Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 178 - Dr. Selman Waksman
Elementary 11X178
850 Baychester Ave.
Bronx
NY 10475

Principal: Deborah Levine

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

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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. 178 - Dr. Selman Waksman 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

#### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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>Proficient</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>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 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>Well Developed</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

All teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations that foster school goals and engage in intervisitation and analysis of assessment and student work.

Impact

The use of an inquiry approach promotes the school’s goal of strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Analysis of assessment data typically results in shared improvement in teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers engage in professional collaborations such as grade level meetings, professional development teams, professional learning teams, and common planning occurring three times a week. In addition, there is a monthly response-to-intervention team meeting. Teachers mentioned that teacher teams support collaboration among teachers. Teacher teams foster class intervisitations among the teachers, and the school utilizes an intervisitation schedule. In addition, the school has an intervisitation protocol in place in which visiting teachers document their visit of a host teacher. A review of the intervisitation documentation shows visiting teachers note the focus of the visit and correlate the focus to components of Danielson’s Framework for Teaching. Foci include engaging students in learning and using assessment in instruction. Teachers engage in post-visit discussions based on the foci and next steps to inform their practice, which include “guided reading and using texts on student reading level.” Another intervisitation’s focus was designing coherent instruction, and the next steps entailed “pacing of read aloud.”

- Teachers systematically analyze key elements of teacher work resulting in shared improvement in teacher practice and mastery of goals for students. During an observation of a third grade teacher team meeting, the focus of the meeting was, “How can we improve the student’s ability to answer a multistep question?” Teachers reviewed pieces of student work from a chapter four GO Math! performance-based assessment using a Looking Collaboratively at Student Work in Six Steps protocol. Teachers identified the student’s strengths, such as “Underlined key words,” and areas of need, such as “Did not use distributive property.” Teachers then brainstormed on the next steps to be addressed in the classroom such as, “Shift from CUBE to SOLVE strategy,” “Try to make the work more applicable to real world problems.” Lastly, the teacher shared take-aways from the meeting such as, “Ask questions that have a deeper understanding,” “Students need to show their process.” Students had been scoring at Level one on their writing assessments. The teachers analyzed ReadyGen and noticed there was insufficient emphasis on the author’s craft and structure. The teachers implemented a “100 Schools” initiative from The Teacher College Writing Program. Since then, there has been an improvement in student’s writing. Kindergarten teachers noticed a common trend of students’ demonstrating difficulties with organization when writing stories. Teachers adopted the use of graphic organizers to support students’ narrative writing.

- Teachers reported that the work of teacher teams has established cohesiveness among the grades by maintaining pacing, making adaptations to units, and modifying the Teachers College rubric. Teachers also mentioned identifying common trends where students were having trouble, such as in organization, and making adaptations. A teacher team noted that in the implementation of the restate, answer, detail, detail (RADD) strategy in ReadyGen for English Language Arts (ELA) and homework, students were receiving zero to one point out of four points for constructed responses. Now, students are scoring two points for constructed responses. The principal has stated that teacher teams are building capacity in teachers. The 2014 -2015 Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP) shows ninety-four percent of the staff are effective.
**Area of Focus**

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

**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provided multiple entry points into the curricula for diverse learners. Student work products and discussions make student thinking visible.

**Impact**

Diverse learners consistently have access into the curricula and are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks. Student discussions and work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In most classrooms, multiple entry points allowed all learners access to the curricula. In a fourth grade reading class, each differentiated student group was assigned a different task and used graphic organizers to structure their group work citing evidence from the text *Hiawatha*. The differentiated tasks included: writing a paragraph explaining what an epic poem is, answering what makes *Hiawatha* an epic poem, finding evidence in *Hiawatha* for three characteristics of epic poems, and answering three assigned questions using evidence from the text. In a fifth grade mathematics class, when students completed the main activity, students worked on an independent activity where students self-selected their enrichment worksheet to complete. In conjunction, small group instruction was in progress in the back of the classroom to reteach students who incorrectly answered mathematics problems during the main class activity. In a first grade guided reading class, students worked on differentiated tasks to identify the sequence of events at the beginning, middle and end of the text, *Far from Home*. Student groups received varied tasks such as identifying the main and supporting details in a text, identifying an event that occurs in the middle of the story, and discussing details that occur in the middle and the end of the text. Extensions into the curricula for the highest performers were not seen across the vast majority of classrooms.

- All classrooms were print rich with scaffolds to support the students during instruction. Students worked in collaborative groups, engaged one another in accountable talk and used graphic organizers to structure their thinking. In a third grade reading class while reading an informational piece from their text entitled, *City Homes*, students responded to one another by making statements such as, “I agree…but I want to add on.” Students travelled to their iBuddy (specific partner) to answer the question, “What type of city home would you like to live in and why?” Students also used a RADD graphic organizer to deconstruct the text feature in the text. In a fourth grade reading class, students worked on differentiated tasks to identify the sequence of events at the beginning, middle and end of the text, *Far from Home*. Student groups received varied tasks such as identifying the main and supporting details in a text, identifying an event that occurs in the middle of the story, and discussing details that occur in the middle and the end of the text. Extensions into the curricula for the highest performers were not seen across the vast majority of classrooms.

