Quality Review Report

2016-2017

I.S. 313 School of Leadership Development
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 09X313
1600 Webster Ave.
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Earl Brathwaite

Dates of Review:
March 21, 2017 - March 22, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Tracie Benjamin-Van Lierop
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. 313 School of Leadership Development 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](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>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Area of Focus</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><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></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><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></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>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>Proficient</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

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

### Findings

School leaders support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback and next steps. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

### Impact

The leadership team uses frequent cycles of classroom observation and analysis of student work and data to support teachers. Informal and formal observation feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development.

### Supporting Evidence

- The leadership team informs teachers of their follow-up meetings about their formal and informal observations via written memos. Teachers bring five pieces of student work from the lesson observed by their administrator to discuss the effectiveness of the lesson. Teachers are given time to improve their practice based on the feedback they receive and the frequency of their observations. The administration began this school year with most teachers having a formal observation.

- A new teacher experienced challenges with her classroom management and instruction. The teacher was supported by both her assistant principal and colleagues through intervisitations, on-the-spot coaching, and in-person lesson debrief meetings. Feedback included creating expectations, systems and structures, and lesson planning that included anticipatory instructional moves. Additionally, the teacher’s observations were increased to support her development. During the review, this teacher was observed teaching and the support provided to her was evident during instruction, from her comments during one of the teacher meetings where she stated that her growth was directly connected to the ongoing support she receives, and in the positive impact in the work her students are producing.

- All reviewed teacher observation reports included ratings using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* components to evaluate demonstrated knowledge of content and pedagogy, managing student behavior, using questions and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, and using assessment in instruction. Observation reports also included the plans and supplemental materials used during the lesson, a section that highlights commendable areas, recommendations, and a follow-up date for the next observation. For example, an observation report for a teacher included, "You demonstrated from the beginning of your lesson solid knowledge of the important concepts in the discipline and how they relate to one another. During your modeling, you communicated clearly to students how to apply the RACE strategy. It is wonderful to see in your lesson plan you included the English Language Learner (ELL) modification; a RACE graphic organizer to scaffold and break down how to do the assignment." Next steps included, "Provide students assessment tools to evaluate their work and their peers, develop a lesson plan to include all components of the workshop model to include assessment and checks for understanding. Additionally, included student reflection time and closure to every lesson. I will be visiting your classroom in three weeks to see that you have implemented these suggestions in your lesson."
Area of Focus

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

Findings
Across classrooms, teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, leading to uneven engagement in appropriately challenging tasks and uneven demonstration of higher-order thinking skills in student work products.

Impact
Student work products and discussions, including the work of English Language Learners and students with disabilities, reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- During a social studies lesson on connecting women’s and African American’s roles in World War I to the United States’ success in mobilization, students responded to questions, “What is mobilizing?”, “Women were not equal because of what?”, and “Who do you think held most of the factory jobs?” The same students participated and answered the questions as many of the other students spent the majority of the time copying the do now activity, learning target, and homework. The teacher’s rapport and praise of students was evident and students were respectful to both their group mates and teacher. Although students were seated in groups, they did not function as such.

- In an English as a New Language class with students classified as emerging in the English language, the students were engaged in discourse with the teacher, primarily in Spanish. Student learning objectives for this English language Arts (ELA) lesson included describing the structure of the poem “If” by Rudyard Kipling and identifying the meaning of unfamiliar words. Although lessons are typically taught in both English and Spanish, ELA and social studies lessons are expected to be taught primarily in English, yet the observed ELA lesson was not.

- Students worked in pairs in a math class on the communicative property. Students had specific roles and were able to explain their answers even when they differed from their partners’ answers. One student stated, “I did it a different way and we both have the correct answer”, which the teacher confirmed was correct as she reviewed their work products and listened to their explanations of their thinking.
**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 and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

**Impact**

Purposeful decisions are made to build coherence and promote college and career readiness for all students. Diverse learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All reviewed lesson plans included the grade level, module and unit lesson, learning target, type of formative assessment, and how questioning and discussion techniques would deepen student understanding. An interdisciplinary grade eight US History plan included Common Core Learning Standards for social studies, ELA, and college and career readiness standards. Vocabulary such as gender roles, minority, and Caucasian were included as well as differentiation strategies for visual learners.

- Teachers of students with disabilities refined the math curricula, specifically the unit on dividing fractions. During a teacher team meeting, a teacher recommended including more manipulatives into the unit. A math academic intervention services teacher meets with teachers to recommend strategies to support students with disabilities and ELLs such as organizing students into heterogeneous groupings, increasing the use of hands-on materials, and allowing for additional time on tasks for students at levels one and two. There was a notation for students at levels three and four to have different tasks, however, this was not clearly stated in unit or lesson plans.

