observed teacher team discovered that fifth grade students, including groups of students with disabilities, showed progress towards their writing goals across content areas when they were allowed to use a rubric, while working in pairs and small groups, and grading a model sample of writing. Discussions produced opportunities for students to engage in critical thinking that they then applied to the assignment. The number of students successfully meeting the normed standard for the assignment increased from 23 to 34 to 45.

- Teachers who serve as the Grade Band Leaders on one of five teams included in the distributed leadership structures at The Weeksville School have the responsibility of serving as grade-level instructional leaders. They fulfill their obligations, which affect schoolwide student learning, by providing leadership in the collection and analysis of data, facilitating team discussions about improving instructional practices, ensuring maintenance of effective routines for monitoring student progress, leading discussions about and aid in the improvement of grade level curriculum, and providing the necessary information, encouragement, and support for team development. Observation of a team meeting, as well as teachers’ notes, past agendas, and documented analysis of student progress after implementation of adjustments to teacher practice, confirm the positive impact of the teams work.
Area of Focus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings

Although teachers create rubrics, across grades and content areas, practices reveal their inconsistent use, as is the case for checks for understanding. Teachers are provided with actionable feedback regarding student achievement, but feedback provided to students regarding their academic accomplishments inconsistently contains actionable next steps.

Impact

Students receiving limited actionable feedback are not able to reliably take the next steps to produce a work product closer to mastery of the learning objectives. In addition, students are not benefiting from ongoing adjustments to teacher practice, lessons, and curricula, so that their learning needs are met.

Supporting Evidence

- Although examples of rubrics were observed in some classrooms and on some hallway bulletin boards, they were inconsistently used as a tool to provide students with actionable feedback. Some messages from teachers which included actionable advice on next steps such as, “You must explain how you used the place value chart”, and “You wrote your description of a witch directly from the text. You must write your answer using your own words.” are not the norm. Check marks and comments such as, “Good Work!”, and “Great Job!” followed by a compliment to a skill already mastered, were observed as a more consistent practice. There were many missed opportunities to provide students with the full benefits of feedback, which included detailed next steps to improve their achievement.

- Although students were frequently assessed with ongoing checks for understanding in third grade, fourth grade, and fifth grade math classes, assessment of students in other grades and subjects lacked consistency. In a kindergarten class, a fourth/fifth grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, and a grade five literacy lesson, checks for understanding were attempted with teacher questions and turn-and-talks. The students, however, did not get the benefit of the attempts because of a lack of follow through. Questions such as, “Do you all agree or disagree?” and use of practices such as turn-and-talks requesting students to “share with your neighbor” were not followed up by any evaluation of the students’ responses. Teachers often moved on to the next phase in the lesson, thus missing an opportunity to gain an understanding of which students understood the concept.

- Across classrooms, teachers inconsistently adjusted lessons to meet students’ learning needs according to the results of the chosen check for understanding. In a second grade science class, the teacher charted a “What I Know, Want to know, What did I Learn” chart, (KWL), and had students turn-and-talk about the life cycle of plants. Students’ responses to “What do you know about the life cycle of plant?” included “They start out as seeds, and then you plant them and water them,” “They go through stages,” and “They change.” These answers confirmed that students were ready for the next stage of the lesson. The teacher met the needs of the students by moving onto charting and tracking the growth of a seed into a tree through the seasons. In a kindergarten class, however, a self-assessment checklist created to evaluate a written response revealed that many students were not prepared to move to the next activity in the lesson. However, the teacher did move to the next activity, connecting animals to their homes.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings

Curricula and academic tasks unevenly include rigorous tasks requiring higher-order thinking skills and consistently lack accessibility for a variety of learners.

Impact

Students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) are inconsistently ensured access to engaging and rigorous curricula in all subjects and content areas.

