Quality Review Report

2016-2017

The Angelo Patri Middle School
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 10X391

2225 Webster Ave.
Bronx
NY 10457

Principal: Graciela Abadia

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

Lead Reviewer: Heidi Pierovich
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

The Angelo Patri Middle School serves students in grade six through grade eight. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

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

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Findings

There are structures in place that sustain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes while the school community strategically aligns professional development, family outreach, and student learning experiences and supports, such as the attendance team and the Pod structure.

### Impact

Each student is known well by at least one adult who helps to personalize attendance supports and coordinate social-emotional learning, child development, and guidance supports resulting in the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors, such as student-led conferences.

### Supporting Evidence

- Faced with an increasing student attendance issue, staff and administration created an attendance team. To increase attendance, the team created an attendance handbook and a multi-pronged approach. The attendance team monitors student attendance, and staff track attendance with multiple data tools. An attendance team member stated, “We meet without fail” to review students' attendance who are concerns. Additionally, they meet to ensure that everyone is on the same page, including the success mentors, who are adult staff members including faculty, aides, clerks, and administration. Success mentors, who started in December 2016, connect mentors with students to check in with them consistently. Further, staff agreed that the new Pod structure has supported this focus on attendance. A Pod is composed of teachers across content areas who share approximately 80 percent of the same students. The Pod structure empowers teachers to know their students well and provides students with academic and social-emotional support. Furthermore, students receive incentives for attendance. Students stated that they are excited about the new selection of incentives; there are levels of achievement: individually, by class, and to be on the all-star team. As a result of these focused attendance initiatives, the student attendance rate has not only met, but also exceeded the goal, achieving an attendance rate year-to-date of 92.9 percent.

- To further provide students with social-emotional supports, staff and administration partner with several outside agencies. This partnership begins with the community-based organization (CBO), which supports partnerships with outside agencies for different types of individual and group counseling for students and families. Additionally, to support female students, the social worker created and facilitated a girl circle to meet the needs of a targeted group; it uses a structure to explore literature themes. Furthermore, there are after-school clubs chosen based on student surveys. Students are proud to be part of the theater club, where they wrote and performed a Revolutionary war musical. Additionally, students agree that the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports program provides incentives for good behavior. However, the staff is always searching for improvement. To this end, they are in the process of researching and creating a restorative justice program.

- Staff provides parents with feedback on their children’s needs, goals, and strengths through several methods, including student-led conferences. To prepare student-led conferences, staff supports students through a reflection process as they review their work, select best efforts for portfolios, complete reflections on each piece, explain their choice, and, especially, reflect on what they did well and upon what they can improve. Students use these reflections as a foundation for the script to present to parents at the student-led conferences. Additionally, the administration and Parent-Teacher Association created the caregiver circle which is an opportunity to work with parents by providing workshops. Such workshops include parenting skills, conversations, and ways to support their child. Parents agreed that they attended more functions for celebrating their child’s successes this year. Staff not only receives professional development for student-led conferences, but also there is a handbook provided to support the program.
Findings

The school is developing their use of common assessments to measure student progress toward instructional and individual goals. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices are uneven and inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers inconsistently use results to adjust curricula and instruction, provide limited feedback regarding student achievement, and inconsistently make effective in-the-moment adjustments to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Administration expects “warm and constructive feedback on student work to support improvement and to embed the rubric language to help the students move to the next level.” Yet, feedback on student work products varies from no grade, a check mark, percentage, letter, or rubric grade, and it often includes a congratulatory statement such as “Nice math here!” or a smiley face sticker. In students’ folders, there was little to no evidence of actionable feedback. Students stated that, “Feedback is only given on big work; small work gets a check or score.” Additionally, actionable feedback to students was inconsistent. Some student work had rubric-based feedback with a glow such as, “Good use of annotation to guide your thought process.” The grow was, “Be sure to elaborate on all evidence to give the reader a clearer picture of what you observed.” However, other work included a score and only a glow, while others had a grow and next steps, “She is able to use different strategies to demonstrate how to find…the lowest common multiple. Next steps, encouraged her to keep focus on task to achieve success.” Students agreed this feedback does not support next steps.

