Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 042 Claremont
Elementary 09X042
1537 Washington Ave.
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Lucia Orduz Castillo

Dates of Review:
March 21, 2017 - March 22, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
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. 042 Claremont 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</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>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>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 Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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 Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</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>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>
</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>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>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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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

Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment data, and student work for students they share. Distributed leadership structures are embedded so that there is effective teacher leadership and teachers play an integral role in key decisions.

Impact

Teacher engagement in systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in mastery of goals for groups of students and improvements in teacher practice. Effective teacher leadership plays an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- During an observed third, fourth, and fifth grade inquiry team meeting, the group uses a restorative circle monkey as a talking piece. The meeting has an agenda and protocol, the team used a modified tuning protocol. Roles include facilitator, note taker, and timekeeper. The team reviewed minutes from the last meeting. The meeting starts with a reference to the last time the group met when they looked at short responses and one teacher discussed how the visual "painted response" helped a student. However, only 28 percent got short response correct overall. The restate the question, answer the question, cite evidence from the text, explain the evidence (RACE) strategy was reviewed. The team looked at student work, took two minutes to ask any questions, and then teachers reviewed the work together that they had brought in. Each teacher offered a specific strategy for each piece of work. One teacher’s feedback included a grow of using the color strategy with a student to focus on answering the question. The presenting teacher reflects on the feedback from their colleagues. A teacher reported, “We have new teachers in the grade, and during vertical planning our third grade is working with fourth grade. I know the expectations; the vertical planning really helps me get some insight into the lower grades. Our team planning gives us a better sense of coherence across grades as well as key strategies to use to improve our practice.”

- Teacher teams are involved in six-week inquiry cycles for the 2016-2017 school year with specific focus areas identified for each team meeting. Meeting one of the cycle includes organizing for collaborative work by discussing the revised inquiry cycle for this school year. Meeting two involves identifying a problem of practice to address during the inquiry cycle. Meeting three includes building assessment literacy and creating a data overview. Meeting four has teacher teams developing an action plan as a result of how to solve the problem of practice and decide on an instructional strategy. Meeting five involves determining what assessment will be used to measure progress and how it will be tracked. Meeting six involves sharing out the results to assess impact on student achievement and determine next steps. A review of Advance March 2016 to March 2017 data shows evidence of improvements in teacher practice, including an increase in Danielson 1e (Designing Coherent Instruction) from 28 percent to 49 percent effective, and an increase in Danielson 3c (Engaging Students in Learning) from 36 percent to 53 percent effective.

- Through the Teacher Leadership Project, grade chairs lead inquiry teams, professional development sessions and common planning involving teacher teams. Teachers play an integral role in key decisions that affect student learning across the school. For example, teacher team analysis of assessment data resulted in the creation of groups for the Saturday school. Fifteen of 17 reading rescue students, some of the school’s most at risk learners, have shown progress with the support of AIS teachers and success mentors.
Findings
The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support values student voice and aligns professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences.

Impact
A safe and inclusive culture is conducive to student and adult learning and promotes the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors. However, student voice is not meaningfully involved in decision-making and the results of the academic and personal behaviors are not evident within the school yet.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) data reports shows a decline in reported incidents this school year compared to the same time last year. Assessing the school climate, using the OORS data report, the reduction of incidents shows drops in OORS incidents over the last three years. Student voice is valued through student government, a group of fourth and fifth graders. The Cougar Council worked with staff members on the library renovation and started a buddy reading program where students from the Cougar Council read to students in kindergarten and first grade. Cougar Council also made suggestions for morning enrichment. The intention was to motivate students to get to clubs and school on time by placing the enrichment activities that students were interested in during the morning before regular classes began. The incentive was that data was analyzed and students, who were not on time, were not allowed to participate in the enrichment opportunities. While these practices support a safe environment and inclusive culture, the school’s area of focus remains to meaningfully involve student voice in school improvement efforts.

- The Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) action plan was developed three years ago and continues to drive school culture building initiatives. PBIS includes three clear schoolwide expectations: be respectful, responsible, and caring. A matrix of expected behaviors appears in staircases, hallways, and in classrooms. Positive rewards include Cougar Paws, that allows students to exchange for incentive prizes. The Cougar Paws emulate the school motto, “All P.A.W.S. (Positive Attitudes Will Soar) On Deck!” Parents also participate by having their card punched for recognition and incentives as they attend and participate in school events, and staff members are involved in “Faculty Friday” shout outs.

