Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 030 Wilton
Elementary 07X030
510 East 141st St.
Bronx
NY 10454

Principal: Debra Michaux

Dates of Review:
May 9, 2017 - May 10, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Joan Prince
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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 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>
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<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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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### School Culture

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>
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**To what extent does the school...**

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<tbody>
<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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### Systems for Improvement

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

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<th>Area</th>
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<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>
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<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>
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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>
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</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<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 a uniform grading policy that is aligned with the curricula. Teacher practices include use of common assessments, rubrics, and ongoing checks for understanding, providing actionable feedback to students.

Impact

Assessments are used strategically to drive instruction and make adjustments to curricula. Teachers collaborate on designing rubrics and tools to track student progress, creating actionable next steps, and making instructional decisions.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has an assessment calendar stored on a flash-drive which each teacher can update and enter new information on strategies and statistics. Assessment choices deliver a range of data, some daily, some monthly, and some quarterly, to sustain continuous improvement in instruction. Teachers and school leaders articulated coherent reasons for assessment choices which are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and the Danielson Framework for Teaching. These include Fountas & Pinnell Reading Benchmarks, GOMath! unit assessments, on-demand writing assessments, and Frye Sight Word Assessment to assess progress in building vocabulary. In addition, the lower grades have Fundations Phonics assessments. All information is shared schoolwide to allow teachers make adjustment in their planning to reflect the identified areas of concern. As evidenced at the grade three teacher team meeting, teachers effectively analyzed data to gather information about students’ progress and the learning needs relative to instruction. This team meets twice a week, once to explicitly talk about assessments. At this meeting, teachers discussed pre-assessments for math fraction problems and identified possible problem areas for students. Discussion during one meeting revolved around learning targets to guide instruction.

- Schoolwide systems are in place, with data/conference note folders for every grade. There is a specific team for “data talks” across grades to look for trends and patterns. This leads to implementation of updated lessons plans to reflect increased differentiation and reteaching. School leaders conduct ongoing formal and informal observations of teachers and provide timely rubric-based feedback with next steps. The administration analyzes Advance data and trends in order to adjust or plan professional learning opportunities. All Advance observations of Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP) reviewed reflect actionable feedback for improvement and include data recorded for each Danielson domain relating to teaching practice.

- As a result of looking at Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) in student-centered tasks, it was determined by administration and teacher teams that English Language Arts (ELA) and math curricula needed to contain more academic language to ensure increased proficiency in all content areas. This is now reflected in the curricula across grades, as well as in lesson plans. Student writing will be reassessed during benchmark writing and math assessments. The school has seen a 13 percent increase in student proficiency identified on Fountas & Pinnell Reading Benchmarks in grades kindergarten through five, from the previous year.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are becoming a coherent set of beliefs informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points and high quality support and extensions into the curricula for all students, and there are missed opportunities for students to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and work products.

Impact

Instructional strategies and learning activities are starting to reflect the school leaders’ beliefs about optimal student learning situations, as influenced by the priorities of the Danielson Framework. Student groups are organized thoughtfully for instruction but do not always build on student strengths to maximize student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- Pedagogy is aligned to the curricula and informed by the Danielson Framework and the instructional shifts. In several classrooms, students built domain-specific knowledge through text and used academic vocabulary across disciplines. For instance, in a grade three ELA class, students that included English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities read grade-appropriate text and distinguished between fact and opinion writing. An opinion sheet was distributed and a whole class discussion assisted in developing a definition for the word opinion. The students used colored card key rings to reflect how hard or easy the work was for them. A graphic organizer and rubric were used, and the students had clarity of assignment. In a grade three dual language math class, students used academic expressions to represent fractions; they practiced different processes and expanded on their own answers when in groups.

- Although students were encouraged to collaborate with one another, student participation in small groups and student-to-student discussion in large group settings were limited. Additionally, academic tasks did not afford opportunities for student choice, and extensions for higher performing students were not always in place. In several classes observed, students did not build on one another’s responses. A grade five ELA class on narrative writing did have small group discussions for students to create a theme within a plot point, but most students did not ask questions of each other and more scaffolding was needed for students to understand the task. The groups were differentiated, with some groups charting and others working on laptops. However, students asked specific questions and the teacher provided all the answers as opposed to encouraging peer-to-peer answering and discussions techniques.

