Quality Review Report

2016-2017

I.S. 232
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 09X232
1700 Macombs Rd.
Bronx
NY 10453

Principal: Nicole Thomas

Dates of Review:
November 2, 2016 - November 3, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Roxan Marks
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

I.S. 232 serves students in grade 6 through grade 8. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Developing</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>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Underdeveloped</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Findings
School leaders have a system in place to build vertical and horizontal coherence through norming and alignment activities to ensure coherence and consistent feedback to teachers, including those new to the profession. Timely feedback aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* offers clear next steps and support through articles, templates and other tools.

Impact
Feedback to teachers shows clear expectations using a common focus on questioning, discussion, and assessment for learning and development of teacher pedagogy is leading to coherent practices across the school.

Supporting Evidence
- The assignment of supervisors ensures that each assistant principal is responsible to vertically oversee a subject area as well as across grade levels to ensure horizontal uniformity. For example, one assistant principal is responsible for observing English Language Arts (ELA) teachers in grades six through eight and is assigned grade seven to supervise across all subject areas. The rationale shared for this new structure is to promote coherence across classrooms to guarantee that school leaders provide consistent feedback aligned to Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

- During the initial planning conference (IPC), teachers formulate professional goals based on lower rated areas reflected in annual observation ratings. Teachers also identified an area of self-interest based on personal reflection or a desire to improve in a specific area. School leaders stated that during the IPC meeting a review of state assessment data and internal baseline assessment scores were discussed. At this meeting, components of Danielson *Framework for Teaching* were reviewed as well as effective practices aligned to the eight components.

- The principal and one assistant principal are new members to the school community. The principal shared as a newly formed team, it was vital to engage in norming and calibrating exercises to ensure consistency in ratings and feedback across the school. For example, after observing a lesson, school leaders took low inference notes and used Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to code their notes and based on the eight components provide a rating. They shared ratings with each other and the rationale aligned to the rubric, and went on to discuss areas where gaps were noticed.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 5.1 Monitoring and Revising Systems | Rating: | Underdeveloped |

Findings
School leaders and staff do not have a structure to evaluate, adjust, and monitor curricula, assessments, and practices across the school. There is no process for school leaders and staff to evaluate the effectiveness in quality of teacher teams and professional development.

Impact
Structures are not established that provide school leaders and teams the ability to exchange ideas and feedback to evaluate existing practices and expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards. School leaders do not adjust routines across the school that will lead to increase coherence across classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty do not have a transparent process for making curricula modifications through regular cycles of team meetings or a system for sharing minutes or notes to adjust plans. School leaders shared a cabinet agenda that demonstrates discussions regarding schedule, observations, roles, and responsibilities, however no other evidence was seen to demonstrate ongoing check in with staff. During the teacher team observation, it was apparent that the current Common Core Learning Standards aligned unit in CodeX was ending; teachers had not yet developed the plan for the upcoming unit of study in English Language Arts. Discussion centered around possibly using the days for reteach, however no formal structure was evident to ensure information from team meetings is shared with leadership. Although assessments are administered, school leaders and teachers have no formalized method to track and monitor grade and school level data used to inform adjustments to improve learning.

- There are no structures to monitor and revise the various systems in the school. There exists disparity in views about the allotted time required to complete units and tasks. Based on the assessment calendar, approximately two weeks are allotted for completion of units in all subject areas. Obstacles faced by teachers when reviewing students work and assessments are not addressed by adjusting maps. For example, teachers shared there is a rigid time constraint for students to complete essays and thus they are not able to effectively address the skills that require support within the time lines established by school leaders. Students shared that more time is needed for them to complete assignments, and cited the requirement of six days to complete an essay, even when they felt more time is need to complete the reading of the book.

- Teams have not yet been formulated that allow for input and feedback on practices across the school. Decisions about grouping of students were communicated to teachers however, structures have not yet been created to support the work for teachers through professional development. Teachers shared that they should have committees although the professional development team or consultative teams have not yet convened, thus limiting staff input in decisions that could inform adjustments to schoolwide practices and policies.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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**Findings**

Teachers are in the process of developing units and tasks aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Tasks observed inconsistently allow students to think at high levels.

**Impact**

Curricula maps are not fully developed in all subjects. Tier tasks are planned however groups of students, including English Language Learners (ELLS) and students with disabilities, do not have access to activities that require high cognitive engagement.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The chosen curricula are CodeX for ELA and in math Go Math! is supplemented with Connected Math Project 3 (CMP3). The former curricula map was a calendar type outline that listed standards and pages, thus in the summer, the principal enlisted a team of teachers and school leaders to work on mapping the curricula for the start of the new school year. School leaders relayed that all students must be exposed to the same standards and that teachers must provide scaffolds. A review of lesson plans showed a few indicated supports for ELLs using graphic organizers and technology, however reliance on the three levels of task to differentiate does not adequately support students in accessing the content.

- During a classroom visit, all students were completing the same graphic organizer that required students to select which piece of evidence corresponded with established factors threatening the survival of the characters in the novel. Students were completing a graphic organizer titled Shackleton’s Stowaway. This rubric required students to date, cite the chapter, page, and write the first four words of the evidence. Some students could complete this task, however the tool hindered students’ ability to create their own meaning or extended their thinking.

