Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 154 Jonathan D. Hyatt
Elementary 07X154
333 East 135th St.
Bronx
NY 10454

Principal: Alison Coviello

Dates of Review:
April 20, 2017 - April 21, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Buffie Whitfield
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. 154 Jonathan D. Hyatt 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td>Area of Focus</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</td>
<td>Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</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</td>
<td>Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

Strong and highly collaborative teacher teams routinely use an inquiry approach and established protocols to reflect on student work and focus on improved teacher practice and instructional coherence.

Impact

The ongoing work of teacher teams results in instructional coherence, increased student achievement, and mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- During the teacher meetings observed, there was a well-developed culture of collaboration and collegial work. The teams evaluated student work and revised units, lessons, and instructional approaches based on assessment data. Teachers also discussed the progress of individual students with the goal of working together to share ideas and best practices to continually improve student learning. As a common practice, teams conduct cycles of inquiry where they establish a question, theory, action, data to be collected, and a focus group of students. Following data analysis, teachers determine their next steps. To create a unified inquiry team, teachers began with a deep look at a variety of literacy assessments using Jennifer Serravallo’s *Literacy Playbook: K – 2* and *Literacy Playbook: 3 – 6*. Teachers stated that because of meeting regularly and the structure of their team meetings they have seen growth in their own planning, specifically in the alignment of curricula and instruction to the instructional shifts and Common Core Learning Standards, and in the areas of differentiation and introducing elements of *Habits of Mind*. The school leaders provided *Advance*-tracker data to show evidence of teachers improving in the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* competencies, specifically around assessment and professional growth.

- All teachers serve as members of grade teams and the vast majority also serve as members of specialty vertical teams. Recognizing the importance of data usage in identifying school trends and progress towards achieving goals, teachers collaboratively analyze student work to support improving their practice and furthering progress and achievement of students. For example, teachers noticed that during the 2015–2016 school year students in grades two and three, reading in the L, M, N, O band at the start of the year, had difficulty remaining at benchmark during the course of the year. Teachers worked together to ensure that independent reading and guided reading were done with fidelity resulting in strengthened fluency. In addition, teachers were able to cite several examples of how their own practice has evolved as a result of the work they have been doing this year on teams. Teachers reported that although the staff had always been supportive of one another, the level of sharing and collaboration that takes place has built teacher’s practice and that they "feel obligated to do better" because they are all working in tandem to continually improve student outcome.

- The Child Study Team created and implemented a system that encourages students exhibiting positive behavior to foster their achievement in learning and it follows its core belief that stresses the importance of maintaining a safe environment based on clear expectations and a system of positive reinforcement to allow learning to take place. Team members use their meeting time to discuss students in need of intervention. During a team meeting, the team looked at data in the form of a behavior intervention plan, case studies, and anecdotes to uncover trends. It was noted that the student had done well behaviorally at the beginning of the school year; however, issues surfaced that directly impacted his academic achievement. The team brainstormed ideas how to support the student, which has resulted in student improvement.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Teachers create assessments and use rubrics aligned to the school curricula to provide students and parents with actionable feedback. Data from student work products is used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Impact

Using teacher feedback, students are aware of the next steps to improve their work and student data is used to determine student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- The school analyzes a range of data sets and assessments to determine students’ interim academic progress. This includes, but is not limited to, the Diagnostics Reading Assessment, running records, independent reading assessments, pre- and post- unit assessments in math and reading, and teacher created formative assessment tasks. Teachers continually look at the data during teacher team meetings to make adjustments not only to the units of study, but also to help in identifying effective instructional strategies to support students in developing content knowledge. In the teacher meeting, teachers were able to speak to various instructional and curricular adjustments and were able to explicitly cite its positive impact on student learning. An example of this is the decision to revise portions of the English Language Arts (ELA) curricula to include linking content and academic vocabulary and incorporating grammar. This has resulted in a decrease of students achieving at Level 1 from 41.6 percent in 2014-2015 to 28.8 percent in 2015-2016, respectively, and an increase from 17.5 percent in 2014-2015 to 26.4 percent for school year 2015-2016 relative to student achievement on the New York State ELA exam. This has also resulted in improved teaching practice as evidenced by improved student work products seen during teacher team meetings.

- Rubrics accompany assessments and tasks, and are used to ensure that expectations for student work are clearly defined, skills and progress toward proficiency are measurable, and teachers track student growth over time. One student shared that the task rubrics “show us what we need to do to get a good grade.” Teachers’ actionable feedback aligned to the rubric was evident on all student work. Additionally, students were able to articulate what they need to do to improve their writing that included working on sentence fluency, keeping details aligned to thesis, working on a conclusion, and including a counterclaim and evidence for support.

- Classroom visits and meetings with teachers and students revealed that feedback on student work includes next steps. Teachers were observed conferring with students and providing them with strategies for improvement. During the student meeting, students shared work products that included rubrics, conferencing notes, checklists, and teacher feedback. For example, feedback on an ELA task asked students to include text-based evidence in their writing and add details for clarity in writing. During the meeting, students compared their earlier writing to more current pieces and explained how the feedback from the rubrics helped them improve in writing. Students explained that they are writing sentences that are more complex and using text evidence to support their claims.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

All curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks are refined using student work and data.

