Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 048 William Wordsworth
Elementary 28Q048
108-29 155 St
Queens
NY 11433

Principal: Patricia Mitchell

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

Lead Reviewer: Luz Cortazzo
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><strong>1.1</strong> 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><strong>1.2</strong> 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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2</strong> 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>Additional Finding</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</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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</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>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</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>
Findings

The administration consistently communicates high expectations to all the school constituents and families regarding student learning that is used as a vehicle towards college and career readiness.

Impact

The unending communication around high expectations to staff, students, and families has invigorated mutual responsibility in support of teacher and student improvement efforts.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers receive the faculty handbook at the first staff conference that includes a clear and descriptive outline of the administrators’ expectations for teacher practice. Teachers reported and document review confirmed that teachers are expected to reference and utilize this handbook for planning and executing lessons along with links to Hess’ Cognitive Rigor Matrix and Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) across content areas. The vast majority of teachers are using Hess’ matrix with proficiency and can identify the level of rigor in a task and provide support for students.

- Staff are held accountable by having administrators conduct formal and informal observations that are followed up with timely and specific feedback. This feedback is based on evidence aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching rubric in order to identify their professional strengths and weaknesses. Subsequently, professional development sessions are designed to support teachers’ instructional needs. A review of the school’s professional development calendar indicates that the teachers are currently engaging in professional learning cycle I, which focuses on Danielson Framework for Teaching indicators specific to their needs.

- Parents reported that at the beginning of the year, the school host a Back to School Night event where teacher teams greet parents and provide them with the school’s grading policy, expectations for the year as well as a brief overview of curricula goals for the year in all areas. Additionally, parents reported that they could communicate with teachers through the Class Dojo application, which indicates their child’s academic progress, behavioral expectations, homework, and areas in need of improvement. Parents and teachers expressed how the immediate feedback holds everyone accountable for their child’s progress, which has made the home school connection stronger as evidenced by the vast majority of parents using the application.

- Parents are informed about the class work their children are doing through standards based progress reports aligned to the school’s grading policy, five times per year. Parents are encouraged to log on to the school website for information about schoolwide events, important dates, and grade specific assessment calendars. Data shows that over 8,200 parents and families have logged onto the school website since its launch in September 2016, resulting in a more coherent communication to parents in English and Spanish. Parents reported the constant communication helps them understand how they can help their children improve in developing good academic and personal habits.
### Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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#### Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices and strategies, aligned to curricula, provide both an articulated belief on how students learn best with multiple entry points for students to ensure they are exposed to many learning experiences. The use of teacher questioning and level of student discussions vary across classrooms visited.

#### Impact

Teaching strategies are informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and instructional shifts. However, opportunities for students to engage in and take ownership of meaningful discussions or curricula extensions vary across the school.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers reported and lesson plans reviewed confirmed that tasks are challenging and engaging in all content areas. In five out of nine classrooms, teachers provided differentiated instruction by providing a choice of activity or text. In a social studies class, a group of first grade students engaged in explaining how people lived long ago using a four tab foldable or graphic organizer focusing on clothing, homes, and inventions, then they engaged in constructing a model of how people lived long ago. In some classes, the task was the same for all students. In a class for students with disabilities, students were engaged in a science lab to explore static electricity within various objects by conducting an investigation. Students used the scientific method to make predictions and recorded their findings on a data table. However, there were limited opportunities for meaningful discussions to ensure success for all learners.

- In four out of the nine classes visited, students were engaged in high-level discussions during which they expressed and debated their opinions and shared their thinking. In a fourth grade math class, students use the area model and multiplication to show the equivalent of two fractions. In the same class, students engaged in a conversation to debrief the problem set. The teacher provided students with an opportunity to reflect and voice concerns with misconceptions.

- In some classrooms visited, teachers dominated the discussions with scholars asking a few questions. In some other classrooms, teachers circulated the room assessing the students’ discussions as they worked in groups. However, in the majority of the classrooms visited, students had limited opportunities to share their thinking or asked questions of their classmates thereby restricting their ability to take ownership of their thinking.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned with the Common Core Learning Standards and address the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks has been planned and refined based on student needs and data.