- School leaders and teachers shared that to provide differentiation three levels of tasks are developed and provided to three groups during lessons. Tasks observed and lesson plans inconsistently required students to engage in higher order thinking or are modified to promote access resulting in missed opportunities to provide meaningful support for English Language Learners or students with disabilities. ELLs represents thirty-nine percent of the total population of the school with the majority Spanish language ELLs; however, teachers revealed that there is a need to build upon Native Language Arts to facilitate the transference of skills into English.
Additional Finding

<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

Across classrooms, teaching practices inconsistently provide meaningful scaffolds and entry points into learning for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Student discussions reflect uneven levels of thinking and participation while extensions for students were not evident.

Impact

Instructional practices in most classrooms limit the opportunities for students to think deeply, engage in discussions, or produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers acknowledged they scaffold instruction through graphic organizers, chapter summaries, read aloud, sentence starters, and level task cards. During classroom visits, all students were using the same text or graphic organizer. In some classrooms, students did not respond to the assignment and struggled to understand the work evidenced by blank notebooks or unanswered prompts. Teachers indicated that there is a need for level text that will enable struggling readers, ELLs, and at-risk students’ access to content and instruction that is tailored to student needs.

- Teachers are developing their ability to engage students in discussions through accountable talk stems. In a grade six class, students were given five minutes to engage in a turn and talk activity. Students discussed whether the selected text was an example of a simile. Across most classrooms, this level of talk was not seen and teachers are developing structure to support discussions. Students responded to questions posed however, talk among students to push their thinking was not evident. Opportunities for talk were evident when students sought assistance from peers with assignments.

- In a math lesson, students were writing linear equations, a group of students sat waiting for other students to finish. Although planning required the creation of three levels of task and three groups in the classrooms, learning was not personalized and extensions for higher performing students were not seen. In most classrooms visited, after completing the assignment some students sat and waited for the teacher rather than having planned activities to extend learning for students.
## Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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### Findings

School leaders and teachers are inconsistently using assessment to adjust instruction or provide effective feedback to students. Teachers are beginning to create assessments and are in the process of starting discussions to agree to use pre-made tests to measure progress aligned to curricula.

### Impact

Assessments results are inconsistently used to provide effective feedback to students. Ongoing analysis and use of data are unevenly used to adjust curricula and teaching.

### Supporting Evidence

- School leaders shared that summative data was analyzed and no standards were identified that required additional support, instead all skills were deemed in need of improvement. Although teachers administer common assessments to measure progress, no comprehensive data analysis is gathered at the class, grade, or leadership level. The school is developing systems for the collection of data that will enable staff to identify challenges and strengths to adjust curricula and plans for groups of students. Teachers and school leaders are developing systems to use data to identify differences in students and trends across grades to inform curricula adjustments.

- Teachers shared that they use pre-and post-test, independent task, journal writing discussions, and conferences to assess progress. However, there was minimum evidence that demonstrated a coherent system for data collection. In a math class visited, there was evidence of analysis of test results represented in graphs indicating performance level and an item analysis recording the overall score with a list of topics for each question. This degree of analysis was not seen across the school and hinders ability to make effective adjustment to curricula and provide effective and timely feedback to students.

- Teachers are developing their ability to use rubrics to provide clear feedback on content and task. The newly created benchmark folders were developed to collect artifacts that demonstrate progress in student learning. The articulated goal is that the rubric is used to grade work and includes feedback with next steps. Students shared they are beginning to use rubrics in some classes to check their work. During classroom visits, feedback was seen on the bulletin boards however, this practice was not consistently viewed in student work folders and notebooks.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings
Teacher schedules allow time for weekly team meetings with school leaders to engage in collaborative discussions. Distributive structures are being developed so that teachers have voice in key decisions.

Impact
The work of teams is not fully structured using inquiry approach and does not typically include analysis of student work or data. Teacher team meetings do not consistently strengthen teacher capacity or provide a voice in decisions to improve learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leader shared that ELA and math teachers are provided with 90 minutes weekly to meet as a team, and subject area teachers are allocated forty-five minutes. While it is the usual practice for the school leaders to attend, and conduct these sessions to observe practices, during the observation of an ELA team, the teachers conducted the meeting.

- During the observations, teachers had an agenda however, two were grading a pre-assessment while others had completed checking the test and were engage in other activities. Some teachers discussed ways to manage the assessment and whether to re-assess students due to the poor responses on the test. Teachers shared challenges and suggested the need to build stamina. The task or goal of team observed was not clearly defined. Although there was productive dialogue taking place, the lack of structure resulted in teachers talking over each other and engaging in various activities not aligned to a specific purpose or outcome. The meeting was not structured by using protocols to ensure effective management of time and building of agendas was driven by leadership.

- During the conversation with teachers, they shared math department has some leeway in selecting problems however the ELA department was provided one book across the grades and expressed difficulty in appropriately supporting the diversity of learners represented in classes. Structures are not fully developed to ensure authentic feedback from teacher teams to school leaders including regular process to meet with teams to focus on building professional development activities or improving school culture. A mechanism for school leaders to use feedback to develop the capacity of teams in the school. For the Principals’ Choice activity, the school leader highlighted the involvement of grade eight teachers in a districtwide professional learning opportunity. This professional learning is designed to build and foster facilitation and leadership skills, which will be shared through turnkey training to develop teacher pedagogy.