Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 032 Samuel Mills Sprole
Elementary 15K032
317 Hoyt Street
Brooklyn
NY 11231

Principal: Denise Watson

Dates of Review:
January 9, 2018 - January 10, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Jennifer Eusanio
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. 032 Samuel Mills Sprole 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

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

**To what extent does the school...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>Additional Finding</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>
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</table>

### Systems for Improvement

**To what extent does the school...**

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<tr>
<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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
</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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
School leaders communicate high expectations to the entire staff through various online and professional learning structures. School staff consistently provides ongoing communication and feedback to families on the school’s expectations connected to standards-based instruction and next-level readiness.

Impact
Professional training and a system of accountability through the use of feedback, supports teachers in achieving schoolwide instructional expectations. Parents understand their children’s progress towards grade-level goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Weekly newsletters, emails, and a staff handbook communicate schoolwide expectations to staff throughout the year. Additionally, through faculty conferences and grade-level team meetings, the school’s focus is shared and support is provided to ensure achievement of those goals. Observations are a key means of holding teachers accountable for meeting their goals and promoting the school’s expectations. A review of feedback given to teachers reveals that school leaders often provide strategies and clear next steps to assist teachers in meeting the instructional expectations. Student engagement, assessment, and discourse are areas of specific focus this year. Teachers reported that they receive helpful and clear strategies to aid in their pedagogical growth. Teaching note taking skills, using data to organize small group instruction, and engaging students in metacognition and using rubrics in self-assessment are practices that are addressed.

- Schoolwide, grade-level and parent coordinator newsletters inform parents of current school events, workshops and the units of study their child is working on during each month. The third grade January newsletter informed the families that students would be completing a nonfiction reading unit and starting fiction texts focusing on skills such as making inferences about their characters’ traits, their motives, and theme development. In the parent coordinator’s newsletter, parents were invited to visit their children’s classrooms to view lessons and take part in instructional activities. In addition, each year, curriculum night is held where teachers explain the standards and policies for the year. Parents reported this helps with understanding the expectations of the school.

- Parents agreed that teachers are helpful and communicate their children’s progress in school. During an interview, one parent explained that her child’s teacher consistently uses an online communication tool to share her child’s performance and provided pictures of the work that demonstrated his increased growth. Another parent shared that when her child had a problem with reading, the teacher provided several tools and other materials to support her efforts in working with her child at home. Most parents stated that communication from the teachers has been ongoing and clear. They are able to understand how their child is performing in school with regards to grade guidelines and standards.
Area of Focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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Findings
Although the school’s rubrics and grading policies are aligned to the curricula, assessment practices are inconsistent in reflecting the regular use of checks for understanding during whole-class lessons and one-to-one conferences. Students’ comprehension of the rubric as a tool is uneven when engaged in self-assessment.

Impact
The feedback is limited in providing consistent and actionable next steps towards increasing student achievement. Teachers have yet to make consistent and effective in-the-moment adjustments during lessons to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- A review of student work revealed that when written feedback was provided, it was aligned with the rubric and provided strengths and areas for improvement. One teacher commented that the work was well organized and that the student had used the strategies taught. Next steps asked the student to make sure to show the work and explain his thinking, which would help ensure a higher grade. Although in some classes, consistent patterns of providing feedback with clear next steps existed, it was not present across classrooms. In some folders, student feedback either was not provided or did not provide the student with strategies needed to improve their work.

- In an interview, one student stated that when writing reports his goal was to work on building stronger, more focused conclusions. While reviewing his rubric and the teacher’s feedback, the student stated that he would continue to work towards meeting his goal and use his teacher’s feedback, which advised him to use transition and linking phrases to make a stronger conclusion. Another student was able to explain that her math teacher wants her to use an editing checklist as a guide to help improve written responses. However, other students were unable to share similar feedback. Some students did not receive feedback on their work and thus did not know what next steps to take. Other students could not understand the rubric or their assignment did not have one attached to it and thus they were unable to articulate how they performed.

