Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 192 Jacob H. Schiff
Elementary School 06M192
500 West 138th St.
Manhattan
NY 10031

Principal: Hilduara Abreu

Dates of Review:
January 10, 2017 - January 11, 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

P.S. 192 Jacob H. Schiff serves students in grade PK 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>To what extent does the school...</td>
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</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 Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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>
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</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>
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<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>Additional Finding</td>
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<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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

The school’s approach to culture building promotes safety, and structures are in place to ensure that all students are known and supported.

**Impact**

The trust developed in the school enhances both student and adult attitudes and enhances the learning of all students and teachers in the school. Students are supported through schoolwide systems that promote healthy social and emotional development.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school has implemented a bucket-filling approach to school culture this year, beginning with a schoolwide shared reading of the book by that name, and continuing with a consistent process set up in every classroom. Every student and adult in the building has a bucket or cup in the class and is acknowledged for the kindness, generosity, friendship and support they show one another. In every class visited the buckets were prominent and generously filled with papers that symbolize students’ good deeds. A student described the initiative by saying, “It helps us remember to use kind words, help each other and to listen.” A fifth grader shared, “Last year a lot of kids were rude to each other. This year we are acting nicer and listening to each other more.” Teachers also acknowledged that the initiative has had an impact on student behavior and learning, but also shared that it has had a positive impact on them. One teacher shared that having her bucket filled by other adults is motivating and “makes me want to keep getting better.”

- The supportive and professional environment cultivated by the new principal has been conducive for adult learning. A teacher shared that after teaching in the building for over 20 years, this is the first year that she has seen people going in and out of each other’s rooms to help and support one another. Another teacher shared, “The community has opened up more than before. Teachers are developing as a whole and we’re learning from each other. We also seem happier now, like we’re all on the same team.” These teachers described a safe and inclusive culture that nurtured them as adult learners. Teachers are leading professional development and sharing of materials, resources, and knowledge has increased across the school, according to several teachers.

- Professional development that supports the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors is aligned with family outreach to ensure staff, families and students share priorities. For example, the school has adopted a Brain Power Wellness program which teaches kids to better self-monitor their behavior. This approach to mindfulness and emotional wellness has been introduced to all constituents to ensure consistency at home and in school.

- An attendance committee is in place and meets multiple times each month to review individual cases and to support schoolwide attendance goals. This work has intensified this year and the committee includes staff and parents to better support attendance. Students who are identified as at-risk are closely monitored and regular parent/guardian meetings are arranged to ensure students are in school and on time as frequently as possible.
Findings
Teacher use of higher-level questions to extend student thinking and the use of multiple entry points are emerging practices. The production of meaningful student work varies across classrooms.

Impact
Levels of student engagement in challenging tasks varied greatly from class to class. While in some classrooms students engaged at a high level by actively participating in discussions and assignments, in several places students either did not participate or did so with mixed results.

Supporting Evidence

- In a math class, students were asked to solve a word problem and had the opportunity to answer using a variety of strategies. Students produced approximately eight or nine different wrong answers, with many students expressing confusion about the task. Students who finished early waited for the other students to be done, with no further work to do. Engagement levels in other classes varied as well.

- In a grade-five English Language Arts (ELA) class students were engaged in a writing assignment and discussion focused on the connections between the Declaration of Human Rights and the novel Esperanza Rising. Students wrote voluminously and urged each other to cite evidence from the book when making a claim. In other classes, the level of accountability and academic engagement was not as robust. In lower-grade reading classes where kids were expected to work independently while the teacher worked with small groups of students, several kids remained off-task and not engaged in their independent work.

- To meet students’ needs some teachers provided scaffolding tools such as graphic organizers and process charts. However, in some classrooms, although the charts are displayed, the teachers and students did not reference them. Additionally, in some classrooms the teachers did not provide math manipulatives or other tools to help students understand the target concept.

