Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 110 Theodore Schoenfeld

Elementary 09X110

580 Crotona Park South
Bronx
NY 10456

Principal: Daisy Perez

Dates of Review:
March 23, 2017 - March 24, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Rod Bowen
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


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>
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</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 Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<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>Well Developed</td>
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<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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborates on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate text-based work. Analysis, evaluation, and other higher-order skills are embedded in a coherent way in curricula and academic tasks across grades and subjects.

Impact
Curricula and learning tasks across grades and subject areas are coherent and promote college and career readiness for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, as they require them to demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- The reading lesson plan for a grade five class grounded student effort in comparing and contrasting informational text. The learning standard that informed the aim required that students accurately quote from text when explaining what it says and when drawing inferences from it. Students would annotate two sources in search of evidence to determine similarities and difference in how bears and deer survive during the winter. They would then use a short response rubric to guide their writing about what they had discovered. Lastly, they would use a peer critique protocol to share their responses with each other. The plan for a grade four reading lesson used the aligned grade appropriate standard regarding quoting text when explaining it, but this time in relation to comparing and contrasting literature. One of three rigorous prompts listed to guide the independent reading assignment asked students to connect the main idea of their text with the main idea of another, similar text they had read, using details from both to support their answer. These examples show a strategic balance of informational and literary text, while purposefully utilizing the grade appropriate iterations of the same academic skillset of comparing and contrasting.

- Two writing lesson plans, one for a grade three class and another for a grade five class, had similar aims of using written response rubrics to revise writing. In the grade three lesson, students would use their understanding of the rubric to revise their own short responses. The grade five task was to use the rubric to evaluate an exemplar extended response before evaluating their own. This coherent focus on using rubrics to inform writing across grades ensures that all students have opportunities to demonstrate their thinking.

- The task in a math lesson would allow students to determine the perimeter of polygons and rectangles when whole number measurements are unknown. The student debrief section encouraged students to compare their process to that of a partner and discuss the strategy they used as well as why they selected it. They would also have to evaluate and explain the differences between two problems that required that they find the perimeter using different approaches. Such tasks highlight an emphasis on deeper understanding of math concepts and higher-order skills.
**Area of Focus**

<table>
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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 leaders consistently communicate the need for teachers to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of their learners and for students to cite text-based evidence to improve literacy. School staff engages in a number of practices to consistently communicate information to families regarding student progress toward high expectations.

**Impact**

Training and support of teachers in meeting high expectations are consistent; however, the structures for teacher accountability are leadership-centered. Although parents have an understanding of their children’s progress toward college and career readiness, they are not yet successfully empowered as partners in their children’s academic success.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The principal regularly communicates clear expectations for teacher practice through instructional memoranda to the faculty. They include the school's focus on differentiation and students' ability to cite evidence from text. One such memo asked teachers to invite students in guided reading groups to engage books through focus questions that require text-based evidence to answer, as well as design small group activities based on targeted skills intended for specific students. Another memo calls for tiered activities and the completion of differentiated instruction data charts at the end of the previous chapter to form focus groups every day until all groups have been supported.

- Agendas for teacher team meetings state the instructional foci that all teachers will use data to differentiate instruction to meet individual needs of all students and increase levels of student achievement in every grade. Most team meetings are attended by school leaders who ensure that they run smoothly and to provide feedback as needed. There was little evidence of staff ownership of high expectations, so that they hold themselves mutually accountable to them without supervision.

- Parent conference logs show that topics of conversation included report cards, student data from an online adaptive learning program, behavior, running records and student performance on assessments. Grade teams send out monthly parent newsletters to inform families of what students are currently learning, upcoming events, and reminders. Suggestions for support from home are also shared, such as encouraging students to read 20 minutes every day, having students log on to the adaptive learning website from home, and studying sight words.

