Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 068 Cambridge

Elementary 24Q068

59-09 Saint Felix Ave.
Queens
NY 11385

Principal: Anne Marie Snadecky

Dates of Review:
November 29, 2016 - November 30, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Carlos Perez
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. 068 Cambridge 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>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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>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>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>
</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>
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<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

There is a theory of action that informs the school's approach to culture building and supports the social-emotional well-being of all students.

Impact

Students have adopted effective positive academic and personal behaviors as a result of the nurturing learning climate and social-emotional structures that are in place.

Supporting Evidence

- The school's positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS) program is a well-functioning system that boosts the school's positive culture building. The PBIS committee, made up of ten staff members, includes an assistant principal, guidance counselor, parent coordinator, school aide, teachers, and paraprofessionals, and meets twice a month to discuss many different school related issues and initiatives. One initiative that is having an impact on student academic and social behaviors is the use of respect, achievement, and pride bucks (R.A.P.). Students earn R.A.P. bucks by displaying positive behaviors or working hard on an academic task and use them to buy items in the R.A.P. bucks store in the cafeteria. Flyers that explain how to earn R.A.P. bucks can be located throughout the school including every classroom, hallway, and stairwell. A poster visible on the doors to the auditorium read, "I will show Respect, Achievement, and Pride in the auditorium", and listed all of the positive behaviors that students must exhibit while in the auditorium. Students read a poster prior to entering the cafeteria and reminded each other that they could get R.A.P. bucks if they follow the rules.

- Across all grades and classrooms, a nurturing and positive environment is apparent via staff members showing respect to students and families, creating a positive rapport. This was confirmed through the conversations that took place during meetings with both the parents and students. Students shared all of the adults in the school treat them "nicely and don't disrespect them." Furthermore, students and parents all believe that teachers and administrators care about the students and expect nothing but the best from them. Students shared work products and were able to explain how they completed their work, the support they receive from their teachers, and how it makes them better students. For example, students shared that when teachers help them with their assignments they teach them strategies so that they don't make the same mistakes in the future. Students also shared that they feel they can go to any adult in the school when they have any problem.

- The school's structures which address the social-emotional needs of students include a specific focus on monitoring attendance closely. Through PBIS, an attendance program called "check in and check out" identifies students who in the prior school year were below the average attendance mark. Members of the PBIS team have now made these students part of an attendance initiative. Targeted students go to the guidance counselor to sign in every morning when they arrive and repeat the process in the afternoon when they leave. Students take the responsibility for making sure they sign in and out and also earn R.A.P. bucks in the process. Attendance is tracked daily and currently twenty-four out of twenty-six students are showing an improvement compared to their last year's attendance. Additionally, to support student attendance the school has implemented "be here, be a winner" program which calls down students at random at the beginning of the school day and gives a prize to those students.
Area of Focus

<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

School leaders and faculty ensure that unit and lesson plans are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and refined using student work. However, instructional shifts are not yet strategically integrated, nor are there planned tasks for cognitively engaging higher-achieving students.

Impact

Students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) have an opportunity to engage in rigorous and challenging curricula, however planning for higher-level students is uneven.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal shared that the school is “very literacy based” and follows the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP), which includes the Common Core Learning Standards as part of its basis and its assessments. For example, the kindergarten curriculum for writing encompasses units that plan for students to be able to practice storytelling, adding details such as pictures or labels to their writing, and narrating a single event in sequential order. However, only some lesson plans included evidence of addressing the instructional shifts such as academic vocabulary.

- Teacher teams meet regularly to refine and adjust units of study. For example, a grade two teacher team analyzed student work in order to look for deficiencies. Teachers noticed common themes in student writing such as not enough rereading of their work and lack of organization. They addressed these areas immediately by introducing graphic organizers and/or organizational charts into their lessons to support students needing help with structure and organization. Additionally, teachers decided to infuse the practice of constant reminders to help students check their work on a more consistent basis.

