Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 087 Bronx
Elementary 11X087
1935 Bussing Ave.
Bronx
NY 10466

Principal: Donna Anaman

Dates of Review:
December 13, 2016 - December 14, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Carlos Perez
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. 087 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>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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</td>
<td>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>
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<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>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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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>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</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

### Quality Indicator: 1.3 Leveraging Resources  
**Rating:** Proficient

### Findings

School resources are used and allocated in a manner that supports the school's instructional goals. Additionally, there is a structure that allows teachers to meet regularly to focus on instruction.

### Impact

Resources such as time, materials, and organization result in the meaningful student work products that are evident throughout the school and display challenging academic tasks.

### Supporting Evidence

- In an effort to work towards raising math scores by five percent, the school has purchased and implemented iReady. iReady is an academic online platform that provides personalized student instruction targeted to students' unique areas of needs. All students and parents are granted access to the program and can use it from school or home. Teachers and leadership can assess and monitor student progress as needed. The principal shared that since implementing iReady at the beginning of the school year, teachers have seen an improvement in student math skills. Currently student math scores have increased by 25% over where scores were at this time last year.

- Teacher schedules are created with ample time for teachers to meet and focus on instructional work. In addition to the regularly scheduled teacher team meetings, leadership has built in two additional periods per week into teacher schedules that allow for more teacher collaborative meetings. Through team meetings, teachers share best practices that lead to teachers challenging their students. As a result of team meetings this year, teachers have decided to add more literacy into their math classes. One student shared that this year one of his math exams focused on multiplication and descriptive properties. The student shared that this was a challenging exam because it gave the math questions in the form of word problems and this was an area the he and many other classmates had struggled with. The student shared that he was able to complete the exam and received a passing grade.

- It is clear that resources are being allocated to all classes as needed and requested by teachers. Students are supplied with the materials they need to complete their assignments and with resources such as iPads, laptops, worksheets, and textbooks. During a science class, evidence of meaningful student work products was visible. A third-grade student's work was prominently displayed which showed how he constructed and created and correctly labeled a plant cell and an animal cell. Additionally, the student was able to clearly articulate and share how the two cells are alike and how they are different. The student’s work also displayed high levels of artistic value as both cells had high levels of detail and clarity.
Area of Focus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings
Teacher practices are in the process of becoming aligned to the curricula and to school beliefs about how students learn best so that all learners are engaged. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula.

Impact
There is uneven student engagement. There is inconsistent use of questioning strategies and higher-order thinking skills with the result of few opportunities for all students to participate in challenging tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- During a math lesson, the goal of the lesson was to have students be able to understand mixed numbers and convert them into improper fractions. The teacher used questioning strategies throughout the lesson, but only asked for one student to respond at any given time. For example, during the lesson the teacher asked the question, “What are the parts of a mixed number?” The teacher then selected students who raised their hands rather than engaging the whole class and asking students to turn and talk to their group members in order to formulate an answer together and share their responses. In addition there were no opportunities for students to engage in meaningful rich conversations either in groups or with the teacher.

- In a writing lesson, the teacher was able to use various examples of modeling for her students. For example, using chart paper the teacher used examples of elaboration pertaining to a toucan. The teacher explained to students how they shared facts about the toucan and elaborated by showing what the facts look like. Additionally, students responded to all questions asked by the teacher. Students then followed the modeling practice in order to produce their own collections of facts in their particular assignment. However, as a result of teacher-centered lessons in other classes the time for students to discover new concepts as a result of rich student discussions was limited.

- In some classrooms discussions were teacher focused with many of the interactions being teacher-student and not student-student. In addition, when group work was implemented there was little follow up in order to assess student learning. For example, in a science lesson students were asked to discuss several questions throughout the lesson. However, opportunities to assess each group discussion were missed as the teacher did not engage in assessing those group discussions. Therefore, opportunities for students to fully explain their thinking and arrive at conclusions through group and partner discussions were limited and assessment opportunities for feedback by the teacher were missed.
### Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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#### Findings

Curricula is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and planned and adjusted as needed based on student classroom and assessment data.

