Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 110 The Monitor
Elementary 14K110
124 Monitor Street
Brooklyn
NY 11222

Principal: Anna Cano Amato

Dates of Review:
March 8, 2018 - March 9, 2018

Lead Reviewer: AJ Hepworth
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. 110 The Monitor 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td></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>Well Developed</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 Celebration</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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching methods strategically provide multiple entry points and high-quality supports and extensions for students through the use of differentiated texts and presentations with their work products and discussions.

Impact

All learners are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and demonstrate higher-order thinking skills, participation, and ownership in their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- A visit to a grade three Integrated Co-Teaching class demonstrated instructional alignment to the core belief of engaging students in rigorous and challenging curricula via independent, hands-on learning to promote thinking. Students reflected on important features found in communities throughout the world similar to their typical school day. Each table group of students analyzed text about children’s lives in different countries and compared their experiences in math, art, writing, lunch, and games. Provision of a graphic organizer to track findings and a variety of leveled texts for content supported students’ ability to engage in challenging group discussions. Additionally, students extended their newly acquired knowledge to their classmates in brief presentations, thus taking ownership of their learning.

- During a grade four English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, students referred to visual support cards with definitions and cartoon or photographic images for contextual understanding of challenging content-based vocabulary. The word illuminate was defined as to ‘light up’ and included a light bulb radiating light in a dark background. The word descend, was represented as a set of staircases with an arrow pointing downward. Students used these visual support cards to further their understanding of real-life stories from Hurricane Sandy. Additionally, differentiated readings strategically promoted higher-order thinking for specific students by providing appropriate leveled work. Several readings included additional annotation and highlighted key words to further engage students understanding of the text.

- Students in a grade five math class demonstrated their understanding of fractions by explaining the distance a student would run based on applied math reasoning. One boy explained two different strategies he applied to calculate the total distance. Additionally, he checked his work and defended it with noticings and a chart. Other students represented their thinking using self-selected problem solving procedures thus making connections to observed patterns while engaging their ability to explain solutions using mathematical language.

- Math games pushed students to extend their thinking in a grade one dual language class beyond the learning objective having to do with simple addition and subtraction. Instead of counting and totaling objects, students made connections and identified facts between numbers one and twenty using cubes and cards. Students additionally read books on the topic to promote meaningful application and understanding of numbers and rules of subtraction. Furthermore, some students took the initiative to print out additional challenges from an online resource once they completed the initial learning objective.
### Findings

Teachers use and create assessment measures including rubrics and checklists that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Additionally, a variety of common assessments are utilized to determine student progress toward grade-level goals.

### Impact

Actionable feedback is provided to students on their work, however not all students have a meaningful understanding of the feedback they receive. Additionally, although common assessments are used to adjust curricula and instruction, all students have yet to demonstrate increased mastery.

### Supporting Evidence

- Assessment tools and structures are used across classes in the form of stars and steps to provide feedback to students regarding their completed assignments. Stars represent positive feedback while steps communicate areas for improvement or growth. For example, several star and step feedback forms attached to student work highlighted efforts to be creative or the incorporation of organizational elements when writing a letter, while steps were limited to a reminder “that writing really makes a difference.” The absence of precise, meaningful next steps limits the students’ ability to develop and improve their work so progress can be made towards achieving a clear portrait of mastery. Additionally, some students in the younger grades, struggled to make meaning of the feedback or assessment criteria used to grade their work when prompted. Although feedback in the form of stars and steps is less frequently used in math, most students did express “we write reflections based on our test performance” so they understand learning expectations.

- Checklists and rubrics offer students opportunities to reflect on their progress toward learning goals. Students write an explanation to justify assessment results on a variety of assignments. This includes noting the piece of work of which the student is proudest and efforts put into place on future assignments leading to improved work. This feedback represents habits, study skills, or conventions to be implemented and improve the students’ achievement on subsequent assignments.