- Student work products enabled student thinking to become visible. In a kindergarten mathematics class, the objective of the lesson was, “Students will be able to use expressions to represent addition within 10.” Students worked on an exit slip that required, “Solve the equation and draw a picture to match.” In a second grade reading class, students constructed their own questions on chart paper about the text, *Do I Need It or Do I Want?* Student generated questions included, “Why did the girl get money for her birthday?” Another question was, “How can I make a choice?”
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders ensure that the curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using data.

Impact

The alignment of curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards promotes college and career readiness. The modifications to curricula and academic tasks ensure diverse learners are cognitively engaged and have access to the curricula.

Supporting Evidence

- The school currently uses ReadyGen and the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP) for English Language Arts (ELA). GO Math!, Passport to Social Studies (K-5), and the Science Scope and Sequence (K-5) add to the curricula adopted by the school. The principal stated that based on teacher observation of students, a need for phonics became evident. The school adopted Fundations into the curriculum for students in kindergarten through second grade. The principal also mentioned adopting guided reading materials to supplement the ReadyGen curricula as well as to align to the other curricula. The decision to modify the ReadyGen curricula was made because of the insufficient amount of guided reading materials available for students to read at their own performance level.

- The assessment results from a GO Math! chapter test led to the modification of an academic task on constructed response problems from the same chapter. The modified problems were differentiated by their level of difficulty. One problem required a three-step process, while another problem needed one step to solve the problem. Furthermore, literacy was infused into the task since students had to provide a written explanation of their process in solving the problems using the appropriate mathematic vocabulary. Supports were provided for solving the problem such as guiding questions, a checklist, and a math task rubric to assess student work.

- The principal stated that the focus on the instructional shifts across the grades included: text based evidence, vocabulary, writing from sources, and dual intensity (practice and understanding) for mathematics. Evidence of the infusion of the instructional shifts in curricular documents was illustrated by a fifth grade social studies writing task. The task required students to use their textbook and additional sources to produce an informational paragraph on Pangaea, continental drift, and the Ice Age while using textual evidence. Similarly, in a fifth grade science task, students had to produce an informational paragraph on the common and special mineral properties of rocks by using compare and contrast. A third grade ELA task required students to use research to produce an informational book on a topic they were deemed experts on. In a fourth grade science task, student produced an informational paragraph on the basic needs of living things. Curricula did not show strategic integration of the instructional shifts across all subject areas.
Additional Finding

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

Findings
Teachers’ assessment practices are embedded in ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades.

Impact
Teachers analyze common assessments to make adjustments to curricula and instruction to meet the learning needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers maintain data binders documenting and analyzing student performance on common assessments. The school uses common assessment data from sources such as *GO Math!* to make adjustments to instruction. Students in a kindergarten class scored between zero and two on a performance task assessment. After reviewing the data, adjustments to instruction noted including “area to revisit,” and “Review greater than and less than.” Assessment data from a narrative on demand writing baseline task revealed that most students scored between two and two-and-a half on the structure, development and language conventions of the task. Modifications to instruction included utilizing a graphic organizer. In grade five, specific students were identified based on their performance on a *GO Math!* chapter assessment. The assessment results were disaggregated by the standards and by each individual student. The data revealed one student demonstrating difficulty with “identifying properties and only identifies one property.” The next steps included, “Make flash cards.” In another instance, a student showed difficulty in “estimating the quotient and finding compatible numbers.” The next steps included, “Review multiplication facts.”

- School leaders stated that checking for understanding strategies include: usage of student handheld white boards, exit tickets, conference notes and conferencing with students, quick checks, teacher and student collaborated checklists, and discussion rubrics with opportunities for students to self-assess. In a fourth grade science class, students were about to conduct presentations of the biotic and abiotic factors in their selected ecosystems. Prior to the start of the presentation, students in groups used the abiotic and biotic factors rubric to self-assess. During meetings with student groups, students confirmed that they would self-assess using the above-mentioned rubric. Similarly in a third grade ICT reading class, the aim of the lesson stated, “How can photographs, illustrations, and captions help readers understand informational texts?” Students assessed themselves using a discussion rubric. Student responses included, “I gave myself a one because I had to give appropriate voice for discussion.” Another student gave himself a three and stated, “Explained my own ideas with textual evidence from the book.” Further, students assessed themselves using a RADD checklist.

