Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 200 Benson School
Elementary 20K200
1940 Benson Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11214

Principal: Javier Muniz

Dates of Review:
January 24, 2018 - January 25, 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. 200 Benson School 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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
</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>
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<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>
</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>
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</tbody>
</table>
## 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>
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## Systems for Improvement

<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>Area of Celebration</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>
## Area of Celebration

### Quality Indicator: 1.3 Leveraging Resources

#### Rating: Well Developed

### Findings

The use of community-based partnerships, literacy-based professional development resources, and other student-centered decisions, including hiring practices are well-aligned and support the school’s goals and long-range action plans.

### Impact

Accountable collaborations among faculty lead to meaningful work products, which promote students’ progress and access to college and career opportunities.

### Supporting Evidence

- For the last two years, the implementation of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) writing model has led to increases in the quality of writing for English Language Learners (ELLs) and student with disabilities. Originally implemented in fifth grade, the use of this structured model has spread to other grades and focuses primarily on writing content. Areas addressed include planning, revising, sentence construction, genre elements, and self-regulation strategies, which connect with the school’s goals, related to improving writing for these sub-groups. A review of student work products in one of the classes reflects an average five percent increase in pre- and post-writing data. Data from other classes using this model indicates average increases of one to two percent. Thus, there is increased progress towards the achievement of school goals.

- Ongoing professional development is in place to assist teachers in developing literacy methods. Specifically, there is planning for unit of study modifications and oral language advanced literacy approaches in support of student achievement, especially for ELLs and students with disabilities. There is a focus on deepening teachers’ understanding of scaffolding in unit activities using Bloom’s *Taxonomy* to develop supportive modifications in literacy instruction, which aligns to the school’s instructional goal. A review of lesson plans reflects scaffolds, visuals and tiered questioning to engage students during class.

- To support the goal, which addresses building a positive learning environment, partnerships with several organizations including the use of a comfort dog, are helping create a culture of learning throughout the building. Students report that the comfort dog reduces their stress levels and thus, as one student shared, “helps me get back to work in a positive way.” Results from online occurrence reports reflect a decrease in high-level infractions.

- Programming structures vary based on students’ needs across the school. Due to the large number of ELLs, there is an increase in English as a New Language (ENL) parallel teaching programs, which are integrated classroom teaching structures. Increased co-planning between general education and ENL teachers has resulted. Several teacher teams across the school have developed inquiry-based collaborations and progress monitoring binders to monitor the quality of program structures and student progress towards their individual goals. In addition, after school and Saturday programs were developed using specialized programs that are monitored by the school’s Response to Intervention Team to determine whether additional support is required. A review of the fall term data from these specific interventions reflects that the vast majority of students who participated in these target programs have made progress towards meeting their grade-level requirements in reading.
Findings

Although teachers create and use rubrics and other summative assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math that are aligned to the curricula, the analysis of common assessments to measure student progress across subjects and grades has yet to be an ongoing practice.

Impact

Across classes, feedback at this time does not reflect consistent, actionable next steps to assist students in improving their work products. The staff is in the process of utilizing common assessments across subject areas to foster adjustments to curricula and instruction.

Supporting Evidence

- Throughout the school, student work is posted on bulletin boards and in work folders, which contain rubrics indicating criteria and scoring levels, which range from 1-4. During an interview, students were able to explain whether they were performing well, based on the scores they received on the rubric or, based on the school's grading policy, which used a percentage range. One student shared that she knew she was a Level 3 because she received a score of 80 percent. However, across subjects a review of feedback on student work reflects that some student work lacks next steps with details to assist students with improving their work. A math assessment indicated a Level 3 on the task yet lacked the next steps that would help the student obtain a Level 4.

- During an interview, some students were able to use their teacher’s feedback to explain clear next steps that would help them improve their writing. One student stated that on her narrative writing essay, she was able to show the beginning, middle, and end, which helped structure her story. However, based on her teacher’s feedback and the rubric score, she needed to add more details to develop the story. The teacher provided a question for her to think about and the student stated, “I should have added more details to explain how the kitchen table broke and how my character got more money in the story. I will have to make sure that I pay attention to those things next time I write a story.” Although, this student was able to share how her teacher’s feedback could help her, other students were unable to provide such an in-depth explanation due to incomplete or a lack of next steps.

