Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 070 Max Schoenfeld
Elementary 09X070
1691 Weeks Ave.
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Kerry Castellano

Dates of Review:
December 8, 2016 - December 9, 2016

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>Additional Finding</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>
</tr>
</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>Additional Finding</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Findings

All teachers are involved in inquiry-based, structured professional alliances that have strengthened teacher instructional capacity and encouraged the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. The instructional literacy team and the cognitively guided instruction team (CGI) systematically analyze key elements of teacher work including classroom practice, assessment data and student work.

### Impact

Across the school grade levels and subjects, the inquiry work across the school has led to increased student achievement for all learners, shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- All teachers across all grades and subjects participate in inquiry-based collaborations that are designed to improve student learning and teacher pedagogy. A literacy coach meeting was observed where the team reviewed data from running records from the beginning of the year. The team found that there was a significant amount of students below grade level in reading. Based on the findings, teachers incorporated guided reading, reading aloud, and mini-lessons. Impact was seen in running records provided that demonstrated 91 percent accuracy in oral reading fluency in grade four. Furthermore, teachers reported that the incorporation of effective mini-lessons and guided reading has improved student reading comprehension.

- The principal stated that it is a school-wide practice that all teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based collaborations. This was evident as a teacher team presented an agenda and minutes on the use of CGI. The teacher stated, “CGI focuses on developing students’ mathematical thinking skills through instruction.” A team that focuses on students with disabilities met to discuss CGI as it relates to investigating word problems and fluency number talks. The grade four self-contained teacher started with a recap of data across grades, including common trends, prior knowledge, where students struggle and what they almost know. The agenda also included time frames and goals, and a preview of the next week’s agenda, which included a grade three number talk video.

- All teachers collectively look at grade level trends of student instruction. An example was seen in a document about trends from the grade two team. Trends were broken down in areas of focus and celebration. Areas of focus included, “students need to build more fluency with addition using basic facts,” and “students need to become more fluent in decomposing numbers using the distributive property and place value.” Areas of celebration included, “students are able to count in fives, tens, and multiples of hundreds which is the foundation of the second-grade math standards.” As a result of the team work, students have demonstrated a five percent increase in all areas of literacy in school wide assessments in two months by incorporating literacy into math. Teachers have stated that there is continuous growth.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Focus</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

The principal and staff make certain that the English Language Arts and math curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and incorporate instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data for all students.

**Impact**

Using literacy based units of study and Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) plans, school leaders and teachers promote college and career readiness, however all students do not have access to the curricula and cognitive engagement is not always planned for in the curricula.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers reflect college and career readiness skills for students by teaching multiple ways to look at problems. A grade three math unit’s focus was on whole number operations. The unit demonstrates mathematical practices, having students use drawings to combine equal groups, skip count on a number line and use arrays. The unit lists levels of mastery including, “Students will understand that word problems can be represented in multiple ways and understand what a symbol represents in an equation.” Although there is evidence in other examples, this unit does not demonstrate how students with disabilities and English Language Learners’ (ELLs’) needs are addressed.

- By using depth of knowledge practices such as compare and contrast, students utilize practices that will help prepare them for college. A literacy-based unit of study for grade three has a reading goal that focuses on understanding characters by observing them and comparing and contrasting characters across books. Although adding multiple entry points to the curriculum is evident in most plans and units observed, this unit does not provide examples of how instruction will be differentiated for all students.

- Lesson plans are refined to address the needs of students with disabilities. A grade four ICT lesson demonstrated refinement for students with disabilities. The aim of the lesson was, “I can read and think across two topics by comparing and contrasting.” The original lesson had active engagement and involvement, and guided practice. Students were originally broken up into groups but not distinguished by needs. The modified version, however, includes low-level, mid-level and high-level tasks for students to accomplish.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices and student work products and discussions are connected to the curricula and echo an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the instructional shifts.

Impact

Student work reflects purposeful assignments and tasks that include high levels of student participation and require that they collaborate in small groups.

Supporting Evidence

- The Principal and teachers have stated that students learn best while collaborating in small groups. In a grade four English Language Arts self-contained class, the observed lesson was about researching the weather. The lesson’s aim was, “I can continue researching my expert topic and summarize my information.” Students worked in small groups on different weather phenomena and the teacher engaged students in dialogue and discussion about the topic by asking clarifying statements. The teacher asked a group, “What do you use to find tricky words?” one student responded, “We use pictures to help us find the tricky words.” The teacher showed the group a picture entitled “A Cold Day.” The picture showed a boy standing in the snow and touching a car. She asked the group, “What does the boy think is cold?” A student responded, “The car because it has ice on it and the boy was touching it.”

- The principal has stated that in some cases, students learn best when they are grouped by cognitive ability levels. In a grade four collaborative team teaching math class, students were observed working on area model and partial products in groups that were divided into three levels: proficient, intermediate and remedial, while a fourth group worked independently on an online game. The instructional shift to apply the proper math application in response a particular problem was evident in the group work. For example, the proficient group worked on solving a word problem. When the proficient group was asked what they are doing one student stated, “We’re working on figuring out eighty two times sixteen. We have to back up the numbers so we’re using partial products.” Another student stated, “I’m using a different strategy to get the right answer. I used expanded form and area form.”

