Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 328 Phyllis Wheatley
Elementary 19K328
330 Alabama Ave.
Brooklyn
NY 11207

Principal: Barbra Gedacht

Dates of Review:
March 16, 2017 - March 17, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Carlos Perez
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

P.S. 328 Phyllis Wheatley serves students in grade K 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</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 Celebration</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

*To what extent does the school...*  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</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>
</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>
</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>Area of Focus</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

Teaching practices are aligned to the belief that students learn best when involved in small group work along with in-depth partner and group discussions.

Impact

Teacher pedagogical practices are aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching, which allow for student work to reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- There is a coherent belief in the school that students learn best when working in small group instruction, engaged in group and partner discussions, and with technology. During an English Language Arts (ELA) lesson that focused on analyzing texts in order to identify themes, students had multiple opportunities to engage in rich and rigorous group discussions. At one point the teacher posed this question and asked students to discuss in their groups, “What can I tell about how the story is written by the first sentence?” Responses from students during group discussions included, “That it is in first person narrative” and “It is in first person because the sentences are using a lot of me, I, and my.” During a math lesson, students had opportunities to work in groups and use laptops in order to complete the lesson on fractions. As students worked on their assignments in groups, other students who required additional assistance and support used the classroom laptops. Laptops are available for each student and students are familiar and comfortable in how to access should they need them.

- Examples of high levels of student discussions and thinking were evident throughout classes visited. A second grade science lesson required students to use a model of a catapult to conduct a lab experiment. Students were presented with a handmade catapult along with a cotton ball and a ping pong ball. With a partner, they were asked to design a scientific question around the objects. Examples of student created scientific questions included, “Which ball do you think will go further?” and “Using the catapult will the cotton ball or the ping pong ball go further?” During a grade five ELA lesson, students annotated text in order to highlight key terms and ideas that would help them cite text-based evidence. During the lesson, student groups could be heard saying, “Don't forget, you need to quote your evidence” and “You're looking for important parts from this story to use as evidence.”

- During classrooms visited, students were engaged in the use of technology that supported lesson objectives. During a grade five ELA lesson, students were using iReady, an online reading program, to complete lessons based on the specific sub-skills that needed support. During a grade four math lesson, some students were using online programs on the classroom computers that aligned content for math and other subjects. As in the ELA class, students were working on different levels according to skill and lesson objectives. Students were able to share that by working on these programs it helps them to get better in the targeted areas.
Area of Focus

Quality Indicator: 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision
Rating: Proficient

Findings

School leaders support teachers through frequent cycles of classroom observations. Feedback from observations captures strengths, challenges, and very often next steps for teacher improvement.

Impact

Feedback shares clear expectations for teacher practices that support teacher development; however, feedback does not always align to professional teacher goals.

Supporting Evidence

- In addition to feedback in observation reports, school leaders offer feedback during pre- and post-observation meetings by reviewing lesson plans and offering teachers feedback that is aligned to the curriculum and, in some cases, to their personal teacher goals. As a result, both teachers and school leaders reported seeing an increase in student engagement and teachers believe this has to do with support and the feedback they receive on their lesson plans. Teachers shared that even though they may have selected the informal process of being observed at the beginning of the year, they still receive the same post observation conference with detailed feedback and ratings as if they had gone through a formal observation process.

- Creating teacher goals is a partnership between teachers and school leaders. Teachers shared that goals are created from the feedback and next steps that are provided from their classroom observations. Professional development (PD) is planned for and aligned to teacher goals and teachers have a clear voice in the PD they attend and or facilitate. School leadership meet with teachers regularly to monitor goals, student data, and lesson plans, and school leaders are consistently gauging whether the teachers need additional support in specific areas. During the teacher meeting, teachers were able to express how they felt very supported by school leadership. One teacher shared, “Administration is very supportive, and they are always willing to give us what we need to succeed.” However, many of the observation reports reviewed do not reference or align feedback to teacher goals, thus missing some opportunities to offer next steps that are aligned.

- Many of the observation reports reviewed displayed feedback to teachers that accurately captures teacher strengths, challenges and offers next steps. One observation report recommended that in addition to verbally discussing academic vocabulary, the teacher should “Highlight those words by listing them on a chart or word wall so that students can use them when completing the graphic organizer.” Observations also reference past reports when identifying areas of concern that have been an issue. For example, one observation report reminded the teacher that their lesson requires additional forms of student assessment, such as an exit ticket, and the report further references that this was the same recommendation that was made in the prior observation report. Although feedback such as this was seen throughout many of the observation reports, others were not as detailed in offering clear next steps that were timely and specific.
## Additional Finding

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

Staff ensures that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and exhibit rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills for all learners.

