Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 327 Dr. Rose B. English
K-8 23K327
111 Bristol St.
Brooklyn
NY 11212

Principal: Kimberly Chance Peart

Dates of Review:
November 15, 2016 - November 16, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Marion Wilson
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

P.S. 327 Dr. Rose B. English serves students in grade PK through grade 8. 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

#### 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>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>Developing</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# School Quality Ratings continued

## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
<td>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

School leaders communicate high expectations to teachers and parents and have a system of accountability for these expectations. To support these expectations, professional learning opportunities are provided to teachers and families.

Impact

As a result of the professional development, teachers have a common understanding of the expectations for their work, and parents are able to partner with the school to help their children meet expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders provide professional learning opportunities to teachers around the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Professional development is conducted via staff conferences, grade level meetings, coaching cycles, and intervisitations. Newsletters are sent out on a regular basis to staff from both administration and the instructional coaches to support the school’s instructional focus and agenda. The Instructional Highlights newsletter refers to teachers as professors and communicates the expectations based on the Danielson component the school is focused on for the learning cycle. The school’s instructional focus is active engagement and was agreed upon by both teachers and school leaders. Staff members are held accountable to meeting the expectations related to instructional and professional responsibilities. A teacher shared that she receives ongoing support from her peers and instructional coaches to help her improve her craft. While the administrative cabinet leads the work in ensuring that expectations are met, this work is ongoing so teachers hold themselves more accountable for their part in improving practices.

- Danielson ideals are posted in all classrooms and throughout the building in an effort to share expectations of lesson plans, bulletin board set-up including posting the task, rubrics, standards, and varied samples of student work products, and class whiteboard configuration including the classroom environment, and experience charts. The principal regularly emails staff, holds informal conversations, and shares her expectations for the priority components through daily morning announcements.

- Parents reported that they volunteer at the school and meet regularly both frequently and informally with teachers. They receive communication from the school in the form of newsletters, emails, and phone calls, and they are invited to attend workshops. Several parents agreed that teachers track student progress and hold families accountable to help their children with problem solving and schoolwide projects. A newsletter entitled Novembers Numbers was sent to parents communicating the expectations for the schoolwide math project that parents were expected to assist and support their children in completing. Each grade band was responsible for creating different developmentally appropriate charts and graphs. Students in second to fourth grade were required to work with their parents to survey at least ten to fifteen people about their favorite color and depict the information in three different representations or charts. Both families and students receive feedback on the quality of the work and strategies students can use at home. Families also shared their experiences of participating in the parent pen pal project where their children write letters to them, and in turn they have to write a response to their child on a monthly basis.
Findings

Teaching strategies include multiple entry points, scaffolds and tiered questioning that are beginning to support student learning across some classrooms. There are some examples of student-centered classes where students can think critically and work cooperatively.

Impact

Inconsistent access to supports and extensions cause some students to fail to be challenged to work to their full potential or to work independently. Discussions, class participation, and efforts to promote thinking are uneven across classes and result in missed opportunities to deepen student understanding of subject matter.

Supporting Evidence

- Classroom practices reflect the use of instructional strategies such as student grouping and varied levels of questioning. However, the proficient use of such supports and strategies to promote high level thinking to meet the needs of the high achieving, of English Language Learners (ELLs) and of students with disabilities were inconsistent, resulting in limited opportunities to maximize student learning. In one classroom, there were multiplication tables, anchor charts, whiteboards, manipulatives, adult support, and graphic organizers to help support students; however, in a few classes, students were not prompted or reminded to access these tools to complete their assignments. In some classes, students were seen working compliantly by following the teachers' directions and trying to complete activities; however, teachers do not consistently promote the use of these tools and resources to help students persevere through completion. There were missed opportunities for some students to work independently on assignments.

- During class visits, students used accountable talk stems to agree and disagree with comments made by their peers; however, the conversation remained primarily between students and the teacher. Students could articulate what they were working on, but they were not always sure of the expectations for them to complete tasks in a specific manner. In one class, students were asked to explain the events and ideas in a historical text including what happened and why it happened based on specific information. They had to support their ideas with textual evidence. Students generally shared a summary of events and what transpired, but didn’t elaborate on why events occurred based on the evidence in the text. In another class, students were asked to turn and talk to a partner about the digit in the ten’s place and hundred’s place and to explain the method they used to write the number for 200+50+8. Once students shared their answers, they were not required to discuss any further and only focused on completing the pages in their math workbook.

