Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 068 Bronx
Elementary 11X068
4011 Monticello Ave.
Bronx
NY 10466

Principal: Aidimaris Soler

Dates of Review:
January 24, 2017 - January 25, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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 Bronx 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>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>Developing</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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</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>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>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>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>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>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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

The implementation of a Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support program and a student mentoring supports the school’s safe and inclusive school culture. Structures are in place for students to know an adult well.

Impact

A safe and inclusive school culture fosters and values student voice to support students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has supports in place such as a student government, positive behavioral intervention and support (PBIS) program, student mentoring, and student celebrations, which results in a safe and inclusive school culture where student voice is welcome and valued. Members of the student government expressed their interest in having school events and clubs in the school. Students devised a plan and now the school has implemented two dance clubs in the school that meets bi-monthly. Students also voted for a pajama day and the event was recently launched. Students support their local community by planning a drive to provide families in temporary housing with materials. Students in the upper grades mentor students in the lower grades during their lunch periods and engage in buddy class activities, such as author day. The PBIS program fosters character building in students by focusing on a different character trait monthly. Events such as “Friendsgiving” day and commendations for perfect attendance, all support a safe and inclusive school community. A supportive environment action plan and the school’s in-house data-base to monitor school infractions was also enacted to gauge the school’s safe and inclusive school culture. Because of these practices, school incidences have decreased by forty-four percent.

- Structures are in place to ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult. There are monthly attendance meetings to discuss and monitor students who are chronically absent. Outreach is conducted to families via phone calls and home visits by an attendance teacher. An attendance intervention plan is enacted to target and support students who are chronically absent. Case conferences are conducted monthly to monitor student social emotional and academic goals. Because of these practices, students are making steady gains in their reading levels, and in their performance in mathematics.

- During the teacher meetings, teachers conveyed that they help to run students’ clubs and this provides them an opportunity to get to know their students very well. Teachers also meet with students during their personal lunch periods. It was also mentioned that the learning style surveys that are disseminated in the beginning of the school year is also for teachers to get to know their students, thoroughly. During the student meetings, all students identified either a teacher or an administrator that they do know very well and described the benefits of the relationship.
Findings

School leaders are in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrating the instructional shifts across all content areas. Curricula reflect planning inconsistently using student data.

Impact

The school is in the process of aligning curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrating the instructional shifts but not across content areas thereby, impeding coherence to promote college and career readiness. Curricula modifications use limited student data thus reducing access to the curricula for a diversity of learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricula across content areas are in the process of alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and incorporating the instructional shifts for a variety of learners. In English Language Arts (ELA), curricula are aligned to the Common Core and integrates the instructional shift of reading and writing grounded in text-based evidence. In mathematics, the shift of fluency and deep understanding is integrated into the curricula. Teachers in collaboration with consultants are currently in the process of implementing phase two of an integrated curriculum project into the content areas of science and social studies, with the incorporation of the Common Core and the instructional shifts. Social studies were integrated into the ELA curricula. The integration of the instructional shifts was not evident in the content area of science; therefore, impeding coherence across all content areas. Further, strategic integration of the instructional shifts across content areas was not apparent.

- Curricula documents and academic tasks reflect planning to provide all students access to the curricula. An ELA lesson plan demonstrates modifications to the curricula by denoting strategies such as partnering of English Language Learner students with ELA proficient students on targeted skills. In mathematics, teachers modify the GO Math! pacing calendar based on students’ skill sets. However, again, the usage of student data to modify curricula in science for a diversity of learners was not evident.

- Modification of curricula reflects planning by using a Common Core audit form. In social studies, each unit is audited using a checklist to monitor the incorporation of the Common Core. Also in ELA, units of study are audited using the checklist to monitor the inclusion of the Common Core. This was evident across all of the grades. However, this practice, again, was not evident in science. There is limited usage of data to modify all curricula to engage a diversity of learners.
### 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

Student work products and discussions, and teaching practices such as differentiation reflects and supports the schoolwide beliefs about how students learn best as informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

#### Impact

Teacher pedagogical practices reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best so that students produce meaningful work products that reflect high levels of thinking and participation.

