Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 244 Richard R. Green
Elementary 18K244
5404 Tilden Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11203

Principal: Deon Edwards

Dates of Review:
March 27, 2018 - March 28, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Marion Wilson
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. 244 Richard R. Green serves students in grade PK through grade 5. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

### School Quality Ratings

#### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>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</th>
<th>Additional Finding</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<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 Focus</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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</td>
<td>Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>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>
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<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>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>
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<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>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>
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</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings
School leaders and teacher leaders, including instructional coaches, have a well-coordinated and systematic observation system, which includes both evaluative and non-evaluative feedback that accurately captures strengths and next steps.

Impact
Strategically shared ongoing feedback to teachers has helped to elevate schoolwide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection. Feedback articulates clear expectations and aligns with professional goals for teachers.

Supporting Evidence

- School and teacher leaders developed a comprehensive tool for observations that is customized for each teacher. The chart showed that each teacher was visited bi-weekly based on their level of need. In the first round of observations, teachers were visited and given non-evaluative feedback and next steps aligned to their goals. There is a well-coordinated tracking system to ensure that teachers are seen within a two- to three-week period to note growth or if further follow-up is needed. For example, some of the next steps for teachers included, “More critical thinking, more rigorous tasks, more higher-order thinking questions, differentiation, pacing and timing, clearer learning targets, etc.” Summary notes are then reviewed by the administrative team to ensure that teachers receive personalized supports and follow-up. During the teacher team meeting, teachers spoke about receiving timely, strategic feedback that was helping them refine their practices and incorporating more effective teaching practices. In addition, the principal shared that she has seen increased levels of data analysis, checks for understanding throughout lessons, and more thoughtful created tools and strategies as a result of her strategic feedback to teachers.

- Through frequent informal and informal observations, instructional coaches and school administrators use low-inference notes to provide teachers with examples of strengths and next steps to support their growth. The non-evaluative feedback from coaches and evaluative feedback from school leaders is strategically coordinated to provide teachers with feedback that reflects their true abilities. Teachers shared that they receive written and verbal feedback aligned to their professional goals and to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The principal developed a summative conference tool, which she uses to launch each school year. Included in the worksheet are strengths, successes for the year, growth areas, next steps, impactful professional learning workshops, and suggestions for improvement for the following year.

- Another sample observation tool summary sheet had each teacher, date of the observation, the feedback they received, and the teacher leaders that were charged with supporting them. As a result of strategic planning, organization, and observation visits, teachers are receiving feedback that is well-aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching and is much more reflective of their practice. Teachers receive meaningful feedback regarding classroom management, questioning techniques, and how to check for understanding using varied techniques. Teachers shared during an interview that they better understand and have internalized the criteria for effective leading to highly effective practices in terms of questioning and discussion, engaging students in learning, and the use of frequent checks for understanding throughout a lesson. Teachers noted that feedback is always aligned to the core beliefs about how students learn best so that they keep in mind-deepening students’ conceptual understanding when planning activities. As a result, most teachers have improved lesson planning and delivery so that special populations receive challenging work with appropriate scaffolds built in to support accessibility of rigorous lessons.
Findings

Across most classrooms, teaching practices and strategies articulate a core set of beliefs about how students learn best, which includes providing differentiated and tiered activities. Students are able to participate in class discussions and work together cooperatively.

Impact

Teaching practices help to motivate and engage students in discussions and cooperative learning activities. However, the school does not yet employ tactical extensions to support all students in producing meaningful work products thus hindering some learners from taking ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- The school community believes children learn best when they understand and are able to articulate what they are learning so they will take ownership of their learning. In addition, they also believe that children learn best when they are given questions tasks that require exploration, critical thinking, problem-solving, and analysis so they can contribute to high levels of discussions. In most classes visited, these beliefs were seen in part; however, there were missed opportunities for student ownership in the vast majority of classrooms. In a self-contained math classroom, students worked compliantly in groups on different activities to add fractions with like denominators. Students tried to work independently to answer questions that could be answered without the use of the shaded in graphic organizer representative of a vegetable farm. However, in a fourth grade math class, students worked cooperatively to complete activity packets and demonstrated high levels of thinking and participation. Students had to predict the measurement of mass for each container with different elements and then use the data collected to answer questions. As a result, some teaching practices do not incorporate the school’s beliefs and afford students opportunities for self-directed learning activities.

- Supports and scaffolds to help English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities engage with challenging tasks were present in most classrooms; however, some lessons lacked extensions for higher performing students. For example, in one social studies class, students researched and analyzed information from texts and primary sources to understand the reasons for European Exploration. Students used graphic organizers to respond to the name of the explorer they were working on, character traits, fun facts about the person, and what the person was famous for discovering. Students were working in groups and used the computer to research the information about each European explorer such as John Cabot and Christopher Columbus. Even though students were able to complete the task with coordinated supports, the task did not provide additional challenge or extensions for high performing students.