Supporting Evidence

- The chosen formal curricula including, ReadyGen, Go Math!, and EngageNY for literacy, math, and science, and Pass Port for social studies, are all aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and emphasize rigorous tasks requiring higher-order thinking skills. However, these tasks appear inconsistently in school created curriculum maps, unit plans, and lesson plans across the grades and content areas. Lesson plans for some math, science, social studies, and literacy classes included opportunities for students to turn-and-talk and then share their thinking with their classmates while working in pairs, groups, and with the whole class. Students were also required to support their findings with facts and quotes from the text. A science lesson plan included a KWL chart, which required students to reflect on their prior knowledge, discuss the new material, and create a hypothesis for future learning. In contrast to planned tasks that require the use of critical thinking skills, preparation of a social studies lesson lists teacher-led reading of text, and the asking and answering of level one questions provided in the social studies textbook as the main class activity. Student tasks that emphasized higher-order thinking and/or rigor were not represented.

- Math lesson plans, on all grade levels, consistently reflect planning as per the evaluation of student work and analysis of data to provide differentiated tasks and materials so students with disabilities would be engaged and have access to rigorous tasks. A fourth grade ICT lesson plan listed a place value chart and differentiated word problems as tools for allowing students with disabilities access into the task. In addition to varied and leveled questions, third grade and fifth grade lesson plans included assorted plans for work products as a way to ensure that struggling students are engaged with the same-leveled math material. However, some literacy, science, and social studies lesson and unit plans did not document questions, materials, or tools that reflected planning allowing all students access to cognitively challenging activities.

- Although some lesson plans clearly documented guidelines and directions for paraprofessionals to support students with disabilities, the curricula and academic tasks rarely reflected specific planning so that these students could access and cognitively engage in the activity. Guidelines for paraprofessionals that were present in some lesson and unit plans for students with disabilities were missing for paraprofessionals assigned to students learning English. Furthermore, curricula did not reflect precise planning to provide these students access to the planned academic assignments.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings

Although teachers provide opportunities for students to attempt rigorous tasks and take part in group activities and discussions, across classrooms teaching practices inconsistently challenge, engage, and provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact

Student work products and discussions by all learners reflect uneven levels of higher-order thinking skills and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- The practice of providing multiple entry points into the curricular was inconsistently demonstrated across classrooms. In a fifth grade math class, students were purposefully divided into three heterogeneous stations according to the fluency they demonstrated on the particular multiplication skill being taught. There were three levels of activities at the first two stations, which provided appropriate challenges for advanced, on-track, and struggling students. Students at the third station were provided with individually paced enrichment assignments that were accessed by using Mathletics software on desktop computers. Additionally, the students at station one were required to use study the problem, organize the facts, line up a plan, verify a plan of action, and examine the results (S.O.L.V.E) to decipher word problems while students at station two used multiple strategies to solve word problems that required multiplication of multi-digit numbers by multi-digit numbers. In a pre-kindergarten science class, however, all students were led as one group in singing “My Five Senses” and continued as a group in reading the My Five Senses book. Student participation and engagement revealed multiple levels of understanding the five senses and how they are experienced; however, instruction, materials, and work product were not varied or adjusted to allow access for all learners.

- Although the teacher of a kindergarten class attempted multiple Common Core-aligned practices, students were inconsistently engaged and displayed uneven demonstration of critical thinking skills by a lack of responses and completion of the connected classroom activity. For example, the teacher modeled the use of a four-point checklist so students would be able to self-assess their classwork. Five of the fifteen students were able to successfully check off all four items on the list and demonstrate their understanding of the self-assessment practice. Four out of the fifteen students were able to verbally demonstrate their thinking when challenged to critically think of what would happen to a squirrel if it were unable to return to its home before the winter. The turn-and-talk discussion before the share out of the fate of the squirrels revealed an inconsistency of the students’ engagement. Two of the seven small groups and pairs were consistently on task and able to demonstrate their understanding of the turn-and-talk process when prompted by the teacher, while the five other groups consisting of eleven students were not. Their lack of achievement of the learning task was not addressed during the fifteen minutes of observation.

- Students in a grade four/five ICT class were asked to provide an action or a quote to show that the English witches in The Witches, by Robert Dahl, were mean, unkind, and angry. Although some students provided actions, such as turning children into fleas and slugs to show the witches as unkind, the students were limited in exploring the deeper meaning of the witches’ choices. Through direct questioning from the teacher, three of the sixteen students were able to show their thinking and participate in a discussion, which revealed the diabolical reasoning behind the witches’ choices. The opportunity for the students to discuss the actions of the characters and then reach conclusions about the reasons behind them was inconsistently available to all in the class.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

The Weeksville school is currently developing methods of communication to consistently deliver messages of high expectations to parents and students.