#### Impact

There is coherence in the curricula which promotes aspects of college and career readiness for all students.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The school has taken the Common Core aligned eight standards for mathematical practice, and adapted them with student-friendly language for students to use when attempting to solve math problems. The eight standards are; keep trying, think about math, talk about math, model math, use math tools, check your work, look for patterns, and look for short cuts. These standards can be found in classes throughout the school, and teachers remind students to use these standards as a guide. During a conversation with students, they shared that when they are doing a math problem they always make sure to check their work before handing it in. One student shared, “I always check my work before handing it in to the teacher, it is number six on our math list.”

- Teachers meet regularly across all grades and disciplines to analyze curriculum and assure that it cognitively engages all learners. There is a strong belief in the school that if a task is modeled correctly all students can perform at a high level. Throughout many of the classrooms visited teachers modeled and used exemplars in order for students to see the process and the finished product. In a second grade literacy class, the teacher’s aim was for students to be able to identify how they can help their readers picture the information they are writing about. The teacher first modeled several different examples of how a student can use descriptions to help the reader picture the information they are writing about. Students shared that they felt that being able to see the examples that the teacher presented made it clear for them to construct their own writing.

- A review of lesson plans and unit plans revealed that curriculum is paced accurately and units have clear planning and focus. Common Core is embedded into the unit plans that were reviewed. The kindergarten social studies unit plans incorporated several elements of Common Core such as, planning for reading informational texts and informative writing. A grade two literacy lesson plan prepares students to not just be readers but to be readers, writers and learners. Students become better readers by answering questions that will help them better understand the text and how to support opinions by using reasons and explanations.
**Findings**

Teachers use data from common assessments to adjust teaching and use rubrics in order to guide students towards meeting their goals.

**Impact**

Students are provided with clear, actionable feedback that provides next steps. Curricula are adjusted for students as needed based on the feedback teachers provide students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Evidence of feedback provided to students was seen in classrooms and on bulletin boards outside of classes. Feedback provided to students was specific and offered valuable next steps for success. During a first grade classroom visit, there were many examples of teacher feedback; one example read, “Your small moment story is full of details and figurative language! Next time let’s try to tell what the characters say!” Additionally, students are graded using a rubric that clearly outlines each level and the expectations that are needed to achieve a certain score. Students are fully aware of the value of rubrics and how using rubric's help them. Students shared their knowledge of rubrics by stating that it is a “tool that helps us get a better grade.” They also stated that rubrics “help them so that they can get the best grade possible, a four.”

- The school uses common assessments from the Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) reading program. The F&P benchmark assessment system allows teachers to determine students’ independent and instructional reading levels. Teachers use a baseline assessment at the beginning of the year as a starting point for students and then use the assessments provided by the program as a way of moving students to their next reading level. The most current data pulled from F&P shows that 60 percent of all second graders are reading on or above grade level, and the school is working on raising that percentage to their planned end-of-year target of 75 percent. During meetings with students, all students were knowledgeable of what reading level they are on and what they need to do to move to the next level.

- There is a common grading policy that all teachers follow. The schoolwide grading policy is an eighteen-page document that is shared with entire school community including parents on a yearly basis. There is a clear rationale for student promotion “based upon the degree of success an individual student has achieved in completing the educational program designed to meet his/her unique needs.” Grading is based upon four levels, level one below the standards, level two approaching the standards, level three meeting the standard, and level four exceeding the standard. The same four levels are the basis for all rubrics that are currently in use. During the student meeting, students were able to share their knowledge of the grading policy and rubric use. Students shared they that they know exactly what they need to do to get a four because it's written in rubrics and also in the “in the big document they give us at the beginning of the year.”
Additional Finding

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

School leadership regularly communicates high expectations to staff regarding professionalism, instruction, and expectations connected to college and career readiness.

