Quality Review Report

2016-2017

P.S. 306
Elementary 10X306
40 West Tremont Ave.
Bronx
NY 10453

Principal: Darryl Harrington

Dates of Review:
December 6, 2016 - December 7, 2016

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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. 306 serves students in grade K through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>To what extent does the school...</em></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>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>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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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 Celebration</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school's instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectation</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the staff, students, and parents that promote accountability for student learning and meeting of expectations.

Impact

The constant communication from school leaders and staff articulates feedback that supports high expectations for students and families and is connected to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders’ communication of instructional expectations to the staff is grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching and a school-developed protocol called, “Elements of Effective Classrooms” that delineate engagement, questioning and discussion, and planning. In addition, the school has literacy expectations for students in kindergarten through grade five that provide teachers with clear guidelines for literacy instruction. These include ReadyGen, close reading, daily independent reading practice, and daily writing instruction. The school's math expectations define elements of a math lesson which include, but are not limited to, a problem of the day, using manipulatives, and implementing problem-based learning. Furthermore, expectations for classroom environment are defined using a checklist.

- Through the principal’s newsletter to families, the curriculum newsletter, parent handbook, school calendars, back-to-school night, face-to-face meetings such as breakfast with the principal, and portals such as Class Dojo and Remind, informs families about the expectations for their children. Further, the school sends out monthly academic progress reports to families indicating their children’s scholastic performance and recommendations to support improvement. In addition, parent engagement time on Tuesdays provides an opportunity for parents to be updated on their children’s performance, and parents emphasized that the school responds very quickly whenever they reach out to the school. Parents are also informed when their child is selected for accolades such as student of the month. Additionally, the school partners with family members by hosting workshops such as one-on-one reading, to provide strategies to use while at home to assist in the development of their children’s reading and writing skills. Families are also provided with English as a New Language (ENL) classes to support them in English language acquisition in order to help the child at home.

- The school effectively shares expectations through memos, such as one that outlines the time allotment for homework for each grade. In addition, memos inform the staff about the expectations when writing letters home to parents, information relative to the Individual Educational Program (IEP), meetings and procedures, parent engagement, professional work, lesson plans, and student portfolios.
Findings

Teachers are engaged in structured professional collaborations and the usage of an inquiry model across teams is emerging. Distributed leadership structures through grade leaders are developing to support teacher leadership capacity.

Impact

Teacher collaboration is beginning to improve instructional practices. Teachers are starting to be included in decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Distributive leadership is developing within the school. A staff member articulated during a teacher team meeting that grade leaders facilitate the teacher team meetings and serve as liaisons between the teachers and assistant principals to relay the work of the teams. Grade leaders receive feedback from the teachers recommending topics for professional development. The principal acknowledged that “Grade level members are new to the process so they may not be able to speak to impact as of yet.” In addition, teachers turnkey professional development training to the staff. Teachers were surveyed and they agreed that the school should adopt the GoMath! curriculum. As a result of teacher input, the GoMath! curriculum was adopted. Teachers turnkey professional development they receive outside of the school to train to the staff.

- A grade three teacher team analyzed the results of a chapter two GoMath! assessment by class, whole grade, and by the standards. Through data analysis, teachers discerned students’ strengths and weaknesses using a school-created looking at student work protocol. Results indicated that students demonstrated issues with addition, subtraction, place values, and using data to make line plots. The team devised a nine-step action plan detailing the teaching strategies teachers would implement that included journal writing, more modeling for the students, and sharing students’ answers from exit tickets via document camera so that students could correct their classmate’s work. Teachers also mentioned that students needed to justify their answers and write more. A grade five teacher team used the data from the State English Language Arts (ELA) and math assessments to identify lessons to target areas for test preparation. The lessons addressed targeted standards but missed out on including teaching strategies and identifying groups of students for support so that they could make progress towards achieving targeted goals. Teachers are analyzing assessment and student data but this work is not fostering improvement of outcomes for all learners or resulting in improved teacher practice.

