Quality Review Report

2016-2017

School for Environmental Citizenship

Elementary School 10X386

125 East 181st St.
Bronx
NY 10453

Principal: Lynnann Fox

Dates of Review:
January 19, 2017 - January 20, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
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

School for Environmental Citizenship 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>
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<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>Proficient</td>
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<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>
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### School Culture

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<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<tr>
<th>Additional Finding</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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<tbody>
<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>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.3 Leveraging Resources</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

The use of resources and other organizational decisions, such as the integration of the after-school program and the school’s instructional focus, are well-aligned to and support the school’s instructional goals and long-range action plans. Teacher teams have regular meetings that are deliberately structured so that teachers’ professional responsibilities align with the school’s instructional goals.

Impact

The use of resources and other organizational decisions results in improved instruction that engages all students in challenging academic tasks as evident in meaningful student work products.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal made decisions about budget allocation that ensured paraprofessionals and sub paraprofessionals for additional instructional support in classrooms. In alignment with the school’s instructional focus on literacy, investments have been made to replenish books for the school’s libraries. The school supports a book of the month program and each month includes a new school set of books and a guided-reading lending library for teacher and student use. The principal modified the after-school program by allocating additional resources to involve more teachers so support groups of students would be smaller across additional teachers, increasing the teacher to student ratio. The school has integrated its instructional focus of increasing student achievement around literacy into their after-school program. During the after-school program, teachers instruct students in literacy in small groups based on reading level. Students in grades two through five attend two hours of after school support with one hour of small group instruction and one hour of enrichment twice per week. The after-school tutoring program data shows an impact on independent reading levels as 38 percent of the students have moved up at least one independent reading level, and 55 percent of the students in the after-school tutoring program have moved up more than one independent reading level.

- The restructuring of the school’s master schedule has resulted in extra meeting periods for teacher teams, thus increasing their professional responsibilities aligned to the school’s instructional focus and overall goals. Teachers meet as inquiry teams and during common planning time over the course of three consecutive periods during the day. Grade teams can meet up to four times a week during the common planning block, the same prep period, and lunch at the same time every day. The master schedule is organized in such a way that teams have many opportunities to meet formally and informally during the week. Teams collaborate to create and share resources to strengthen student learning. For example, a fifth grade teacher team created a challenging exit slip in math that had students write a detailed explanation of how they solved a word problem step-by-step.

- A partnership with Universal Literacy has brought a coach to the school to support the school’s instructional focus and functions as the bridge between the administration and the teachers. Grants have provided research-based intervention through Academic Intervention Services (AIS) that is supported through a team of AIS intervention teachers who focus their efforts on specifically targeted students based on frequent data analysis. AIS data shows evidence of student growth between October 2016 and January 2017, including 84 percent of English Language Learners (ELLs) who progressed more than one independent reading level, 75 percent of students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) who progressed more than one independent reading level, and 67 percent of general education students who progressed more than one independent reading level. As a result, students engage more with text-based evidence writing tasks during regular instruction.
Area of Focus

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
Structures are in place to ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult and the school community aligns professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports to create a positive learning environment.

Impact
Students have access to social-emotional learning and guidance supports that align with their learning needs to promote the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors. However, there is not yet evidence of the impact on the academic and personal behaviors of all students across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Students reported that they have more than one adult at the school that they can go to when they need support. One student stated about guidance counselors, "They help us if you’re not feeling good, they give us compliments, and advice about our problem and how we can solve it. We get to express our feelings, and they make it better.” A partnership with Harlem MagicMasters provides after-school basketball clinics that builds social-emotional connection skills and provides mentoring for 41 students.

- The school communicates with families about student progress through report cards three times a year and through additional progress reports twice a year. Students receive progress reports that track academic and personal behaviors such as wearing the uniform, completing homework and classwork, showing respect for teachers and students, and showing effort. Progress reports also include written feedback from teachers that include strategies for parents to support students at home. A parent reported, "My son brought home information from his teacher about how to help him read, learn his sight words, and how to help him focus better. I followed the rules at home and he’s already memorized seven sight words.” While these practices support the promotion of the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors, there is not yet data that captures its impact on the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

- Grade-level teams collaborate to create monthly newsletters showcasing current units of study, as well as suggested books for students to read at home. Parents are invited to monthly Chat and Chews with administration to discuss current school events, academic achievement, and ways to support students at home. Monthly character traits, aligned to the school's Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) program are highlighted with weekly character building classroom lessons. The school community celebrates student success with a monthly Student of the Month and Character of the Month breakfast. Students are nominated and elected by their peers for Character of the Month based on characteristics of the value of the month. The school also hosts Family Fun Nights rewarding students with the highest attendance, however there is not yet evidence that supports are personalized for students nor is there data that tracks the impact of such programs.

