Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 069 Jackson Heights
Elementary 30Q069
77-02 37th Ave
Queens
NY 11372

Principal: Martha Vazquez

Dates of Review:
January 31, 2017 - February 1, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Whitfield
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. 069 Jackson Heights 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></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>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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
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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

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

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

4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning

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

3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations

### Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Well Developed</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Additional Findings

- Well Developed
- Proficient
Findings

High expectations are consistently communicated to the entire staff via the use of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and other modes of communication. Families of the school community are kept apprised of student progress towards a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

A culture of collaboration among staff, students, and families exists that fosters high expectations, supports an effective partnership for all and a clear path towards college and career readiness for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal and two assistant principals write and send newsletters to faculty around current information and expectations. The principal has created opportunities for collaboration and professional development fostering a culture of high expectations for all members of the school community. In reviewing the school's professional development plan, it is noted that teachers engage in training in the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teachers attend professional development and are encouraged to turnkey to colleagues. This information is shared with the school community.

- Monthly newsletters developed by grade teams are sent to parents keeping them informed of curricula topics, vocabulary words students are learning, school activities, upcoming events, and tips for parents to help children at home that include websites to access. Parent workshops are given and facilitated by teachers on the Common Core Learning Standards, reading, math, and test sophistication for third, fourth, and fifth grade families around the State tests. Parents receive goals from their children's teachers informing them what students are working towards for the next three months. For example, parents receive reading, writing, English as a New Language (ENL), math, social studies, science, music, physical education, and technology goals to be informed and to support their children. Additionally, teachers share an overview of literacy skills with helpful suggestions so parents can partner in their children's education. For example, in kindergarten, teachers discussed with parents the Opinion Writing unit and what their children would be practicing: the differences between a fact and an opinion and how to add feelings to an opinion.

- Parents stated that there is an open door policy and that parents are welcome to visit classrooms at any time, not just during open school week. Parents stated that they appreciate always feeling welcomed at school and are happy to have so many opportunities to communicate with teachers around their children's progress. Interim progress reports are sent home to families between the report cards cycles, which inform them of students' grades, reading levels, and behavioral information. Teachers use the parent engagement time to meet with families around student progress, enabling parents to have more up-to-date information on children's progress. School leaders and staff provide ways for parents to assist their children at home, such as, checking children's reading logs and reading responses, and reading with their children. Grade teachers end their letters to parents with, “We look forward to continuing our collaboration with you to set your child on the path to reading and writing success.” During the meeting, parents stated that their children enjoy reading. One parent stated that her child places a book under the pillow at bedtime and in the morning joyfully continues reading upon waking.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices and strategies articulate a set of beliefs about how students learn best and consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. Opportunities for high levels of student thinking indicated by discussions. The incorporation of the instructional shifts was evident in lessons across classrooms.

Impact

Across classrooms students are motivated and actively engaged in classroom activities and discussions. However, the school does not yet employ tactical extensions to support all students in producing meaningful work products thus hindering a diversity of learners from taking ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Supports for learners were posted in most classrooms focusing on academic language with picture cues around language in the current unit of Go Math! and Ready Gen. Charts about the writing process and current writing taking place in the classrooms were also in evidence with students utilizing those supports in classrooms visited. For example, in a second grade classroom, while the teacher was conferring with different students, other students were working on writing stories incorporating dialogue using models as well as checklists that were provided.

- Across classrooms, the depth of questions posed to initiate discussion and “turn and talks” is not consistently rigorous. For example, in one third grade class, the teacher asked the students, “How many rows of seven are in twenty-eight? The first thing you are going to do is, what?” While in another class, students were asked, “How does cacao connect to the overall cultural importance in Mayan society?” Consequently, student discussion, though evident in all classes, does not yet uniformly result in higher order levels of thinking, limiting student capacity to develop strong analytic skills and hindering student growth.

- In multiple classrooms students were observed working diligently through guided reading and writing. Furthermore, in some classrooms teachers employed brief “turn and talks” to support comprehension. Students were also observed responding to teacher questions, such as, “What is an opinion?” and “What details from the text support your answer?” These questions supported teacher-to-student interactions. However, there was little evidence of consistent student-to-student communication that fostered questioning, discussion, and student ownership of conversations.

- In an English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were observed following along with a SmartBoard projected text during a shared reading activity about defining vocabulary words in context. Graphic organizers were used to support them as they read. In some, but not yet all classrooms, it was evident that teachers create access to all learners, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) by providing leveled texts, re-written text, graphic organizers, and the effective use of paraprofessionals in classrooms where they facilitate student groups. These elements were evident in an Integrated Co-Teaching class where the special education teacher utilized a modified text and graphic organizer to engage her group in the same task as the general education population.
Additional Finding

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

Curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards. Higher-order thinking skills are emphasized for all learners across grades and content areas.

Impact

The school’s curricular decisions build coherence through a focus on literacy and promote college and career readiness for all learners, while academic tasks push student thinking and improve student learning across grades and subjects.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers explained how higher-order thinking skills are emphasized in curricula and academic tasks and in building coherence across grades. Teachers have made adjustments and enhanced ReadyGen and GO Math! to meet the needs of all students by incorporating the Teacher College Writing Reading Project (TCWRP) units of study in reading and writing. The literacy team added student response to literature and continue to utilize daily writing. Grades two to five have an additional reading program focusing on skills-based instruction. Additionally, many of the tasks reviewed in student folders and hallway displays are aligned to Common Core and content standards. Bulletin board displays show standards-based instructional tasks.