- Each class begins with a restorative circle to build community and address student social emotional learning. Students sit in an emotions circle and place themselves on a “feeling” and have an opportunity to explain why they feel that way. Students learn self-regulation and communication skills during restorative circles. Adult meetings, from teacher inquiry teams and Teach Me Tuesday meetings with parents, also start with a restorative circle to reinforce the expectation of culture building consistency across the school. While these practices support the promotion of the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors, there is not yet data that captures its impact on the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.
Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Across grades and subjects, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities.

Impact

Coherent curricula promote college and career readiness for all students. A diversity of learners has access to the curricula and tasks and is cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Review of curricular documents reveal alignment to the Common Core State Standards and New York State content standards where applicable, as well as integration of the instructional shifts across grades and content areas. The school uses Teachers College Reading and Writing Project (TCRWP) curriculum for reading and writing. Teachers College curricula include a tiering of tasks at high, middle, and low levels. In math, GO Math! begins each unit by unpacking the Common Core and pre-requisite skills are addressed through the fluency part of the lesson. Instructional shifts include exposing students to literary and non-fiction texts, text based answers, and writing based on sources.

- Unit plans consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits in the course of instruction. Learning objective statements in unit plans include, “Students will analyze question to answer both questions and provide evidence from both texts.” and “How does building reading habits inspire and help us become better readers?” Additionally, students are to consistently write and connect their writing to evidence from the text. Lesson plans consistently detailed high-level questions. Examples of higher-order questions found in curricular documents are, “How can I make sure that I get to know the characters in my books just like I get to know my friends, noticing who they are, what they do, how they act, how they feel and what they learn?”, “How can persistence and partnership help us become better readers?”, “How can we write a fraction as a product of a whole number and a unit fraction?”

- A diversity of learners benefit from access to academic tasks as evidenced in a Kindergarten writing unit differentiation includes 3 different level of student work to choose from depending on the majority of the students in your class, highlight student sample with various colors to support the extraction of the text features, allow students to tag text features/elements on enlarged mentor text, provide certain students with text feature words on an index card in order to use to find the evidence of that text feature. In a third grade math class, a tier 1 activity is outlined if a student misses question 3 or 4, they go to small group to do a quick reteach and do RtI (Response to Intervention) Tier 1 activity. Tier 2 students will use fraction tiles on their own. And tier 3 students will explain how they can use reasoning to compare two fractions with the same numerators. The tiered groups have anticipated students identified by name pending the results of the in lesson assessment.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact
Students produce meaningful work products and take part in discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Teaching practices evidence the shared belief that all students learn best when provided multiple entry points and tasks are designed for partnership work. A second grade ELA lesson on figurative language and similes, included meeting with a small groups of students at multiple levels of learning. The lesson includes an enrichment activity for higher-level students and different supports for different steps of the learning process. In another class, a fifth grade math lesson on simplifying fractions and finding equivalent fractions involved students working in small groups. Students used manipulatives to fill out letter charts and an answer box using the Sum It Up! strategy. A student spoke to what they were doing, “We can check our answer- we got the same answer, it's a race between us two, a little competition.”

- A first grade ELA lesson included a reread of text and cross out of words as students find synonyms. The students did a turn and talk with their partner to discuss what word could they use instead of big. Students were referencing the help/add feelings chart within the classroom. During a third grade math lesson, students worked in pairs while using dry erase boards practicing addition fluency, 654 + 819. Students were using whiteboards as they worked out the problem individually for one minute, then they talk with their partner. There were anchor charts in room that students used as a resource during the lesson. A third grade ELA lesson on non-fiction text included a turn and talk compar comparing how animals and humans need to play. The lesson included a recap of previous learning and strategies were modeled, with road mapping and elaboration of vocabulary. Anchor charts in the room were also referenced by students.

- A fourth grade math lesson, students learned fractions by doing a word problem dividing a pizza into six equal slices. A turn and talk opportunity for students allowed work with a partner. Students used manipulatives of 1/8 to count out 5/8 and determine the number of separate plates required to share a pizza equally. A kindergarten lesson on problem solving word problems about stickers. Students had whiteboards with word problem and were working in pairs. Some students showed their work on the document camera to demo for the class. The lesson included modeling a strategy and guided practice opportunities for students to visualize the operation.