- The school's Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) data reports shows a decline in reported incidents this school year compared to the same time last year. The number of behavioral incidents has decreased from the previous year, from 31 to 25. Suspensions have also decreased during the same time period, as January 2016 documented three principal suspensions and three superintendent suspensions, and no principal or superintendent suspensions were recorded by January 2017 during the 2016-17 school year. Staff participated in Therapeutic Crisis Intervention for Schools (TCIS) professional development training to de-escalate behaviors and the resulting practices across the school has minimized incidents.
Additional Finding

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

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

Impact

The curricula builds coherence and promotes college and career readiness for all students so that a diversity of learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, have access to the curricula and tasks and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of curricular documents revealed alignment to the Common Core and content standards, as well as integration of the instructional shifts across grades and content areas. The school uses Teachers College Reading and Writing Program curriculum for reading and writing. In math, GO Math! is combined with EngageNY. Passport is used for social studies and FOSS and Harcourt is used for science. Curriculum documents include evidence of modification by teachers. GO Math! and EngageNY resources are merged in curriculum documents to meet students’ needs. Evidence of instructional shifts includes a third grade lesson that includes collaborative discussion and explicit use of text to support answers, and a fifth grade lesson on numeracy guiding students through multiplication patterns with decimals.

- The lesson plan for a fourth grade integrated co-teaching (ICT) English Language Arts (ELA) writing lesson includes small groups with students identified by name to receive specific differentiated supports. One small group works with the ICT teacher on an oral rehearsal before a writing planning session. Another group works with the content teacher on organization and structure with an oral rehearsal and an opportunity to reteach students to write one piece of evidence at a time to support a direct reason. Selected small group participants are based on previous assessment results on their opinion essay and daily classroom observations. Another lesson plan from a fourth grade science class shows the teacher working directly with a small group of ELL students, as she used guiding questions to test knowledge of each item during an experiment testing materials to see if they created an open circuit. A fourth grade math lesson on prime and composite numbers also includes specific differentiated groups. For example, students in the tier two group have specific questions to guide students as they use manipulatives to arrange tiles to show $4 \times 2 = 8$. Tier one supports include asking the students to make as many different rectangles as they can and to record the dimensions of each rectangle.

- Teachers have engaged in a process through which curriculum maps, unit plans, and lesson plans have been specifically adjusted as a result of the analysis of student work and data. Adjusted items are highlighted in red in either curriculum maps or unit plans by the individual teacher or teacher team making the adjustment. There are multiple examples of teachers across grades and content areas, having adjusted curricula based on individual students' and student groups' needs. For example, in a first grade curriculum map, adjustments were made to assessments in math based on counting and model numbers. In science, modifications were made regarding animal diversity by adding assessments for mealworms and waxworms. In a social studies unit on the importance of families and communities, an assessment was added to include interview writing to develop questions about students' families.
**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the instructional shifts while focusing on small group instruction.

**Impact**

Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation so that all students produce meaningful work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teaching practices evidence the shared belief that all students learn best when lessons are well planned and students receive targeted instruction in small groups based on student need. Articulated instructional beliefs include mini lessons to introduce workshop models across classrooms and teachers conferring one-on-one with students to gather data which is used to form small groups. In a fourth grade class, students participated in a writer’s workshop that involves adding a variety of evidence to support their persuasive essays. The teacher met with students in small groups to support their work on adding more details. In a second grade class, the teacher conferenced with small groups of students and tracked progress on index cards identified for each student as they listened to each student read passages. The teacher guided students through chunking words and sounds as they read.

- In a first grade ICT ELA class, the lesson was about getting to know what characters are thinking and adding speech bubbles to increase comprehension. The teacher worked with students as they sat on the rug in the classroom. She modeled using speech bubbles to show what characters are saying during the story. Students were involved in turn and talks in pairs and triads to discuss what they thought the characters were thinking or feeling. Students were given strategies including to look at the cover, read the title, and read the back of the book. Students were to look at the facial expressions to see how the character was feeling and add a speech bubble to add what the character was thinking. Students were getting to know characters by working on retelling their stories to themselves and with their partners during independent practice while teachers work with identified small groups and conferenced with students.