- Lessons and units reviewed displayed planning that differentiated instruction for students with disabilities and ELLs. For example, in a second grade reading lesson differentiated activities included teacher scaffolded support, talking prompts sentence frames, and jigsaw activities. However, specific differentiated activities for higher-level students were lacking, therefore not granting full access to the curricula for higher-level students. A fifth grade social studies lesson plan had areas that displayed the differentiation of learning tasks for students, however planning did not specify why certain students were placed in certain groups nor the skill that would be address during instruction.
Additional Finding

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

Teaching practices aligned to the curricular and an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best is reflected throughout classrooms.

Impact

As a result of the instructional coherence and rigor of teaching practices, learners are able to engage in high leveled discussions.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers believe in and use the workshop model in their classrooms. Lessons observed included a do now or warmup exercise, a mini-lesson component, followed by students working on a task. Additionally, students have opportunities to share responses to questions by either turning to talk with a partner or engaging in a discussion with their group. In a kindergarten class, the teacher worked with students and had them use post-it notes to identify where they needed to change a lowercase letter to a capital letter in their writing. The teacher asked students to turn-and-talk with their partner and share where they had to make changes before sharing with the teacher or the class.

- Across many classrooms visited, student work products displayed high levels of student thinking and rigor. For a grade two writing assignment, students were asked to write about “one time when they did something.” Student writing displayed structure and incorporated transitions. Students made use of academic vocabulary, were able to create a story effectively, and used a narrative checklist to self-assess their writing, enabling them to go back and adjust any areas that required correcting. In a grade five math lesson, students solved a word problem to determine whether the solution presented was correct or incorrect. Students started with a total checking account balance and all of the various deposits and withdrawals that were completed. Students checked the math to ensure that the balance was accurate. Students created a chart detailing all of the deposits and withdrawals, and determined that the answer presented was incorrect and were able to display what the correct amount should be.

- The schoolwide focus on student group work was evident throughout the classrooms as students worked collaboratively in groups. During a grade-five social studies lesson, students worked in groups of four and had to make inferences with regard to items they examined that were found during the era of westward expansion. Students were able to share ideas and insights with each other. In addition, during a grade-two reading lesson, students worked in predetermined groups to define the main idea of a paragraph they read together. The teacher first modeled how to examine a paragraph and identify the main idea and then instructed students to read the subsequent paragraphs and do the same. The teacher had the students use the sentence starter “This paragraph is mostly about” when coming up with their responses. Students were able to work collaboratively and developed answers as a group.
**Quality Indicator:** 2.2 Assessment  
**Rating:** Proficient

### Findings

Data from common assessments determine student progress. In addition, teachers have an ongoing practice of checking for understanding that includes student self-assessment.

### Impact

Curricula and instruction is regularly adjusted based on classroom and assessment results in order to meet the needs of all learners.

### Supporting Evidence

- Ongoing checks for understanding were evident throughout many lessons and as a result teachers are making students immediately aware of their next steps when they encounter an error. Furthermore, teachers use checklists as a means to evaluate student learning as they work in predetermined groups or independently. During a grade three writing lesson students were fully engaged, either working independently, with a partner, or as part of a group. During group work, the teacher conferenced with the students and used his checklist to gauge student progress and comprehension. The teacher used data collected from the checklist to support students, and make immediate adjustments to the lesson. For example, during this lesson, the teacher was able to determine a series of errors that many of the students were making as they read their excerpts. The teacher stopped the class and refocused the students so that they would not continue to make the same mistakes.

- During a grade-four writing lesson, students worked on constructing a persuasive essay. The teacher used purposeful grouping, moved around from group-to-group, and asked students questions in order to check for comprehension. Additionally, students used a self-assessment checklist as a means to check their work. The checklist encompassed areas in writing such as structure, development, and language conventions. The students shared that using a self-assessment checklist is something that they do regularly and it helps them with their writing.

