Quality Review Report

2016-2017

The Bilingual Bicultural School
Elementary 04M182
219 East 109th St.
Manhattan
NY 10029

Principal: Yazmin Perez

Dates of Review:
December 8, 2016 - December 9, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier
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

The Bilingual Bicultural School 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
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<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>
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</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
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</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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<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

| Quality Indicator: 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings

Structures are in place so that each student is known well by at least one adult. The school community strategically aligns professional development (PD), family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports.

Impact

Personalized interventions, routines, celebrations and supports help students learn positive behaviors and result in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors. Incidents of student behavior not aligned to school beliefs have decreased dramatically.

Supporting Evidence

- The Peer Coach addresses student behavioral issues through de-escalation and restorative justice techniques. The Peer Coach also visits with classes, targeted through the previous year’s incident data, to facilitate follow-up discussions and activities related to the Book of the Month initiative. This initiative has students across all grades reading the same positive behavior-themed book. Follow-up activities are differentiated into two student grade groups. One group includes grades kindergarten through two while the other group includes grade three through five. Some of the topics addressed by these books are building community, bullying, the importance of accepting responsibility, the difference between needs and wants, and the value and importance of inclusion and acceptance of peoples’ differences. All of the work that celebrates students’ understandings resulting from this initiative decorate the hallway bulletin boards.

- Students can earn OWLS tickets from any member of the faculty who observes them behaving positively. OWLS stand for, On top of responsibilities, we are kind, love of learning and safe. Students place their eared OWLS tickets into a bowl in their classrooms. Each Friday there is a raffle using these tickets resulting in the public celebration of the student whose OWLS ticket was chosen. In addition, there are monthly assemblies at which awards are issued to students as well as faculty members. Awards are issued for person of the month as well as attendance. A separate monthly class attendance award is also issued to the class with the highest rate of attendance. This award is a trophy that stands over one feet tall and is housed in the classroom that won the award for the previous month. Students reported that, “The school is really proud of us for being good. The OWLS are great! And we all get awarded. Also the teachers.” After this, one student stood and proudly declared, “And my class has the attendance trophy now!” Later that day, that student took me out of the hallway and into his class so that I could see the award.

- Professional Development (PD) is offered to faculty on its Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program. PD has occurred on six occasions so far this year covering topics such as, systems to aid in supporting students’ social-emotional growth, de-escalating the student, and integration of high behavioral expectations throughout the school. These behavior expectations are shared on a rubric detailing how students should behave in the classroom, playground, cafeteria, hallways/stairway, bathroom and auditorium. The four categories of specific behaviors are titled only good choices, we are kind, love of learning, and safe. This initiative is present in all hallways, classrooms and mailings to parents as well as discussed at parent meetings.

- The number of behavioral incidents rising to the level of official documentation have markedly decreased from the previous year. Whereas there were seven such incidents in October 2015, there were zero in October 2016. An identical drop in incidents occurred between November 2015 and November 2016.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Developing |

Findings

Teaching practices are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs that students learn best when working cooperatively in groups and engagement is maximal. Student discussions inconsistently reflected high levels of student participation.

Impact

Teaching practices are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts. However, students have limited opportunities to engage in appropriately challenging tasks, take ownership of learning, or demonstrate higher order thinking skills in work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, there was evidence of teaching practices that reflected the articulated belief that students learn best when working in small cooperative groups. In most observed classes, students were either seated in groups or on the carpet receiving direct instruction, where evidence made clear that they would return to group seating arrangements. However, the additional articulated belief that students learn best when highly engaged in lessons that contain multiple entry points was inconsistent. In a grade four math class, students were seated in differentiated groups for which multiple entry points were in use. For this class, the support group received a targeted reteaching of the lesson and the student group that had already met the standard was working on an extension activity. Similarly, a grade five math class had students in groups working on assignments differentiated to meet students’ needs. However, in other classes all students worked with identical materials and without additional, differentiated supports.

- In a grade three science lesson, students engaged each other in discussion through the use of sentence prompts. While conducting an experiment on sound involving the identification of the dropped item solely by the sound of that item as it hit a desk, after describing the sound heard and the possible item that had been dropped, the student tasked with identifying the item was asked to explain why his or her match of the sound to the item was correct or incorrect. However, in a bilingual lesson, there were multiple missed opportunities for student to student discussion as individual students answered the teacher’s questions about monkeys, the topic about which they were to write. During a grade four math lesson, students individually responded to the teacher’s questions about what had been covered during the previous chapter, the relationships between addition and subtraction as well as between multiplication and division.