#### Supporting Evidence

- In most classrooms, teaching practices consistently reflect and support schoolwide beliefs about how students learn best and is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. School leaders conveyed that students learn best when the learning environment supports differentiation and leads to student engagement in tasks, discussions and center based activities. In an English Language Arts (ELA) class of diverse learners, the teacher modeled a mystery lunch box activity and with the clues and evidence provided, students inferred about the item being described. Students engaged in a turn and talk to discuss what they inferred of the food item being described in the activity. In a mathematics class, the instructional focus was, “I can use academic language to describe fractions and then complete a multi-step problem solving question. Students in groups were working on different activities such as the problem of the day, *GO Math!* problems, and reviewing a mid-year test. Students asked one another questions about the use fractions in everyday life and how to find the greatest common factor of three-twelths. Although the espoused beliefs about how students learn best was observed in most classrooms, these practices were not witnessed in all classrooms.

- In a mathematics class with diverse learners, the teacher reviewed the instructional outcomes with the class, such as “How can we use an array to…” Student groups were working on different tasks. One group worked on a problem-based learning task to create a game involving multiplication. In the groups, students stated, “I want to challenge their minds.” “Outcome is to get better at arrays and help the player challenge their minds.” Another group were working on a math problem and a student stated, “Which question would be the most challenging?” In an ELA class, students were reading articles on the Stamp and Townsend Acts, and the Boston Tea Party. Students in their groups were deconstructing the articles and expressed their thinking by stating, the British did not have enough money to pay for the taxes or that the Stamp Act was not just about stamps. Student work products showed the students analyzing the article by looking at the misconceptions, new information, and synthesizing the information gathered from the reading. Student ownership of the material was not demonstrated across most of the classrooms.

- In a science laboratory class, students were investigating the properties of objects for their buoyancy, conductivity, magnetism, and density. At their lab stations, students carried out their investigations and in their groups made predictions. Students in their groups mentioned that not all metal conducts electricity and metals have different properties. Other statements included, “Steel is an insulator and aluminum is a conductor.” Student work products showed students collecting their data using a data table and explained what their results meant. Student work products and discussion reflected high levels of thinking and participation and ownership. However, this was not evident across all classrooms.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating: Proficient</th>
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Findings

Common assessments are used to monitor student performance towards goals across subject areas. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of checks for understanding.

Impact

Results from common assessments are used to adjust instruction. Checks for understanding strategies are employed to make some adjustments to the lesson to meet the needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school uses assessments such as Fountas and Pinnel (F&P), writing baseline and performance tasks, on demand reading assessments, mathematic assessments which encompasses beginning of the year, as well as end of chapter tests and performance tasks. State ELA and mathematic exam simulations are also administered to students. Information gleaned from the assessments are used to monitor student performance and the attainment of mastery of standards and/or skills. For example, a literacy profile is created to monitor students' performance on literacy assessment tasks, such as, but not limited to, F&P levels and vocabulary tests. This information is tracked monthly and denotes whether a student has attained mastery. The information is maintained and advances, as a child progresses to the next grade. Analysis of students' performance on baseline writing assessments are captured on a “Closing the Gap” form. The form notes students' strengths, challenges and teaching implications and/or next steps. ELA data from beginning of the year assessments was analyzed and denoted students' both reading and ELA proficiency levels. Based on the data, teachers adjusted instruction by holding additional small group instruction for students not reading at their appropriate grade levels. In addition, students' read books at their reading level, as well as books in the next reading level within a specific time window.

- In most classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment. Strategies observed were, teachers conferring with students and taking conference notes, students using hand signals, and teachers posing questions For example, in a science class, the teacher walked around to the different groups, conferred with the groups by asking questions and kept conference notes. The teacher posed questions such as, “If it is a conductor, what does that mean?” “What is flowing through the wires?” The teacher then adjusted the lesson and convened a small group on the rug to discuss the experimental results. In an ELA class, hand signals were used to check for understanding. In addition, students self-assessed themselves using a center's rubric to evaluate their group activity. Although strategies for checks for understanding were implemented, adjustments to the lesson were not always executed.