- Results from teacher administered common assessments in grade one connected to spelling are disaggregated several times a year to group students in Response to Intervention periods and learning circles. During those periods of instruction, student misconceptions are revisited and addressed. Although most students demonstrate growth, the practice is not similarly implemented with coherence across all content areas and grades. Additionally, New York State Math and ELA assessment results are reviewed for trends and patterns to inform instruction and student grouping; however, benchmark results do not demonstrate increased mastery for all, especially in math. Furthermore, item analysis results appear to be tracked for progress in ELA with more fidelity than in math or other content areas.
**Additional Finding**

| Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: | Well Developed |

**Findings**

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts by embedding challenging tasks. Additionally, rigorous habits and higher-order skills are integrated vertically in all grades and subjects, including dual language.

**Impact**

Students experience college and career readiness skills, through a coherent emphasis on tasks that embed academic language and eco-sustainability in order to demonstrate higher-order thinking in all subjects and grades.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Essential questions guide the mastery skills required to advance to the next level throughout curricular planning documents so students are aware of the overarching ideas of the unit and learning objectives necessary for college and career readiness. Alignment of learning objectives to the Common Core Learning Standards further emphasizes college and career readiness skills. For example, a grade four-lesson plan has an essential question for students to answer, “How can you use addition and subtraction to describe a pattern with fractions?” Doing so, will enable them to understand the relationship between factors and multiples and determine if a number is a multiple of another given number. Real world problems provide students with opportunities to apply their learning and gain a deeper understanding of the connections between content and the pre-requisite skills required to move forward.

- Lessons are planned so students receive rigorous content that is differentiated to support on-grade or enrichment levels so that higher-order skills are emphasized. Support for students in a grade five-math curricular document references fraction tiles as a concrete model to help students understand what encompasses a common denominator. On-grade rigorous opportunities challenge students to “struggle [and] find equivalent fractions using printed number lines to help them see how fractions are equivalent.” For students who have already achieved mastery of the content, enrichment opportunities extend learning by such activities as explanations and demonstrations of their thinking using alternative approaches. Additionally, prepopulated tables and vocabulary guidance support English Language Learners (ELLs) so they are engaged appropriately.

- Teachers integrate the instructional shifts and vertically align learning experiences by making purposeful decisions emphasizing student engagement and challenging curricula. French dual language classes plan learning experiences for students with a side-by-side model to ensure content aligns with the Common Core Learning Standards in both languages, English and French. Additionally, planned rigorous units of instruction align with the schools focus on eco-sustainability through a lens of our relationship and responsibility to nature. For example, essential questions for a unit of study may include, “How did Hurricane Harvey affect humans and society in Texas?” or “Can everyday people be heroes in their community?” Furthermore, reciprocal teaching is planned throughout classes and subjects to deepen conversation around literary text. Students apply their reading skills and thinking to expand their understanding of text, as well as promote student voice, and independent learning.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 3.4 High Expectations  
Rating: Well Developed

Findings

School leaders and staff systematically communicate high expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness and successfully partner with families to establish a culture for learning that promotes effective habits for students.

Impact

Clear, focused, and effective guidance and advisement ensures students meet expectations and own their educational experience in preparation for middle school and beyond.

Supporting Evidence

- Beyond the communication from school to parents regarding their child’s progress, parents support all students through a partnership they have established with the entire school community. Parents participate in the Leader in Me program, which teaches 21st century leadership and life skills to students and creates a culture of student empowerment based on the idea that every child can be a leader. Parents serve in the capacity of school librarian so all students in the school experience research and reading in a library setting. Furthermore, they have created several committees to achieve the high expectations school leadership has established; inclusive of grant writers, lunchroom volunteers, holiday and multicultural festival liaisons, and tour guides for prospective parents. Additionally, parents in conjunction with the sustainability coach are leading a green initiative to address issues related to health and nutrition, outdoor learning, and lead in soil contamination for the entire school community, private and public.

- The Leader in Me seven habits of effective people are embedded throughout all grades and classes to guide students’ daily decision-making leading to ownership of their educational experiences. Habits of being proactive and beginning with the end in mind are strategically implemented in the younger grades so students understand to remain engaged in the learning and think through their ideas while students in the upper grades learn to synergize their thinking by collaborating creatively on teams with an open mind. Students expressed their ability to apply the seven habits, including a recently adopted additional habit of using student voice. Much of the students’ ability to take ownership in their learning stems from their monitoring and tracking of their own progress towards meeting academic expectations.

