Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 073 Bronx
Elementary 09X073
1020 Anderson Ave.
Bronx
NY 10452

Principal: Vivian Bueno

Dates of Review:
December 21, 2016 - December 22, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier
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. 073 Bronx 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></td>
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<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>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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Quality Ratings continued

#### School Culture

<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>Additional Finding</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>Proficient</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>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>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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings
The majority of teachers are engaged in grade-based teacher teams that meet to review curricula, differentiation strategies, as well as best practices and student work. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact
Teacher collaborations have resulted in teacher intervisitations and the sharing of best practices, positively impacting teacher practice. Grade-level teams have addressed student need through an inquiry-based process resulting in improved reading levels and math fluency.

Supporting Evidence

- All grade team leaders serve on a vertical teacher team that is focused on improving teacher practice around the teaching of writing. Teachers on this team conduct intervisitations and using a protocol, share observations, wonderings, questions and develop plans to integrate best practices across the school through professional development (PD). A recent classroom visit involved the videotaping of a writing lesson in which the teacher allowed herself to be the subject of a descriptive writing piece in order to increase student engagement. One teacher reported, “The students were fully engaged in using descriptive language, more so than if they were just writing. It was wonderful to see how the teacher’s volunteering herself as the subject really freed-up the students to be creative with language.” Additionally, teacher intervisitations have resulted in colleagues adopting the practice of laminating graphic organizers so that student groups can use them at their tables with dry-erase markers as a tool for increasing student engagement as well as assessment.

- The grade two team analyzed Fountas and Pinnell beginning of year and subsequent assessment data and found that the number of students reading at grade level or higher rose from 26.8 percent to 32.3 percent. The number of students reading at either one or two levels below decreased. However, the number of students reading at more than two levels below remained stagnant. This student group became the target for the next step of this inquiry cycle. Teachers brainstormed strategies that they would use to address common issues found after reviewing target students’ data. The team determined that they would provide targeted instruction in phonics and comprehension strategies. The phonics strategy would involve teaching students to use the parts of words they have already mastered to understand new words that would be introduced. The comprehension strategy would involve targeted instruction on making inferences so as to understand the primary elements of a story.

- The grade four team analyzed their students’ State math scores and found that students were having trouble with numeracy. Team members’ review of assessment data did not reveal any clear trends in student deficiencies and so it was decided that teachers would focus their inquiry cycle on review of individual student misunderstandings while conferencing with students in order to uncover the source of students’ low scores. Analysis of this data resulted in the team’s decision to make curricular adjustments and implement instructional strategies that would result in more appropriate pacing and integration of embedded high-level peer- and self-reflective practices. Additionally, observation reports revealed evidence of increased differentiation based on student groupings. For example, one teacher was praised for organizing student groups as either Math by Myself, Math with a Buddy, or Math with a Teacher.
Area of Focus

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

Across classrooms, flexible student groups reflect teachers’ work toward providing students with multiple entry points into lessons. However, as evidenced in student work and discussions, tasks and assignments are not yet designed with scaffolds or supports for different learners.

Impact

Students were unevenly engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and student discussions inconsistently reflect high levels of student participation.

Supporting Evidence

- During a grade three science guided reading lesson, students were grouped based on Fountas and Pinnell reading levels. Student groups read from leveled texts and were supported with different vocabulary lists, discussion questions, and extensions. During a grade three dual language math lesson, students learned how to multiply numbers with factors of zero and one. English Language Learners benefited from student groups were leveled based on data and were engaged in work targeted to their group’s need. Groups work on either solving a work problem, drawing an array, or completing a multiplication puzzle. However, multiple entry points into lessons were inconsistently implemented resulting in classes during which teaching strategies and materials were identical, addressing only the needs of a single learning style. Additionally, two classes included English Language Learners who were not supported by differentiated materials.

- Grade three students engaged in a high level student-to-student discussion around the weather conditions that lead to rain. Initially, one student asked why rain falls. The discussion was propelled by students as they challenged each other with concerns over what makes a drop of rain heavy enough to fall, why clouds move, and why clouds change color. During a grade three math lesson, student groups engaged in discussion around what they learned about multiplication. Student moderators led these discussions. However, there were also classes in which teacher questions results in low levels of student thinking and participation. During a grade four reading lesson, students were asked to read the blurb on the back of a novel. When asked to predict what would happen in the book, individual students responded to the teacher without engaging with other students. Additionally, when the teacher asked students if they understood the word allowance, none knew the specific definition, though some recognized the word. Instead of facilitating a turn-and-talk between students as to what the word might have meant or engaging students in the use of context clues, the teacher provided the definition, missing an opportunity to guide the students through a high-level word acquisition activity.

