Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 002 Meyer London
Elementary School 02M002
122 Henry St.
Manhattan
NY 10002

Principal: Silvana Ng

Dates of Review:
April 20, 2017 - April 21, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Mitchell Center
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


School Quality Ratings

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

Quality Indicator: 1.3 Leveraging Resources  
Rating: Well Developed

Findings
The school invests heavily in technology and the arts in to enrich the student learning experience, and resources for adults are well-aligned to impact student achievement.

Impact
All students are engaged in challenging academic tasks and Instruction that engages all students with academically challenging tasks, as evidenced in meaningful student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The school made a commitment to professionally develop the staff, as the principal said, “Not a little bit here and there, but in way that is in-depth, ongoing and well-aligned to the school’s needs.” Teachers College curricular resources were brought back to the school and the principal made it a priority that all staff would have both the curriculum and the training they need to implement it well. The goal is to make a long-term commitment to the Teachers College approach to teaching reading and writing, which has already shown great improvements in writing and more students engaged in academically challenging reading at their just-right level. Teachers’ schedules have been coordinated to maximize investments in adult learning, and professional learning has been emphasized to ramp up teacher understanding and mastery of curriculum.

- The school’s emphasis on art and social-emotional development have been supported with investments in a range of programs. Several arts-based programs enrich the student learning experience and support academic goals. A drama program provides students with opportunities to practice reading while acting out various scenes from plays. Students read and re-read scripts and encourage their friends to take risks publicly. A music program for students supports mathematics instruction. Students are learning to read music and play piano through an integrated program that teaches mathematics through music. For example, discussions about eighth and quarter notes reinforced concepts that will help students better understand fractions and numerical relationships. Additionally, the National Dance Institute also operates programs in the school that provide students with physical and artistic enrichment.

- Staff time has been scheduled to maximize student learning and professional development for teachers. A cross-level team works with Apple PD to support the school’s iPad initiative. Grade teams work with Teachers College consultants that support curriculum planning and instructional improvement. Special education teachers regularly meet as part of the Academic Intervention Team, and also join grade team meetings to represent the needs of their students, and to share best practices with their colleagues. A double period of planning time is provided once per week for all teachers to ensure they have the time to co-plan and learn together. Staff time alignment with the instructional goals in the school has led to students engaging in meaningful and challenging academic work.
Findings

Common assessments are more consistent in English Language Arts (ELA) than they are in math, and teacher checks for understanding vary in consistency and quality across classrooms.

Impact

Common assessments and inconsistent classroom assessment practices do not yet provide teachers and leaders with specific knowledge about student achievement and progress, resulting in missed opportunities to tailor instruction to student need.

Supporting Evidence

- Common Assessments in ELA are used to determine students’ reading levels three times per year. In a kindergarten Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class students were observed reading books at a variety of levels. Students at similar levels were paired together at tables while one teacher worked with a group that was reading ahead of their peers, and another teacher worked with students who were reading a lower level. In this regard, systematic assessments of students lead to differentiated assignments. In this classroom, the teacher’s evidence of student reading levels was available and running records of student reading progress were implemented. However, in math the school has fewer regular check-ins and is not yet able to pinpoint with the same level of precision what students know and what they need to know.

- As was observed during classroom visits, some teachers take notes during student conferences in math and literacy instruction. While this practice was seen in some classrooms and subjects, in others conferences and checks for understanding were conducted verbally without any note-taking. In a lower grade math class students were making measurements with locking cubes as the teacher rotated, but results were not systematically tracked. Similarly, in social studies and science classes teachers asked questions that students answered, but the responses were not systematically tracked for later analysis, thus missing an opportunity to effectively plan for future lessons based on student need.

- During small group conferences, students shared written work that they had completed and that had been graded. They all reported having a rubric, but in several cases, they shared that they received the rubric after the completion of the assignment. Students also shared that there was limited discussion about the rubric when used, whether before or after the assignment.

- Although there are many effective student self-assessment practices in place, such as written reflections and peer assessments, teachers’ use of on-the-spot assessment and ongoing checks for understanding were inconsistent. Without clipboard checklists or notebooks that memorialize the content of conferences, some teachers lack the data they need to make adjustments for the future.
Findings
School leaders and staff ensure that ELA and math curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact
Adoption of Common Core-aligned materials and strategies across subjects as well as consistent planning ensures that curricula are coherent across the school and cognitively engaging for a range of learners.

Supporting Evidence
- After five years of not having Teachers College (TC) in the building, TC has returned this year with the support of two consultants who have contributed to the creation and refinement of the reading and writing curriculum. Teachers are now using Teachers College Reading and Writing Project units as their primary curricular source. Teachers and school leaders use student work and data to plan and refine curricula and academic tasks. The principal shared that they are integrating more non-fiction writing throughout the year across content areas.

- School leaders and teachers articulate how they ensure curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and other content area standards and chose strategies for integrating the instructional shifts coherently across grades and subjects. In math, the school is in its fourth year using the Math in Focus curriculum. Teachers and leaders refine the curriculum based on observations of student work, with a focus on finding more places where students are required to explain their thinking. For example, the school is exploring and experimenting with supplementing some math lessons and units with a program designed to promote active investigations.