Impact
The curricula consistently promote college and career readiness for all students. The creation and refinement of lesson plans and learning tasks based on students’ needs has provided opportunities for all learners to be cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams create units of study by referencing the Common Core Learning Standards for the grade and subject, when they identify learning outcomes for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, which illustrate performance mastery. Teachers additionally create instructional resources that support mastery of the standards. Teachers created questions aligned to the standards that ask students to demonstrate their practices to become mathematically proficient. School leaders reported that 70 percent of the teachers are creating more complex mathematical tasks that provide opportunities to assess students’ use of mathematical practices and critical thinking skills.

- Across the school, teachers use guided reading lessons in grades kindergarten to two based on running record data. Close reading lessons in grades three to five provide students with articles with scaffold support based on their needs. For math instruction, teachers use instructional units with Common Core aligned tasks with instructional support and the scope and sequence for social studies and science with supports and scaffolds, such as Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) to meet the needs of the diverse learners.

- All teachers use a lesson planning template that reference the relevant Common Core Learning Standards or content standards and include teaching points, learning outcomes that illustrate mastery, direct instruction (I do), guided practice (we do), and independent practice (you do), as well as rigorous tasks that incorporate the instructional shifts, and DOK. In a grade four math task, students compared two fractions with different numerators and different denominators by comparing to a benchmark fraction. The aim of the task was for students to recognize that comparisons are valid only when the two fractions refer to the same whole. Students were asked to record the results with comparison symbols, and justify their conclusions by using a visual fraction model. In a grade five lesson plan, students had to engage in text-based discussions by answering the question, “How can scientists understand the earth by looking at the minerals found in the ground?”

- Strategies for providing access to the content for students with different learning needs are incorporated in most lesson plans. In a grade three lesson plan, the teacher had provided detailed planning for three groups, and identified the students that would work with the teacher to identify the main idea of a feature article and supply two or more details to support the main idea. The other two groups were tasked to either work independently using technology to research a natural disaster they wanted to write about, or develop evidence to support subtopics with the aid of differentiated graphic organizers. A lesson in a self-contained class for students with disabilities, focused on analyzing explicit information in order to gain a deeper understanding of the text by finding the main idea and using key details of the text through discussion.
Additionally Finding

**Quality Indicator:** 2.2 Assessment  
**Rating:** Proficient

**Findings**
Across the school, teachers utilize assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned to the school's curricula to monitor and determine student progress.

**Impact**
The analysis of student performance has provided opportunities for teachers to provide feedback to students and make curricula adjustments in response to students' diverse needs.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers regularly analyze information about individual student performance on common assessments to determine if students are making progress and to identify skills that need extra attention. Across grades and content areas, they form small instructional groups according to common need. Students are also identified for targeted cycles of interventions using Response to Intervention (RtI) strategies.

- Data from common assessments, such as Fountas and Pinnell running records, are tracked on the school's data wall, which is shared with staff, students, and parents in an effort to offer a picture of student progress. Parents receive individualized postcards four times during the school year that allows them to track and understand their child's reading levels. The postcard encourages parents to read with their children daily, visit public libraries, set reading goals, and track their progress level using this card. Teachers also maintain assessment summary data sheets on each scholar, which are used during team meetings to adjust instruction and organized guided reading groups as evidenced during the team meetings.

- Teachers use baseline, mid- and end-line assessments to track scholar assessment performance across content areas as evidenced by a review of grade kindergarten social studies data spreadsheet that indicates pre-assessment data baseline data. Similarly, grade four math module three data results indicate that scholars in grade four have made progress from pre-test administered in October to post-test administered at the end of the module in November. Results indicate that 100% of ELLs in grade four showed growth from the pre-to post-assessment.
Findings

Administrators support teacher professional development with targeted effective feedback and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders make informed decisions about professional development for all staff members through a strategic, transparent system.