- At grade-level and other school based meetings school staff use benchmark assessments to consistently measure the progress of students in reading and math. Teachers reported that they review this data and develop small-guided reading or strategy groups to work on those skills indicated as in need of improvement. After reflecting on the most recent reading data, one teacher created five, targeted ability-based groups in ELA and math to support students who are struggling and those who are on-grade level. A review of recent primary, letter-sound assessments reveal increases in some students' abilities after working in small word-study groups with their teachers. However, a review of curricula and instructional tools reflected adjustments from common assessments in science and social studies were not in evidence indicating this process is still in development.
Findings
School staff ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and make purposeful decisions to integrate the instructional shifts related to fluency building and developing claims. Teachers use data from formative assessments to plan and refine tasks for a variety of learners.

Impact
Planned tasks provide access to the curricula, cognitively engage all students, build coherence and promote college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- This year, school leaders and the instructional team purposely decided to use updated versions of their current curricula and engage in practices where they continuously unpack and align tasks within the ELA units of study. Additionally, the team makes adjustments and maintains efforts to vertically align instructional shifts. A decision was made to use close-reading questions for discussion and integrate more turn and talk prompts into lesson plans to further team discussion around claims and opinions. This resulted in an increased number of text-based answers and analysis tasks in units. A review of ELA unit plans reflects lessons on using details to support claims. Fourth grade writing activities specifically require students to quote from the text when writing an essay to provide well-supported reasons. Similarly, in a first grade ELA unit, lesson objectives include the use of text features and facts from a text to support claims in a module addressing becoming a good citizen.

- Math pacing guides, unit plans and tasks reflect an emphasis on building fluency and vocabulary. In fifth grade, skills reflected in the first half of the school year, emphasize fluency with whole numbers and decimals. Similarly, in grade one, units of study focus on number facts and operations. A review of lesson plans indicates that teaching vocabulary is targeted through the planning of semantic maps and other graphic organizers. In a fifth grade math plan, question prompts require students to define words such as multiple and equivalent, before the rest of the procedure is implemented.

- Teachers use a combination of formative data and summative data to plan lessons, which contain tiered tasks for groups of students. In a second grade science lesson plan students were grouped using formative data and provided modified graphic organizers to measure the distance of how different cars travel based on their length and weight. In a lesson plan for a second-third grade bridge class for students with disabilities, the lesson plan reflects tiering. The independent group will receive two different types of letter writing paper. They will develop an opinion as to why the main character should have an iguana. Another group will use a different strategy provided by the teacher to extract details from the text to support their rationale for obtaining the iguana prior to writing their letter. In a Russian-English, dual-language, first grade lesson plan, the procedure includes the viewing of a video to support students with creating numbers up to 100 using tens and ones. An additional graphic organizer is provided for certain students to use with a partner or group member.
### Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated belief that students learn best through explicit teaching and the consistent integration of multiple modalities. These practices serve as entry points informed by the instructional shifts and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

**Impact**

All learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities are engaged in appropriately, challenging tasks and demonstrate critical thinking in their work products.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders and staff have stated that they believe students learn best when using strategies which adhere to diverse learning styles thus ensuring all students meet the standards-based learning objectives in different subjects each day. In addition, the staff indicates that they utilize a variety of tools to support students’ intellectual engagement. Across the grades, the use of the gradual release model was emphasized during lessons to provide students with explicit teaching. Additionally, modeling and providing small group instruction as needed are employed to support their understanding of targeted standards. All students were fully engaged. In a first grade, Integrated Co-teaching (ICT) ELA class using a grouping model known as parallel teaching, both teachers used anchor charts to model how to determine the similarities and differences of schooling across the world based on key details in a text. Both groups of students were able to make comparisons using how students dressed or other facts they learned from the text to achieve the target of the lesson. A review of student work across grades reflects a focus on the use of graphic organizers and other tools to aid students in producing essays and other forms of writing incorporating the instructional shifts.

- In a fifth grade ICT ELA class, both teachers asked students to work in pairs to review their essays and support each other’s writing revisions. Students reported using SRSD strategies such as Topic, Information, Detailed Examination, and Ending (TIDE) to produce their essays and used other strategies provided by their partners to support those revisions. One student suggested that her partner work on his topic sentence. Additionally, the student recommended he work on the detailed examination portion by explaining why those details are important and revise the first sentence to align with the focus of the essay. Additionally, in order to ensure that the essay made sense, the partner helped him choose which details to remove from the writing based on their relevancy.

- The use of sentence stems and support with vocabulary help students engage in active discussion and meet the learning objectives. In a kindergarten class, students worked with a partner to understand the meaning of the word plow while reading a text and completing a Frayer Model graphic organizer. After working with partners, students described the plow and where they would be able to locate one, such as on a farm. Additionally, students shared examples of what was not a plow by contrasting the machine with other vehicles including cars, buses, and even bicycles. In a dual-language, first grade math class, groups of students used multiple tools, including a place value chart and base ten blocks, to create different numbers the teacher assigned to their table groups. One student was having difficulty using the place value chart. His peer suggested that he use the base ten blocks and supported him in obtaining the correct answer.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations to students through special programs and the Schoolwide Enrichment Model (SEM). Parents are provided ongoing feedback, connected to their children’s next-level readiness.