- The school uses various assessment tools and results to inform and adjust curriculum as needed. For example, in kindergarten, teachers use data from running records in order to create student writing groups. Additionally, teachers throughout the school use independent reading level progression data from Lexia, an online program, to monitor and evaluate student’s reading levels. Teachers use this data in order to plan lessons to support students moving to the next reading level.
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
School leadership consistently communicates high expectations connected to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to all staff members. In addition, staff regularly communicates expectations connected to college and career readiness to students and their families.

Impact
The high expectations shared among staff, students, and families, help to provide a path for students towards high achievement and college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders begin the school year by sharing a teacher handbook that clearly states instructional and professional expectations for all staff members. In addition, school leaders have aligned the school's instructional focus to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and they provide targeted feedback and next steps to all teachers following observations and evaluations. For example, during an informal kindergarten observation, administration shared with the teacher that students seemed to be stuck on the first section of the unit which dealt with word and letter sounds. The administrator suggested that the teacher use the paraprofessional in the classroom to “work with students on stretching out words and sounds by reviewing daily letter sounds and then moving towards beginning sounds and ending sounds.” For a grade two informal classroom observation, post-observation feedback from administration focused on assessment. The administrator shared that in order to engage all students in learning, the teacher should not call one student to the board to complete an example, but rather have all students bring their whiteboards to the carpet and have them complete the same problem. This would give the teacher another valuable assessment tool.

- Parents shared that they receive ongoing communications about the many programs and opportunities the school has for their children. Information is shared monthly at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, and teachers and administrators use ClassDojo, school messenger, monthly student goal letters, student item-analysis letters, and the school's twitter account to keep communications timely and up-to-date. Parents stated that they feel the school does a “great job” of communicating with them and they always feel “well-informed.”

- Teachers are preparing students for college and careers by challenging them with upper-level work. Students said that teachers are always giving them difficult and challenging assignments that prepare them for the next grade. Teachers also incorporate group and partner work and make sure that students use accountable talk prompts in their classrooms when responding to classmates. In addition, the school has incorporated a computer science course so students can explore many technology areas such as programing and coding. Thus, they are beginning to learn how to program and code software in order to explore and prepare them for college or a career in computer technology. Parents attend workshops pertaining to the computer science program, which informs them of the benefits and how this program is preparing their children for a possible career in computer technology.
**Additional Finding**

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams &amp; Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Through inquiry based team meetings, teachers promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Distributive leadership practices provide teachers with a voice in schoolwide decisions.

**Impact**

The shared leadership structures found throughout the school have resulted in a focus on improving student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Every teacher on a grade team has a role and provides input into the creation of team meeting agendas; engage in a continuous sharing of best practices gained through inquiry, and/or participate in professional development (PD) and share the information with colleagues regularly. In addition, teachers host their own professional collaborations called “lunch and learn” in order to strengthen their instructional capacity. Teachers shared that they feel that the constant cycles of team meetings has really allowed them to become better teachers and has given them the tools to help assess and teach students at all levels. For example, one teacher explained how they have learned about so many types of multiple entry points that in the past they may not have used, especially for visual and auditory learners. Thus, using the iPad and audio clips have enhanced instruction and given students more tools to use in the classroom.

- Teachers have a voice in decision making throughout the school by participating on various committees such as the attendance team, PBIS team, the Title One committee, data team, and the social committee. In addition, teachers are actively involved in developing and participating in the professional development opportunities that are offered at the school and off campus and turnkey information from PD sessions they attend. As a result, teachers requested PD sessions on how to effectively turnkey information to their colleagues. They shared that this has “helped us grow as educators.”

- Grade leaders at every level support teachers and work with administrators to build the leadership capacity of all teachers. In addition to grade leaders, each grade has five facilitators, for math and literacy, who act in a leadership role and add support to the grade and each department. Literacy facilitators are selected for the following areas: reading/read aloud, writing, word work, and ELLs. Grade facilitators have the responsibility of acting as a liaison in their designated content area between their respective staff and the administration. As such, most teachers have an opportunity to take part in some form of leadership role in the school.