- In some classes, teachers were observed using questions and prompts to gauge students’ understanding during a task and to make in-the-moment modifications, however, these methods were not consistent in other classes. In an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) second grade math class, students self-assessed their work using a rubric to determine whether they considered themselves to be a novice, apprentice, practitioner, or expert when solving a word problem. Although some students arrived at the wrong solution, they rated themselves as practitioners, and were not corrected as to their proper level. Others showed difficulty in understanding the differences between the categories and levels yet were not redirected, which led to student confusion in the use of the rubric. In a fifth grade math class, one group of students had difficulty solving a word problem and yet the teacher did not clarify their misunderstanding.
### Additional Finding

<table>
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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 the curricula is rigorous and aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards while consistently integrating instructional shifts aligned to math application practices and claim development.

#### Impact

The curricula and academic tasks across grades and subjects consistently reflect rigor and the need for higher order thinking aligned to the Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* guidelines to build vertical alignment and promote college and career readiness.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers utilize multiple Common Core Learning Standard programs and materials to formulate the schoolwide curricula. To ensure vertical alignment in English Language Arts (ELA), teachers streamline instructional shifts that connect to text complexity through close reading and text-based answers using claims and citing evidence. In a fourth grade ELA unit plan, learning objectives and tasks focus on students determining the theme of a story. The students produce a written response to literature using details to support their claims through interpretation-based book club discussions. In a first grade nonfiction reading unit, target skills, and task reflect students engaging in conversations and producing books to teach others about a topic. There is an emphasis on close reading strategies including annotation and note taking while students research their topic.

- In math, teachers worked to develop curricula, which builds on the instructional shifts addressing fluency and application. A review of several math tasks reflects emphasis on problem solving skills and the use of math in everyday situations. In a fifth grade math plan, the task requires students to be able to analyze and discuss real-word word problems applying the circle, underline, box, eliminate, and solve (CUBES) strategy to annotate the math story. Similarly in a second grade math lesson plan, students are provided real-world word problems and are expected to use the appropriate strategy when problem solving.

- In a fourth grade social studies plan, the Question Formulation Technique is to be used by students as they work in groups. The task requires that they collaboratively generate and evaluate questions to analyze and discuss images of Native American people and draw connections to selected quotes. As part of the procedure each group of students chooses and prioritizes the questions they are to focus upon and provide reasoning for their choices. In a third grade science lesson plan, the students will engage in an experiment to determine how pollinators are irreplaceable in the world’s ecosystem. Students will reflect on questions that lead to drawing conclusions and developing a claim. In a pre-kindergarten science ICT lesson plan, after performing an experiment students will make comparisons and explain the differences between real and fake snow. Similarly, reflection questions and tasks promoting student thinking on claim development and synthesis are evident in plans for diverse learners across all subject areas.
**Findings**

Across classes teaching practices reflect the school's articulated belief that students learn best when engaged in challenging tasks and student-to-student discourse connected to the instructional shifts and the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

**Impact**

High levels of student participation and thinking are reflected in discussions leading to meaningful work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A portion of the school's instructional foci centers on rigorous teaching practices and small group instruction, which was evident across classes. During a grade four science lesson, students worked in groups and used materials to create a closed electrical circuit. Students explained to their peers the process of how electricity was moving throughout the circuit. One student stated, "It's a closed circuit because if I took out the clip, it would be open and the light bulb wouldn't shine." which was similar to other student responses. When asked to add another light bulb to ensure both were lit at the same time, students made several attempts with extra wires and bulbs. One group determined that the battery wasn't strong enough to light both bulbs and added another to solve the problem. Throughout the visit, students used their notebooks to memorialize their observations and write conclusions leading to high-quality work products.

- In a fifth grade ICT class, students worked in groups and came to consensus on the solution to a set of multi-step, authentic word problems. As part of a debate in one group, the students challenged each other and eventually agreed to try two different methods, multiplying or dividing, to determine which strategy was more effective in reaching the correct answer. Both sets of students were able to solve the problem correctly and determined that dividing was more effective because multiplying took much longer. Student engagement was evident throughout the lesson.