- A fifth grade math lesson on multiplication patterns with decimals asked students to use a strategy to move the decimal place to the right for powers of ten and greater, or left for numbers less than one. During a share and show, instruction included a turn and talk as students analyzed a word problem to determine which friend from the word problem earned the most money. As the lesson transitioned to small group work, student leaders were given red folders to lead small groups, while the teacher worked with a specific group of students on a place value chart. Student-led groups were working on multiplication patterns with decimals and extending multiplication patterns. Student groups worked through the problems and supported each other through the learning as they developed independence.
Findings
Across classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula. The school uses common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

Impact
Assessments provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and the results are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher-written actionable feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work. These were seen in classrooms, student work portfolios, and on bulletin boards. Some examples of feedback were, “You wrote a nice conclusion, but remember to look at the original question when forming it. Please remember to use science vocabulary,” and “Your organization of your paragraphs is unclear. Next time, make sure you clearly state your reasons in your first paragraph (introduction). Then your body paragraphs will fall in place based on the introduction. Don't forget to cite the evidence.”

- Students use rubrics and checklists as tools of self-assessment during the writing process. One student reported that the feedback given by their teachers has had a direct impact on their work. A student stated, “My teachers put me in a small group with others who needed help, and she told me about my conclusion, and gave us examples to improve our writing.” Another student added, “We were reading and writing two paragraphs. We had our own groups, and each group had different articles. What helped me was the rubric, by checking that stuff that I had to add.” A fifth grade student spoke about writing a letter to the mayor, “We were debating the position about whether water bottles should be banned. I had to choose a side, both sides made sense. I had to organize my work and get details and evidence to support my claim. My teacher wrote about what I need to improve on the next time, now I know the next time what I need to improve on. I will try next time to organize my work better.”

- Assessments across grades include Fountas and Pinnell running records administered four times a year, pre- and post-unit on-demand writing pieces in narrative, argumentative, and informational writing genres, iReady diagnostics in ELA and math twice a year, GO Math! pre- and post-chapter assessments, and Exemplars performance tasks. A partnership with District Public supports teachers in analyzing state assessment results in ELA and math. District Public disaggregated data for teachers and provided professional development sessions in which teachers learned how to access the data and use it to inform instruction. Specific focus during the professional development included planning for students who scored within one to four points below specific proficiency levels and looking at specific distractors in questions that were missed by most students. As a result of the school’s assessment practices, teachers meet with students in small groups with more targeted instruction to support the school’s instructional goals. The Academic Intervention Services (AIS) structure has shown positive results. Overall, 74 percent of students have progressed two or more reading levels. 22 percent of students have progressed at least one reading level.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations and distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Inquiry teams promote the achievement of schoolwide instructional goals while strengthening the instructional capacity of teachers. Teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- An observed second grade inquiry team was teacher-led by the school’s Universal Literacy reading coach. Each teacher brought below benchmark, approaching benchmark and meeting benchmark on-demand baseline student writing pieces from their current Teachers College unit on writing gripping fictional stories. The team used the Teachers College Narrative Writing Rubric to assess the different pieces of student work. The teachers analyzed common trends within each group and discussed where they were meeting expectations and where they needed to add additional supports in regards to the grade two standards. The teachers identified volume of writing, structure of essay, and lack of conventions as areas where students were not meeting expectations. The teachers agreed that the unit needed a lot of adjustments and next steps include one on one conferences with specific students who are below or far below, a lesson on the beginning, middle, and end of the story, creating a conventions tool where they could do this independently, and creating an editing group. Teachers reported that the work of teacher teams, due to the fact that they meet so often during the week for three straight periods, has had a positive impact on their instructional practices in the classroom.

- The review of agendas and accompanying meeting minutes evidences that teacher teams are using protocols in their analysis of student work and data in order to build coherence around promoting the school’s instructional goals. A third grade inquiry team looked at assessment data regarding the opinion-writing baseline for the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project’s Changing the World unit. The team noticed areas of need and decided that students are struggling with what an opinion is, organization, elaboration, transition words, vocabulary, and revision. The team decided to incorporate more explicit modeling, visual reminders to help with organization, and variously leveled student examples for modeling. A fifth grade inquiry team looked at the results of the chapter one end of unit GO Math! assessment on place value, multiplication, and expressions. Students were identified with an area of need in multistep word problems, both completing all parts and following all directions, as well as in writing expressions. The team identified next steps as more group work, including questioning and discussion with word problems, and multi-step Exemplars performance tasks.

- The school has a hiring committee comprised of staff and teachers that has taken on the responsibility of hiring new staff. The hiring committee’s process includes a resume review, phone interview, interview, demo lesson, interview with administrative team, and final steps regarding onboarding new staff. Teachers have built leadership capacity and accountability with a key voice in the decision making process through the hiring committee. Through the hiring process the school has been able to hire highly qualified teachers. Teachers reported that their work has helped to ensure that new hires are supported during the transition in their new roles at the school. They also pointed out that due to their involvement on the hiring committee, new teacher hires have seamlessly worked with teacher teams to support the goals to improve instruction.