- In most classrooms visited, students participated in class discussions by responding to teacher-generated questions. In a fifth-grade class, students studied how the Declaration of Human rights related to two books they had read. “What human rights have been violated? Are they different or similar to how Esperanza and Ellen have been treated in this book?” All children engaged with those questions in writing and conversation. In several other classes, teachers asked questions that only one student answered at a time, with several not participating. In addition, students only posed their own questions in three of the nine classrooms, thus limiting their ability to expand their thinking.
## Additional Finding

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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

The school leader ensures that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students.

### Impact

School leaders and staff make purposeful decisions to build instructional coherence, emphasize higher-order skills in tasks, and promote college and career readiness for all students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Lesson and unit plans reveal purposeful decisions to integrate the Common Core instructional shifts. Teacher teams and the administration have combined a variety of programs to ensure coherence and balance. For example, the school selects readings and lessons from *Core Knowledge Language Arts*, *ReadyGen* and *EngageNY*. This integrated approach has been supported by consultants that have helped the school create coherence across subjects and grades.

- The school is responsive to needs they identify in observations and through data analysis. The principal shared that an analysis of Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) data revealed that students lacked decoding skills, especially in the lower grades. As a result, all kindergarten through grade-two teachers use the phonics lessons in *EngageNY* on a daily basis to further develop students’ phonemic skills. So far, identified students have made gains according to F&P reading assessments. In math, the school supplements *GO Math!* with *EngageNY* for problem solving. The shift towards deep understanding of mathematical concepts comes through in the *EngageNY* lessons and the exemplar tasks that students participate in.

- One shift the school has made, which is visible in lesson and unit plans, is an emphasis on text-based answers and academic vocabulary. Lesson plan templates in several classrooms isolate key words that students should learn and pre-planned text-based questions that the teacher will ask throughout the lesson. In some classrooms, clear models that were pre-planned were displayed and utilized so students could better understand the concepts being taught. An example of this was the review of the commutative property that showed pictures and numbers to help students learn the concept.

- Small group instruction targeting the diverse needs of learners is evident in lesson and unit plans, and is driven by assessment data that the school gathers through a variety of means. Students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs), as well as other learners with varying needs, are included in small group instruction that is planned two times per day for forty-five minutes at time. In a third-grade classroom, students read Reading A to Z (RAZ) Kids Books that were written at various level and aligned to their assessed level. The teacher worked with a small group all reading the same book and guided them as they went. Vocabulary was previewed as the students read through the book together.
# Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teachers use assessments and rubrics aligned to the curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals.

## Impact

Common assessments are used to provide students with actionable feedback on their achievement and teachers track student progress to inform instructional and curricular adjustments.

## Supporting Evidence

- The school has developed a consistent approach to providing feedback to students on their work. On separate slips of paper or on the bottom of assignments or rubrics, students are provided with wishes and stars. The stars are areas of strength and the wishes are areas of growth. This nomenclature was consistent across all grades and subjects, and was also used for peer feedback and self-reflection. Feedback is aligned to the school's curricula and offers students concrete next steps, such as “Great job adding details and facts. Next time try not to veer off topic.”

- This year the school developed a consistent grading policy to ensure assessments, grading, and feedback are consistent within and across grades. The principal and a large group of teachers met at the beginning of the year to align curriculum with instruction and to better ensure that teachers on the same grade were grading consistently. The process for giving feedback is something that is consistently discussed in staff meetings and professional development sessions.

- Students described the rubrics and feedback they receive from teachers as being helpful. "My teacher attaches the wishes and stars to the rubric so I know what I'm doing well at and what I need to work on," a student shared. She went on to describe how rubrics are used in the class. “Sometimes we used them to judge our own work. Sometimes the teacher uses them to help us, and sometimes we use it to help other kids in the class by reviewing their work and giving them wishes and stars.” Evidence of these practices were widely seen across the school on classroom walls, in student folders, and in conversations that teachers were having with students.