### Impact

Curricula and academic tasks are accessible for a variety of learners and promote college and career readiness for all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teacher lesson plans displayed planning and alignment with the Common Core. A grade five literacy lesson included planning for students to be able to analyze evidence from literary or informational texts in addition to being able to identify vocabulary words and their meanings. For this lesson, students were exposed to excerpts from *Seeker* and *The Most Beautiful Place in the World*. Planning included the teacher modeling the lesson and then asking students to begin working in groups and allowing for time for the teacher to work with students that need assistance.

- The grade five curriculum map for social studies displayed planning for all students. There was a list of differentiated questions using *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) questions, levels one and two. Additionally, there is planning for students to construct end-of-unit writing activities on three separate skill levels. This specific planning accounts for all of the learners in the class, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. The grade one math curriculum has areas that plan for time in order to reteach those students who need additional assistance, enrichment for those that require more rigor, and ways to model language to support ELL students, keeping the rigor at high levels in order to challenge all students.

- A grade three English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan included the teacher modeling how to follow a “quick flash” plan for writing an extended response and then having the students engage in the process themselves. Planning highlighted the importance of the introductory sentence as it is the place where students will tell the reader how they will address the prompt. The plan outlined how the teacher will read aloud to the class, and follow each section with a turn and talk session that involved several questions pertaining to the text.
Additional Finding

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

Teachers use rubrics that are aligned with the school curriculum and use common assessments, such as Fountas and Pinnell (F&P), to monitor student progress.

Impact

Teachers provide actionable feedback to students and use results from assessments to adjust curriculum to meet the needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use the rubrics from the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) for all literacy assignments and create rubrics for all other subject areas using these rubrics as a guide. For example, teachers use the narrative rubric for writing as a basis for all social studies and science writing assignments. Students understand rubrics and value the use of rubrics, especially for their writing assignments. During the student meeting, students were able to articulate their feelings about rubrics. All students shared how valuable and important rubrics are to them. One student shared, “Rubrics are helpful because they tell you what to do to get a perfect score.” Students also expressed how useful rubrics are especially with writing drafts. One student shared that using a rubric after every draft and revision allows you to see what is missing in order to bring the writing to a level four.

- The school uses F&P as their leveled reading assessment program in order to track and assess student's reading levels. Students are assessed through F&P three times during the school year and comparisons of data are conducted every time in order to track movement of all students between reading levels. Teachers analyze this data to adjust reading groups and offer additional support to those students that require it. Students know their reading levels and understand the importance of moving up in reading level. During the student meetings several students shared how they set reading goals and that each time their teacher listens to them read, and assesses their work, it is an opportunity to move up a level. One student shared how at the beginning of the year her reading level was an L and her goal was to get to a level P by the end of the school year. She shared that as of the date of this Quality Review, she was already up to a level N.

- The school uses GOMath! as its math curriculum for all students. All teachers use the performance tasks associated with GOMath! along with the rubrics as their primary assessment method. Data from the performances tasks are regularly shared with teachers through the schools data coordinator and data is analyzed during team meetings and meeting with the school's data coordinator. Teachers shared that based on the data on the performance tasks, teacher develop feedback that they share with students during individual conferencing sessions. Students shared that when teachers meet with them individually, they review all of their errors and give them feedback as to how to improve. One student shared, “When the teachers sit with us and review our tests, it helps me so that I know how to improve the next time.”
Findings
School leaders communicate high expectations connected to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. All staff communicates high expectations to parents with respect to preparing their children to be college and career ready.

Impact
School leaders have a system of accountability for all teachers with respect to professional expectations. All staff members support parents in understanding their children’s academic expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- There is an expectation that all teachers who attend PD sessions off site, turnkey that information to their colleagues shortly after the sessions have concluded. School leaders shared that they attend all PD opportunities that take place throughout the year. The school principal shared that she attends all PD in order to not only grow as an educator but to hold teachers accountable for implementing what they learned into their lessons. Teachers shared that they appreciate seeing school leadership at the PD sessions as they know it holds them accountable as to implementing what they learned into their lessons.