- A review of grade team meeting documents shows a third through fifth grade team unpacking the GoMath! curriculum and outlining the school’s math expectations for instruction. Another team meeting document instructs the teams to complete the ELA and math calendar within a specific target month, discuss plans for test prep, and to begin planning a calendar for ELA and math by pairing topics with the curriculum. Although the teams are meeting, there was no analysis of student assessment data or student work to adjust teacher practice that leads to the achievement of goals for individual as well as groups of students.
## Additional Finding

### Findings

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

### Impact

The deliberate incorporation of the instructional shifts and the refining of curricula using data build coherence in the curricula to ensure all students are cognitively engaged and college and career readiness is promoted.

### Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans reviewed and tasks are planned and refined to provide access to the curricula for all learners to be cognitively engaged. In an ELA curricula document, data from Running Records was used to group students accordingly and included the reconfiguring of groups based on the data. The task directed students to cite evidence from the text about an animal’s defense mechanisms. Another ELA lesson plan indicated that student groups were determined by their reading baseline assessments, Developmental Reading Assessments-2 (DRA-2), and teacher observed daily reading performance data. Lesson plans directed students to analyze the elements of a story, such as a character resolving a problem. In a math lesson plan, data from student performance such as their ability to represent up to eight objects with a number and a written numeral was used to differentiate the groups.

- A review of lesson plans show that teachers are using data to design differentiated tasks for the diversity of learners within a subject area. In a math lesson plan, data such as the students’ ability to solve partial product problems was used to group students into categories such as low, approaching, meeting and advanced. In an ELA lesson plan, data was used to ability group students based on their capability to express their views on their current text. Students in high, mid and low functioning groups were required to write one to three paragraphs expressing their views on *Pale Male*. An Integrated Co-Teaching lesson plan noted that data such as students’ ability to identify the main idea in more than one area of the text or using details to find the main idea were used to make adjustments to the small student groups so that all learners have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged.

- School leaders and teachers purposefully integrate the instructional shifts by making connections to the content areas and ensuring college and career readiness for all students. A review of a first grade ELA unit map delineates tasks in reading, and writing that students will have to analyze how authors use plot show how characters solve a problem. For example, students are asked to name a character and why the character is their favorite using details from the text. Subsequently in third grade, students also analyze the characters’ actions towards the problem and resolution through the characters’ dialogue. The concept of point (idea to solve the problem) and counterpoint (response to the idea) is also introduced.
**Additional Finding**

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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**

Teaching strategies to develop student thinking and participation are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

**Impact**

Students learn best by pedagogy that is informed by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Student work products and discussions reveal uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- In an Integrated Co-Teaching reading class (ICT), students used evidence and features from the text, engaged in a turn-and-talk, and answered the prompt related to the mode of travel used by the Athabascans. Using accountable talk protocols on their desks, students agreed or disagreed with their classmates during discussion. Student work products showed students explaining the main idea citing evidence. In a math class, students ascertained the learning objective that stated, "How can you use place value to compare and order decimals." Students were instructed to go with their three o’clock partner to justify their answers. While in groups, exchanges included, "I think my answer is correct because ..." However, in a first grade general education class with English Language Learners (ELLs), students sat on the rug and were posed questions from the teacher. During the time on the rug, students were not given the opportunity to engage in any discussions with one another. All questions were from teacher-to-student and not student-to-student. After the question and answer period, the students received differentiated graphic organizers, but some students were struggling with completing the task due to lack of supports such as materials in their native language.

- Teacher practices inconsistently mirror and support school wide beliefs about how students learn best. School leaders mentioned that these beliefs would manifest itself in the classroom through the use of academic vocabulary, the incorporation of Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) scaffolds in the classrooms, and use of DOK level three (strategic thinking) words. In an ELA, students read the text, *Pale Male* and the line of questioning included, “Why do you think *Pale Male* is so important?” A follow up question was, “What does he do specifically to help his family in overall survival?” An annotation scaffold posted in the room supported students during the activity. In a fourth grade math class, students were on working problems using the area model and partial products to multiply two-digit numbers. The teacher used academic vocabulary, and students used the scaffold entitled Good Mathematicians Use Math Talk to support them while problem solving, but the questions posed to the students was procedural. In a first grade class, a discussion scaffold was posted in the room but was not referred to during a question and answer activity about customs. In most of the classes, the use of DOK level three words was not evident.

