Quality Review Report

2016-2017

The Hunts Point School
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 08X424
730 Bryant Ave.
Bronx
NY 10474

Principal: Steeve Traversiere

Dates of Review:
May 24, 2017 - May 25, 2017

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

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

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
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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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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<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>
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### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 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>Additional Finding</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<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>
Findings
Teacher teams consistently analyze student work and assessment data. Distributive leadership practices are in place.

Impact
Peer collaborative teachers (PCT) have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school. Analysis of assessment data and student work results in improved teacher practice and student achievement.

Supporting Evidence

- A humanities teacher team engaged in looking at student work using a prescribed protocol. The teacher providing the student work conveyed that the student's need was to both elaborate and provide relevant details in the writing. In addition, the student writing lacked cohesion. The teacher team posed questions about the student work to uncover the strategies used in the classroom. Moreover, the teachers shared glows and grows of the student's work. Lastly, the teachers reflected and discussed what identified strategies to use in their own classrooms such as, deconstructing checklists for students, providing students a web to organize their body paragraphs, and including more lessons on stream of consciousness. Members of the humanities team stated that the impact of their work has resulted in them having an opportunity to learn different practices from one another, which helps in lesson planning. Further, teachers mentioned that that work of the teams helps in providing adjustments in their instruction and working with teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs) gives them access to additional scaffolds. The teachers stated that teaching strategies such as set up a plan, observe, look for a solution, verify, and explain (SOLVE) are being used in mathematics classrooms. Unit assessment data in mathematics showed a range of thirty to fifty percent growth for specific standards across the grades.

- A review of teacher team notes revealed that the mathematics team analyzed unit assessment data and noted that students in grades six and seven demonstrated significant growth from pre-assessment to post-assessment data. As a result of analyzing the data, teachers also identified the standards that posed a challenge for the students, and re-taught lessons that aligned to the standards in which students were demonstrating difficulty. An English Language Arts (ELA) team looked at student work using a looking at student work protocol. The presenting teacher shared that the student needed to provide textual evidence to support the claim by using relevant details. The next steps recommended included using more graphic organizers to deconstruct short responses, and using lower-level texts when introducing material and gradually increasing the level of text as students master a concept. As a result of the ELA teacher team work, ELLs periodic assessment data shows positive growth from baseline to mid-line assessments across the grades.

- School leaders provide opportunities for teachers to have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school via Peer Collaborative teachers (PCTs) and English as a New Language (ENL) coordinator positions. Math PCTs serve on the extended cabinet and survey teachers to gather information and offer professional development at the school. Furthermore, PCTs are responsible for spearheading the inter-visitations among colleagues. In addition, the ENL coordinator recommended that the ELLs take the ELL periodic assessments and suggested programming improvements for ELLs, which were implemented this year. Mathematics teachers also made recommendations to administration for the purchase of a math textbook that has been adopted across the math department. PCTs and non-PCTs also serve on a professional learning committee, and facilitate professional development sessions for their peers.
### Area of Focus

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

Teaching practices, student work products, and discussions are beginning to reflect a set of beliefs about how student learn best.

#### Impact

Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect uneven levels of student thinking and participation, precluding some students from producing meaningful work products.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The instructional focus at the school states, “We will leverage the elements of writing, specifically elaboration, to promote critical thinking so that students can build written viable arguments supported by textual evidence in all subject areas.” In a science class with diverse learners, students read aloud, as well as, tracked the text as their teacher read a selection entitled, *Wave, Sound, and Light*. The teacher posed questions to the students as they engaged in a turn and talk about the reading, but did not direct students to include textual evidence to support their answers. Thus, the practices cited in the instructional focus are not yet evident across the classrooms.

- In a humanities class with diverse learners, the students were required to conduct research by annotating articles and taking notes on two religions, such as Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. During a turn and talk, the teacher posed the question, “How do you take notes?” The teacher gave students a choice of graphic organizers to capture their notes, and more than one student responded by stating, they capture their notes using a bulleted format. In a math class, the teacher prompted students to engage in a turn and talk to discuss the expectations for the upcoming task of finding the area of a composite figure. However, in a science class with diverse learners, the teacher provided students with limited opportunities to engage in peer-to-peer discussion or make their thinking visible as they created a plan to solve a problem-based task. Similarly, in an ELA class, students worked in groups on limericks; however, there were no structured protocols for group work, which impeded students’ engagement in meaningful peer-to-peer discussions.