- Students explained, “For peer editing, we have a self checklist and edit our peers’ work, grade, and give comments both negative and positive...it helps me because I get to learn from my classmates.” Students agreed that they use rubrics to help them to achieve a higher grade, but that they do not peer edit often. Also, checking for understanding has been a focus this year. In one class, checking for understanding mirrored the administration’s expectations. One teacher went from group to group, listening, posing probing questions, and providing scaffolds to support student learning. Yet, in some classes, checking for understanding during the lesson was uneven and often without having an impact on students’ understanding; it focused on timing or directions without adjusting instruction to support students’ learning needs. Some teachers check in with students without noting data points. A few teachers took notes on clipboards; however, in one classroom, several students were falling asleep; neither co-teacher noticed, nor did they make any adjustments.

- While the staff has several data tools to use, it is not evident that they, individually or in teams, use these tools to track student progress toward goals or to determine next steps in lessons. Administration presented growth from the State assessments across previous years but did not demonstrate growth toward goals for this school year. Staff administers quarterly assessments and performance tasks, yet no evidence was provided of their use to track student growth toward goals or to inform instruction. Staff uses a few software programs, such as iReady, to support student achievement. Administration stated that the most recent iReady diagnostic data, 35 percent in ELA and 40 percent in math have achieved growth targets. Yet grade-level or whole-school iReady data was not available; instead, just a few samples of individual student’s growth was available. Also, staff uses the 100 Book Challenge to track independent reading level assessment data. Data from June 2016 to March 2017 shows decreases, flat scores, or minor improvements. Furthermore, there is neither little-to-no improvement from June to March across grades, with 75.5 to 83.0 percentage points at the lowest, or emergent, level. Nor was there any evidence of how this data is used to inform curricula.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curricula</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Across grades and subjects, curricula and academic tasks inconsistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills or reflect planning to provide access for all students.

Impact

The curricula and academic tasks across classrooms are in the beginning stages of being planned so that they incorporate access for all students, including the school’s large population of English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- With approximately 58 percent of students designated as ELLs and/or students with disabilities, administration and staff determined a need to ensure that all students have access to higher-order thinking skills and rigorous habits. To that end, staff is in the process of aligning tasks and lessons to Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) and Hess’ Cognitive Rigor Matrix levels. There is evidence of language objectives, and learning targets are noted on lesson plans. Often, additional space to write on a handout or translations for different languages are provided. Some lessons are planned for some differentiation, while others are planned more specifically for differentiation of content, process, and product; yet others do not include any planning for differentiation. Some lessons include tasks at the level of rigor that the standard requires, while others do not. Other lessons clearly demonstrate planned questions that use the Cognitive Rigor Matrix and DOK to spiral up the level of rigor. Yet, other lessons do not include questions or provide access to cognitively engaging tasks through differentiation.

- Administration expects that lesson plans address the needs of all students such that teachers know their students’ data so they can adjust curricula to meet students’ needs. To this end, administration, in concert with the instructional leads, used data to determine goals to target specific groups of students to improve. Staff follows a cycle in meetings to adjust lesson plans based on student work or data. However, although some samples show detailed planning and refinements with data-determined revisions to curricula, others include a lesson and some student work, but the previous lesson and student work were not available to make the comparison and show the refinement and access for all. Another sample provides the before and after lessons and one student’s work, but it did not provide how others in the class did with providing details to support evidence. Although staff is currently making these alignment adjustments, it is unclear as to whether a variety of students have gained access to higher-order tasks and are cognitively engaged because the student work and data have not yet been analyzed. Thus, lessons and tasks inconsistently emphasize higher rigor levels.

- There is evidence that teachers use data to inform the work of student groups as provided in lesson plans. One lesson plan included a data sheet with glows and grows from the character analysis paper and assessment data to create color-coded student groupings as well as for differentiation. Yet, there was little or no evidence to demonstrate that the data is used to inform instruction across grades and subjects, as intended. One English Language Arts (ELA) team determined a need to support students in constructed response. To that end, teachers developed tasks to provide students access and a model sample. Yet, this level of data analysis used to inform curricula was not evidenced across grades and subjects.
Additional Finding

1.2 Pedagogy

<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 practices are becoming aligned to the curricula and beginning to reflect a set of beliefs that students learn best by doing. Teaching strategies inconsistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula, student work products, and discussion.