- In a second grade ICT class, the students worked to identify the different sounds of the -ed suffix in order to determine how to properly spell words in the past tense. During the group activity, students listened to various words and based on the ending sound, determined whether to double the final consonant, drop the -e or just add the suffix. All students worked collaboratively and engaged in discussion when explaining reasons why they chose one answer over another, thus resulting in high levels of participation by all the students. As seen in other classes, student-to-student discussion fostered the group engagement. In a social studies class, students collaborated and analyzed different pictures containing Native Americans and worked together to develop and categorize questions about the images.
Additional Finding

**Quality Indicator:** 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision

| Rating: | Proficient |

**Findings**

School leaders provide feedback that accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as well as being aligned to the school's instructional foci on differentiation. School leaders use teacher observation data to effectively design and inform decisions on professional learning cycles.

**Impact**

Informed decisions on professional learning and articulated feedback connected to the school’s goals increases teachers’ schoolwide instructional practices and promotes professional growth and reflection.

**Supporting Evidence**

- As part of the school’s instructional goal on the use of effective assessment techniques, teachers are frequently provided feedback regarding this area. In one report, the school leader compliments the teacher’s classroom management practices and use of routines to enable students to work independently. As a suggestion, it was recommended to review the rubric with students to ensure they are aware of the criteria to help them become successful on their math task. Similarly, in another report, the school leader suggests the teacher use the rubric as a tool in crafting feedback and developing next steps for students to achieve successful completion of a task.

- A review of observation feedback indicates alignment to the expectations related to improving teacher practice in planning effective instruction to foster student engagement, questioning, and discussion. In one report, the school leader stated that the strengths included the clarity with which the purpose of the lesson was presented and the high level of student engagement. Suggestions included using a series of questions and prompts to further cognitively challenge students and promote metacognition. The school leader provided strategies to support the teacher’s next steps to lift the level of rigor and increase student discourse.

- This year, the new-teacher study group focuses on the core basics of the schoolwide teaching approaches and other methods. Lead teachers and mentors discuss how to conduct running records, an assessment that measures the accuracy, fluency, and comprehension level of a student while reading a book, and plan guided reading or strategy groups as part of the school’s focus on using data to inform instruction. Based on teacher observations additional individualized support is provided by the mentors. Furthermore, inter-visitations are conducted to support the ICT instructional model and lesson planning which is leading to increased growth in teacher performance.

- Staff input, along with teacher observations from the previous year, informed the cycles of professional learning throughout the year. Connected to the instructional goals for the year, cycles of professional learning include creating common formative reading assessments, standards-based checklists, planning rigorous questions and problem solving in math. Teachers report that both internal and external professional learning has supported their classroom practice, especially in deconstructing their ELA units of study and planning effective lessons.
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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</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers belong to grade-level, inquiry-based teams, which consistently analyze literacy and math assessment data and student work for a group of targeted students.

Impact

Teacher teams promote the school’s collaboration and instructional goals, which address strengthening teacher instructional capacity and result in improved practices and student progress.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams meet weekly to review data and student work on assessments and performance tasks. The team then crafts and shares strategies to foster improvements in instruction. During a kindergarten team’s inquiry focused on writing, teachers shared information regarding the skill of organization. They decided to use illustrations as a strategy to model and help explain the skill. In addition, the team is using specific frontloaded vocabulary during read alouds as a means to further model reading skills for students.

- In a fourth grade team meeting, teachers used a tuning protocol to analyze a student’s personal narrative specifically addressing the strengths and areas in need of improvement. Teachers determined that the student would benefit from additional support with elaboration and craft. Similarly, the fifth grade reviewed an on-demand narrative writing task and determined that students needed more support in author’s craft, transitions, organization, and endings. Teachers agreed to work on these skills by explicitly modeling several strategies including how to use checklists as a guide, use of read alouds to set expectations, and interactive writing for editing support.

- During a team meeting, first grade teachers reviewed data and student work from a math assessment on the topic of addition. Teachers shared that their target students demonstrated difficulty in using number relationships to add beyond 10 but not greater than 20. Some students correctly used previously taught strategies, such as the turnaround strategy. However, the teachers all agreed that the visual format of the task was confusing for the students. A decision the teachers made was to revise the format of the questions. One class showed more progress than the others. The teachers shared that they had conducted frequent fluency drills to help their students practice adding. The team decided to implement the drills again and continue with this method in the next unit on subtraction to ensure students demonstrate progress on the next assessment.