Quality Review Report

2016-2017

J.H.S. 080 The Mosholu Parkway
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 10X080
149 East Mosholu Pkwy N
Bronx
NY 10467

Principal: Emmanuel Polanco

Dates of Review:
March 7, 2017 - March 8, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Clarence Williams Jr.
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

J.H.S. 080 The Mosholu Parkway serves students in grade 6 through grade 8. 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><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<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>
</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 Focus</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>Additional Finding, Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
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<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>Well Developed</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, 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, 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>Additional Finding, 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, Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
School leaders and staff use technology and other resources to align with and support schoolwide goals, long-range action plans and initiatives. Staff time is deliberately and carefully designed to allow for collaborative staff meetings so that the resulting work reflects the goals of the school, including training in technology.

Impact
All students are engaged in meaningful work as a result of challenging tasks provided by teachers.

Supporting Evidence

- Technology is used to support the school-wide goal of giving students resources that create learning opportunities. Every student in the building has a laptop that is used daily in all classes. An example was seen in an English Language Arts (ELA) class. Students were observed using myON, a software program that personalizes reading for students based on interest and reading level. In math classes, students were observed using an online program called Khan Academy. This program allows students to watch lessons designed for their learning needs and cognitive levels, and places students in the categories of struggling, needs practice, practiced and mastered.

- The school leadership allows for teachers to have abundant scheduled times for collaboration to support the use of technology. There is a full-time technology staff member who is available to the staff throughout the day. Also teachers used Google Drive to allow all teachers access to lesson plans and make adjustments. Teachers also meet four times per week to look at student work and make adjustments to their practice and lesson plans. This was impactful; as one teacher stated, “The extra time is beneficial as it allows teachers to master the technology so that they can best support student learning.”

- Every classroom is complete with two interactive white boards that are used to provide assistance for students and to support the classroom instruction. For example, teachers in one class used one interactive white board to differentiate for some students, while the other board was used for whole class instruction. In other classes, students used the additional board to work on problems during the lesson. This allowed the student to make real time corrections to share with the class. All classrooms were also equipped with microphones for students to use. The impact of this was seen as every student was able to clearly hear student responses and participation throughout the lesson. The teacher was also able to hear each student response and takes notes. Students passed the microphone to their peers to speak and identified with the person holding the microphone as the speaker, which allowed for few interruption.

- The school leadership and teachers use Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports, (PBIS) to support the schoolwide goal which states, “All school stakeholders work together to develop a common understanding of the importance in creating a school community that is safe, conducive to learning and for socio emotional health.” The PBIS program includes monthly student awards and weekly class rewards.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings
The school leaders and staff support an environment of social-emotional learning and students are known by staff members.

Impact
Each student is assigned an advisor so that students know an adult in the building, although it is not evident that it consistently leads to a close relationship. The school has built a safe learning environment, and an inclusive culture that supports learning, although it is not developed by a theory of action.

Supporting Evidence

- During a student interview, students discussed and were able to name their advisor. However, when asked who they would go to if they needed guidance or support, few students named their advisor as the person they would go to, indicating that while students feel that they are known well by an adult, it is not necessarily the result of school programs and policies, rather it is the culture of the school for teachers and students to have open dialogue with each other throughout the course of the day. The principal also has an open-door policy to listen to students.

- Teachers and school leaders use the “80 Challenge” to support knowing students better. The challenge allows for teachers to support students with goals. For example, an “80 Challenge” was for students to write a letter to a college for admission. Students selected a teacher as a coach to help support them. Although all students interviewed stated that they participate in the “80 Challenge,” most did not refer to their coach as someone they felt they could go to for support.

- Students have stated that they feel that the school community reflects a safe learning environment. During an interview, students stated that there is always a presence of school safety and other staff members in the hallways. During a student interview a student stated, “This year is much better. We have much fewer fights and bullying in the building than we did before.” School leaders, staff and students have stated that the school is safer than previous years. The principal projects that the suspension rate will be under 4 percent for the year which will be lower than last years 4.40 percent.
Findings

Unit plans presented demonstrate that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, integrate the instructional shifts, and also emphasize higher order thinking skills by Webb’s Depth of Knowledge questioning. School leaders make intentional decisions to build coherence schoolwide.

Impact

Units and lesson plans presented require all students to engage in rigorous tasks and higher-order thinking skills across grades and subjects. Curricula promote college and career readiness for all learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leadership presented a sample scope and sequence that demonstrates typical school-wide instructional practices in the area of academic vocabulary. The unit includes the theme vocabulary and word study. Students are required to use context clues, recognize related words, use synonyms and compound words. Objectives include, “I can determine the precise meaning of a word.” “I will use nouns pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and verbs to explain the meaning of an unknown word.” The unit also incorporates using an online dictionary to support ELLs and students with disabilities.

- Unit plans represent higher order thinking skills. A grade six ELA lesson plan’s learning objective was, “I will visualize the text to summarize parts of the story.” Students were required to “determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is being conveyed through particular details.” The plan lists Webb’s Depth of Knowledge level three, strategic thinking, in terms of focus questions, for example, “What is the author’s message?”, and questions about how the student might visualize the events of a story. Modifications for students with disabilities include instructional and content videos, leveled text and a visual presentation. Technology was also incorporated into the lesson as the lesson stated that students would use Google Docs to write summaries of the scenes they read. Teachers stated Google Docs allows for information to be shared with other teachers and students in real time and for teachers to more seamlessly look at student work in team meetings.