Impact

The school is in the process of developing ways to communicate with parents both high academic expectations and how to provide support for their children. Some students are receiving messages of high expectations and guidance on preparation for the next academic level.

Supporting Evidence

- Parents receive handouts, a monthly newsletter, and have the option to meet with teachers face-to-face every Tuesday afternoon for information on the progress of their children. Although each parent spoke to specific needs, strengths, and weaknesses of his/her child, very few were able to speak to examples of support they received on how to get their children to the next academic level. A fifth grade parent received instructions on how to access academic websites that students use in school to check progress and how to support her daughter’s reading and writing. A pre-kindergarten grandparent explained that parents are expected to prepare pre-kindergarten students by making sure they are able to recognize the letters of the alphabet and write their own names. To support this process, school leaders and staff members spoke about workshops and learning opportunities that are currently under development that would provide information to family members on ways to specifically support their children’s progress to the next academic level.

- Fifth grade students stated that they must be able to use the S.O.L.V.E procedure to solve math problems so they will be ready for algebra in middle school. Fifth grade students also spoke about the importance of details in writing, supporting their opinions with quotes and text, and understanding vocabulary in preparation for sixth grade work. Although fifth grade students were able to speak about supports and messages received from guidance counselors and teachers that prepared them for the next academic level, second, third, and fourth grade students were not. Teaching practices, guidance counselor procedures, assemblies, and guidelines for group work and classroom activities are currently being reviewed, discussed, and adjusted to achieve successful communication of expectations to all other grade levels.

- Some grade five students stated that the one to four scale on the rubrics they use in ELA and math reminds them of what they should be aiming to achieve on their next attempt at the same skill. Another fifth grader stated, “A 2 is OK, but my teachers and my mom expect me to do better.” A third fifth grade student explained the process of receiving “Right Now’s” and “Next Steps” and how they are expected to apply the “Next Steps” in their new work. A number of students, from across the grades, also spoke of a color-coded system where “Red means you are struggling and don’t understand, yellow means you understand some of it, and green means you are doing well.” More than one student expressed how they are expected to work very hard to reach or maintain the green level.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

School leaders provide feedback to staff that include strengths, challenges, next steps, and suggested professional development to support the progression of observed practices to align with the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders meet regularly to review observation data and make professional development decisions.

Impact

Frequent feedback to teachers provides clear expectations and focuses on teacher development. Professional development opportunities are the result of informed decisions by school leaders.

Supporting Evidence

- Using their iPads, school leaders send teachers immediate feedback via email as they exit a formal or informal observation. The principal and assistant principal follow up in a timely manner with the official write-up providing not only viewed strengths and challenges but also expectations and recommendations for professional development to support the growth of teacher practice. Review of several write-ups revealed school leaders highlighting practices such as print rich classrooms, use of technology, providing extension work, redirecting students after technological malfunctions with class materials, and thoughtfully organizing instructional groups for maximum learning. Some challenges brought to the staff’s attention were the use of support staff, classroom management, transitions from one class activity to another, and lack of differentiation in tasks.

- Presentations of all strengths and challenges in teacher practice were accompanied by the observing school leader’s expectations for continued implementation of a best practice or a needed pedagogical adjustment. For example, a teacher who was praised for celebration of student work displayed both inside and outside of her classroom was encouraged to continue ensuring that all displayed work includes a task and visible comments. A concern raised about students sharing books was followed by information regarding an ample supply of the books in a nearby classroom to preclude students from having to share and not have access to the materials.

- In response to review of student work and the results of benchmark assessments, combined with data from Advance, which revealed a need for support in the teaching of writing, school leaders implemented the Schoolwide Writing Fundamentals workshop for all teachers. Sessions were implemented during blended grade team meetings of kindergarten and grade one, grades two and three, and grades four and five. The use of student benchmark results and the most recent data from Advance are under review to determine the impact of the professional learning and to identify the focus for professional learning for unit two.