- Curriculum maps reviewed across content areas provide evidence of alignment to the Common Core and emphasize rigorous tasks. For example, in a grade three mathematics curriculum map, students are required to use known facts to add and subtract numbers and to solve problems. The map includes teaching points and a list of math strategies to support for all learners. In a grade two reading curriculum map students are expected to become independent problem-solvers who can recognize difficulty and draw on strategies to tackle new and tricky words, phrases, and information.

- Lesson plans are cognitively engaging and require students to cite evidence, analyze information, develop claims and counter claims, and apply concepts to solve real-world problems. For example, in a math lesson, students are asked to solve word problems involving dollar bills, quarters, dimes, nickels and pennies. In an ELA lesson students are asked to analyze the author’s use of figurative language and African Americans’ contributions to society.
**Findings**

Teachers create assessments and use rubrics aligned to the school curricula to provide students and parents with actionable feedback. Data from student work products are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

**Impact**

Using teacher feedback, students are aware of the next steps to improve their work, and student data is used to determine student progress.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Students are given rubrics that are most often used to assess projects or longer writing pieces, although sometimes they are not used to their full benefit. Many students were clear about the given feedback. Students shared their writing goals, which included “writing more and include punctuation.” Another student goal was to practice more in math and use more mathematical language.

- The school uses a variety of common assessments to track student progress. *TCWRP* assessment is used in grades kindergarten through grade five at least three times during the year. Students are assessed on their reading levels using the Fountas and Pinnell reading assessment system. In math, the school uses *Show What You Know* as a pre-assessment in every lesson and uses unit tests at the end of math units to assess mastery of skills. Progress monitoring takes place between the assessments. Teachers confer with students to review their goals around literacy, which includes discussion on improving in reading levels as well as in phonics and word work. When asked, students could speak to knowing their reading levels.

- Students in all grades complete writing samples at the end of every *ReadyGen* unit, which are then evaluated according to the unit rubric, which is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Students then receive feedback and are given goals indicating what they did well and what are their next steps. Teachers analyze the data and review trends making modifications to that unit and to future units.
Additional Finding

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

Findings
Teacher teams and teacher leaders engage in collaborative inquiry and contribute to the forward trajectory of the school's work in curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment.

Impact
The revitalized commitment to sharing and learning from one another has helped many teachers re-energize their practice, which has resulted in many students making significant progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are engaged in collaborative inquiry. During teacher team meetings, teachers spoke about how they regularly meet to shape units of study, identify resources to supplement core curricula, and to create curricula to promote achievement of school goals. Teachers attest to being a team that learns from each other, and that they are strengthening instructional capacity by referring to each other for professional support. An example of this would be a "shout out" from a colleague during a team meeting for a teacher who learned about and incorporated graphic organizers for building student vocabulary, such as the Frayer model, this year, in a lesson.

- Grade level teacher teams meet weekly. Teachers stated that a ReadyGen unit was modified to support students in grade three in increasing their reading stamina. Grade three teachers integrated chapters from Lemonade Wars, and early childhood teachers used Frog and Toad to build their units. Teachers were able to cite several examples of how their own practice has evolved as a result of the work they have been doing this year on teams.

- Teachers report that although the staff had always been supportive of one another, the level of sharing and collaboration that takes place now has improved for each teacher's practice and that they now feel compelled to work even harder because they are all working on the same key priorities. There are several distributive leadership structures in place at the school. Teachers open their classrooms to other teachers for intervisitations and professional learning opportunities.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: Proficient |

Findings
School leaders support teacher development using a systematic observation structure that advances teacher practice through actionable feedback and supportive professional development.

Impact
Ongoing feedback informs effective professional development and ensures professional growth and development.

Supporting Evidence

- Through frequent formal and informal observations, the administrative cabinet uses low inference notes to provide teachers with examples of strengths and next steps to support their growth. The principal and assistant principal model lessons while explaining what effective teaching looks and sounds like. Teachers receive written and verbal feedback aligned to the school’s stated instructional goals, and to the Danielson Framework, that supports teacher development. This includes self-identified areas teachers want to strengthen and identification of what success would look like.

- Teachers receive a wide range of feedback on classroom management, questioning techniques, and assessments for student learning. Observation reports include the instructional focus to provide differentiated instruction and use multiple entry points and assessment practices that reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding. New teachers also receive feedback and coaching strategies from the leadership for improvement. According to school leaders’ tracking analysis on teacher development of improved practice, teachers have improved in Danielson’s description of “Designing Coherent Instruction.”

- The principal shared the need to see increased levels of informal assessment and checks for understanding throughout lessons, instead of only at the end of lessons. In response to that, schoolwide professional development activities center on continuing to build in strategies that assess student learning during lessons and appropriate supports to accelerate student learning. For example, this year teachers were given the opportunity to attend a professional learning cycle on differentiation. Participants were taught strategies for content, engaged in intervisitation to collect low inference notes and discussed practices to support diverse learners.