- A grade five science lesson required students to conduct an experiment during which students would count the number of water drops that could rest on a penny before water fell off the side of the coin. Data collection revealed that all student groups had vastly underestimated the number of drops it would take before the water fell off the side. When the teacher asked what all groups had in common, accepting an answer from a single student without asking all of them to discuss this amongst their groups, students missed an opportunity to form a greater understanding of the experiment’s results. This was followed by instructions that each student should share whether their hypothesis was correct. However, the fact that all hypotheses were incorrect had just been revealed and so students were effectively asked to repeat information they had just learned, missing an opportunity to form greater understandings about the evidenced trend of incorrect hypotheses.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum
Rating: Developing

Findings
School leaders and faculty are in the process of aligning curricula to Common Core Learning Standards, and the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are inconsistently emphasized across curricula.

Impact
Lesson and unit plans evidence uneven alignment with the Common Core and applicable content area standards, as well as integration of the instructional shifts. Additionally, curricular documents evidence an inconsistent focus on emphasizing rigorous tasks for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- Review of curricular documents revealed that the process of alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and applicable content area standards is not yet complete. Of the nine lesson plans connected to the classroom visits conducted during the school visit, four showed no evidence of alignment to standards. Additionally, while reading and writing unit plans evidence alignment to standards, math pacing calendars do not. Similarly, integration of the instructional shifts is also in process. A grade two math lesson plan guides students through the process of representing three-digit numbers in a variety of ways. The grade three literacy curriculum map contains a high level of text complexity as well as numerous writing assignments that require the use of textual evidence. In a grade four math lesson covering factors, students are to evidence their understandings in a narrative paragraphs as well as through visualization. However, there were no instructional shifts evidence in five of the nine lesson plans reviewed.

- A grade three guided reading lesson plan includes two differentiated activities, each focused on a leveled book appropriate to students’ need. Additionally, each reading activity includes extension activities for students who complete the assigned reading with time to spare. A grade four math lesson plan also evidences student placement in the leveled assignments to which each group was tasked so that all students’ needs would be met. In addition to this support, a lesson plan section is devoted to secondary supports available to assist students if and when they do not reach the goals of the lesson. One secondary assessment notes that if a student incorrectly responds to exercises three or four, either a targeted reteaching should be implemented or students could be engaged in one of two online activities depending on which of the exercises were incorrectly answered. However, lessons spanning reading, writing, science and social studies show no evidence of thoughtful planning so that ELLs or students with disabilities have access.

- Unit plans, curriculum maps and pacing calendars across grades and content areas evidence a general lack of planning for ELLs and students with disabilities to have access. The grade five science and grade one social studies curriculum maps evidence alignment to both Common Core Learning Standards as well as NYS content area standards for science. However, review of curricular documents across grades and content areas reveal no evidence of planning for the needs of diverse students. For example, a grade three literacy curriculum map and grade 5 math calendar indicate the key Common Core standards addressed, performance tasks, assessments, and anchor texts, and the various unit themes covered, there is no mention of the ways in which materials are differentiated for students with disabilities or ELLs.
Additional Finding

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<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 rubrics and checklists aligned with the school’s curricula to inform feedback to students. School leaders use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals.

Impact

Students utilize teachers’ actionable feedback and assessment tools in order to increase their achievement. Common assessments have been used to adjustment curricula to reflect a need for increased focus on vocabulary acquisition.

Supporting Evidence

- Samples of student work across grades and content areas evidenced teacher-written actionable feedback. For example, feedback that focuses a student on expressing mathematical understanding in a variety of ways informs a student that his calculation is correct but that his narrative explanation of that answer was incorrect and that he should rewrite and turn it in again. Samples of feedback that focus on writing mechanics draw students’ attention to organizing their works into separate paragraphs, capitalizing proper nouns, punctuation use, and placing quotation marks around direct quotes used as textual evidence. Additionally, feedback reminds students to add more descriptive words in writing, extend learning and solve the same problem using three digit numbers, and ensure that penmanship is readable. Feedback from teachers in dual language classes is written in both English and Spanish.

