Quality Review Report

2017-2018

J.H.S. 088 Peter Rouget
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 15K088
544 7th Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11215

Principal: Ailene Mitchell

Dates of Review:
March 22, 2018 - March 23, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kimberly Bradley
The Quality Review Report

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

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

Information about the School

J.H.S. 088 Peter Rouget 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<td>is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the</td>
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<td>curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful</td>
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<td>work products</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<tr>
<td>information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>classroom levels</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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</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>
</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>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>
</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>Area of Focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned with the curricula and reflect a coherent set of beliefs. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking, participation, and ownership.

Impact

Teaching practices across the vast majority of classes reflect school beliefs that students learn best by doing through project-based learning and choice and applying their learning to real-world experiences. Student work products demonstrate high levels of thinking, participation and ownership across content areas and grade levels.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers post the day’s teaching point and language objective with the sentence stem, “I can” referring to what students will work on during the lesson. Examples include, “I can read opinion essays from multiple stakeholders in the gun control debate in order to identify elements of persuasive writing and develop my own stance, I can summarize the persuasive writing features of a text in writing using sentence frames, I can write equations to represent relationships and real world situations, and I can justify my math thinking using the language from the ‘Strong Math Poster Chart’.” There is also evidence of student ownership for learning during group work Students complete a checklist for group work. The checklist requires students to self-monitor and reflect on their work as a group, including whether all members of the group are working toward completing the task and are on-topic, including identifying explicit elements of persuasive writing, analyzing implications and bias of the opinion, developing questions to challenge and extend thinking, and establishing a stance on gun control. In the vast majority of classrooms, there is evidence that teaching practices reflect a coherent belief across the school that students learn best through project-based learning and real-world experiences.

- In a seventh-grade math class, students worked in small groups to organize and analyze data they collected from a student survey and to draw inferences based on their analysis. The survey included questions about their favorite grade level and how long they have known their best friend. Each group created a graphic and wrote about the inferences they made based on analysis of the data. Students wrote in one group, “According to the data, fifth grade was the most popular grade. Based on the chart, first and second grade was the least popular grade.” Each student group designed a poster that graphically represented the data and their inferences, demonstrating high levels of student participation and ownership.

- In a seventh-grade science class, the lesson was designed around the use of Personalized Learning Time and allowed students to self-direct their learning. Students chose to work in small groups or individually. The monitored the progress of students and met with individual students for targeted interventions. Students stated they like being able to choose their focus and the order in which they could complete the stations and unit activities. The unit on “Invisible Worlds” required students to design an installation that explains the matter and energy flowing through an ecosystem in New York City. Students used a Personalized Learning Time procedure and information from the Summit Learning platform to determine the focus area they chose to work on, what resources they needed and whether they needed to participate in a workshop for the unit as part of the self-directed learning cycle. This is evidence of student choice and ownership.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

School leaders and teacher peers support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback and next steps with the strategic use of frequent cycles of classroom observation and analysis of student work and data. Feedback accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice and supports teacher development to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers report that they receive effective feedback from both school leaders and teacher peers and stated there is a culture of collaboration. A teacher stated, “The administration is clear they are trying to build leadership from within and the administration leverages our strengths.” New teachers described the mentoring and support they received from school leaders and mentoring teachers. They also participate in new teacher professional learning and classroom visitation. The school has instructional coaches in each content area and four model teachers.

- A review of calendars shows strategic use of frequent cycles of classroom visits with time scheduled for classroom visits and immediate feedback. There is also evidence of calibration of ratings by the school leadership teams and reviews of student work and data. Agendas from coaches also reflect a focus on supporting the growth of teachers and providing opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice. One teacher wrote in their reflection, “During this year, I’ve improved my use of formative assessment to target student groups for instruction. I have used this work and data to develop effective methods of grouping and targeting students, and I have turn keyed this work to other teachers I work with in the building.”

- Classroom observations provide feedback, with each rated item on observation reports including specific language from the rubric, evidence from the observation that supports the rating, as well as glows, grows, and next steps. Examples of glows and grows included, “Teachers asked questions to extend student thinking and discussion. Incorporate a variety of forms of feedback, from both teacher and peers. Encourage students to self-assess and monitor their own progress as well as their peers.” and “Leveled text and images to provide multiple access to Harlem Renaissance and stations to provide multiple choices for learning and for student discussion.” An example of next steps states, “Consider incorporating a pair share prior to a whole group share out. This will encourage all students to engage in discussion and provide everyone with the opportunity to share out their work and get feedback from their peers. During your whole group share out you asked students to identify the strategy and answer for a student who was unable to share their explanation. This lends itself to peer assessing.” Another example of next steps state, “The structure and pacing of the lesson provided multiple access to understand the concepts. Consider holding students accountable for their learning by having them articulate their assessment of their learning using the relevant academic language and their progress toward the learning outcome with the digital graphic organizer perhaps also being a rubric that can assist students in evaluating their learning progress. A review of professional goals demonstrates alignment between written goals and feedback to teachers.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

Curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Curricular alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts results in coherence across grades and subject areas, promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Academic tasks ensure all students have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans consistently challenge students to develop rigorous habits in the course of instruction. Objective statements are communicated to students using “I can” statements and are included in lesson plans. One example is, “I can read opinion essays from multiple stakeholders in the gun control debate in order to identify claims, evaluate the strength and validity of evidence and to create thoughtful questions.” Teachers also write teacher objectives such as, “Students will critique their own museum installation and commentary, and will receive feedback on the quality of their critique in preparation for the final peer-critique on museum opening day.” Additionally, students are to consistently write and connect their thinking to evidence from the text. Lesson plans consistently detailed high-level questions. Examples of higher-order questions found in curricular documents include, “What are the elements of argumentative writing?”, “What are other techniques used in argumentative writing and why or how do authors use these?” “How can we read to identify elements of argumentative writing?”, and “How can we analyze the strength of an argument and is this always an objective process?” The curricula purposefully aligns to key standards and integrates the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts.

- Lesson and unit plans reflect full integration of the instructional shifts embedded in Common Core Learning Standards across content areas. For example, lesson plans in English emphasized the value of text-based evidence in argument through the reading of multiple texts and creating thoughtful questions, identifying claims, and assessing the strength of the evidence and counterclaim. One example of the inclusion of the mathematical instructional shift to increase rigor is a lesson that requires students to understand independent and dependent variables in real world relationships, determine which internet plan is a better deal based on the number of minutes used for video streaming, and to understand that the cost of each plan depends on the number of minutes the consumer uses for video streaming. Across all grades and content areas, there is a written scope and sequence that integrates the instructional shifts resulting in coherence that promotes college and career readiness for all students.

- A review of curricular documents demonstrates academic tasks that ensure all students have access to the curricula and are cognitively engaged. In an eighth-grade English Language Arts class, the lesson provides the option for students to read the texts independently or in groups, that additional pieces of text that pertain to the same topic will be used with students depending on their reading level, and that the use of tiered graphic organizers and anchors is matched with the needs of each student. In a seventh-grade science lesson plan, students are given personalized learning time and set personalized learning goals and learn the science content at their own pace, using resources and strategies such as the personalized learning time procedure sheet that works best for them. Through the refinement of the curricula and academic tasks, students including the lowest- and highest-achieving students are cognitively engaged and have access to the curricula.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics and grading policies that are aligned with the school's curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. In addition, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

**Impact**

High quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers’ assessment practices result in effective instructional adjustments to meet all students’ needs and articulate to them what their next learning steps should be.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments that result in actionable and meaningful feedback regarding student achievement. In an English Language Arts assignment, students wrote an argumentative essay taking a position on whether or not the potential benefits of technology outweigh the disadvantages. In their response, they needed to incorporate citations from at least 3 different texts they had read in class. In one example of feedback given to the students based on the assignment's rubric, the teacher wrote, “Very well organized, but next time use a mix of textual evidence and paraphrasing in your essay. Also good reference to all ideas in the article but where’s your thinking and ideas (reasoning).” Another example of feedback states, “Very nicely argued. Good evidence. Watch your passive voice. Be confident in your ideas and point of view. Make sure you refute a counter argument next time.”

- Through assessments such as Mastery Connect, running records, and Degrees of Reading Power that are aligned with the school's curricula, school leaders and teachers have a clear picture of student progress towards mastery and track student progress in levels of mastery, near mastery, and needing remediation in particular standards. The school teams develop a remediation plan and analyze the effect of the plan through continued assessments. For example, one team’s remediation plan states, “The seventh-grade team will do an inquiry project using student model response and a cycle of student self-reflection to improve student performance on constructed response questions. An example of written analysis states, “This is a 9% increase from last year. Our current interventions are proving successful and we anticipate growth in this standard.” This analysis is conducted throughout the year and is monitored by the school's data team and school leaders. Teachers were able to speak to the monitoring and identify specific students they were supporting to move to mastery. As a result, students are showing progress in moving from remediation to near mastery and mastery and ultimately impacting student performance on city and state assessments.