- Teachers use the data that they have for kids to develop a Student Needs Analysis Plan (SNAP). Following the implementation of F&P reading assessments, students are placed into one of the following four groups: below standard, approaching standard, meeting standard and exceeding standard. A plan detailing how each group will be taught is developed. The template used for this plan identifies the description of student performance, learning needs, and a short-term plan. For example, a description of student performance for a group of level one students describes them as being able to identify sight words while reading the story. Their learning need is described as needing more exposure and practice reading outside of school to help build comfort with reading texts at their grade level. The short-term plan says that teachers will meet with this group at least three times a week during guided reading. In this regard, teachers are utilizing the data to adjust curricula and instruction.
Findings
School leaders and staff are beginning to create systems and structures that provide feedback to families about student progress. A culture that provides students with support and guidance about their next levels is developing.

Impact
Families are beginning to understand student progress and students are beginning to be supported in meeting expectations by structures at school and at home.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal conducts full-period observations in an attempt to see the beginning, middle, and end of every lesson so that student learning and teacher expectations can be a part of the debrief conversation. The principal is working to develop training aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching based on what is observed in classrooms. For example, the school has been developing professional development focused on cooperative learning and small-group instruction, and accountability measures tied to these focus areas are being developed by administration.

- The staff establishes a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for all students through goal setting and communication of goals. For example, the school established a goal that the number of ELA Level 1 students will decrease by five percent. However, progress of the goal is not clearly measured and it is not clear whether or not there is enough detail about student progress to ensure that students are being prepared for the next level.

- Teachers share their expectations for student learning at parent teacher conferences and during scheduled meetings with parents. However, ongoing practices that provide families with information to support students and clearly understand expectations connected to college and career readiness are not yet well-rooted across the school. Parents shared that some teachers are in constant contact about progress, strengths and growth areas, and that some teachers are much less communicative. While some teachers use an online platform to regularly communicate with parents, others do not use it. The majority of parents expressed that they did not know much about the system and that communication was inconsistent depending on the teacher.

- Parents expressed that while they understand meeting the Common Core Learning Standards is difficult and the school schedules some workshops that provide advisement about how to prepare students for the middle school admissions process, they still have a hard time understanding the academic expectations, particularly for math. The school has conducted some workshops with parents to help them better understand the Common Core instructional shifts. However, some parents still feel like there is a gap between how they understand mathematics and how kids are currently being taught. Additionally, workshops have been provided so that parents could learn information about middle school options and the application process.

- Some grade-four and five students had the opportunity to visit the City College campus, but have not had the opportunity to visit a middle school yet. The school is planning to provide grade-five students with the opportunity to spend some time in the middle school that shares the building, but there have been no visits to schools as of yet.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Team and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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</table>

Findings

School structures to support the analysis of student work are unfolding. Teachers are beginning to assume leadership roles.

Impact

Teacher team collaborations that result in improving teacher practice are inconsistent, thus hindering student progress and the development of teacher capacity. Structures that include teachers in decisions do not yet consistently impact student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Common planning time is provided for teachers to meet and analyze assessment data, further align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards, and deepen teacher understanding of the Danielson Framework for Teaching competencies. Teachers have established norms and have clearly articulated roles established for their team meetings, but the overall clarity of what they are focusing on is inconsistent. For example, when teachers were asked what the math goals in the school are and how those relate to the team meeting they had about math, teachers were unable to articulate the vision. In this way, the inquiry work remains a work in progress.

- Teachers shared that they are beginning to look at student work with their colleagues. The observed teacher team discussed the importance of solving math word problems as if they were reading assignments, with an emphasis on vocabulary and making meaning from the text. They shared that they meet to look at student work and tweak assignments, change the order of units and share ideas as a result of looking at student work. The structured collaboration is beginning to result in improved teacher practice, but improvements are not quite consistent across classrooms yet as evidenced by the uneven instruction seen across classrooms.

- Distributed leadership structures are developing to support leadership capacity to include teachers in key decisions that impact student learning across all grades. School leaders have recently begun to utilize lead teachers to support teachers across grades and content areas. During the teacher team meetings, teachers articulated that they felt they are beginning to have a voice in key decisions and that school leaders are open to teachers’ academic and instructional input. The principal and teachers articulated that several teachers are part of the curriculum team, where many key instructional decisions are made.