- A math lesson on fractions included students using the circle, underline, box, eliminate (CUBE) strategy to determine which is the smallest denominator. The lesson included a “turn and talk” and share out opportunity. Students worked with partners on the next task of the lesson. A fifth grade ELA lesson had students reading an excerpt from *The Seeker* while using the RACE strategy and checklists. After small group work, students used the color-coded text from the group they were in with the teacher back at their desks. Students worked with a graphic organizer to chart possible ways to structure their essay, a student reported, “I need details to support my answer for each question.”
Findings
Across classrooms, teachers use and create assessments and rubrics that are aligned with the school's curricula. Across classrooms, teachers' assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact
Teachers' use of assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement as well as make effective adjustments to support all students' learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher written actionable feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work. One example of feedback reads, “You did a great job explaining your thinking. Try to show your work for both problems next time.” Another example reads, “I want you to think of the word bigger- what did you mean? Think about your words and use some of our new vocab to explain your thinking – vocab: height, high, lower, speed.” Another example, “Love the way you said a slide is “like a big hill that pushes your whole body!” Can you tell us step by step how it works”, and “Very nice challenging yourself to use a number line. Remember we want to label all our work. Box in your final answer.” A student reported, “My teacher gave me feedback about adding more transition words and more details to improve my writing.”

- The schoolwide grading policy includes end of marking period grades aligned to reading levels. The reading level benchmarks change as the marking periods progress throughout the year to account for expectations of student growth over time in reading levels. Teacher teams have used student work and data to create common rubrics and assessments and through this practice, communicate high expectations via detailed rubrics and feedback to students. Students use rubrics and checklists as tools of self-assessment during the writing process. A student reported, “We have test prep folders with tools, rubrics, short response questions, it helps us to organize our work and steps of what to do.” Another student stated, “I had to find information from different sources, the checklist helps me to know.”

- Across most classrooms, there were checks for understanding such as questions, responses, share-outs, and student work products. Teachers make instructional adjustments based on the information to support all learners including student subgroups. For example, during a math lesson the teacher noted checks for understanding on a sheet after she conferenced with students. During a first grade lesson, the teacher repeated what she heard during the students' turn and talk and introduced vocabulary and a collected vocabulary anchor chart for student reference.
Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through its Faculty Handbook and professional development plan. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

Prompt written feedback and constant communication and support has increased teachers’ understanding and awareness of school leaders’ expectations around teaching and learning. Communication with families provides opportunities for them to partner in students’ education.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standards for professionalism and high quality instruction. School leaders support teachers in understanding their instructional expectations by conducting informal classroom visits that are quickly followed by a write-up summarizing what was seen, providing feedback, and transparently identifying the next-steps for which they will be looking upon their next visit. For example, “Before I left your room, I mentioned to you the “I do” portion of the mini lesson was not evident. Please see attached resource from the book, *Explicit Instruction* by Archer and Hughes, for guidance on how to deliver the “I Do” portion of the mini lesson.” A professional development plan makes clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations in addressing topics such as task analysis, differentiation, and tiered instruction.

- School leaders have established high expectations with the 4x2=8 Must Haves. These include, a flow of day with time, subject area, and the goal must be displayed at the start of the school day. Standard-based objectives must be displayed for duration of the lesson in WALT format (We are learning to…) and explicitly shared with students at the start of the lesson. Lesson plans must be readily available in a hard copy. Charts within the classroom must be reflective of current units. Notebooks should be used for students to show their work and their thinking. Bulletin boards within classrooms must be updated no later than two weeks into the start of a unit and display process-oriented student work along with a task descriptor, rubric, and actionable feedback. Checks for understanding should be embedded throughout the lesson. And student talk must be evident in lessons.

- Teach Me Tuesday is designed as outreach to empower parents. Teach Me Tuesday starts with teachers and parents in a restorative circle with a talking piece, as parents are asked to share an area in math that their child has shown progress or growth this school year. One parent shared, “She’s doing better at recognizing numbers up to 100. She’s learning how to add and subtract. I’ve seen her grow a lot.” Four different teachers from the grade level showed the most recent area of focus on decomposing mathematical equations and how students have learned how to decompose using counters. Specific data regarding the topic being covered showing student growth from December to March is reviewed by the teachers to give parents context on how the students are progressing in their classes and the importance of their involvement. Parents then worked through problem solving examples, similar to the tasks that the students see in their classrooms, in groups together with the support of a teacher. One parent reported, “During Teach Me Tuesday we learn strategies to help our children. Easier ways to help my child, like math and learning her sight words, tools to make a graph at home, Teach Me Tuesday includes different ways to learn the necessary skills the child is using in the class.”