- In a social studies class, student groups read aloud their documents on the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union. Although students were engaged in this activity, there were no structured protocols or assigned roles; which hindered students’ opportunities to have high level peer-to-peer discussions of the documents. Similarly, in an ELA class, the teacher tasked student groups with revising sonnets but protocols were not evident which hindered some students from engaging in meaningful peer-to-peer discussions, demonstrating uneven levels of student thinking and participation.
Additional Finding

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

School curricula aligns to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrates the instructional shifts. Units, lessons, and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

The integration of the instructional shifts and the Common Core Learning Standards across grades and content areas builds coherence that promotes college and career readiness for all students. All students have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers plan and refine lessons using data from student work samples, as well as, other formative data collected during instruction. A mathematics lesson plan shows adjustments for individual and groups of students, such as extended time and additional strategies, based on students’ performance in carrying out single and multi-digit calculations and computations. Another mathematics lesson plan shows adjustments to group diverse learners by performance levels to support re-teaching. In addition, lesson plans also show differentiation of the tasks, with student groups assigned to complete specific portions of a math problem. A social studies lesson plan shows not only adjustments for instructional delivery, but also the use of specific materials such as graphic organizers, checklists, sentence starters, stress ball, highlighting key ideas, and visuals, based on students’ reading comprehension levels. An English Language Arts (ELA), lesson plan reflected refinement for diverse learners and showed a range of supports such as graphic organizers, prompting to stay on task and teacher-led small group instruction.

- A mathematics curriculum map showed refinement to include student choice in selecting strategies to solve equations, formula selection, and simplifying expressions. An ELA unit plan evidenced the addition of new mentor texts, an exit project, changes to the pacing calendar, revision of the essential questions, changes in culminating tasks, and the inclusion of additional Common Core Learning Standards. During the teacher meetings, teachers mentioned that they review learning objectives and amend math, social studies, and ELA curricula using pre- and post-assessment data to emphasize specific topics during instruction. For English Language Learners, teachers also use New York State assessment data to plan learning accommodations and supports for students.

- School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula align to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts in order to promote college and career readiness. In the humanities, teachers expose students to a progression of the instructional shifts. For example, students in the lower grades begin with citing evidence and advance to citing critical pieces of evidence in the upper grades. In ELA, school leaders and faculty build coherence across the grades through the citing of textual evidence. In math, teachers plan for coherence through the use of a SOLVE (set up a plan, observe, look for a solution, verify, and explain) strategy. One ELA tasks requires students to write a position paper answering the prompt, “Should child soldiers be given amnesty?” Another ELA task required students to write a short fictional story containing multiple scenes. A social studies task required students to write a compare and contrast essay on the religions of Hinduism, Sikhism, Christianity, and Judaism. Teachers across grades and content areas purposefully incorporate elements of the instructional shifts into the curricula to promote college and career readiness for all students.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

Pre- and post-assessments and iReady data are used to determine student progress towards goals across grades and subject areas. Teachers consistently use ongoing checks for understanding, as well as, student self-assessment.

Impact

School leaders and faculty use common assessment data results to adjust curricula and instruction. Teachers checks for understanding lead to adjustments in instruction to meet the needs of all learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use common assessment data to make adjustments to content curricula and instruction. Pre-and post-math assessment data was disaggregated for all grades by class and students showed some growth in every standard tested. Based on this assessment data, teachers adjusted the mathematics curricula to include re-teaching topics, embed skills in other areas of the curricula, and add more checks for understanding of the concepts. Teachers use science mid-year diagnostic data to drive small group instruction, create target groups, and revise the science pacing calendar. Teachers’ analyzed the iReady instructional usage report to inform next steps and target specific students for intervention. As a result of the analysis, ELA and mathematics departments met 100 percent instructional usage of the iReady platform. The curricula has also been adjusted to include iReady as a component of student homework and add an iReady homework rubric. Successive teacher team meeting notes show teachers monitoring specific students and devising interventions for groups and individual students.

- Teachers’ assessment practices reflect the use of checks for understanding by utilizing strategies such as thumbs-up or down, and peer- and self-assessment, leading to on-the-spot-adjustments to the lesson. For example, in a mathematics class with diverse learners, the teacher tasked students with identifying various angles using a protractor. Students were engaged in peer-assessment and self-assessment of their tasks. As a check for understanding, the teacher prompted the students to discern where they made a mistake in their work and the rationale for their error. The teacher also conferenced with student groups. In a science class with diverse learners, the teacher checked for understanding using the thumbs up or down strategy. The teacher probed the students about their expectations and noticed that there were few thumbs up. The teacher adjusted the lesson by asking the students, “What are we doing while reading?” A student responded, “Identifying the main idea of a paragraph.”