- Across classrooms observed, class lessons were mostly lectures, and students completed the same assignments with limited time to work collaborative in groups. While they were sitting in groups in most classes, the interaction was limited to turn and talk. However, students in a math class were asked to create and to look for patterns in a table, graph, and equation that represented a growth pattern. They also had to use previously learned math vocabulary such as “exponents,” “exponential function,” “exponential growth,” “growth factor,” and “exponential relationship” to articulate their reasoning. Students were required to further prove their answers by writing out their responses once they shared with a partner. Students were engaged, and all students knew what was required of them while the teacher facilitated learning. This type of high level of student thinking and participation was not evident across most classrooms.
### Additional Finding

#### Quality Indicator:

1.1 Curriculum  

#### Rating: Proficient

**Findings**

The school ensures that curricula are aligned to the standards and Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), and that text complexity, academic vocabulary, and fluency components are integrated into curricula and lesson plans. Tasks and plans expose students to elements of critical thinking across grades and subjects including ELLs and students with disabilities.

**Impact**

Tasks provide a diversity of opportunities for students to extend their thinking across subjects including opportunities for English Language Learners and students with disabilities. The curriculum is designed to address horizontal and vertical alignment within grades and across subjects in order to promote college and career readiness for all students.

**Supporting Evidence**

1. The school has a common lesson plan template, which highlights the instructional shifts and mathematical practices for every lesson and include “I Can” learning target statements written in student friendly language. All lesson plans utilize the Uncommon Schools lesson plan template that structures plans with lesson segments for the teacher-led whole class activity (“We do”), group work (“You do”) and independent work (“I do”) portion of every lesson. All plans contain the following elements standard across subjects: essential questions, formative and summative assessments, tiered groupings, lesson reflection, and next steps. There are monthly projects based on prioritized standards for writing both opinion, and informational writing tasks, such as in lesson and unit plans that commemorated Election Day. Lessons progressed with the level of difficulty from kindergarten to fifth grade.

2. Plans highlight the level of Depth of Knowledge that their learning targets expect, and the common lesson plan template based on CCLS integrates instructional shifts and mathematical practices for lessons. For example, students are asked to infer meaning from texts, analyze characters’ actions after a sequence of story events, identify trends, and create authentic work pieces. There is an inter-disciplinary approach to planning lessons for science and English Language Arts and math and social studies. The “prove-it” method is standard across subject areas and requires students to explain their thinking by providing evidence from text based evidence, anchor charts, maps, or by writing to explain strategies and rationales for the use of a strategy they chose. Lesson plans require instructional alignment for core subject areas with an acronym that is supported across the school. For example, each plan should include opportunities for students in reading independently, complete enrichment activities, completing at your seat tasks, and receiving direct instruction (READ). Similarly, lesson plan elements for mathematics contain Math drills and facts, at your seat activities, teacher directed instruction, and a hands on component (MATH).

3. Curricula materials are designed so English Language Learners and students with disabilities have access to challenging and rigorous tasks and activities. Accessibility is in the form of technology supports, graphic organizers, manipulatives, visual aids, and charts. Plans highlight the Depth of Knowledge level question or activity different students are required to complete ensuring that there is variability within lesson plans such as differentiation through scaffolds, and strategic or extended support materials.
Findings

Most classes use end-of-unit or chapter tests, teacher created tasks, on-demand writing prompts, rubrics, and other grading practices based on the school’s curricula to receive feedback on student progress and mastery. Teachers consistently use formative assessment tools such as conferencing, exit slips, and varied higher order thinking questions to capture information and to make adjustments to lessons based on student response.

Impact

Information gathered allows teachers to reflect on their practices, to adjust group assignments, and to meet the needs of the learners in their class. Students utilize checklists, popsicle sticks, rubrics, and self-assessment tools to give most teachers ongoing information about what they know and on what they need help with.

Supporting Evidence

- End-of-unit and chapter assessments from curricula materials, performance tasks, on demand writing, rubrics, grading policies and the use of “glows and grows” on work products provide feedback to help teachers gauge student achievement and progress related to the standards. The school’s list of pre-requisite skills needed for each grade informs the critical assessment areas that need to be addressed. Performance tasks and mid year assessments reveal information on how students are progressing towards standards. Conferences with students and simulation exams based on selected prioritized tested standards provide opportunities for item and skills analysis. There are standard-aligned rubrics used in all content areas, as well as student-friendly checklists that are used to identify strengths and areas of improvement. Feedback to students includes comments such as, “You have a strong opening statement, and you need to work on the use of transition words to notify your reader that you are switching to a new idea. This will help your writing flow more smoothly.”

- Students receive a variety of feedback from their teachers that is accurate and timely and helps students show progress based on lesson targets and where they are currently performing. Teacher feedback posted on student work on bulletin boards or in folders incorporates language lifted from the rubric language for different activities and tasks. Both teachers and students can speak to assessment results from multiple sources that help to improve student performance. In the small student group meeting, one student shared, “I am able to use the information from my graded work to see if I am on the right track or if I need to start over.”