- Students were observed citing text-based evidence in a grade three English Language Arts class. A group observed was working on stamina in reading. This was impactful as teachers have stated that data showed that an area of weakness for students was completing extended response questions. The group was engaged in a discussion about the book *The Paper Bag Princess*. The teacher asked students questions in the book such as, “Who is the main character of the story and what are her character traits?” The teacher asked the students to use the textbook to cite their evidence.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and grading policies that line up with the school’s curricula. The school uses common assessments to define student growth toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact

Assessments that the school uses, such as baseline and end-of-unit assessments provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student success. Assessments result in adjustments to curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers provide actionable feedback to students to memorialize their progress and offer next steps. An example was seen on a student’s writing assignment where the teacher used a writing rubric and provided actionable feedback including, “Your work is organized with a lead and body paragraph, you also filled out the organizer the right way.” Next steps included, “Add a strong ending and continue to elaborate,” and “Write your body paragraphs and add details.” A math rubric assessed students’ expertise in areas of problem solving, reasoning/proof, communication, connections and representation. Actionable feedback the teacher provided included, “Your adding for your dry goods is incorrect, however the rest of your working using the number you found is correct. Excellent job multiplying and dividing decimals. Next, always check your work using area model or check for division.”

- Grade two uses an information-writing checklist that students use for peer- and self-assessment. The checklist is divided into three key areas: structure, development and language conventions, and the students check off not yet, starting to, or yes. This rubric aligns with the curriculum as teachers and school leadership have stated that writing in extended response was a goal for the school this year. This was evident in a grade two lesson plan where the aim of the plan was, “I can edit my writing with a partner.” The lesson plan states that students must write compliments, suggestions and corrections.

- To make adjustments in instruction teachers use a teacher-student mathematics conference form that they share with students and other teachers. The form has teachers make notes in several areas including, “What we talked about, the strategy taught by the teacher, what student will work on, and notes/comments.” An example provided showed that the teacher talked to a student about decomposing numbers form one to ten. The teacher made an adjustment in the lesson by using manipulatives and ten frames. The student worked on math practice book and an iReady lesson. Notes and comments included adjusting the lesson to spend more time on decomposing numbers.

- Teachers use common assessments across the grade levels to address the needs of all students, including unit assessments in math and English Language Arts, and Teachers College Running Records. iReady is also used for math and literacy. Fundations was used because unit assessments revealed that students with disabilities and ELLs struggled with phonics.
### Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating: Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations including elements of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to the entire staff. Teachers and staff connect families to a path for their students to follow for college and career readiness, and offer families ongoing feedback on students’ progress toward these goals.

#### Impact

The principal uses different methods to communicate high expectations and provide training, and has a structure of accountability for staff. Teachers help families understand student growth toward those expectations.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The principal has stated that the school community uses PERFECT (Parents Engaging Relationships for Educating Children Today) to communicate student progress and expectations. A November PERFECT agenda highlighted the following, “The parent support group is an informational/support group that will assist, educate and support parents to help their child succeed in school despite of their learning and behavioral needs.” The agenda also states the staff will provide educational workshops and a topic discussion group. Impact of this was seen during the parent meeting. A parent stated that they attended a foster child support meeting that the school had under PERFECT and it was very helpful in providing support for her and her child who has disabilities.

- The principal uses a weekly newsletter to communicate high expectations to staff. A November newsletter stated that teachers must use correct mathematical language throughout the grades. She referred to an article of the same title that teachers were required to read. The principal also communicates high expectations to the staff through the staff manual that all teachers receive.

- To communicate college and career readiness, the school host an annual STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fair. Parents have stated that the fair helps them understand career paths for their children and also educates about what is happening in their child’s classes. One parent stated, “I never saw a school that talks about career choices with children this early.”

- The principal communicates expectations related to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to staff. During a post observation conference, the principal addressed using questioning and discussion techniques with a teacher stating that, “The teacher attempts to ask some questions designed to engage students in thinking but only a few students are involved.” This was impactful as teachers discussed the ways they improved discussion and questioning techniques during a teacher interview. Most teachers stated that this focus on questioning was an expectation this school year. Teachers are held accountable with follow-up classroom visits in the form of formal and informal observations and in some cases, improvement plans.
Findings
School leaders support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback and next steps. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
The principal uses feedback through informal and formal observations to articulate clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development, resulting in strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal provides support and supervision to teachers by conducting observations with next steps and feedback. In November, the principal conducted an informal observation on a non-tenured teacher. The principal noted that the teacher was developing coherent instruction and creating an environment of respect and rapport. Feedback to the teacher included, “It is important to give students ample time to engage in independent work, this means beginning the lesson on time.” Feedback also included for the teacher to find ways to improve relationships with any student who is frequently misbehaving, possibly through something like an individualized tracking system for student behavior.

- The principal uses informal observations to provide feedback, specifically about how teachers incorporate technology into the lesson. In December, an informal observation was conducted by the principal. Feedback to the teacher included, that the teacher could have students support ideas with details using the text. Next steps included, “I would like to see incorporation and use of laptops, iReady (reading and math) within the lesson.”

- The principal provided feedback to a teacher on an informal observation to articulate clear expectations that included the following feedback, “Establish and implement expectations for student conduct via ClassDojo, behavior programs. Monitor student behavior, including being attuned to what’s happening in the classroom and moving subtly to help students when necessary.” Feedback also included working with colleagues and properly using ClassDojo.