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. 149 Sojourner Truth serves students in grade kindergarten through grade eight. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

### School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<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><strong>Area of Focus</strong></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><strong>Additional Finding</strong></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><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 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>
</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>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>Proficient</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 consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teacher teams establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

Ongoing communication and support by school leaders around classroom visits support teachers’ understanding and awareness of expectations around teaching and learning. Teacher teams offer detailed feedback that prepares students for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. Teachers also receive a staff handbook that covers topics such as Respect, Enthusiasm, Achievement, Citizenship, Hardwork (REACH) school culture expectations, professional development meetings, instructional quality, unit plans, lesson plans, learning objectives, homework policy, classroom environment, bulletin boards, and classroom management. The principal sends out a Teachers' Weekly email to inform teachers of upcoming events and expectations that’s color coded with blue for upcoming deadlines/dates, yellow for your information, and red overdue items. Teachers are required to create a course syllabus. Additionally, teachers receive the professional development (PD) plan at the beginning of the year. Within the PD plan are sessions to support the Danielson Framework for Teaching including, Designing Coherent Instruction, Using Questioning and Discussion, Engaging Students in Learning, and Using Assessment in Instruction.

- The principal designed PD time for teachers to work with the school’s instructional coaches with the expectation that teachers would produce unit plans aligned to the new curricula selections of the school. The unit plans are standardized across the school and include a unit overview, stage one- established goals, Common Core Standards addressed, enduring understandings, essential questions, lesson objectives, stage two – determine acceptable evidence, assessments (performance tasks, tests, projects), and an appendix. Teachers are held accountable to using the unit plans as guides as they develop and fine tune their lesson plans for specific student learning needs.

- The school’s culture for learning consistently communicates high expectations that help prepare students for their next level of education. Students receive weekly progress reports and report cards. Teachers use TeacherEase to post grades online for students and families. Each trimester, students participate in goal setting based on final grades from the end of the previous semester. This includes students graphing their trimester one and two grades in all four major content areas. A goal setting graphic organizer helps students to calculate grades and averages between the semesters. Students set a goal for their overall 2016-2017 average across each content area, they then figure out what their grade has to be in the final trimester to obtain that goal. Student led conferences are academic based and happen twice per year and give students opportunities to articulate their academic progress and goals to both their teacher and their parents. In addition, students maintain advisory portfolios that contain a REACH rubric, “Did I REACH for My Personal Best? Grade” charts, and goal setting documents are also included in the portfolio.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

While curricula promote college and career readiness for all students, coherence is building, and results across grades and subject areas are still in process. Teachers adjust curricula so that a diversity of learners have access and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricula documents revealed alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and New York State (NYS) content standards where applicable, as well as integration of the instructional shifts across grades and content areas. The school uses Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP) curriculum for reading and writing. In math, GO Math! is used. Passport from the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) social studies scope and sequence is used for social studies, and FOSS (Full Option Science System) and SunWorks are used for science curriculum. While recent steps have been taken by the principal to build coherence, results across grades and subject areas are still in process. Teacher creation of two unit plans aligned to Common Core Learning Standards per content area are starting points in building coherence.

- Curricula documents across grades and content areas evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards and the integration of the math instructional shifts. For example, in a sixth-grade lesson plan, students were asked to use ratio and rate reasoning to solve real-world and mathematical problems. Tasks included how to calculate the numbers of pizza to order for students participating in campus clean-up, determining the cost to travel in a car after a mechanic worked on it, and writing an equation to determine the number of drawers in a jewelry box with a total volume of 45 cubic inches. A second-grade unit plan involved students using addition and subtraction to solve one and two step word problems connected to real world problems, such as figuring out how many farmers are selling fruit at a farmer’s market when they know the total number of farmers participating and how many are not selling fruit. Curricula documents included assignments evidencing integration of the English Language Arts (ELA) instructional shifts. For example, a seventh-grade social studies lesson plan details students citing textual evidence as they analyze primary and secondary source documents. A third-grade unit plan details how students who are tasked with informational reading explicitly use text to develop their knowledge of animals.

- The lesson plan for an eighth-grade class social studies lesson includes differentiation for English Language Learners (ELLs) support such as a simplified organizer, simplified reading, and a computer for translation purposes. An extension activity for students who master the content includes reading about Thomas Jefferson’s plans for the Native Americans. Students were required to answer the question, “What was the social impact of the Louisiana Purchase?” A sixth-grade science lesson plan indicated sentence starters, both content related and general were used with ELLs and students with disabilities. Spanish speakers have translated versions of the notebook sheet, and specific students are noted for check-in with the teacher for additional support. A second-grade math lesson plan indicates a reteach opportunity for ELLs that included reading the problem aloud, having students use base-ten blocks, and guiding students to explain the steps to solve the problem. However, there was a lack of additional documentation to support individual and groups of students, including the lowest- and highest-achieving students, ensuring that all learners have meaningful access to the curricula and tasks.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best through the workshop model. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact
Students produce meaningful work products and take part in discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence
- In a second-grade math lesson, students were able to articulate their learning for three-digit addition and subtraction, "I started with 100s because I had to cross out the first one. 10s take away one, it has to be 145." In a fifth grade ELA class, students are using non-fiction text to learn about westward expansion for a research project. When the teacher asked, “How is this going to help you in research?” a student answered, “We’re pointing the facts out. We’re keeping it organized like the author. We’re taking out the chunks and pieces, and decomposing the complex text, by paraphrasing.” In a third-grade reading class on non-fiction text features. Students in groups reading animal books, a student responded, "When you see the keywords, it’s a vocabulary word. We can look to the back of the book to look up the words to know what they mean."