- Teachers employed checking for understanding strategies such using students’ white boards in a fifth grade mathematics class to show student work in solving a problem as well as to provide explanations for their work. In a second grade reading class, students were using a checklist to see if they completed the items in the checklist. This practice was mirrored in a fourth grade mathematics class in which students used student-generated checklists to assess their own work. In a kindergarten mathematics class, exit tickets were used to check for understanding.
Findings

The school communicates high expectations to the staff through its commitment to professional development. School leaders offer feedback to families that is connected to a path of college and career readiness.

Impact

School leaders provide training and hold staff accountable for schoolwide expectations. Families understand the progress their children are making to meet those expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The professional development delivered by school leaders and outside agencies is based on teacher input, differentiated by teachers’ needs, and aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional focus. Teachers were surveyed and recommended topics such as, questioning/discussion techniques, student engagement, TCWRP, and guided reading. Teachers also reiterated this during the teacher meetings and noted the support of intervisitations by teachers. Documents show that specific teachers were offered professional development from a Teachers College staff member on implementing informative and narrative writing units in the classroom. Moreover, specific teachers received training from a Center for Integrated Teacher Education (CITE) liaison through classroom visits and debriefing in order to provide teachers with strategies to engage all students in rigorous instruction. As part of the school goals, all teachers are expected to facilitate one professional development session aligned to the best practices of the Danielson rubric. Teachers presented on topics which included but were not limited to, staff overviews on Fundations, Passport to Social Studies curriculum, and an introduction to TCRWP.

- Staff and students at the school identified seven habits known as the, “P.S. 178 Seven Habits of College and Career Readiness.” This credo is posted throughout the school and identifies habits that students need to practice in order to be college and career ready. Habits include: collaboration, persistence, self-monitoring, time management/study/work habits, problem solving, critical thinking, integration of technology, and being prepared. Parents recounted celebratory events such as college day where parents and teachers wore shirts or insignia from their alma maters. Families receive feedback through portals such as Class Dojo, and Remind. During parent engagement Tuesdays, teachers reach out to families to communicate their children’s academic progress. A parent stated that teachers work with the parents and as a result, her child’s academic performance has improved as seen in the report card. Parents are informed via letters home and asked whether they want their children to receive additional support in mathematics and ELA. In addition, the school communicates to the families about the Saturday Academic Academy that provides students with supplemental support in mathematics and ELA. School leaders provide ongoing feedback to families and are developing partnerships with the families to support student progress towards meeting expectations connected to college and career readiness.

- The school communicates expectations to families via a parent handbook, monthly newsletters, and a school calendar. The parents discussed workshops such as Learning Leaders, where parents volunteer for the school in supporting breakfast, morning line up and the book club. The school partnered with Equality Adult Programming to provide the parents a workshop on managing their children’s behavior while building healthy relationships. Parents were invited to a fall curriculum night to apprise them of the expectations for their children’s current class. In the spring, there was another curriculum event where parents learned of the expectations for their children’s future classes.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

School leaders support teacher development through frequent cycles of classroom observations with effective feedback. Feedback to teachers captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact

Classroom observations and feedback to teachers elevate the schoolwide instructional practices and promote professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- All new teachers are assigned a mentor, and the mentoring interactions are recorded in the mentoring tracking system. Teachers are provided support through resources such as the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Teacher Center and the Job-Embedded Support for *Advance* coach (JESA). The principal mentioned that, “Twelve teachers visit the UFT Teacher Center daily.” School leaders maintain a record for the cycle of observations that include the date and type of observation conducted (formal or informal), when feedback is given, and approximately when to go back for a follow up observation based on the feedback. Teachers are observed at least once a month based on the observation cycle calendar and the date for follow up observations based on the feedback. During a teacher meeting, the teachers stated that they receive support from math and literacy coaches who support the teachers on a six-week cycle. Support includes intervisitation with other teachers. In addition, the teachers mentioned a professional development session known as, “Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) The Power of Two,” that provided the teachers with support in the ICT teaching model.

- Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations that are aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. In one instance, a teacher received feedback to “bolster practice,” in the area of planning and preparation, such as, “Prepare alternate strategies to support all learners,” “Present a visual model for clear expectations,” and “Provide manipulatives to bridge the concrete and the abstract.” The teacher was also provided support from a CITE mentor in addition to a web resource. The observation report also cited approximately when the administrators were returning to observe the implementation of the recommendations into the teacher’s practice. Feedback to teachers did not consistently align with professional goals for teachers.

- A teacher’s summative conference reflection notes of her practice as it pertains to questioning and discussion was reviewed. In the notes, the teacher stated that her practice needed to focus on every student’s voice being heard in a discussion. The teacher was observed and lauded for incorporating a strategy known as “talking tokens,” where students in “a small group made their thinking visible two times.” The teacher was also commended, “Students formulate many questions, initiate topics, and challenge one another’s thinking and make unsolicited contributions.” The practices are in concert with the school’s instructional focus of, “collaborative questioning and discussion.” Although the feedback was aligned to the school’s instructional focus, feedback to teachers did not consistently align professional goals for teachers.