- Across classrooms, rubrics and checklists are used across grades and content areas as tools of support for student growth. Examples of rubrics and checklists range from those designed for specific assignments in science, social studies, mathematics, personal narrative writing, and informative writing. Evidence of students’ use of these tools is posted on classroom walls, on hallway bulletin boards, and included with student work in portfolios. One student reported and all present students agreed, “I always check the rubric for what I have to do to get a level four and then I make sure to do it.”

- Analysis of NYS exams revealed that students’ vocabulary development needed greater support. As a result, it was determined that classrooms should have content-specific word walls to support an increased effort to develop students’ vocabulary acquisition. Additionally, Teachers College Running Records data was used to track students’ phonemic awareness. Kindergarten through grade two classrooms have all implemented a multi-sensory strategy for teaching phonics focusses on the connections between letters and their corresponding sounds, including the teaching of prefixes and suffixes as a result of this assessment.
Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through its Faculty Handbook and memorandum. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact
Ongoing communication of high expectations is consistent and supported by frequent walkthroughs. Additionally, the school regularly communicates with families about available learning opportunities for ensuring students’ college and career readiness and provides regular reports of student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standards for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. Additionally, teachers receive a faculty handbook covering a wide variety of expectations ranging from day-to-day professional conduct as well as guidelines for instructional planning. The value of differentiated student supports including those for students with disabilities, ELLs, and those students who complete work ahead of classmates, is also emphasized, as well as the creation and maintenance of a positive classroom environment.

- School leaders to communicate high expectations utilize memorandums and letters. For example, a letter addressed to teachers makes clear that teachers are to plan for effective questioning and engagement of students in learning. In addition, memorandums and communications through email and paper letters discuss the importance of designing learning targets, maintaining conference notes, planning for and delivering guided instruction, and the use of anchor charts. Another letter to teachers reminds them to post a photo of themselves on their day of college graduation while in a cap and gown in order to help grow and support a college culture.

- Newsletters to parents include monthly calendars containing information as to events, class trips, Parent Teacher Association meetings, as well as workshops for parents. Some examples of parent workshops conducted so far this year cover individualized education plans, understanding children’s temperament, building success in reading, and building success in writing. While a majority of parent workshops are designed for the whole school community, some are geared toward parents of the students in specific academies. The Rising Stars Academy is comprised of students in grades kindergarten through grade two. The Summit Academy is comprised of students in grades three through five. Parents praised the school’s communication of students’ progress through progress reports that are provided for all students each month that there is no official report card.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles and student data analyses. Prompt written feedback captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

**Impact**

School leaders facilitate periodic student-data reviews with teachers. Additionally, formal and informal classroom visits result in written feedback for teachers that make clear the expectations for teacher practice and the supports available to help teachers meet them.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders meet with teachers to facilitate student data review sessions during which student data is reviewed relative to achievement gaps, successes, challenges, progress benchmarks and intervention resources. Additionally, school leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Each rated item is supported with specific evidence from the observed class. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence and at the close of each observation report. In addition, school leaders discussed a strategy of observation cycle planning that targets teachers based on individual need as well as student need. This involves an initial prioritizing of teachers new to the school and teachers on an official improvement plan. The remaining teachers are tiered based on their previous year’s ratings as well as data gathered during classroom visits and walkthroughs.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and is accompanied by next steps teachers should take in order to improve their practice and impact student success. For example, a teacher is praised in one observation report for asking questions that challenged students within their groups and for designing the lesson to maximize student to student discussion in order to address the focus questions. Feedback to the teacher in this report advises that they use the Depth of Knowledge tool in order to ensure that questions are of a growing level of complexity. In another observation report, feedback to the teacher discusses the importance of adjusting the lesson’s pace when in-class assessments evidence that students are struggling. Additionally, specific resources are identified, including the identity of a coach who will be scheduled to meet with the teacher in order to provide targeted support.

- In addition to the reports resulting from official classroom observations are the feedback emails that follow informal classroom visits. For example, in one such email the principal wrote about how student discourse was evident and positive and praised the teacher for effectively modeling the mini-lesson’s skill. Feedback offered to this teacher focuses on the importance of increasing circulation throughout the room in order to ensure a positive classroom environment as well as consistent monitoring of student understanding. Another feedback email praises the teacher for the observed use of various strategies to help students decode a text and build fluency while also offering feedback on refining questions to ensure that they are focused on the lesson’s learning target. One teacher reported, “I received feedback on extending word-study activities. Now, when we’re reading in class my students write the verbs they don’t know on a word wall devoted to verbs. This has absolutely increased my students’ understanding of verb use.”