**Impact**

The strategic integration of visual-thinking strategies into the curriculum results in lessons and academic tasks that promote college and career readiness for all students. The analysis of student work results in a carefully designed menu of scaffolds and strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The school uses a myriad of curricula to support the needs of their students. For example: Teachers College Reading and Writing Project and Teachers College Writing Pathways for grades kindergarten to five; SuperKids (foundational skills in reading and writing grades one to five); Visual Thinking Strategies curriculum to support critical analysis, vocabulary development, and talk in grades pre-kindergarten to five; Zaner-Bloser Handwriting, grades one to three; grade one and two teacher created grammar; and teacher created shared-reading curriculum for grades three to five. In math, teachers determine the priority standards for the unit and use GOMath! to construct meaningful and rigorous learning experiences for students. Lesson plans include specific learning targets and objectives. Additionally, all lessons include learning outcomes, key vocabulary, misconceptions that may arise, materials, planning section, differentiation strategies, options student choice, questions, and questioning strategies. Challenges to encourage students to include specific examples of related topics in their response were an integral part of the lesson plan, which addresses the level of thinking needed for college readiness.

- Common Core-aligned curricular maps outline teacher-created units of study and are evident across grades and content areas. For example, a grade five ELA map includes content, skills, assessments, classifying and sequencing, and annotating and paraphrasing a text. Skills increase in rigor as the year progresses from unit to unit. Mid-year, students are expected to determine importance and understand text structure, and by the close of the year to determine validity and evaluate evidence. The module also includes performance-based and summative assessments, a culminating performance-based assessment, a student checklist, as well as scaffolds, adjustments, extensions, and resources for vocabulary, text-dependent questions, and literature circles.

- Revisions of curriculum and lessons are made based on the analysis of student work and formative assessment data. Teachers systematically use protocols for looking at student work, and determine mastery of concepts for each unit of study. Revisions are then made to the curriculum to address the gaps in student learning that have been revealed. They have included changes in sequence of topics, additional lessons for re-teaching within the units, and the selection of culturally relevant and appropriately challenging materials to support student learning. For example, grade three through five teacher teams worked to develop a meaningful shared reading curriculum. Teachers recognized the need to reduce the amount of text, hone in on theme or character change, and include one to three multiple-choice questions with each text, resulting in a steady increase of student achievement on the New York State ELA exam. Similarly, in kindergarten through grade two math, teachers refined games and mini-lessons resulting in teachers developing unit frameworks for all units of study using the Universal Backward Design model.
Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rating:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Findings**

Across a vast majority of classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership. Teaching practices strategically provide multiple entry points and high-quality supports and extensions into the curricula.

**Impact**

All learners, including English language learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All learners, including students with disabilities in the NYS Alternate Assessment class, receive individualized scaffolds and challenges. Paraprofessionals and City Corp assistants were engaging students with individualized instruction, and students were using checklists, refer-to charts, and a variety of leveled text of poetry to complete their work. Teachers used supports, such as chart paper, strategy cards, manipulatives, and a document reader to engage and assist students in their learning. Additionally, during all classroom visits, effective supports were identified. There were evidence of sentence starters and prompts to promote student-to-student discussions. In a vast majority of classrooms, there was also evidence of teachers encouraging students to explain their thinking. Additionally, teachers insisted on students using content specific vocabulary, such as the term cube in a math class. Student writing was authentic and students used an explicit rubric to guide their writing towards meeting or exceeding standards, which included backing up their choice or their claim with evidence from the text. The consistency of rigor in classrooms evidenced teachers' accountability to effective teaching. In a grade five class, students counted unit cubes that filled a solid figure to find its volume. Students had differentiated assignments levelled one to three based on his/her learning needs, with level three students having to make predictions and come up with dimensions for two rectangular prisms.

- Across a vast majority of classrooms, student work products and discussions signify higher-order thinking skills that challenge students. In an ELA class, students were asked a series of questions, “What might be Doll’s greatest strength, flaw, or negative trait? How do you see those traits throughout the journey?” Students developed theories about characters, finding strengths and flaws and then they shared with their partner and/or in triads. Using accountable talk stems, students expressed their thoughts, added on to their classmate's responses, and proceeded to select another student to share out. In ELA classes, students without teacher guidance, extemporaneously used the restate, answer, detail one, detail two (RADD) and format to answer literature-based questions.

- All students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, had to articulate what they were learning, why they were learning it, and how they will use the learning beyond the classroom. In one class, students could explain their rationale for their poem choice and clearly understood the poem's meaning by examining its subject and tone. In another class, the teacher modeled how a detective looks for pieces of evidence. The teacher demonstrated two pieces of evidence that supported a claim. Students worked with partners to find another piece of evidence to support claims while annotating and explaining their thinking in their partnerships.
## Additional Finding

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

### Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff and provide training tied to expectations about instruction leading to college and career readiness. The school’s culture for learning ensures that all students are prepared for the next level.