- The school provides supports for parents to give them usable skills to help their children with their education. For example, teachers and school leaders shared that the first Tuesday of every month is dedicated to homework help sessions for parents that share productive ways to support their children with homework. During the parent meeting, parents shared how useful those homework help sessions are. Parents expressed that knowing that they can come in and review their children’s homework and ask questions gives them comfort and makes it less anxious when helping their children with homework. Additionally, the school provides training to parents for the online platform iReady in order to help parents understand the platform and how it helps to support their children’s academic needs. Parents shared that having access and knowing how to navigate the platform gives them confidence when working with their children at home. School leaders stress to teachers and students how important it is to use iReady at home or during times other than during the school day and reward students and classes with high usage levels. For example, out of 28 fifth grade students from one class, 22 students showed an increase in usage when comparing September through December to January through March. Parents shared that having a system that allows them direct access to their child progress in real time has been very useful to them. They shared that many times they just want to know how their child did on a test or homework assignment and do not necessarily need to speak to the teacher, and this helps.

- School leadership uses a white board that can be found near the main office as one of the primary ways they keep teachers, students, and parents informed with upcoming events and time sensitive information. For example, on Friday, March 17, 2017, the notes wished the staff a happy St. Patrick’s Day, reported that 76 percent of school surveys have been completed and reminded four classes to report to an assembly at 9:28 a.m. Announcements posted on the white board remind the staff of any upcoming faculty and staff meetings for that day or that week, that teachers need to check their mailboxes and emails for important communications, and keeps them apprised of any time sensitive information that needs to be submitted. School leaders consistently sends messages to all staff about promoting college and career readiness throughout the school, such as reminding them to speak to their students about the colleges they attended during college week.
Findings

The majority of teachers are involved in inquiry-based collaborations using the Data Wise inquiry model. There are several distributive leadership opportunities for teachers to take part in, most notably through teacher-facilitated workshops for parents and staff.

Impact

Teachers’ instructional capacity is strengthened and teachers are taking on more leadership roles throughout the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers meet collaboratively in order to evaluate and review test scores, student work, and teaching practices. All teachers participate in structured inquiry-based team meetings using the Data Wise inquiry model which allows them to evaluate a variety of student data. This process also allows teachers to identify next steps through a collaborative process. During the team inquiry meeting, teachers worked on developing teaching strategies that will help to address some of the issues they identified at a previous meeting. At the start of the meeting, Data Wise protocol procedures were discussed and reviewed. The team discussed how they will be evaluating student work from various fifth grade classrooms as well as the ELA iReady data from tests administered thus far this year. The team worked collaboratively to share and assess instructional strategies implemented from the action plan as well as sharing strategies for answering short and extended response questions. Teachers continued to follow the protocol and shared wonderings and next steps, which included ways they could adjust the current action plan in order to implement specific teaching strategies to address the student issues they discovered during this meeting.

- The school has many ways that teachers are acting as leaders in the building. Each grade level has a teacher leader, and in addition, there are three overall teacher leaders in the school. Teacher leaders meet regularly with grade leaders and with school administration. During these meetings teachers and school leaders discuss curriculum, teacher pedagogy and other issues pertaining to the overall instruction and culture of the school. School leaders report how distributive leadership opportunities have “changed the culture of the building.” School leaders and teachers report that the level of trust in the building has increased as the messages that are being sent to all staff are coming from several different sources and not just from school administration. Teachers shared how there is no longer an “us vs. them” feeling in the building. The approach now, according to both teacher and school leaders, is built on “we” and “how are we going to get this done.” Teachers feel more comfortable taking risks and expanding their practices to include new initiatives and approaches that will make their classroom more exciting and welcoming to students. Students shared how this year they noticed that their classes are more “exciting and fun” and how the teachers are connecting what they learn to things they are interested in.

- The Data Wise inquiry process has not only brought a structured inquiry process to the school, but it has also allowed for more leadership opportunities for teachers. During team meetings, teachers take turns running each meeting and acting as the meeting facilitator. Teachers have the responsibility of ensuring that the meeting runs smoothly, and that all components of the inquiry process are followed properly. Teacher inquiry leaders have the responsibility to ensure that all teachers have equal voice, that data is disseminated to all team members prior to the meeting so that teachers have an opportunity to review all materials. Additionally, teachers report how teacher leaders work with other grade and subject teams in order to assist them with the implementation of the Data Wise process. Teachers feel empowered and provide their classrooms with the necessary tools such as connections to real life, that has helped improve student learning.