- Across classrooms, students were engaged in high levels of thinking and participation. During a sixth-grade science lesson, students were in collaborative groups working together on answering the question of what is an organism. They analyzed milkweed bugs and wrote three observations and three questions on a graphic organizer. One student noted, “This one is three dotted, so based on the chart of the female with four dots, I estimate that this is a male.” During a pre-kindergarten lesson, students were involved in a turn and talk about how did the little boy get that orange from the book An Orange in January. During a sixth-grade math lesson, students were involved in a turn and talk using a rubric to assess their partner’s responses.

- Teaching practices evidence the shared belief that all students learn best through the workshop model exhibited in instructional routines, coherence, and consistency. In one class, students had opportunities to work independently with resources at their level to support their learning. In another class, a mini-lesson on figurative language introduced students to similes, metaphors, and personification.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and checklists aligned with the school’s curricula to inform feedback to students. School leaders use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals.

Impact

Students utilize teachers’ actionable feedback and assessment tools in order to increase their achievement. Common assessments as well as grade-team findings and actions inform schoolwide curricula and instructional adjustments.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher-written actionable feedback. For example, teacher feedback on an opinion writing assignment included, “You stated a claim and gave strong evidence to support it. Your conclusion brings it all together and incorporates the idea of believing in yourself no matter what. Next time, we will work on elaborating your ideas.” In a sixth-grade class, teacher feedback on an argument writing task included, “Try using all of the documents provided. Using the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation in your introduction would really strengthen the intro.” A student reported, “I got feedback from my teacher about a paragraph I wrote about fox, and I needed to work on my conclusion. So, I rewrote my conclusion to make it better.”

- Across classrooms, rubrics and checklists are used as tools of support for student academic progress. Rubrics that are aligned with the curricula, along with rubrics and checklists that have been modified for student use, are used across grades and content areas. Evidence of students’ use of these tools is posted on classroom walls, on student work products, and reported by the students themselves. A student reported, “After getting feedback from our teacher about the rubric, she checks our work to see if we used our grows. She might do a review for the whole class, she might take a group, or she tries to find another way to teach it.”

- Common assessments to adjust curricula and instruction include TCRWP Running Records administered five times a year to track reading levels. ELA, math, science, and social studies mid-term finals are created by teachers based on Common Core Learning Standards addressed in NYS standardized exams and are used across grade levels. Other common assessments include baseline, mid-term, and final tests at each trimester, and performance tasks across all content areas. Teachers use the data gathered from common assessments to regularly adjust these writing and math groups in classrooms.
Findings
School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles. Prompt written feedback captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact
School leaders facilitate periodic goal reviews with teachers. Additionally, formal and informal classroom visits result in written feedback for teachers that make clear the expectations for teacher practice and the supports available to help teachers meet them.

Supporting Evidence
- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Each rated item is supported with specific evidence from the observed class. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence and at the close of each observation report. In addition, school leaders discussed a strategy of observation cycle planning that targets teachers based on prioritizing at-risk teachers based on the prior year’s overall rating, teachers on a formal improvement plan, and first-year teachers. New teachers are also supported with a new teacher institute that reviews expectations for school culture, the advisory program, curriculum mapping, and the classroom environment.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and are accompanied by next steps teachers should take in order to improve their practice and impact student success. For example, “As you execute the lesson, you should be cognizant of precision when teaching mathematical concept and demonstrating the work. You should use content specific vocabulary during the lesson and provide students with definitions they can reference during the lesson.” In another observation report, “In the future, as you plan your daily lessons, identify no more than three critical thinking and/or discussion questions that you will pose to students during the guided practice portions of the lesson. These questions should fall within the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation level of the critical thinking continuum. As students discuss these questions, you have the opportunity to track student responses (using a grading sheet or checklist) and to provide concrete feedback and address any misconceptions.”

- School leaders meet with teachers to facilitate teacher goals and objectives for the school year that are monitored and tracked three times during the school year. Teacher goals include measurable objectives, an action plan, and evidence. One teacher reported the impact of the principal’s feedback on her practice, “I was having difficulty with the mini-lesson in TC [Teachers College], when she taught me a different way, and then I got better at it. It’s come to a point if I’m uncomfortable to doing something, in instruction, I need to have it modeled for me. I saw how to do it and I progressed as a result.”
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: Proficient |

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations have strengthened their instructional capacity. Teacher team work typically results in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- An observed second- and third-grade math team met with their instructional coach to review extended responses in math specifically around fractions. The team reviewed student work products across the two classes showing whether students could shade models to show equivalent fractions and explain why they are equivalent. The inquiry team looked for trends and misconceptions. A rubric was used by the team when assessing the student work products. The team also had an exemplary response and sample responses to use as a resource to norm the team’s scoring of the student answers. Outcomes include some students getting a score of two and one in one class and some students in another class shading in all models as equivalent. Next steps included students taking a diagnostic of fractions and area and students using the rubric to self-assess their work.

- Teachers have strengthened their instructional capacity through team collaborations. As one teacher reported, “We review that pre-assessment, diagnostic data as a team and come up with specific strategies to implement in the classroom. I [have] notice[d] an improvement in students being about to explain their thinking and justify their answers after this cycle." Another teacher reported, “As a new teacher, I work[ed] with a colleague, and the work of the teacher teams has shown me how to make the performance task more applicable, by making it relevant to the students.”

- Grade-level teacher teams meet weekly to analyze assessment data, student work, and discuss best practices. Review of second- and third-grade team agendas and meeting minutes reveal that team discussions have resulted in the analysis of students who had trouble with two-digit multiplication and decided to reteach with multiplication equations and expressions. The team decided that they would use a do now on which expression is equal to, use a key for pictographs because students looked for numbers in the problems, not what the problem was asking, and spend two days on spiral math for graphs, arrays, and big topics.