### Impact

The culture that exists in the school reflects a unified set of expectations that students will attain and exceed standards, thus all students demonstrate and express ownership of their educational experience. Communication structures ensure a high level of trust and mutual accountability between parents and staff.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers engage in ongoing professional development focused on aligning instructional practices with the expectations of the Danielson Framework for Teaching, that is also embedded in grade level and department meetings held weekly. Teachers hold themselves mutually accountable. For example, every marking period teachers provide feedback to one another to improve quality of marking period assignments. Some warm and cool feedback includes formatting, pedagogy, and instructional goals. Teachers participate in a ‘Friends with Bagels Critical Friends’ team. Members shared that the feedback they receive through this venue and inter- and intra-departmental observations by colleagues and supervisors is meaningful and leads to self-reflection and improved practice. Specifically, teachers state that feedback about the rigor and level of questions asked during lessons keeps them on track relative to the high expectations of preparing lessons so that their students are college and career ready.

- Professional learning consists of five primary structures, in which all teachers and administrators collaboratively participate: lab site cycles, collaborative walks, inquiry team meetings, model classrooms, and topic cycles. The principal shared that teachers’ professional development focuses on understanding the elements of highly effective practices such as multiple formats of discussion, higher-order thinking and questioning, formal and informal writing opportunities, and using formative assessments to inform instruction. These effective practices were confirmed during classroom visits. Staff have “unpacked” the Danielson Framework for Teaching and assessed the quality of their pedagogy against the rubric. Additionally, the principal provided guidance to teachers on how to provide actionable feedback to promote student progress. The expectation is that teachers apply their professional learning and the feedback received from school leaders to their pedagogy and to their professional goals for improving instruction.

- Teachers and other staff articulate high expectations and share information with students, leading to student progress towards mastery of Common Core Learning Standards and college and career readiness expectations. College readiness is demonstrated through college tours. Kindergarten, grades one and three students, parents, and teachers visit Manhattan College, and students, parents and teachers in grades two, four, and five visit Columbia University. All students participate in student-led conferences. In addition, students are aware of the skills needed to advance to the next level and are able to set goals. For example, learning targets for pre-kindergarten through grade two include, “I have learned to use picture clues to help me when I am reading” and “I have learned to add two numbers.” During the meeting, students stated that the school has supported them to improve. Specifically, a grade four student shared that she aspires to be a singer and through rigorous tasks and fluency exercises the fluidity of her words and thoughts have improved, and as such, “I will be a better singer.”
Findings
School leaders provide teachers with effective feedback that articulates clear expectations and next steps for professional growth, and personalized professional development opportunities lead to growth for all teachers.

Impact
As a result of the effective feedback and differentiated professional learning experiences provided to all teachers, classroom practices have improved.

Supporting Evidence

- The school community has focused closely on the Danielson Framework for Teaching to assess, support and improve teacher practice, and address students’ academic needs by engaging teachers in a personal goal setting and action planning process. Teachers receive support through intensive, well-planned professional development opportunities. Furthermore, the school leadership focuses on giving targeted feedback to ensure that across all classrooms, teachers use strategies to impact teaching and learning, including questioning and discussion techniques, hands on learning activities, collaborative group work, small group instruction, and individual conferences with students. Through ongoing focused observations and follow up support, supervisors developed a cycle of continual improvement where feedback is specific, evidence based, actionable, and timely.

- The principal has strong systems for management, monitoring and follow-up to teacher evaluation. The requirement for teachers to set professional goals ensures that the administration is able to provide targeted professional development, peer and coach support as well as mentor teachers to move toward best instructional practices for those not meeting pedagogical expectations, or for those new to the profession and those who are struggling. Principal and assistant principals calibrate what effective teaching looks like and provide ample opportunities for teachers to observe best practices by creating lab sites, intervisitations, backwards design lesson planning meetings, and literacy and math coaching to ensure the consistency of teacher development and practice. The collective growth of instructional practice is measured over time and is monitored to ensure alignment to the school's instructional goals. During the team meetings, teachers expressed that they are more confident in their teaching as a result of transparency around the classroom observation process and feedback for improving instructional practice.

- School leaders have strategically aligned the school’s instructional foci, teacher team inquiry work, and early rounds of observations to provide targeted feedback and next steps to teachers in the Danielson components of planning and preparation and using assessment in instruction. The effective implementation of the Danielson Framework for Teaching has resulted in the development of a schoolwide system for providing all teachers with frequent, actionable, and timebound feedback as well as clear next steps for growth. The principal and assistant principals utilize the Advance Measures of Teaching Practice data to thoroughly analyze trends in schoolwide growth across domains as well as teacher’s progress towards the goals that they have identified in their individual professional growth plans. Observation data trends are shared with faculty to provide an open dialogue regarding teacher development and to allow teachers to have input into their own professional development.