Impact

School leaders have strategically ensured the professional development for all staff has benefited from collaboration, coaching, and effective feedback that has ultimately led to improved student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Throughout the school year, administrators revisit data sources to reflect and refine professional development. The year concludes with the teachers completing a reflection form using the eight indicators in the Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP) data. This reflection form is used as the basis for the one-on-one conversation with every teacher at the start of the new school year.

- Teachers are encouraged to be reflective about their practice and set three professional goals related to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The MOTP data information as well as observation report feedback trends informs the school’s professional development menus; offerings, such that teachers are empowered to direct their learning as per their MOTP data and administrators guidance. Professional development topics highlight strategies and best practices to enhance teacher’s pedagogical practice and ultimately improve student outcomes. A review of the school’s professional development calendar indicates that the teachers are currently engaging in cycle I. Using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, teacher leaders lead Monday sessions in the area of designing coherent instruction, Danielson *Framework for Teaching* domain 1e, using assessment in instruction, Danielson *Framework for Teaching* domain 3d. In addition using, knowledge of the content, literacy design, and collaborative unit planning, Danielson *Framework for Teaching* domain 1a.

- As part of the school’s instructional practices, school administrators have utilized various data sources to inform not only professional development, but to target instruction and pedagogical practices. Observation reports are used to assess the impact of professional development. Administrators require that teachers keep records of the professional development they attend, the content and how it will impact their instruction and student outcomes. Additionally, teachers are asked to be reflective about the impact of observations next steps. Administrators consider this a one-on-one professional development that is designed to improve teaching and learning. Teachers are given two to three weeks to implement next steps and submit a reflective narrative that speaks to the impact. Evidence of reflective narratives were observed attached to observation reports. In an observation report, the evaluator provided the teacher with next steps for the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* components 1a, 1e, and using questioning and discussion techniques, Danielson *Framework for Teaching* domain 3b, “Dig deeper with your line of questioning when you read students’ writing responses. Make the students prove what they are saying against the text and align it to the rubric. Explain grammar rules not just correct them. Take the next two weeks to implement the above next steps. Email me the impact of these next steps on your professional practice.” The teacher responded by writing, “I have incorporated the Common Core-aligned question stems when providing feedback to my students and I am using a grammar usage checklist to explain what grammar errors my students need to improve on.”
### Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Team and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based collaborations that has ensured the promotion of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. There are distributed leadership structures in place.

**Impact**

Collaboration across the school has strengthened the instructional and leadership capacity of teachers that ensure students are making progress toward meeting their goals.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams plan units of study together by looking at Common Core Learning Standards for the grade and subject. Then they articulate learning outcomes that illustrate performance mastery. Next, teachers look for instructional resources that support mastery of the standards. Finally, Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) is created to meet the needs of the diverse learners, as evident in lesson plans, and Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) classrooms.

- During an observed meeting, the vertical team engaged in inquiry work with a focus on writing standard two. Teachers utilized the vertical team protocol to look at student writing where students write informative and explanatory text in which they name a topic, around a previously assigned piece on Native Americans. Teachers introduced the skill set used, process for meeting the standards, shared the writing produced from their students, shared trends noticed and decided on next steps for teaching a skill in standard two.

- Teacher teams engage in grade level collaborations during weekly common planning. These planning meetings provide the time for teachers to look at student work using a student protocol, review summative and formative data, share best practices, and ensure instructional cohesiveness. They create new lessons and instructional strategies to improve student achievement. Teachers use the writing standards and rubrics to determine where the students should be and plan next steps to help them get there. As a result the quality of student writing is improving as evidenced by a review of third grade writing realistic fiction assessment data results that show 100% of the students showed growth from the pre-assessment in September to the post-assessment in October, and 85% of the students scored a level 3 or higher on the post-assessment.

- The principal promotes shared responsibility and ownership for the work of the school by empowering teacher leadership. Teachers are required to make adjustments to curricula units and create inquiry-based units of study. Teachers are also required to facilitate professional development activities and take leadership roles on various shared decision-making teams as evidenced by documents reviewed and conversations with teachers during teacher team meetings.