Impact
The ongoing, detailed feedback to parents helps families understand their children’s progress in meeting national standards and provides guidance to students in preparing for the next grade level.

Supporting Evidence

- Parents reported that teachers and other school staff communicate expectations via online messaging programs and through one-to-one conferences. Additionally, school websites, newsletters and contact by the parent coordinator, provide information on upcoming grade-level themes or topics to ensure parents’ awareness. One, second grade newsletter states that students will be learning about the elements of story structure and focusing on how characters in two stories respond to events and challenges. Parents reported that workshops such as those on phonemic awareness, math, and reading strategies for students with disabilities help assist them with their children at home and in understanding the expectations of the grade.

- Parents reported that the school uses a variety of tools to share how their children are meeting the schoolwide expectations. These include online grading programs, tests that are sent home, parent-teacher conferences, and other teacher meetings. Additionally, end-of-unit literacy assessment progress reports are provided parents, which help them understand how their children are advancing as measured by the standards for the grade. Parents reported that teachers provide tools and additional work to assist them in supporting their children at home.

- School leaders and staff provide a SEM which offers students’ choice regarding a wide variety of cluster topics. This offering exposes students to opportunities to hone skills that will support post-elementary school readiness. One student reported that in the Underwater Ecosystem cluster the group is working to create a submersible and a three-dimensional model of a deep-water ecosystem. He explained that this project has helped him develop measurement and science skills. Another student shared that being socially conscious was important. This understanding was the result of the project done in the cluster regarding increasing student awareness of world issues. Other programming options include music and a technology course. There is a technology squad, which students reported helps build responsibility and their organizational skills, which are used each day in class.

- Other programs which foster increased awareness of skills needed post-elementary school includes the violin program, which is sponsored by a community-based organization. Students reported that they are working to become musicians and that the program has helped build skills such as memorization of musical notes and coordination, which she states is needed to play the violin. Another student explained that building these skills has further aided him in memorizing math facts. Other students reported that they are working on their portfolio to qualify for specialized middle schools, which have strong music programs. The program is helping them develop a talent that they can use when they try out for these screened schools.
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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Findings
The majority of teachers meet in structured, inquiry-based grade-level and vertical ELA teams to consistently analyze student work and data for specific students.

Impact
Professional collaborations promote the achievement of school goals and the implementation of the Common Core, strengthening the teams’ instructional capacity. Improved teacher practice and progress towards goals for groups of students, especially ELLs has resulted.

Supporting Evidence

- Across grades, teachers examine student work and data from performance-based assessments. This year, there is an emphasis to support ongoing efforts towards increasing comprehension including vocabulary acquisition, especially for ELLs. To that end, each class targets four students and reviews a combination of formative and summative data to determine whether students are progressing. Modifications are used as needed to increase the use of academic vocabulary in work products to ensure student progress. Based on their review of student progress, teachers learned how to determine the effectiveness of certain graphic organizers. For example, data indicated that the Frayer Model is more effective than a semantic map for some lessons. Teachers also learned that using tiered questioning practices, visuals and the use of the ENL Progressions have supported teaching the ELL students. They are now using additional anchor charts to support them as well. A review of current data reflects that students are demonstrating progress in reading. In a data summary for a third grade class, students increased two percent from pre-to post assessments. Similar increases are noted in other grades.

- Teachers use the ATLAS, a protocol to structure how teams analyze student work and assessments, to aid in their reflection of student data and how the implementations of specific strategies are supporting the school’s goals towards increasing writing scores for ELLs and students with disabilities. A review of teacher team notes reflects this is a consistent process across grades. In first grade, a review of team notes reveals that teachers have been working on supporting students who are struggling with sequencing. They have created flip charts, graphic organizers, and checklists to support them. Through the process, teachers learned that the creation of an assessment on the concept of sequence with pre-ordered pictures was not an accurate determination of whether students were able to apply the skill and created another more authentic version. Data indicates this revision enabled students to meet their sequencing goal.

- During an upper-grade, vertical team meeting, teachers reviewed SRSD ELA tasks using the ATLAS protocol. Based on a review of student work, the teachers determined that the students improved in the development of the structure of an essay and in use of evidence. However, a continued focus for students would be to work on details and elaboration of their evidence to provide greater meaning for their readers. Teachers reviewed the Goalbook as a resource to find strategies that would support their students. They agreed to extend the topic across lessons and use sentence stems to assist students with this skill area.