- Students reflect on their work and contribution during classroom activities. An example from one student shows their reflection on their preparation for learning by reviewing their learning and notes, by using feedback from teachers and exit slips to continuously improve, and by being in control of their actions and reactions. The student also reflected on asking and sharing questions to help everyone understand, sharing their strategies and solutions to math problems with their peers, and identified that they needed to continue to pay attention to details in word problems.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students that focuses on a student-centered classroom where students own their learning and develop self-directed learning goals.

**Impact**

Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of mutual accountability. Students are provided with clear, focused, and effective feedback and guidance supports that ensures students are prepared for the next level.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for teaching and learning and conduct classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* as the standard for professionalism and high expectations for instruction. Regular professional development around best practices support meeting the expectations including working on reading and writing in content areas, adult learning, Math in the City, and Teachers College Reading and Writing Project. Content, grade and house teacher teams create mutual accountability among teams by leading meetings with specific outcomes with the goal of all participants having responsibility for shared goals of increased student achievement being implemented across classes.

- The school uses a staff handbook and professional development calendar and resource guide to communicate expectations to the staff about the components of an effective lesson and unit plan, the school’s grading policy and how to incorporate supports for various groups of students. The handbook also reviews the expectation that all staff members are to maintain accurate grades regularly in the school’s online grading program. Staff and students developed the school’s core values of respect, empathy, curiosity, integrity and resilience and posters illustrating the school’s core values are posted throughout the building and are referred to by students and staff. In addition to schoolwide communication, the school is divided into three houses and there is weekly email communication to the staff and students within the house.

- In the vast majority of classrooms, hallways and offices, there are posters in the shape of a shield that remind students to reflect on their thinking by asking themselves, “What am I learning, How do I know I am learning, Why does it matter, and What do I do with it?” Students refer to these questions when completing their academic and core values goal sheet for each class and unit of study. For an English class unit on argumentative nonfiction, a student wrote that their academic goal for the unit is to, “Evaluate an argument if the reasoning is valid and if there is enough quality evidence to support a claim. Draw evidence from various types of text to support my analysis.” The student identified “Resilience-keep it pushing through the difficult times” as their core/behavior goal. Student are expected to write an explanation of the goals they selected for the unit, the strategies they will use to meet the goal, and how they will know they have met their goal. A student’s response stated, “I chose these goals because I seem to struggle the most with them and I’m not able to function right when it comes to these topics. Everything gets tough for me. I seem to give up instead of trying and I feel like I can be a lazy person.” Students referred to the core values and goal setting during meetings and the feedback they receive from staff members on their progress towards academic and core values goals. There is evidence that students own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level.
### Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

**Findings**

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaboration. Across the school, grade level, content, and house teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data and student work products, and to share teaching strategies.

**Impact**

Teacher engagement in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations has strengthened their instructional capacity and promoted implementation of the instructional shifts. Systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in mastery of goals for groups of students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations by grade, content areas and house. In minutes from a math inquiry meeting, teachers described their observations that students struggled with explaining how they created their “Camp Coordinate,” in particular how they explained their mathematical thinking and decisions in class discussions. The teachers determined that students need to learn how to use appropriate math vocabulary through responding to journal prompts to effectively explain the steps they use to solve problems. The teachers also use data to from a Mastery Connect assessment to determine which students were close to mastery. Based on their incorporation of journal prompts, teachers concluded that students overall had more to say in their written explanation when given prompts, some students were more likely to explain what the numbers in their solution represented in the context of the problem when given the prompt, but the richness of the academic language is still missing. Also while some students were more likely to explain what the numbers represented in the context of the problem, others are still not making the connection clear to the reader. In the team’s reflection, teachers stated, “We learned that often times math teachers expect that when the mathematical thinking is evident in student work, it will translate clearly over to their explanations. We often fail to recognize that supports are necessary to help students structure their thinking into responses the same way they are given supports to structure their writing in ELA.” As a result of the vast majority of teachers meeting in inquiry-based professional collaborations, there is evidence of instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners.

- A seventh-grade team was observed analyzing student work from a recent writing task for students they share in their English Language Arts and Social Studies classes. The team utilized a student work analysis protocol that included selecting low, medium, and high student work to analyze whether students met the objectives of the assignment, identify and discuss the student misconceptions, and what students did not demonstrate. They then determined what instructional next steps the team would incorporate across the different content areas. The team determined that high-performing students are using relevant evidence and that reasoning sentence frames are helping them in the development of their own thinking, but for medium- and low-performing students, there might be a need for an additional scaffold between the outline and written draft. The team also determined they will design a universal checklist for writing across disciplines.

- There is evidence that teams use a variety of data including running records, results from the Degrees of Reading Power assessment, student work, assessments from Mastery Connect and that the analysis of classroom practice and assessment data has resulted in improvement in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.