- Teachers implemented checks for understanding strategies, such as using technology to capture real-time data on student assessment and students self-assessing. For example, in a social studies class, the teacher conferred with students groups while capturing conference notes. In addition, students self-assessed themselves using a rubric and shared their results with other students in the class and with their teacher using an app on their iPads. In an ELA class, students assessed themselves using a four-point informational writing rubric to determine what should be included in their paragraphs. Checks for understanding did not consistently lead to an adjustment in the lesson.
### Additional Finding

<table>
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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**

High expectations are conveyed to the staff through professional development embedded in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the Instructional Professional Collaboration. School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to families connected to a path of college and career readiness.

**Impact**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the school community, provide training, and have a system of accountability for those expectations. School leaders and staff offer ongoing feedback to help families understand student progress toward those expectations.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders consistently articulate clear expectations for professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Administration provides professional development such as “Danielson Framework and its Alignment to Instruction.” The workshop communicated the school’s instructional focus and correlated it to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Teachers also have the opportunity to attend lunch and learn sessions in ELA, mathematics, and data management. Through the Instructional Professional Collaboration, teachers and the administration collaborate with one another to share best instructional practices through inter-visitation. Best practices on instruction are also shared through the digital warehouse known as “The Treasure Chest.” Teachers are held accountable for the expectations through the observation process.

- The administration consistently communicates high expectations to the staff through the staff handbook, daily announcements, and weekly newsletters. Instructional expectations for the learning environment are articulated through an environmental and bulletin board checklists. Teachers are provided feedback on the checklists.

- School leaders and staff convey expectations to families that is connected to college and career readiness and offer feedback to the families through progress reports distributed twice a year and report cards disseminated three times a year. Class Dojo is used to communicate with parents how their child is performing in their classes. The school website is also used as a vehicle to share information about school events with the parents. Parents are provided with feedback during weekly parent engagement sessions where they can learn about their child’s academic performance. In addition, teachers send out monthly newsletters to the parents sharing the goals of the classes. Parents are sent notices to the home that apprises them of the child’s reading levels, monthly student goals sheets, and promotion-in-doubt letters. Parents are invited to writers’ celebrations throughout the school year to laud their child on their writing pieces. The fall carnival, game and multicultural night events promote parental involvement in the school. Teachers provide grade-level workshops for parents on literacy, phonics, homework, and strategies for students with disabilities to support them while home.
Findings

Teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations. Grade level leaders exemplify distributed leadership structures that are in place.

Impact

Teacher professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals thus strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Most of the teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and support the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, and strengthens the capacity of teachers. Grade level inquiry teams meet with the support of an instructional coach during their common planning time to look at student work using the Tuning Protocol and the Closing the Gap Sheets to analyze student work, and incorporate targeted instructional strategies to support students. The School Improvement Team uses student data and evaluations to ensure that students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are receiving their mandated services and are being moved to the least restrictive environments. During the teacher meetings, teachers stated that the work of teacher teams has provided them with different approaches to teaching, and fostered collegial relationships that allow for the sharing of ideas. The School Based Improvement team works to ensure school events are aligned to themes such as friendship, leadership, sportsmanship, and partnership. Teachers also mentioned that inter-visitation occurs organically, through their open-door policy. Although the teachers are accountable for meeting these expectations, there is no system of mutual accountability for meeting those expectations.

- Distributed leadership structures are in place and ensures that teachers have a voice in key decisions in the school. Teacher serve on various teams within the school. For example, there are teachers that serve as grade level leaders. The leaders serve as point persons for their grade. Information garnered from meeting with the administration is disseminated to the appropriate grade teachers. During the teacher meetings, teachers attested that they have a voice in decisions such as planning concerts, establishing and revising pacing calendars within their disciplines, and establishing a project-based class period and content fun Fridays within their classes. Teachers have a voice in decisions that affect student learning. However, distributed leadership practices are not embedded.

- Teachers provide their input into the professional development that is provided to the staff through a survey. Teachers provided their input on topics that are aligned to Danielson such as planning coherent instruction, assessment in instruction, student engagement in ELA and math, the writing workshop, academic vocabulary, questioning and discussion, and small group instruction. Teacher input was included in renaming the school's positive behavior interventions and support program (PBIS) to safe attentive in control leaders in responsibility (SAIL).