Students were seen using differentiated worksheets and graphic organizers in different groups, sometimes without any additional scaffolding. However, definitions for students who struggle with academic vocabulary and pictorial support for students who struggle with understanding key concepts are inconsistently used. In observations, the principal stated that teaching is shifting from teacher-centered discussions to student-centered, as seen in some of the lessons mentioned above. Actionable feedback has been tied to rubrics for each task, and training has been provided to the entire staff on multiple entry points and using Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) levels of questioning techniques. The school is striving to have more interactive classroom experiences, using Smartboards, diagraming, and manipulatives or visuals in all subjects and across all grades.
**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**

School Leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher order skills.

**Impact**

The school makes purposeful decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. Across grades the promotion of higher order skills for all learners is consistently emphasized.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school has worked on the integration of the Common Core in everyday practice, as evidenced by professional development agendas and minutes of the team meetings. Teachers are aligning practice to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and engaging in inquiry work using baseline, interim, and post-assessment data, as well as annotating lesson tasks for thinking skills. Teachers at team meetings are addressing the highest-leveraged skill, along with the integral components of their lessons to improve teaching and learning. Data systems are used to look at the curriculum units to continue alignment. MyON, an on-line reading/library program, is used in the school and at home.

- The school believes that making learning relevant to students' lives is motivating, and across the curriculum essential questions that relate to real world connections are included, along with differentiated instruction. Curriculum units and lesson plans reflect the use of higher order thinking skills embedded using Webb’s Depth of Knowledge to promote critical thinking. The math curriculum has incorporated writing on an everyday basis. Moreover, the school has partnered with several community based and educational organizations to provide a more diverse curriculum that also centers around career and college readiness. The United Way focuses on early literacy and is assisting on expanding the pre-kindergarten and kindergarten experiences. The school participates in Jazz at Lincoln Center, which the fifth grade visits four times a year to learn about music in relation to American history.

- Inquiry-based work as well as *Depth of Knowledge* questioning is embedded into the curriculum. There is implementation of data-driven, guided reading groups and the workshop model of I Do, We Do, You Do in ELA and math. Implementation of TELEC (Think, Explain, Listen, Extend thinking, Challenge yourself) is abundant on charts in classrooms. Lesson planning includes the use of scaffolds and extensions to ensure rigor across grades and content areas for all learners. Schoolwide instructional focuses on students’ responses, critical thinking, and problem solving skills that highlight college and career readiness. In addition, there is a greenhouse with student and family participation across grades, along with a vegetable garden where the entire school participates in learning about how things grow.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness, offering ongoing feedback on student progress to both students and families.

Impact

All members of the school community clearly articulated that expectations are high and are supported by a culture of mutual accountability for teaching and learning. The entire staff successfully partners with families to support student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has strong relationships with students and their families, engaging them regularly via telephone, conferences, emails, and frequent progress reports. Each student is greeted at morning arrival, and a positive mindset is encouraged through looking at students both academically and socially. There is a focus on student emotional and social growth with the programs Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) and Brain Power, bringing wellness components to the entire school community. In addition, school leaders ensure that teachers are on the same page via emails and memos with schoolwide expectations for teaching and learning. Teacher teams hold each other accountable for their work as partners in meeting goals for next steps in teaching and learning.

- There are regular celebrations of student achievement and intervisitation among teachers to observe and exchange effective practices. There are “Shout Out” bulletin boards for staff accomplishments and perfect attendance for classes, students, and teachers. The school utilizes staff and student uniforms to promote a positive school climate and culture of inclusiveness. Teachers set long-term goals at the beginning of the year and keep records of professional development (PD). The principal stated and agendas have shown that there is PD conducted through faculty conferences, grade meetings, and teacher team meetings that offer opportunities to discuss the expectations aligned to the Danielson Framework. Teachers used ClassDojo, an online behavior monitoring system, to provide ongoing communication about school expectations to parents and families in real time. A decrease in discipline referrals as measured in the school’s OORS reports and data also shows an increase in student attendance. In addition, there are increased numbers of students participating in leadership roles with the implementation of the Student Council and the Brain Power Student Leadership Program. There is a monthly newsletter, curriculum night, and other family-attended events to celebrate student achievement.

- School leaders provide teachers with detailed feedback outlining the support that is available to them to improve their practice. Expectations are clear for pedagogical and professional practice via verbal and written communication. As an example, there are frequent classroom observations used to communicate high expectations, as evidenced in a calendar and as stated by teachers. Through observations and preparations, planning, learning environment, professionalism, and classroom instruction, there is frequent and actionable feedback given to teachers by peers and administration. The school has implemented a staff book club and is reading Teaching Reading in Small Groups. The teachers are encouraged to implement the best practices discussed in the text through demonstration of strategies with their peers and the sharing of best practices.
Findings

The principal and school leaders support the development of all teachers with effective feedback and next steps. This feedback accurately captures strengths and challenges using the Danielson Framework for Teaching to articulate clear expectations for teacher practice.

