Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 020 Clinton Hill
Elementary 13K020
225 Adelphi Street
Brooklyn
NY 11205

Principal: Lena Barbera
Dates of Review:
January 9, 2018 - January 10, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Debra Tasioudis
The Quality Review Report

The Quality Review is a two-day school visit by an experienced educator. During the review, the reviewer visits classrooms, talks with parents, students, teachers, and school leaders and uses a rubric to evaluate how well the school is organized to support student achievement.

The Quality Review Report provides a rating for all ten indicators of the Quality Review Rubric in three categories: Instructional Core, School Culture, and Systems for Improvement. One indicator is identified as the Area of Celebration to highlight an area in which the school does well to support student learning and achievement. One indicator is identified as the Area of Focus to highlight an area the school should work on to support student learning and achievement. The remaining indicators are identified as Additional Finding. This report presents written findings, impact, and site-specific supporting evidence for six indicators.

Information about the School

P.S. 020 Clinton Hill 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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</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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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 Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</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 Focus</td>
<td>Developing</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>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Findings
The school’s culture supports high expectations focused on independence, leadership and career and college readiness that are effectively communicated to students and parents.

Impact
Students take responsibility for their own progress and learning and are supported by their families and school staff as they prepare for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and staff have created successful partnerships to support student progress toward high expectations that permeate the school culture. Throughout meetings with school leaders, staff, and parents, a common refrain was heard: “Our school. Our rules. Our children. Our expectations.” At a parent meeting, parents shared with consensus, that communication and engaging parents in understanding and shaping the school’s curricula and academic expectations is a highlight of the school. Parents praised the openness of teachers and school leaders in making instructional practices and assessments well known to parents. Through grade-wide newsletters, collaboratively developed by parents, students and staff, instruction and curricula are highlighted.

- Additionally, one parent shared that communication about their children’s progress is systematic via ongoing access through online grading systems, daily pictures about the life of the classroom, and regular and as needed check-ins with teachers. Another parent shared, “This allows my husband and me to see blurbs about the focus of instruction during the day, and know what our child’s homework will be, before we even see him, and this helps us to be ready to extend the learning in the evening.” Parents are also invited into the classrooms, and to have breakfast with students and teachers daily, with many parents taking advantage of this time. The school also provides ongoing curricular workshops across the content areas to ensure that parents understand the expectations in dual language classes, science, math, English Language Arts, (ELA), and social studies.

- Parents, students, and teachers alike praised the school’s work on building student independence and leadership skills. The school utilizes a leadership curricula across the grades, and students keep leadership binders, where they regularly reflect on their growth, areas for improvement, set goals for themselves. They reflect on progress, and confer with their teachers to get focused feedback and guidance about their next steps. Leadership binders reviewed across the grades, including binders of students with disabilities, demonstrate consistency in end-of-unit and post-assessment opportunities for students to be reflective about the academic progress, and set and monitor goals. Across the grades, students use these reflections and binders to host student-led parent teacher conferences, where students lead discussions about their work, and students, teachers, and parents discuss grades, for all subjects, including clusters, such as dance and music. As a parent shared, “When you have the student led conference they have their binder, they are looking at their progress and work, and they are talking about what they are doing well. It builds accountability for their work. It really builds the relationship between the student and teacher learning together.”
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Developing |

Findings

School leaders support teachers through infrequent cycles of observations. Feedback to teachers captures strengths, and next steps, but inconsistently connects to the Danielson Framework for Teaching, especially highly effective ratings, creating a lack of clarity relative to next steps.

Impact

Feedback practices, though not yet frequent, are beginning to promote professional growth.

Supporting Evidence

- At the time of the review, most teachers had been observed once during the year, and 25 percent of the mandated observations for the year were complete. This was confirmed at a question and answer session with teachers where most staff shared that they had only been observed once, sometimes informally. Teachers and school leaders also articulated that, as a regular practice, school leaders only provide teachers with written feedback after classroom observations, and few conversations occur between the administrators and teachers about the feedback provided to teachers. Observation reports shared also revealed that feedback seldom made reference to student work or data, unless it was to encourage teachers to use data to inform instruction. As there is little written feedback or discussion or analysis of student work/data, the feedback is not consistently effective.