- In an ELA class, the teacher asked the students to indicate a thumbs-up or down if they understood how to write their limerick. The teacher was not satisfied with the number of students indicating a thumbs up, and conducted a small group re-teach of the qualities of a limerick. In a mathematics class, the teacher checked for understanding by posing questions such as, “How might you find the area of the larger figure?” “Is there one correct way to do this?” The teacher also polled the class using a thumbs-up or down strategy. Based on the students’ response, the teacher re-configured one of the student groups. Across grades and content areas teachers use information gathered from real-time formative assessments to adjust instruction and meet the needs of a diversity of learners.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

School leaders convey high expectations to all staff through professional learning and written communication that reflects the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations to families connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

Consistent communication of high expectations to the school community and the provision of professional learning, along with a system of accountability, ensures that all stakeholders work toward those expectations. School leaders and staff provide ongoing feedback to families that helps them understand their children’s progress toward expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for instruction, professional learning, and communication grounded in the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Leaders delineate expectations for instruction through face-to-face scholarship meetings with teachers, and written communiques. Written communication includes an ELA instructional manual with expectations for the classroom environment that outlines the flow of a lesson, procedures for classroom libraries and student data collection. Administration also communicates with the staff through a weekly newsletter known as, “The Weekly Point.” The newsletter conveys the school’s instructional focus, theory of action, school calendar of dates, professional development workshops, and instructional expectations. Leaders also provide teachers with professional learning opportunities on topics such as, how to target students for intervention, new teacher meetings on lesson planning and instruction, and the Data Wise protocol. School leaders hold staff accountable for these expectations through the observation process and instructional walk-throughs. School leaders conduct instructional walk-throughs focused on the instructional environment, rigor, and student engagement. Leader feedback provides teachers with non-evaluative feedback about expected practices.

- Administrators and staff communicate high expectations connected to college and career readiness and provide feedback to families to keep them apprised of their children’s progress. The school uses online grading platforms, quarterly progress reports, parent-teacher conferences, a parent email distribution list, monthly principal letters, and a parent calendar of events, weekly parent engagement meetings, parent town hall meetings, phone calls, and monthly breakfast meetings with the principal, to maintain ongoing communication with families.

- The school offers parents a variety of workshops such as, the high school application process, “Super Tuesday Robotics,” General Educational Development (GED) exam preparatory classes, cooking classes, and supporting reading in the home. The school also hosts celebratory events such as the Mother’s day gatherings and a Thanksgiving dinner. During the parent meeting, the parents attested to their open communication with the school and the variety of classes and workshops offered to them. Workshops such as, “How to support your child through reading while at home” were highlighted by parents as ways the school supports them in understanding their child’s educational process.
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

Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders utilize teacher observation data to facilitate differentiated professional development for teachers.

Impact

School leaders’ feedback to teachers and the utilization of observation data to design and facilitate professional development elevates schoolwide instructional practices and supports teacher development.

Supporting Evidence

- Feedback to teachers captures strengths, challenges, and next steps that align to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. A review of an observation report showed a teacher receiving successive feedback on areas such as designing coherent instruction, questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, and using assessment in instruction. The range of feedback entailed: sharing lesson plans with colleagues to receive feedback, using Common Core-aligned resources for lesson planning, implementing checks for understanding strategies, and including diagnostic questions. A review of observations reveals that individual teachers have demonstrated growth based on leader recommendations and feedback aligned to the teacher’s goal of improving questioning during the assessment portion of the lesson.

- Sample observation reports evidence leader feedback to teachers that captured their strengths, challenges, and next steps. An observation report shows a teacher receiving feedback on incorporating scaffolded materials into his lessons. Leader recommendations in this report include providing ELLs with translations and step-by-step directions in order to perform an assigned task. Another observation report shows a teacher receiving feedback on constructing learning objectives. The school leader provided the teacher with a model of an effectively written learning objective. Follow-up observation reports show that the teacher utilized the feedback to write future learning objectives and improved in designing coherent instruction.

- Based on the analysis of observations, the instructional walkthroughs, and feedback data to teachers, the administration implemented a tiered professional development plan for teachers. In this plan content teachers receive discipline specific support from consultants. The professional development varies in cycles, with the first two cycles geared towards planning and preparation, and the third being ENL instruction with either a whole group or departmentalized audience. During the teacher meetings, teachers shared that administration also supports teachers’ attendance at off-site professional development to address individual professional needs. Leadership also utilizes the observation process to monitor the effectiveness of teachers considered for PCT positions.