- In a fourth grade class, the teacher posed the question, “Why is it important to have dialogue in a story?” Students engaged in a turn-and-talk and responded to this question. Afterwards, a student stated, “Dialogue means we need to know that it is their time to talk.” The student then called on another student to respond to the prompt. In a kindergarten class, the teacher had a student volunteer go to the SmartBoard to identify sets of eight. Students responded to one another such as, “You are correct, you circled eight teddy bears.” Another student stated, “I agree because you did it right.” In a second grade class, the teacher had the students engage in a turn-and-talk to a question prompt. The student pairs responded to the prompt by having student A respond followed by student B. However, there was not sufficient time for both members to respond to the prompt, thus hindering students to discuss their thinking with one another. In a first grade class, students responded to questions posed by the teacher and there were missed opportunities for students to engage in student-to-student interactions.
Additional Finding

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

The school is developing its use of common assessments to measure student progress towards goals across grades and subjects. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

The results of common assessments and check for understanding are inconsistently used to adjust curricula and instruction to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers administer end of chapter assessments including GoMath!, baseline, mid-line, and end-line assessments from ReadyGen and DRA-2, and track student performance from these assessments. A review of assessment data showed baseline and mid-line tests are disaggregated by the standards, classes, individual students, as well as the students’ proficiency levels. During the teacher meetings, teachers stated that they analyze and use the data from assessments to make informed decisions on student grouping and to adjust curricula. The usage of assessment data to form student groups and make adjustments to the curricula was not evident.

- Teachers monitored checks for understanding during the lessons but did not make in the moment adjustments to the lesson. For example, in a math class, a strategy such as fist to five was used to assess student attainment of the content. In addition, the teacher conferenced with the students in the various groups and kept conference notes. Using the conference notes, the teacher made on the spot adjustments noting that students should be explaining how they derived their answer. In three other ELA classes, the teachers were observed conferencing with their students but did not capture any conferencing data nor made on the spot adjustments to instruction to meet the students’ learning needs.

- In two classes visited, there was evidence of students engaging in self-assessment during the lesson and students’ monitored their own understanding as a result of the task set by the teacher. In a fourth grade ELA class, students were correcting one another’s work on the SmartBoard by placing quotation marks on the correct portion of a sentence. The teacher ensured that adjustments were made to reflect the correct answers on the placement of quotation marks in a dialogue. In a fifth grade math class, students had to explain to their partner the process used to solve a math problem. The teacher walked around and conferenced with individual students and made adjustments by reminding students that they must share their strategies with one another. The practice of students self-assessing and adjustments being made to meet the learning needs of all students was not evident in most of the classrooms.
### Additional Finding

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

**Findings**

School leaders provide teachers feedback that captures strengths, challenges, and next steps aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Data from teacher observations is used to design and facilitate professional development.

**Impact**

Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations that supports teacher practice, promotes professional growth, and facilitates professional learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders articulate clear expectations that are supported by professional development. The school has a focus on classroom based math discussions to build students’ critical thinking skills. More than one school leader referenced and recommended that teachers should refer back to a math professional development on the “number talk moves strategy,” as evidenced in their written observation reports. One report stated that the usage of this strategy would support student’s abilities to, “make mathematically convincing arguments and critique and build on the ideas of their peers.” This feedback is in line with the school’s focus of incorporating math discussions in the classroom and is in alignment with its professional development designed to enhance teacher development. The feedback also encouraged the use of the strategy to “encourage all learners to participate in discussion…” which is aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* questioning and discussion techniques.

- During the interview with school leadership, a school leader mentioned that there is an expectation that teachers are to include higher-order thinking questions from Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) into their lessons. An observation report reviewed cited that a teacher used more DOK level one and two questions that required recall descriptive information. The recommendation to the teacher was to build on the questions posed to generate deeper conversations from the students.

- The school’s *Advance* data showed the questioning and discussion component of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as an area of focus. To target the support of teachers in these areas the school follows a four-week professional development cycle, as documented in a professional development plan. The plan outlines the sessions addressing support in questioning and discussion in instruction and notes the connections to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, and the school’s instructional focus. Sessions such as, “How can I improve student performance and conceptual understanding by enhancing classrooms discussions?” and “How can I use better strategies to help deepen students understanding of important math concepts?” are included.