- Feedback written to a teacher after a classroom observation that focused on engaging students in learning gave the teacher the highest rating possible, but the evidence provided to the teacher to support the rating more closely aligned to a lower rating. The administrator wrote, “Throughout the lesson, your students were given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of fractions and explain their thinking. In addition, all of your students were actively engaged while solving problems individually, in their small groups and whole class discussions.” While this feedback captures a glimpse into the teacher’s practices during the period observed, it demonstrates missing pieces of teacher practice that are essential to the highest ratings in the Danielson Framework for Teaching in this component, such as students taking the initiative to improve the lesson, adjusting the learning task to be more relevant to their needs, or students suggesting other modifications such as changing the student groups or the materials being used during learning. Similarly, other observation records also demonstrated misalignment in ratings given to teachers about managing student behavior. Several teachers were rated at the highest level for responding to student behavior in ways that were respectful, and sensitive to the student’s need. While this is a hallmark of the Danielson Framework for Teaching rating of effective in this area, missing from the highest possible rating, was students managing and responding to student misbehavior, as well as the teacher. This misalignment of teacher pedagogical practices relative to the standardized ratings impacts the teacher’s ability to fully understand and then implement aligned strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

- In other observation records, teachers were given next steps that did not always align with feedback given within the lowest rated indicators in the Danielson Framework for Teaching, and/or next steps for teachers were not always clear. Lesson delivery feedback given to a teacher stated that the lesson did not include the instructional strategies and supports that were included in the plan, and noted that the students had the wrong graphic organizer for the task. However, the teacher was also praised in the same observation for providing learning tasks and activities that were fully aligned with the instructional outcomes. Thus, there was a disconnect communicated to the teacher as to the quality and expectations of the learning activities.
Findings
School leaders ensure that curricula is interdisciplinary, aligned to the Common Core, and focus in ELA on citing evidence from fiction and non-fiction texts and deep understanding in math. Rigorous tasks are planned and refined to provide access to higher order skills and rigorous habits in unit and lesson plans.

Impact
Curricula is differentiated so that it is accessible to a variety of learners, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs), so that all learners are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Across grades and subjects, interdisciplinary units focus on building student skills in fiction and non-fiction texts, and curriculum maps demonstrate a balance of narrative, informational, procedural, and opinion reading and writing tasks in social studies or science themed units, such as informational writing about animal diversity in first grade or third grade students creating realistic fiction stories based on their knowledge of Arctic communities. Units also contain learning targets aligned to the Common Core standards to be taught, such as, "I can explain how my text evidence proves by answer to the question" and, "I can retell a story aloud with good details and facts." The curriculum maps, coherence in unit planning and use of learning targets aligned to the Common Core demonstrate purposeful decisions to build college readiness skills.

- The math curricula, also aligned to the Common Core across the grades, includes skills and academic vocabulary, and provides resources for teachers, such as extension activities, manipulatives, games and additional activities for re-teaching to ensure that the curricula provides varied opportunities for students to engage in learning and demonstrate what they know. This was evidenced in a fifth grade unit on place value of whole numbers and decimal fractions. Teachers collaborate to make weekly math homework assignments, comprised of one nightly word problem connected to the day’s learning, to deepen understanding and problem solving. In some grades, the nightly problem is also accompanied with a set of multiplication tables, and in all cases, students are asked not just to solve the problem, but also to show their work, and explain the strategy that they used to solve the problem.

- Most teachers use tiers to plan for rigor at different levels, offering the same task with different scaffolds. In a first grade lesson on addition and subtraction in word problems, three tiers of students worked on the same math problem, with different supports, such as a partner, sentence stems, or a partially completed table. Similarly, in a second grade reading lesson, students at different tiers were tasked with understanding character development in the same story, with varying levels of support, such as additional instruction, assistance with outlining, or graphic organizers. Success criteria also accompanied most tasks, helping to both break down and build in chunking of the task for students.