- In a grade one class, students engaged in discussion with each other and with the teacher over the elements of a thermometer and the ways in which information that can be learned from a thermometer can affect daily decisions. Students initially discussed what they believed could be learned from a thermometer and considered reasons why there may be a thermometer in the coolers used to keep food cold in the school cafeteria. However, in a separate class students were asked to identify whether the temperature went up or down based on the height and color of the model demonstration thermometer. Students then went on to color individual copies of an identical thermometer, without engaging in any student-to-student conversation.
### Additional Finding

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

Curricula and tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

**Impact**

Coherent across grades and subjects, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities. Planning for differentiated learning helps ensure that a diversity of learners have access to the curricula.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Review of curricular documents across grades evidence purposeful decisions to implement Common Core aligned curricula and ensure integration of the instructional shifts. In a grade two lesson plan, an anchor chart titled Read Like a Detective, is provided for students to detail how they should look for clues, ask questions, make their case and prove their claim by using text-based evidence. In a grade five lesson plan, students are guided through tasks that uncover the complexity of a non-fiction piece’s main idea. During the course of this lesson students were guided by the teacher to dig deeply into texts and understand their complexity by searching for key words that were used frequently, and by reading a chunk of text to find the main idea. The students engaged in this process repeatedly to uncover if a text has multiple main ideas.

- Curricular documents also evidence integration of the math instructional shifts. For example, a grade three unit plan involves activities designed to deepen students’ understanding of math by having them utilize a variety of perspectives in estimating, rounding, and computing place value when adding and subtracting whole numbers. In a separate lesson found within the same unit, students are to read and interpret data while also displaying data and tables by constructing picture- and bar-graphs. Students then interpret the data in graphs by solving work problems and writing number sentences. In a grade four unit plan, students read, write, and compare multi-digit numbers. They write numbers using standard and expanded form, as well as word names.

- Across grades and subjects, unit plans emphasize high-level questions and require students to make their thinking visible in their work products. A grade five math unit details how students will solve one- and multi-step problems that involve multiplication and that students will write equations and apply a variety of operations to solve those equations. In addition, students will assess the “reasonableness of their answers through mental computation and rounding.” A grade one reading unit includes a detailed list of all strategies that will be used to support English language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Some examples of these strategies are online tools, timed “brain breaks,” modeling behaviors, and highlighting. A grade four math lesson plan details the different supports made available to the three levels of differentiated student groups which are identified in the plan as either support, on grade, or enrich. Whereas the support group would benefit from a reteaching of the skill addressed in the lesson along with an internet-based support which would be accessible at their station, the on grade and enrich student groups each had specific extension activities that would be available to them once they completed the task at hand.


### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers and students use rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

### Impact

Teachers’ use of assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students. Additionally, teachers continually check for understanding during lessons and make adjustments in order ensure all students’ needs are being met.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher written actionable feedback. Some examples of that feedback directed a grade one student to remember to plan a story’s outline before beginning to write it and for a math project in the same class, feedback was given to a student that stated, “Next time, try to add labels and sentences explaining your work in detail. Also, try to give more examples of the math problems.” Other examples of written feedback to students include guidance to a grade four student to share written pieces with a partner to “work on sentence fluency and syntax (the way a sentence flows),” and advice to a grade three student to extend his use of details while also challenging himself to use more “high level words, perhaps more descriptive word to enhance his writing.” Additionally, evidence of the use of rubrics by teachers and students across grade was evident on hallway bulletin boards, classroom displays, and in student work portfolios.

- One student reported and all present agreed that the feedback given by their teachers has had a direct impact on their work. A grade three student stated, “This year when we first started our writing, I wrote a writing piece as one really long paragraph. The teacher gave me feedback on how to separate it into different paragraphs. I’m much better at it now.” Another student added that he appreciates being required to use a rubric to rate his math work before turning it in. He stated, “It makes me look at my work. Then I can correct it before I hand it in for a grade. Definitely helps!”

- Teachers continually check for understanding throughout daily lessons through check-ins and make adjustments or re-design student groups according to the results of those assessments. During a grade five reading lesson, the teacher facilitated a check-in with the class to determine which students felt comfortable with the mini-lesson target, using evidence to determine a main idea. These students were then asked to turn to a fellow student who did not feel confident with this skill and discuss it. A grade three teacher circulated throughout the room and checked students’ work, along with conducting a thumbs-up or thumbs-down check-in to determine which students would benefit from a re-teaching session. As a result, five students were brought together so that the teacher could reteach the mini-lesson. Additionally, during a grade four math lesson, the teacher circulated throughout the room while listening to students as they conducted a turn-and-talk as they attempted to agree on the mathematical equation that a word-based problem was asking of them. The teacher drew students’ attention when she stated, “I was listening to you and noticed that many students were struggling with this word problem. Let’s focus first on whether or not this question is asking for an estimate or an exact number.”
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

High expectations are consistently conveyed to staff through documents and professional learning aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress towards college and career readiness.