- Parents agreed that they are kept abreast of what their children are learning as well as their children’s academic standing through letters, report cards, and conversations. They also agreed that they have access to teachers; however, there were inconsistencies in their accounts of having access to leadership. A parent of a child who is learning English as a New Language spoke of regularly receiving her child’s grades, but not fully understanding why he was not doing better. Others noted that they are not sure how to support their children, who feel frustrated and pressured as they prepare for the State test. Such sentiments point to opportunities for responsive partnerships with families to support student progress.
Additional Finding

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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
Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide students with multiple entry points so that students produce meaningful work products.

Impact
All learners engage in appropriately challenging tasks that reflect high levels of thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Students in a grade three class elaborated on each other’s talking points while referencing a rubric and assessing an exemplar writing sample. Although students were primarily responding to the teacher instead of talking to each other, they were accurate in their analysis of the writing. When asked what was correct based on the expectations outlined in the rubric, a student said, “He used ideas from the text.” When asked for an area for improvement based on the rubric, another noted, “His spelling is a problem.” To assess their own work, students used their writing folders, which contained copies of the rubric, exemplar writing samples, and a checklist.

- During a first grade literacy lesson, some students worked independently on identifying different aspects of the text they were reading. Graphic organizers provided dedicated space to write the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the narrative. Although the quantity and quality of the written responses varied, most students showed an understanding of these components. More advanced students wrote the elements of the narrative in their notebooks with labels such as setting and characters. Exemplar responses, key vocabulary, and directions that students could reference as they worked were accessible throughout the lesson. Those who were not engaged in independent work were engaged in small group instructional activities regarding making predictions.

- A rubric was used by students during a math lesson to provide each other with written feedback. The initial task required that students write about their understanding of the math problem, their plan to solve it, the actual solution, and how they checked to ensure their work was correct. Peer feedback on this process included comments regarding the lack of math words, the need to explain why “you did what you did,” and the degree to which steps were labeled.

- The teacher of a reading lesson encouraged students to seek out text-based evidence as they compared the content of two pieces of non-fiction text. Students annotated and many used a Venn diagram to organize the content that they gleaned from the text. Those who did not need the Venn diagram referenced their annotations. Students also used the rubric found within their reading folders to inform their written responses.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

There is a schoolwide emphasis on the analysis of student work as well as both teachers and students using rubrics aligned to the school’s curricula to offer a clear portrait of student mastery. Ongoing checks for understanding are reflected in the use of rubrics and questioning.

Impact

Students and teachers receive actionable feedback regarding student achievement. When needed, teachers make effective adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers consistently analyze student work to inform pedagogical next steps. A grade analysis/planning sheet showed that students were strong at answering literal, multiple choice questions; general organization and structure; and including supporting details in answers. The biggest area where students still needed support was in inferencing. Such analysis is done across grades and shows a means by which teachers receive meaningful feedback regarding student achievement.

- Without looking at rubrics or samples of their work, students articulated teacher feedback and referenced rubric content that together they claimed informed their readiness for the State tests. A student stated that he’s learned to use more than one model to check his math work. Another said that he needs to remember to use a lot of evidence to support his claims. A third student noted that she has gotten better at using more details to support her inferences.

- Regarding their work, although there were a few instances where a few students were not able to explain parts of rubrics in their own words, all were able to use them to point to areas of improvement in specific assignments such as the need to use correct spelling, provide more evidence from specific sources, and include details from text to support an explanation.

- Questioning was consistently used in a second grade social studies lesson to assess student understanding of the topic and move students toward achieving the learning objective of comparing New York City, then and now. Students were asked to draw from their prior knowledge, images viewed, text read, and their opinions to address questions such as, “What caused this change?” and “What happened over time?” Similarly, a teacher in a third grade class pushed students to justify their evaluations of a short written response by questioning their use of a rubric by asking, “Tell me what he did that was so positive from the rubric?” and “Based on the rubric, what else does he have?” Based on student responses, the teacher asked students to read aloud from the rubric to ensure their understanding.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings
School leaders engage in strategic, frequent cycles of classroom observation, and provide effective feedback that accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps.