Impact

Accountable talk at teacher team meetings, with self and peer reflections including a focus on instructional learning walks to support teacher development and practice, has increased.

Supporting Evidence

- Analysis of teacher observation data from Advance is used as a basis for goal setting and planning the focus of professional development topics. Each instructional assistant principal collects work samples that reflect implementation of an instructional initiative or best practice. This work becomes the subject of an instructional "show and tell" meeting, held once a month with the principal. It was stated at a teacher team meeting that “during the teacher-led instructional learning walks, goals are to improve pedagogy within a culture of respect and continuous improvement, using warm and cool feedback.” Recommendations are aligned to instructional goals and Danielson Framework for Teaching. For instance, questioning and discussion techniques have been emphasized in all PD sessions as a result of teacher requests.

- Common planning time is available for all grade level teams, and English as a New Language teachers and teachers of students with disabilities are included in these meetings. Grade level leaders meet and assist teams in utilizing protocols including maintaining minutes and using common data templates to guide their work in analyzing student work products and current data. A Professional Development Evaluation (PDE) form evaluating pedagogical needs is used by teachers to provide school leaders with information to guide professional learning. Based on information gleaned, there have been more vertical/department meetings, including dual language teachers and teachers of special education. In addition, a paraprofessional institute was initiated to help this group in developing techniques to support learning and increase proficiency in all content areas.

- The schoolwide goal is to focus on individual student needs supported by targeted collaborative professional development for faculty. All staff observations are followed by a face-to-face verbal post-conference providing feedback in a risk-free environment. School leaders share low inference notes with teachers, fostering teacher reflection on practice and plans for next steps. It was noted by the principal that teachers, as evidenced by Advance systems, are planning, developing, and implementing more Common Core-aligned lessons and have identified priority standards in their lesson plans due to participation in professional development. Team leaders supporting school goals are used in conjunction with staff meeting time to improve instruction. Administration uses an inquiry approach to monitor the impact of professional development on teacher performance and designs learning cycles aligned to data about student performance in the classroom.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
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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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**Findings**

Teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations to strengthen teacher instructional capacity and promote the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that there is effective teacher leadership.

**Impact**

Teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school. The teacher teams work on an inquiry-based structure to promote the integration of the CCLS into the curriculum and into the classroom.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher teams meet weekly and are organized by grade and content area. At the grade one team meeting observed, teachers were examining student work and implications. Additionally, teachers share information on GoogleDocs and look for the appropriate implementation of the Danielson *Framework* into lesson planning to strengthen student outcomes. During the reviewer’s observation and the question and answer period, team-meeting goals were stated as holding each other accountable, to give constructive criticism and support. A major goal throughout the school is for all students to leave their grade with essential foundational skills; therefore, academic vocabulary is embedded into all lesson planning. At the grade three teacher team meeting, teachers discussed pre-assessment math fraction problems and barriers to students’ solving fraction problems. They identified strategies for reteaching fraction standards and developed a plan to address students who are approaching grade level.

- Distributed leadership is shown through teachers’ input into the Comprehensive Educational Plan’s curriculum goals and with the teachers’ decision to put into place a wellness program with approval of the principal. Teachers at question and answer meetings said that their voices are heard in the school and that they have had an impact on professional development, both in selecting topics and facilitating presentations. Teachers, as per agendas and minutes, have the opportunity to facilitate workshops and professional development and take turns leading their team meetings. Teachers stated that they are encouraged to visit classes where good differentiation and questioning techniques take place to help them make greater use of the techniques with their own students.

- The work of teacher teams has impacted teachers’ pedagogy and, in turn, student results on assessments. For instance, on this year’s NYS Assessments, gains were made in both math and ELA. On benchmark assessments, the students have strengthened their ability to answer extended response questions. There is a (CTILW), Collaborative Teachers Instructional Learning Walk, including teachers across grades and subject areas, which examines best practices in student engagement and creates a focus on the transference of skills. Through team meetings, “look fors” were established, such as math exemplars, different levels of word problems, interactive anchor and process charts, and differentiated work. Across subject areas, teacher teams have created and shared assessments, such as exit tickets and methods, and strategies used to assist student performance.