Impact

There is a system of accountability for high expectations that all teachers are aware of. Additionally, all students and their families receive ongoing feedback and support with respect to student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- All staff members are given a handbook at the beginning of the school year that clearly outlines all of the expectations for staff. The staff handbook outlines the mission and vision along with the P.S. 87 belief statement. All school forms that staff may need throughout the school year can be found in the handbook as well. Additionally, this year a supplement was added to the handbook regarding the school-wide instructional focus. The instructional focus outlines teacher responsibilities, student responsibilities, administrator responsibilities and the family responsibility with respect to the instruction that students receive at the school. During the teacher meeting teachers shared how the instructional focus is something that everyone is fully aware of, including parents. Parents also shared that they feel well informed and made mention that they knew about the instructional focus and that it helps them understand their role in the education of their child.

- Parents shared the numerous opportunities that the school offers their children with respect to college and careers. Parents shared how the school puts on a career fair where parents, alumni and local business owners are invited to come in and speak to the students about professions. Students are able to ask questions and can begin to determine if a specific profession is something that they are interested in. Parents and teachers shared how successful the college fair is on an annual basis. During the college fair students are once again able to meet with alumni and ask pre-determined questions that they developed with their teachers.

- The school not only has high academic expectations connected to college and careers, but also has high expectations in their arts program as well. The school offers students opportunities to learn a stringed instrument by encouraging students to participate in the school orchestra. The school believes in the importance of music and how it stimulates the minds of children. As such, the school has partnered with the group, Education Through Music and offers its students the opportunities to be a part of a musical performing group. Further evidence of high expectations that the school has with their arts program is the work they do with the artists-in-residency program. Students create and produce high level art projects. Those art projects are displayed in a professional art exhibit at Christie’s NYC Auction House, along with professional artists work. The entire school community is invited to view student art pieces.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams &amp; Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings

Teachers are engaged in regular, collaborative, structured inquiry-based meetings that promote the Common Core Standards and the instructional shifts. Additionally, teachers have opportunities to take on leadership roles throughout the school.

Impact

Teacher’s instructional practices and leadership capacity are being supported and strengthened and they have a voice in key decisions throughout the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Leadership has created teacher schedules that allow teachers multiple opportunities to meet. Teacher meeting time is dedicated to analyzing student work, preparing materials and resources, teacher planning, and student data analysis. Teacher teams are able to reflect on student work and offer feedback to each other as next steps. As a result of these meetings, teachers developed and recommended the implementation of the six common instructional practices that are found across the building. Those practices included, modeling, assessments, high level questions, student self-assessment, making rubrics clear and visible, and planning to meet the diverse needs of all learners. Modeling has been a big initiative this year and the school has seen a real impact in student performance as a result. Last year, there was an increase of 12 percent in Level 3s and 4s in English Language Arts (ELA), and teachers firmly believe that this is attributed to the modeling they are doing in their classes.

- Distributive leadership has helped to change the culture of the school. Teachers shared that all decisions that are made in the school no longer come from the “top down,” but rather from all stakeholders. The principal shared that teachers now have a much louder voice and stated that distributed leadership “has done in two years what I have been trying to do in six; it’s meant everything to this school.” Through team inquiry, the instructional team made the decision to move to the Common Core aligned Go Math! program and the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP). Teachers are involved in professional development sessions for each program which they turnkey to colleagues in a productive cycle of professional learning.

- Teacher teams made the decision to implement the Exemplars math problem-solving program. Teachers shared that they felt that students were lacking critical thinking and reasoning skills in math, and as a result recommended to administration that the Exemplars program be purchased and implemented. Teachers attend regular trainings on the Exemplars program at neighboring schools in their district, and they then turnkey to colleagues in order to share best practices in the program. As a result of the work the teachers have done, the school has now become a site school for other schools to visit when schools are considering implementing the Exemplars program.