- A weekly gazette is mailed to all families communicating what they need to know related to upcoming events along with a message from either the principal or assistant principal which emphasizes expectations and the established culture for learning. Additionally, one student is spotlighted, a classroom is highlighted, and wellness and sustainability efforts are communicated.

- Beginning in grade three, students have conversations related to preparation for middle school. In grades four and five, students meet with the guidance counselor and are informed of all the necessary supports and processes involved to support their next level of learning. Students take ownership of their learning by leading parent conferences. They prepare in class and use their assessment data and Leader in Me binder to highlight their stars and steps.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders support the development of teachers with effective, accurate, and timely feedback which clearly articulates next steps through cycles of observations aligned with the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

Impact

Feedback and next steps to teachers from school leaders promotes instructional practices by increasing both students’ discourse and their engagement with rigorous tasks through planning, questioning, and discussion.

Supporting Evidence

- A cycle of inquiry supports the elevation of schoolwide instructional practices that target selected components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* in alignment with the instructional foci of engaging students with challenging tasks through conversation, discussion, and teacher facilitation leading to independent work. Feedback from school leaders to teachers shared on Annual Professional Performance Review (APPR) evaluation forms is based on specific evidence collected during classroom visits. A rationale for the rating accompanies strengths and next steps. For example, a next step on one APPR form suggested allowing students more time to respond to each other’s thinking and challenge one another to improve questioning and discussion techniques.

- Timely post-observation conversations between school administration and teachers include feedback with recommendations, especially support on how to improve future lesson planning. Teachers use the information from their observations to promote their professional growth. One teacher shared she was supported recently to provide more elaborate feedback with her stars and steps. Since implementing more effective feedback to meet clear expectations, the teacher noted that from a review of student work and data, students’ language skills are improving and helping their writing. Other teachers shared similar growth. Based on observation feedback, another teacher encouraged her higher performing students to assist the lower performing students with their work through peer review. School leaders and teachers agree the instructional observation cycle effectively supports their curricular and instructional proficiency.

- A review of several APPR evaluation forms demonstrated areas of strength and improvement aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Additional evaluator notes included areas for improvement with demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy, design of coherent instruction, use of questioning and discussion techniques, use of assessment during instruction, and engaging students in learning. Teachers with effective ratings were encouraged to share their successes with colleagues to build a professional community and lift desirable instructional strategies across classrooms.
Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in weekly, inquiry-based grade collaborations that include addressing student misconceptions and gaps in instruction through an analysis of assessment data and student work.

Impact

Teachers strengthen their instructional capacity and delivery of lessons while promoting student independence and high-quality work, specifically in writing.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers across grades and disciplines work together during weekly inquiry meetings to review student work and ensure they are appropriately planning and assessing students to meet the Common Core Learning Standards. Additionally, teams collaborate to identify instructional gaps and student misconceptions connected to specific content standards. Teachers noted their inquiry work has resulted in alignment of curriculum, especially for the dual language program. As such, students are given high-quality supports and scaffolds to enter into their tasks and be successful. Checklists and rubrics are consistently redesigned by teachers during inquiry meetings to meet their students at the appropriate level.

- A protocol for collaborative inquiry work and review of student work supports teachers’ consistent review of instructional strategies to implement. Teachers identify evidence in their students’ work based on their current thinking. Gaps are then articulated based on students’ struggles. Next, teachers discuss implications which result in planning and preparation of instructional next steps and strategies that improve goals for groups of students. French teachers implemented word banks to support students’ collaboration and synergize their problem solving. On-demand writing tasks have resulted in students improved opinion writing.

- A grade one team meeting objective was to discuss the impact of a recently created opinion writing checklist on a sample of students representing general education, students with disabilities, and those classified as ELLs. Teachers previously created the checklist based on noticings from students’ informational writing which lacked good understanding of conventions and spelling. Furthermore, students lacked deep understanding with reasoning and opinion writing. As such, teachers followed up with some direct instruction to address those gaps and created the “checklist/rubric” to score the student work and help them pace and self-assess. Each teacher identified areas of concern and limitations in the checklist. Specifically, for some ELL students the checklist actually limited their thinking and creativity by serving as a minimal guide and not pushing their ideas further. Conversely, some teachers noted how exciting it was to see several other ELL students refer to the checklist while writing and embed strong conventions, resulting in a higher score on their on-demand writing assignment.