**Impact**

As defined by the instructional shifts and the Danielson Framework for Teaching, all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, are not yet sufficiently engaged in high levels of student thinking and participation, and therefore, not all students produce meaningful work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Staff believes that students learn best when students are the ones doing the work. To support this belief, staff and administration believe students should be provided with scaffolds and opportunities to discuss with peers, engage in higher-order thinking tasks, and answer rigorous questions. Further, they believe staff should use data to determine differentiation and student groups. However, these practices are just beginning to be implemented across classrooms.

- In some classes, the higher level of rigor and questions was evident, and students were provided with differentiated materials for multiple entry points into the materials, while in other classes, it was uneven. In an English as a New Language (ENL) class, students worked on activities from whole groups, to pairs, to data-determined groups with differentiated graphic organizers, targeted vocabulary, and tiered readings that provided all students with level-appropriate work that engaged students in reading short stories. Similarly, in an ELA Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) class, students worked collaboratively as a whole group with different supports, either a “boxes and bullets” or compare/contrast graphic organizer, to write paragraphs using text-based evidence. Yet, this level of differentiation was inconsistently implemented across classes and subjects. In a social studies ICT class, although students were in data-determined groups, students conducted “silent discussions” through writing responses to quotes via a blog, with no provisions for differentiated supports, resulting in uneven participation and engagement. Similarly, in a math ICT class, although the ICT teacher supported students with math vocabulary, questioning used a fill-in-the-blank format and remained at a low level. Also, questions were teacher-directed, moving from teacher-to-student-to-teacher in a ping-pong fashion. Similarly, in an ELA class, students read self-selected books on computers and were tasked to answer the same question to make predictions about the main character. Yet, students were involved in reading as the teacher worked with a small group, so students were not prompted until just before their time had concluded, leaving many with blank pages. When the teacher asked the question to the whole group, a student answered without providing the required text-based evidence, and the teacher accepted it.

- In an ELA ENL class, students were the “doers” of the work, whereby they discussed the prompt and each student had an opportunity to share his ideas, providing equity of voice. Yet this was not consistent across grades and subjects. In a science class, students were involved in a group activity and seated at tables of four facing the front of the room. As they moved from one station to the next, they retained this configuration, which was not conducive to their discussion as evidenced by students craning across the desks to hear the partner on the end or merely not engaging. At one point, two students at different groups moved their chairs to face their group members, supporting their contributions to the discussions. In a math ENL class, students were not the ones doing the work. One teacher was at the board reviewing a problem, while students sat in groups demonstrating a listening posture, not taking notes or correcting their work. At one point, a few students joined in to answer or ask questions. However, most students were not involved in the attempts at discussion as evidenced by their silence; even some students started to fall asleep.
Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:** 3.4 High Expectations

**Rating:** Proficient

**Findings**

High expectations are consistently communicated to staff via the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and through training and ongoing communiqué. The school communicates expectations to students and families and keeps them abreast of student progress toward college and career readiness through venues such as student-led conferences.

**Impact**

School leaders maintain a system of accountability toward expectations amongst staff, while staff helps families understand student progress toward those expectations.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Parents shared they receive support for the high school selection process through workshops, fairs, tours, and the completion of the applications via the parent coordinator. Students agreed that the school helps to prepare them for college and career. The parents stated that the method that has the most impact on knowing how well their child is doing academically is through student-led conferences. During student-led conferences, the teacher facilitates as students present their work and speak to their progress and new goals based on meeting the last ones. Parents agreed that it is different from when they are at home speaking about school and their work. When one parent summed it up, “I like that I speak to my daughter about her school work in school; the teacher is right there, supervising the conference. When I have a question about her work, my daughter explains without help from the teacher.” Students note their areas of growth, goals, and career plans in their portfolios. A student stated, “You have the power,” and students agreed they have more ownership of their work and have stronger public speaking, goal-setting, and reflective skills. Parents agreed that their children have improved in effective academic and personal behaviors, and staff agreed this has helped students to grow towards their goals. Students agreed as one student reflected, “This helps us prepare for high school, college, and career.”