- Teachers make adjustments to the curricula in common grade-level unit planning, and in lesson plans, often with post-its reminders to make adjustments for specific learners. This includes reminding them to stay on task, or to provide a student with a shared language partner. Weekly, teachers also create “Review Friday” lesson plans to deepen learning in literacy and math. A “Review Friday” third grade plan focused on making inferences and drawing conclusions in fiction and non-fiction texts about the reproductive life of turtles, and representing fractions on a number line. In both, the teacher planned for high, medium and low groups, as well as additional extensions such as small group Socratic seminars, and individualized tasks.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

There is a coherent belief that students learn best when teachers facilitate group work using the workshop model, reflected in the vast majority classrooms. Teachers provide high-quality extensions and strategic entry points so that all students have access to the curricula.

Impact

All students are engaged in rigorous discussions and produce meaningful work products in classrooms where there are high levels of participation and ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classes, teachers share the belief that students learn best when teachers use the workshop model with a brief mini-lesson, and the majority of the period to facilitate small group work and discussions. In a kindergarten science class, the teacher conducted a brief mini-lesson on motion, and demonstrated setting up an experiment for students about objects in motion. After modeling, the teacher engaged students in a turn-and-talk about what they observed, and discussed what should go on her lab sheet. Students then went off to work in pairs, making predictions, experimenting, and recording their observations on their lab sheets. Teacher modeling, hands on learning, and student-to-student discussion was common across the vast majority of classes, and is a part of discussions during Monday professional learning sessions and teacher team meetings.

- Learning walls, anchor charts, success criteria, graphic organizers, math tools, hands on activities and access to peers were common scaffolds across classrooms to ensure that all learners were able to demonstrate high levels of thinking. Large learning walls made of chalkboard paint, a part of every classroom, captured vocabulary, and images and thoughts of students about connections within and across units, providing support and demonstrating student ownership of the learning environment. In several classes, students were seen going to the learning walls to remind a classmate of a concept, or review a vocabulary term.

- In many classes, anchor charts supported students during independent or group practice, such as a comparing fractions anchor chart seen in a third grade classroom. In many classes, teachers provided students with extensions that were closely connected to the learning target, deepening student thinking. In an upper grade ELA class, students worked to understand how to use evidence from the text to demonstrate how characters change over time in fiction. Students who completed the activity exploring the change in the main character were given an extension activity to focus on how a secondary character, the mother in the story, also changed over time. In math, students used “when you are finished” charts to write about their solution, make connections or create an expert challenge question, similar to the problem presented during the lesson.

- High levels of student thinking and ownership were observed in student work products. In a fifth grade ELA class, students debated possible themes across two texts and whether the authors most wanted the readers to know that people can change; or if the theme was about the importance of being independent. In a first grade math lesson, the teacher stopped students mid-lesson for the class to discuss a peer’s work. Students compared the work to the success criteria chart, and shared noticings. The students highlighted things that went well, such as labeling his model, and writing his math sentence, and then students went right back to their tasks, allowing students to then reflect on their own work, deepening their understanding of their own work, as well as the work of a peer.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
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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**

Teachers use common and formative assessments across the grades to determine student progress and check for understanding in lessons.

**Impact**

The analysis of common assessments and checks for understanding through on-the-spot check-ins, and the use of data trackers, leads to adjustments in curricula and instruction that meets the learning needs of all students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers conduct item analyses of common assessments, particularly the math and ELA Measures of Student Learning (MOSL) assessments, to make adjustments to curriculum and instruction, and to form Response to Intervention (RtI) groups. Teachers keep binders and track beginning, mid- and end-of-year MOSL for students, student-by-student observations and noticings from exam analysis, as well as planning and tracking for instructional next steps. Teacher binders also show that they use other common assessments, such as problems of the week in math, ELA quick writes, Fundations assessments and mid-unit assessments to create groups for re-teaching skills, such as lower case letter writing and identifying letters to corresponding sounds, stretching words or writing to the end of the line.