**Impact**

The faculty handbook and a variety of memorandum help staff understand the high expectations to which they are held. Communication with families, along with monthly student progress reports, provides opportunities for them to understand student progress towards meeting standards.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Review of the faculty handbook reveals the conveyance of high expectations that are aligned with the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Faculty Handbook sections dealing with expectations around the design and delivery of instruction are directly aligned to the applicable components of the Danielson *Framework*. Other examples of instructional expectations conveyed in this document are instruction of all content areas, assessment, standardized tests, differentiation, high student engagement along with multiple strategies and tools that teachers can use in order to reach these expectations including the circle the numbers, underline the important words, box the equation, and solve and explain using sentences (CUBES) strategy and restate the question, answer the question, cite examples from the text, and extend your answer (RACE).

- The principal shared high expectations through memorandum and includes targeted quotes from research found in professional educational journals. One memo discusses the importance of using manipulatives during math lessons in order to ensure access to education for students of different learning styles. In that memo, the principal defines a mathematical manipulative and discusses a variety of practical ways in which manipulatives can be used during a lesson. Another memo addresses the expectation that students and their efforts should be celebrated on hallway bulletin boards and classroom displays and quotes a researcher as stating, "Displaying children's work allows them to know you value their work," along with the added benefit to the school community in learning about the process in which students engage while completing challenging tasks. Other topics covered include the value of meaningful, written feedback and the importance of assessment in planning and adjusting instruction.

- The principal has designed and is currently delivering a series of workshops intended on increasing the scope and depth of inquiry work being conducted by teacher teams. This professional learning guides teachers through all steps of the process of identifying a problem of practice through data analysis, the steps of designing and delivering interventions along with conducting a post-assessment in order to gauge the impact on student learning.

- Parents praised the communication carried out by individual teachers and the school community through phone calls, emails, text messages as well as through letters sent to homes by mail and by backpack. Workshops have been provided for families on topics such as immigration, curriculum reviews, healthy eating, as well as the importance of high student attendance. Additionally, parents contributed to an event at the school that helped teach students about immigration by telling their personal stories. In addition to traditional report cards, families receive monthly progress reports that detail each student's up-to-date math and ELA scores, reading level, as well as a section that includes "School to Home Recommendations" that help families understand the current units of study along with advice on how to help students succeed.
**Additional Finding**

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<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 data and student work for students they share. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

**Impact**

In addition to progress made by students toward writing goals as a result of teacher team inquiry work, teachers’ practices have improved. Across the school, teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The grade three teacher team met to analyze student work resulting from a writing task. In September, the team met to review students’ writing products and found that students were having difficulty organizing their writing with many students not attempting to use paragraphs in extended responses. In the process of analyzing the most recent writing task assigned to their students, teachers found evidence that the interventions designed by the teacher team resulted in students' increased use of transition words as well as basic paragraph structuring. The team also found that while some students’ organization was improving, their focus on writing to the specific task was also inconsistent. A next step discussed and agreed to was for future utilization of student written exemplars that exhibited strong organization as well as consistent focus on the writing task. In addition to this, the team assessed the tracking graphic organizer they use and reprioritized the categories. Data revealed student growth between the first and the second writing assessment. Twenty two percent of students in the target group improved in writing a logical introduction. Seventeen percent of the same target group improved in sequencing their ideas, and thirty three percent grew in the use of evidence in supporting an argument.

- Teacher team focus on student writing has resulted in improved teacher practice. One teacher reported that within her team, conversation led to the discovery a foldable, a student made, interactive graphic organizer based on a specific skill, can be modified for use in writing instruction. The team then created a foldable that reinforced the importance in writing a claim that is then supported by a variety of evidence taken from the text. A grade two teacher reported, “One of my colleagues had a method for organizing exit tickets so that they became an effective assessment. Now I use them to make sure I start the next lesson in that unit with a group of students who need the lesson retaught.”

- Teachers serve as leaders for the grade-based collaborative inquiry teams. Teacher also serve as content specialists on the RTI (Response to Intervention) team and members of the professional learning team, data team, PBIS team and as leaders of the professional learning committees. The leader of the School Implementation Team (SIT) worked with the principal to establish a checklist that the team would use to ensure that students with disabilities were receiving appropriate services. Through this team’s careful analysis and aided by the use of this new checklist, the number of students with disabilities declassified as such has already increased over 100 percent from the previous school year.