Impact
Teachers receive observation feedback that includes clear expectations for improvement, supports professional development, and aligns with individual instructional goals.

Supporting Evidence

- A sample observation schedule showed that in addition to two formal observations, most teachers received five to six informal observations each school year. Beyond the informal observations, teachers noted that school leaders may visit specific teachers as needed. They agreed that the principal's standards are “unbelievably high” and that the processes for supporting growth are very transparent. All teachers were able to provide specific examples of how their pedagogy had improved as a result of observation feedback.

- All teachers meet with a school leader during the first term to review student data and strategically outline next steps. A letter written to memorialize one such meeting noted that running records from a specific class showed that the majority of students had moved up one to two reading levels within the first four months of school; however, there were two students who had remained at the same level. A letter written to another teacher pointed out that only 24 percent of students showed mastery when the goal was 75 percent. All data meetings include analysis of student performance data and identification of relevant next steps for meeting the needs of specific students.

- The initial planning conference notes for a teacher prefaced questioning and discussion techniques as an area in need of improvement, specifically as it related to engaging students in meaningful discussion and promoting higher order thinking and use of accountable talk. Subsequent formal observation reports for that teacher were aligned to this goal. In one case, the feedback acknowledged that although some of the questions posed during a lesson emphasized critical thinking, the teacher led the responses rather than positioning students to push each other’s thinking. A next step was for the teacher to utilize accountable talk protocols to foster student discussion and build on each other’s thinking. The presence of feedback aligning to individual teacher’s professional goals was consistent for all instructional staff.

- Formal observation reports conclude with comments written under either “commendable items” or “Next Steps.” In one case, commendable practices noted the inclusion of connecting students’ prior knowledge to the previous lesson, while an area for improvement was to work toward getting students to engage in accountable talk protocols so that the teacher would not be compelled to ask leading follow up questions.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

The majority of teachers participate in grade teams that follow an inquiry-based protocol for looking at student work. Distributed leadership structures are in place at the school via grade leaders.

**Impact**

Grade teams promote the achievement of school goals, particularly regarding student progress in literacy and math, but this work does not yet result in increased student achievement for all students. Although specific staff members and teachers have a voice, they do not play an integral role in making schoolwide decisions.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All teacher team agendas focused on looking at student work and follow the same protocol that involves assessing the task’s level of cognitive demand, reviewing individual student’s assessment, analyzing class/grade level data, and developing an action plan to address the problem. Student work reviewed during a fifth grade teacher meeting was accompanied by a grade analysis/planning sheet that provided a space for strengths, weaknesses, emerging patterns, and follow-up mini-lessons. One such completed form noted that the student had a clear introduction and conclusion, supported her claim, and connected the identified personality trait to both characters. Using supporting evidence and stamina were emerging patterns, while weaknesses were her brief use of specific quotes as well as transitions and phrases.

- Notes from a first grade team meeting focused on math captured strengths across the three classes which were adding zero, drawing pictures to show a number sentence, and using counters and connecting cubes. Challenges included using different strategies or addition within 10 and solving problem situations and numbers in a variety of ways. These realizations informed the strategic inclusion of mini-lessons during the subsequent week to improve progress for students who needed it.

- Reading data showed that there were increases in the percentage of correct responses in a post-unit test compared to pre-unit data. These gains were attributed to a purposeful focus on questioning, text to text connections, and comparing and contrasting. There was insufficient evidence of such impact on student performance in math and literacy across grades.

- The leadership capacity of lead teachers in each grade is cultivated by positioning them to facilitate meetings and support their colleagues. Specifically, they are invaluable in ensuring that all participants are on task and have what they need. Teachers noted that they have a voice, but that their ideas have to be driven by data. Although there were staff members who were able to contribute ideas to the school’s positive behavior interventions and support (PBIS) process based on structures that worked at another school, teachers communicated a desire and readiness to be integral in making more impactful decisions within the school community.