- Teachers modify academic tasks based on student data and work products. For example, in ELA, teachers use their bi-weekly assessment data to revise the curricula. Students have achieved increases in their growth targets across grade levels, which teachers and leadership attribute to changes being made to the curricula. Over the past year, students in grade six have made average scale score gains of 12 points, grade seven of 22 points, and grade eight of 18 points.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are not consistently aligned to the school's curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Limited feedback is provided to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers inconsistently make effective adjustments to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are expected to engage in a three-part rubrics experience including teacher, student, and peer. Teachers are also expected to provide feedback to students via conversations and written feedback. The leadership team states that they see evidence of teachers giving students written feedback on their draft; however, this is something that the school’s leadership continues to work on with teachers.

- Some students stated that they use ThinkWave, Engrade, or iReady, which are all on-line platforms for students to monitor their own progress. Students stated that the rubrics are used primarily for math and ELA and that they are taught to focus specifically at levels three and four. A review of student work products included rubrics, but some assignments did not always connect with the rubric to which they were supposed to be aligned. Additionally, the feedback provided to students did not consistently provide the necessary next steps needed for the students to deepen their understanding of the task.

- Although plans incorporated checks for understanding and student and peer assessments, the implementation was not evident across classrooms. In a math class, students did call the teacher when they needed additional support, however, structures were not in place for students to collaborate with each other to share their thoughts and work through their questions despite being seated in groups. Most of the students worked independently and were unclear about the task, which resulted in their work products being incomplete.

- Students complete conference session forms in collaboration with their teachers where they engage in discussion about academic strengths and needs for improvement. For example, a student’s identified strengths from his teacher included “the use of statistics, some evidence, and issue included is good but limited information.” His needs for improvement were, “Include information about child abuse in the Bronx and include examples of people in your community that are affected by this problem.” The conference form also included next steps and next scheduled conference date that was signed by both student and teacher.
Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff on professionalism, instruction, communication, and other elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact
Faculty is provided with training and there is a system of accountability for meeting expectations. Staff provides ongoing and detailed feedback and guidance supports focused on college and career readiness that prepare students for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- The leadership team members stated that prior to the current principal arriving, the majority of teachers were rated highly effective and effective, and now the observations reports provide a more accurate reflection of the teacher practice and student performance. The raised level of expectations and accountability are reflected in the supports that are provided to the staff that are connected to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. For example, faculty and borough field center supports are provided to the staff through professional learning sessions on a variety of topics, including Co-Teaching in the 21st Century, Inclusionary Practice, Unit Assessment Design and Overview, and Analyzing Data: Benchmark Assessments.

- According to the most recent School Quality Snapshot, 82 percent of students responded that the school provides useful information about the high school application and enrollment process. Seventy-four of the school’s former grade eight students earned enough high school credit in ninth grade to be on track for graduation.

- Students agreed that their teachers and counselors try to get them to perform at their highest levels. According to a student, “The teachers are good because they will go over lessons with us when we fail as many times as we need them to.” Another student stated, “I really like iReady because I’m able to see how I’m performing. iReady also helps the teacher know what they need to help us with.” Although the majority of students interviewed spoke very highly of the school community as a whole, there were some students who wished that their teachers were stricter because they shared that some do not have sufficient class management skills. One student commented, “We should be exposed to more and some teachers need to motivate us more.”
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Teacher teams consistently analyze assessment data and student work for students they share.

Impact

The instructional capacity of teachers is strengthening. Improved teacher practice typically results in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers have been charged during the current school year with implementing two to three formative assessment strategies to promote student self-assessment and self-reflection. Progress will be measured through an anticipated 10 percent schoolwide teacher rating increase on the Danielson Framework for Teaching, domain 3d components. Correspondingly, teachers are also collaborating in their teacher team meetings and focusing on using assessments to guide their instruction. For example, a math inquiry team analyzed data from a quiz distributed the week prior and used the data analyzed to adjust the math curriculum and write strategies to re-teach in an effort to address the student learning gaps.

- The school has placed an emphasis on learning walks throughout the year that focus on learning environment, classroom environment, student engagement, and student levels of discussion. During a fall learning walk, teams of teachers by grade and/or content area were grouped with parents and all teams answered the following questions, “What did I notice?”, “What did I wonder?”, and “What might be some of our next steps?” Teams spoke about turn and talks, teacher-to-student and student-to-student interactions and conversations. All responses were memorialized and shared with the entire staff during a Monday afternoon professional learning meeting. During teacher team meeting interviews, teachers stated that the learning walks have been one of the most impactful professional collaborations they have engaged in thus far this year.

- Sentiments expressed from new teachers to more experienced teachers included, “My team makes me feel welcome. There is support from my peers and administration.” Another said “As a veteran teacher, my approach has changed and this has taken time. I haven’t had the greatest experience at other schools and I realized I needed to ask for help when I needed it and I am, and I see the results with my students.” According to iReady school summary student growth reports, most groups of students across grades and content areas are making progress and meeting their target growth for one year, with some students exceeding their targets. However, the data for some students with disabilities in self-contained and Integrated Co-Teaching classes and ELLs have indicated negative values and that they have not met their target growth measures as of the most recent spring report.