- Across most classrooms, there are systems to check for student understanding before classes through a “do now” activity or problem of the day; during class through color-coded systems or group assigned discussion prompts, and medial checkpoints for the whole class, or after class through exit tickets. These checks for understanding help teachers effectively make adjustments in response to students learning needs. Students have opportunities to self- and peer-assess formally and informally. Students capture their understanding of subject matter by using the terms, “spicy, mild, and hot” to capture understanding of lesson topics. Teachers use this information to form groups, to revisit material, and to spiral or move forward in lessons. Most teachers also record student responses directly on lesson plans or capture data collected from students through checklists in notebooks related to the skill and standard being taught.
**Findings**

School leaders observe teachers informally and formally on a regular basis and look at student work and data to help teachers grow professionally. BiteSize learning notes accurately captures teachers’ strengths and challenges through “glows and grows,” and offer concrete next steps.

**Impact**

Teaching practices across the school are improving as a result of frequent visits and observations with ongoing feedback from the school’s administrative team. The feedback supports teacher development in implementing more student-centered and small group instruction activities.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school’s observation schedule includes both formal and informal observations and walkthroughs by administration and coaches. Teachers receiving feedback through BiteSize learning notes, which are sent via email after a classroom visit from administration. Teachers have twenty-four hours to reflect and respond to the principal on the steps they will take to improve their practice. School leaders then return within one week to view the observed practice and memorialize the visit. New teachers receive additional support from the coaches and a teacher on the grade level with whom they are paired to help them become more proficient in teaching. Effective and actionable feedback to teachers is helping to lift practices and also to build coherence of instructional practices across grades and subjects.

- The school employs a tool called *An Analysis of Measures of Teacher Practice*. It includes the following essential question, “How effective are I.S. 327 classroom teachers’ practices as measured against Danielson’s rubric?” There are effectiveness ratings for each domain along with degrees of competency represented by a percentage. The school identified “engaging students in learning,” “using assessment in instruction,” and “using questioning and discussions” as the areas needing the most improvement and as the foci for this school year. The action plan to address these deficit areas included lunch and learns, intervisitations for staff to view best practices, and focused support for teachers in greatest need. The beginning of the year analysis tool indicated improvement across several key areas as compared with the end-of-the-year analysis completed last June.

- Feedback accurately captures strengths and includes concrete next steps for teachers to improve their pedagogy. One sample observation report gave “glows and grows” for the lesson that was observed. The principal suggested the teacher create math workstations that target the specific skills of students that need to be addressed. The principal also told the teacher to offer students a choice in picking an independent activity while students worked in each center. A sample math group-planning template was offered to support the teacher’s efforts. On the day of the visit, this teacher was observed implementing the principal’s feedback and had students working in centers. In another report, the teacher was instructed to decrease scaffolding for more students to work independently and to demonstrate knowledge of previously introduced skills. In addition, the teacher might further differentiate her level of questions for more student-to-student discussion. The coaches supported the teacher with implementing the feedback, and the teacher continues to show improvement in these areas.
Findings
Teacher teams analyze data related to student achievement and discuss instructional strategies to make adjustments to instruction in order to improve teacher practice and student outcomes. Teacher leadership is evidenced throughout the school where teachers play an important role in making decisions that affect curriculum and instruction.

Impact
The work of teacher teams has led to increased teacher collaboration and the sharing and implementation of effective teaching practices. Teachers’ involvement in key decisions around curriculum, professional development, and programs helps groups of students make progress towards goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Most teachers collaborate in professional teams during Monday and Tuesday sessions, as well as at other times to utilize protocols to look at student work through the lens of the school’s instructional focus. Instructional practices embed the Common Core and the instructional shifts so that teachers encourage students to talk more and to make their thinking visible. Teachers have opportunities to meet both horizontally on grade levels and vertically within content areas. There is an asset inventory completed for each collaborative team to help focus their work on areas that need to be strengthened.

- One team was engaged in analyzing writing samples from the most recent on-demand writing prompt from students where students were asked to write a narrative about a single event in the proper order and to provide a reaction to what happened in their story. Teachers facilitated the meeting through the “what, so what, and now what” lens. All work focused on the standards, skills, and requirements to exit kindergarten. Teachers discussed the implications for instruction based on previous work and the additional scaffolds needed for ELLs before the administration of the next month’s writing assessment. As a result of the meeting, teachers shared that they will continue to provide picture cues, drawings, dictation tools, and writing exemplars to help students better communicate their thoughts in writing. Teachers also decided to further revise the rubric to support students and to replace words with picture progressions.

- Teachers have opportunities to demonstrate leadership and have a key voice in decisions that affect student learning. For example, there are teacher leaders on each grade along with coaches and model teachers who meet with administration to offer input on a weekly basis. Teachers helped to create the new common lesson template that all teachers are now using to plan lessons. Teachers contribute to the design and implementation of professional learning activities. During the teacher meeting, many teachers shared that they make decisions on the resources they want to use and administration supported them when they adopted the use of the ReadWorks Article-A-Day program to expose students to high-quality nonfiction articles every day and to increase fluency and comprehension across the school. Teachers suggested the idea of a humanities approach for the social studies and science program and as a result the school has an interdisciplinary approach for teaching these subject areas.