- The school leaders and teachers support college and career readiness for their students by incorporating productive struggle into the lesson plans to support problem solving and perseverance. An example of this was seen in a grade six social studies lesson plan. Students were required to explain what the conflict regarding the Native Americans in the South East and their being forced off the land. Students were also required to explain, with supporting evidence, the author’s point of view and use metacognitive skills to explain their thinking and their progress.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices reflect a belief that students learn best through small group work, discussion, and the use of technology.

Impact

Student classroom discussions reflect higher order thinking and participation and aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Supporting Evidence

- A grade seven social studies class demonstrated students participating in a think-Mac-share, in which students take one minute to think about the question, take two minutes to write a response in their laptops, and an additional two minutes to share with their group. They were discussing the justification of using the atomic bomb in World War II. One student stated that the United States was justified in dropping the bomb because it prevented the loss of the lives of American soldiers’ lives, “because by dropping the bomb, soldiers could go home.” Another student stated that they disagreed because “violence is violence and it does not matter what the purpose was, it doesn’t make it right.”

- Using Google Classroom, a grade six ELA class was observed working on their laptops in pairs. Students were discussing the essay, *The Making of a Scientist*. In response to a prompt asking students to consider how the opening paragraphs “help the reader understand the rest of the passage,” one student wrote, “by explaining why Feynman’s father loved science,” and the student’s partner wrote, “by showing that Feynman’s father disagreed with his mother on how to raise children.” Students were observed discussing their responses, stating that they agreed with each other’s statements. Students then shared their consensus with the whole group.

- School leaders and teachers stated that students learn best when collaborating and expressing their thoughts. For example, a grade six self-contained class was engaged in a social studies lesson on westward expansion where students were observed working in small groups annotating the text of “The Worchester versus Georgia lawsuit.” The teacher asked the students to explain the lawsuit and support a claim with annotation. One student stated the lawsuit represented problems for Georgia because they wanted to keep the Indian property. The teacher asked the student to cite the text to support the statement. The student showed the annotation on the interactive white board that stated, “Georgia had no right to enforce its laws to remove creeks from Indian Territory.” The teacher asked the students their thoughts on their classmate’s response and one student stated that the text says that they are protected by the Constitution.
Findings
Teachers use rubrics, self-assessments and Google Classroom during instruction that align to the school’s curricula. Teachers also use check for understanding strategies.

Impact
Teachers use rubrics to provide feedback to students, and use the data collected from rubrics and other assessments to make effective adjustments to instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers checked for student understanding during classroom instruction in an ELA class. Students were observed on their laptops responding to questions posted by the teacher. Students were required to analyze a writing piece and contribute to the development of ideas about the piece. Students were tasked with responding to the following, “How do paragraphs one through three of the passage help you understand the rest of the passage?” and “Write a paragraph explaining why you chose the answer you did. Be sure to include why the other responses you felt were incorrect.”

- In most classes visited, teachers use self-assessments. A self-assessment checklist was used in a grade eight ELA class. A student stated, “I need to work on my transitional words to help the reader know how I am connecting my ideas and explanation with my evidence.” Another student stated, “I need to work on my ending to help stimulate the thoughts of the readers and offer additional insights on Claudette being both civilized and uncivilized.” The checklist included answers, yes, no or partially. For example, “In the conclusion, I describe the significance of my argument: partially” or “I organize claims and counterclaims into sections: Partially.”

- Teachers adjusted their instruction after analyzing assessment data. Grade six ELA teachers analyzed data from the tiered assessment protocol (TAP) and found students struggled in identifying a central idea as well as describing how authors use words and punctuation. As a result, teachers modified the pacing calendar to give more time to teach students critical reading skills such as how to identify main ideas, and they discussed re-teaching skills including determining word meaning, using more annotations and drawing inferences.
Findings
Teacher teams analyze student work on all grade levels to discuss teaching strategies for students they share. Distributive leadership structures are in place.

Impact
Teachers have a key voice in decisions that impact instruction and learning schoolwide through leadership structures that include model teachers, teacher-led professional development and teachers writing curricula.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams use conference notes to analyze individual students’ work products. For example, as a result of the grade six team analyzing one student’s work, the student was identified as needing to build more confidence in reading comprehension. A teacher suggested showing the student how to break down a word and blend sounds so that the student can practice decoding. Another example included a student who had difficulty decoding words due to a lack of knowledge regarding vowel and consonant-vowel sounds. The teacher suggested having the lesson plan reflect more phonics and practicing decoding smaller words to improve sounding out words.

- Minutes from a grade six ELA teacher team meeting indicated they discussed how to revise instruction to meet the needs of students based on the tiered assessment protocol (TAP) data. The data revealed that students struggled with how to identify a central idea and how authors use words and punctuation. Next steps included modifying the pacing calendar in order to address identifying the central ideas of texts, and providing academic intervention service, (AIS) for students who are struggling with this skill. Teachers also discussed re-teaching skills around word meaning, using more annotations and drawing inferences relating to a text’s central idea.

- Distributive leadership examples are seen throughout the school community. Teachers are instrumental in the writing and revising of the curricula, and they have stated that they make instructional decisions that are supported by the administration. For example, teachers and administration implemented a TAP. This is the structure that teacher team minutes are based on. The protocol allows for teachers to look at student actions, teacher actions and tie them into areas of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Another example of distributive leadership is through intervisitations where teachers look to one another to identify and learn best practices. The school creates structures so that model teachers can support other teachers in areas of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. An example was presented from a grade eight class intervisitation form. The teacher stated that a strategy that she will use is to “have a time frame for every part of the lesson so students can be accustomed to getting through a task as efficiently as possible.”