- Teacher data binders also include “Gap Reduction Strategies Planning” organizers, where teachers analyze unit data across the subject areas, analyze test questions that students miss, isolate learning targets to revise, and list how they will address students’ gaps in understanding. A review of a fifth grade binder shows that a teacher completed one of these after students took a math performance task, and planned to reteach the use of equivalent fractions about how to add and subtract fractions. This organizer was also seen in use for unit planning across the content areas. Teachers also use this planning to guide their weekly “Review Friday” lesson plans to ensure that students are receiving targeted instruction in response to common assessment data and the checks for understanding during the delivery of lessons.

- Providing additional consistency across the grades, teachers also use leveled reading assessments given at least three times a year, (sometimes more for students demonstrating lower proficiency levels), to form student groups such as reading groups for students in ELA, to ensure that students are purposefully matched to supplemental texts and scaffolds. In other subjects, such as science and social studies, teachers tailor reading tasks to student reading levels. Teachers also use the leveled reading assessments to ensure that students are grouped heterogeneously across the subject areas, so students can support one another in gaining content knowledge.

- In seven of the nine classes visited, teachers checked for understanding in the classroom with questioning aligned to the Common Core standard relative to the focus for the lesson, and they used a tracker to make notes on student thinking, or make on-the-spot adjustments for students after taking the pulse of the room. In an upper grade math class, the teacher used a tracker to record student thinking as they compared fractions, with some boxes highlighted to remind the teacher that these were tier three students, needing closer assessment. These common conferencing records, used across the subject areas, and added to the teachers’ data binders track how teachers checked for understanding, such as looking at student work, skill or strategy taught, and next steps for the student. Lesson plans often referred to these check-ins in plans for adjustments, such as grouping or tasks to meet student learning needs.
### Additional Finding

#### Quality Indicator:

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

#### Findings

Teachers engage in inquiry on vertical content- and grade-level teams. Teams regularly analyze student work to identify trends and patterns of performance connected to the Common Core.

#### Impact

The instructional capacity of teachers is improved and students make progress toward college and career readiness.

#### Supporting Evidence

- The majority of teachers engage in structured, inquiry teams, either vertical or French dual language vertical teams, or grade level teams. Across the school, teams are focused on literacy, with the exception of one fourth grade team that is focused on math, aligned with the school's goals and needs from the previous year's New York State exam data. A review of team records for several teams in the school demonstrates a coherence in the ways that teachers use agendas to drive their work, look at student data and the demands of the Common Core, usually focusing deeply on one or two standard at a time. Teachers focus their efforts on reviewing student work and strengthening the instructional practices of teachers. Common across teams, is the creation of learning targets, known in the school as "I can statements" that guide the work of students across units. The fourth-grade math team is focused on creating, analyzing, and spreading the use of a common problem solving strategy across the grades. The French dual language teams' inquiry work has a curricular and instructional focus, and is building a coherent curricula and a new teacher packet for dual language teachers. At a question and answer session with teachers, newer teachers shared how valuable these resources have been in helping them to improve their planning and instructional practices.

- During the review, a grade three through five vertical literacy team was observed. The team is focused on students' ability to write opinion pieces on topics and texts and supporting their point of view with reasons and information, the first of the Common Core writing standards. The team is supported by a professional learning and curriculum design partner, and uses their research-based strategies, professional resources, and coaching to improve the writing tasks that students engage in across grades three through five. Team notes demonstrate that at this point in the year, the team has gotten to know their professional learning library, engaged in learning about the differences between a mini-task and a unit, and selected a mini-task of focus to implement with students on opinion writing. In the meeting observed, teachers reviewed student work from the mini-task, representing high, medium, and lower performing students, and recorded noticing and wonderings from student work. Teachers noted progress toward goals for students whose work was shared, as well as students that they collectively focused on across the grades, demonstrating that the team's work results in progress toward goals for groups of students.

- Teachers during the observed teacher team meeting shared that they are each looking closely at three students selected from their classes; a high, medium, and lower performing student. At a separate question and answer session, teachers shared that this is a common practice across teams. This was also evident across teams in their meeting minutes, and was observable in other planning documents, such as lesson plans, where teachers commonly have three tiers of students, and in teacher data binders where teachers track progress for individual learners and groups of students.