- Teachers consistently refine academic tasks to make sure all students can access the Common Core. Unit plans across the school illustrate vocabulary and key terms, skills or strategies, essential questions, enduring understandings, content, lesson plan and activities, assessments, differentiation, and resources, such as the manipulatives needed for specific lessons and units. Lesson plans and academic tasks include the integration of the instructional shifts across subject areas. For example, a grade five ELA task required students to write a persuasive essay and include three reasons to support their claim. Students formulate their essay to agree or disagree and provide evidence in the form of facts and details to support their point of view. Most lesson plans include academic tasks that provided additional support and extensions for students.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the school’s belief about how students learn best. Teaching strategies consistently provide students with multiple entry points and high-quality supports.

Impact

Students across performance levels are fully engaged in lessons and activities as a result of the access they are provided.

Supporting Evidence

- In keeping with the school’s belief of how students learn best, across most classrooms visited, students engaged in partner work, small group instruction and independent practice. To promote small group instruction, some classrooms had as many as three adults supporting student learning. For example, in a kindergarten ICT class, there were two teachers and another adult each working with a small group. In three different math classes students were seen working with partners to solve problems and co-construct their understanding of fractions and measurement.

- In several classes observed, students were engaged in assignments that were tailored to their specific level. Teachers utilize grouping techniques and hands on supports such as math manipulatives to reach all learners. In a math lesson students built fractions by using a die and pattern blocks, and more advanced students used two dice as a challenging variant. Furthermore, a variety of partnerships, such as an Apple initiative that supplies iPads and the drama initiative which works to bring literacy to life, ensure that students needs are met in a variety of ways. Leveled literacy materials, the introduction of vocabulary at the beginning of lessons, and teacher supports also help students access the curriculum at their level.

- Technology is leveraged to support all students in working at their level. In a grade five class the teacher worked with a small group of students on the metric system while several other kids worked in differentiated groups using a computer application called Class Kick on a completely different task. Teachers have begun experimenting with various apps that allow them to assign tiered challenges to students working at various levels. The iPad initiative at the school also allows students to read at various levels on the same subject, providing English Language Learners (ELLs) and lower achieving students with access to new words with built in vocabulary structures. Students also use Digital Reading Works, iMovie, Scholastic News and other sites and apps to further their learning.
Findings
Teachers participate in collaborative inquiry-based teams and help lead several instructional initiatives across the school.

Impact
Teacher participation on leadership teams spreads the instructional knowledge-based across all grades and subjects and continues to impact the quality of lessons students experience.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are teamed by grade bands and meet regularly. School structures for distributed leadership empower teachers to identify student learning gaps based on assessment review. For example, a grade two inquiry team met to look at various samples of students' writing. Students were working to craft poems and each teacher brought samples of writing to the meeting to discuss the individual strengths, growth areas and identified next steps for the students whose samples were shared.

- Teachers share resources and ideas with each other, so they can spread best practices across the grade. For instance, one teacher suggested that kids keep a notebook to gather ideas for new poems, and another teacher suggested a Map of Your Heart activity where students jot ideas about things that are important to them. In this way, these exchanges of ideas in team meetings impact the experiences students have in the classroom.

- Teacher leaders represent each grade and support the school leadership with communication and decision making. Grade team leaders meet as a cohort to help ensure vertical alignment throughout the school. These teachers are tasked with helping to make critical instructional decisions that will impact all students and teachers. For example, as the leadership looks to supplement the *Math in Focus* program, some teachers are piloting the latest edition of TERC materials to help determine which units might be supplemented in future years to increase student engagement and understanding of mathematics.

- Teachers work with each other and with outside developers to further their instructional knowledge to achieve schoolwide academic goals. Two staff developers from Teachers College support curriculum writing and implementation, and teachers have dedicated time to work on these priorities. Several teachers meet regularly with the Apple staff developer to support with the implementation of their iPad initiative impacting the experience students have with iPads across the school.
**Additional Finding**

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating:    | Proficient |

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff and students. Teachers and staff cultivate a culture of achievement in the building that supports students.

**Impact**

The high expectations that emanate from the school leadership are reflected in the words and actions of the staff, and there are supports in place to prepare students for the next level.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders immediately provide feedback to teachers through explicit notes after classroom visits and publicly praise the best teaching practices, holding teachers accountable for their own expectations and students’ level of instructional rigor. Detailed suggestions are shared in write-ups for informal and formal observations, and there is evidence that teachers have instructionally rich conversations with the principal during post-observation conferences.

- A weekly newsletter is consistently shared with staff reiterating the principal’s high expectations and making clear the goals of the entire school community. In each newsletter the principal reiterates the school’s focus of increasing student rigor and developing coherence and includes general announcements and instructional comments that document progress, such as “I see evidence that you are developing a growth mindset.”

- Students in grades four and five are well informed about the middle school articulation process. A student shared that they have discussions with adults about which types of schools they might want to go to based on their specific interests. Students have the opportunity to visit middle schools within and outside their immediate community, and frequent parent and student meetings are held so that students and families could make informed choices. The parent coordinator works hard to translate all materials so that all parents could access and understand the full range of options available to their children.