- Beyond the weekly parent engagement contact via phone, email, or in-person meetings, staff also communicates with the home through an online grade book with a parent and student portal called PupilPath. Parents agreed that, “This school’s communication is great and makes things easy for parents and teachers to work together.” Parents agreed that they are aware of school happenings and events via the newsletter and calendar that provide parents with information about dates and events. Parents also stated that the Parent-Teacher Association, PupilPath, and parent-engagement Tuesdays also support their understanding of events at the school. Students and parents agreed that the guidance counselor supports their understanding of the high school application process, through high school fairs, trips, and workshops.

- Administration provides staff with consistent messages regarding high expectations through the weekly memos, bulletins, a staff handbook, and observational feedback. Administration delineated school goals, action plans, and next steps during the opening day professional learning session, setting the tone for the year. During staff meetings, the expectations are brought to the forefront, keeping them current. To meet these expectations, administration uses classroom observations as a system of accountability. Administration meets to determine areas that require additional support through professional development (PD). A staff-led PD team create, plan, and implement professional learning based on teachers’ needs, supporting their achievement of school-wide expectations. PD also occurs during teacher team meetings. Administrators and teachers discuss high expectations during the initial individual planning conferences, which are used to develop teacher’s goals. Administration conducts debrief meetings that follow classroom observations to provide specific and actionable feedback so there can be further focus on the implementation of school-wide initiatives aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* such as designing coherent instruction, using questioning and discussion techniques, and using assessment in instruction.

10X391: March 21, 2017
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in organized inquiry-based professional collaborations. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards, and they strengthen the instructional capacity of the teachers, who have a voice in key decisions such as professional learning that affects student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers are engaged in grade and subject teams that meet weekly, and informally, daily. Staff has adopted and been trained in the Meeting Wise protocols for conducting meetings. Staff agreed that the structure supports organized and efficient meetings that are facilitated by grade-team or subject teacher leaders. Staff also meets in their Pods at lunch with a social-emotional focus on shared students. A staff member who is new to the profession stated that she has learned how to differentiate instruction based on student work and assessment data instead of “just picking a strategy; now it is linked to what is challenging to the student.” She stated that meeting with her colleagues “gives more clarity about what students cannot do and analyzing strategy data helps her decide what to do the next day to support students making progress.”

- Staff is empowered to make decisions through distributed leadership positions. Such positions include, but are not limited to, grade and subject leads, the instructional cabinet, common planning teams, attendance team, model inquiry team, administrative inquiry team, extended leadership inquiry team, budget committee, and supportive environment team. This variety of positions empowers staff to be engaged in leadership positions focused on both academics and social-emotional supports. Lead teachers are not only part of the instructional leads team, but they also form the professional learning team whereby teachers create and present professional learning to their peers, conduct intervisitations, and share best practices. Staff provides feedback on these sessions to support the adjustments as needed to ensure professional learning alignment to teachers’ needs. These professional learning sessions occur in cycles that are aligned to the cycles of observations by administration. To use similar language, staff reads common professional research. Additionally, there are lunch and learn sessions. Teachers and other staff attend outside professional learning and turnkey it to their colleagues, so that the learning becomes part of the staff’s learning and not just a few teachers. For example, a group of teachers was trained in the protocols. This group turnkeyed the learning to another group, who then turnkeyed it to others. Now a new group is being trained. Furthermore, staff are learning to design units of study as part of an initiative; one group has been trained, they turnkey it to a new group and provide feedback. A new teacher stated and others agreed that “this teacher-led turnkey method helps us grow.”

- Each common planning team conducts inquiry cycles, using protocols to look at student work and use it to inform instruction and curricula. Staff is proud to be part of the improvement process pilot program. The program provides professional learning around protocols which teachers employ during their professional collaborations and inquiry work. Staff focuses on different topics for inquiry such as checking for understanding, which is developing through intervisitations, sharing of best practices, and identifying new ways to incorporate checking for understanding into lessons.