- Teaching practices included varied questioning, small group instruction, challenging tasks, and opportunities for mixed ability grouping of students to support one another during classroom activities. In one class, students had chart paper and were using images to complete a see, think, and wonder activity using post it notes about the historical image they were viewing. In a reading task, students had a strategy note affixed to their desks in order to help them during lessons. There were notes on how to summarize and close read passages. In addition, most classes had bins in the center of each group with resources, annotated notes, definition, and strategy cards, accountable talk stems, highlighters, and post-it notes, to support students during small group activities. While most students participated in lessons, there were missed opportunities for complete student engagement. As a result, there were missed opportunities for student ownership and tactical extension activities for high-performing students.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and reflect a focus on conceptual understanding and citing text evidence in most grades and subjects. Higher-order thinking skills are incorporated into academic tasks and activities with built-in supports for English Language Learners and students with disabilities.

**Impact**

Decisions around curricula build coherence and promote college and career readiness. Academic tasks push student thinking and ensure accessibility through scaffolds for all subgroups.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The common elements found in most written planning documents including the Common Core standard, lesson objective, assessment for and of learning, small group activity, and accommodations and modifications for diverse learners, help build coherence across the school. Curricula referenced academic rigor through activities that afforded students opportunities to engage, explore, explain, elaborate, and evaluate their work. In a sample plan, students were asked to write and draw on a Venn diagram to compare and contrast different types of communities. In an early childhood plan, students had to solve a place-value word problem as a cooperative group with members serving as support for each other. The plan included charts, diagrams, notations, pictures, and definitions in student-friendly language. Another standards-aligned lesson plan required students to quote accurately from a text when explaining what a text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text with strategies and cues to assist students.

- In a science experiment packet, students were required to conduct an experiment and then answer questions related to each stage of the process of osmosis. The focused question was, “What will happen when we soak celery stalks in colored liquid?” The activity sheet required students to write their hypothesis, make observations and collect data, and then draw conclusions about their work. The packet also had a built-in rubric attached so that students could assess their work at the end. In other curricular documents and academic tasks, there were prewriting graphic organizers with sections to help students write down what occurred first, next, and last and a section for their conclusion. In a math task, students had to make their thinking visible by using a diagram and showing their work in steps they took to arrive at their answer in response to word problems. Most curricula and academic tasks have built-in supports and scaffolds for most subgroups so they have access to challenging material.

- Most academic tasks were aligned to Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* application of skills and strategic thinking. Evidence reviewed during the visit showed a task that included the following types of basic recall questions, “Is Super Boy bad or good in the story?” and “Who does Super Boy take in each story?” In a math task, students were given the following problem, “Elijah had 65 toy cards in his room. When he came home, he saw that 9 cars were missing. How many toy cars were left in his room? Write a subtraction sentence. Break apart the one-digit number to solve. Explain the steps you took to solve the problem.” Other reviewed evidence revealed teacher-created Frayer models for math, which had built-in supports for students. This example showed the number 183 in the center circle, and then how the number looks in expanded form, written form, within a place value chart, and expressed with base ten blocks. However, there were a few missed opportunities in other tasks to provide multiple entry points for some learners.
## Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:

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<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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### Findings

Across classrooms, most teachers use assessment practices and provide rubrics that align with the school’s curricula. There are common assessments to determine student progress in relation to Common Core-aligned goals in most subjects.

### Impact

Assessment practices provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers are able to make effective adjustments to curricula and pedagogy based on the results of benchmark and baseline assessments.

### Supporting Evidence

- There are common assessments that are Common Core-aligned across subjects. For example, assessments include *iReady* practice exams, performance tasks, as well as schoolwide baseline, mid-year, and end-of-year assessments that are administered in math and reading. For example, when teachers noticed that students were not able to show their work in constructed math responses, they incorporated more teacher-created word problems in math lessons. In addition, leveled texts are infused to support the varied reading levels of students in classes based on the results of running records. The time allotted for each unit, pacing and sequencing of each unit along with the implementation of instructional strategies are all informed by the results of common assessments across the school.

- Most teachers use online diagnostic data to identify and determine students in need of intervention services and the focus of small group instruction. Student growth reports indicate that approximately 30 percent of students have made progress between baseline and interim assessments. Teachers use this data to redirect instruction, provide targeted interventions, and determine the types of scaffolds that will be used with students. Data discussed at team meetings focus on what students are doing and how teacher practices are providing actionable feedback through the use of standards-aligned rubrics. Although data informs teachers of what needs to be changed in what is taught and how it is taught, some students are still not yet demonstrating mastery. One student stated that he did well on a writing assignment however, the student was only provided feedback to add more details next time for his writing. Similar responses regarding feedback were communicated by the majority of students during the student meeting. Most students shared that they receive verbal and written feedback from teachers however, the feedback doesn’t always provide them with a clear understanding of what to do next or help them become better as learners.

- Student performance data across grades and subjects are collected and organized through an online platform. Students are identified by the subgroup population they represent, interventions and supports offered, and their performance level according to the varied assessment tools that are being used. Teachers are then able to determine whether students made progress based on the content of the color-coded analytical tool. Data is used to inform decisions to the school’s pacing calendar, timing, and pacing of activities, and how to group students for small group instruction. For example, many fourth grade students demonstrated proficiency on main idea but still struggled with inferencing. As a result, teachers decided to incorporate additional higher-order thinking questions allowing students to make inferences and draw conclusions. The results of most common assessments are used to adjust pacing calendars, instructional tasks, and instructional practices.
### 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 consistently communicate clear expectations to staff regarding professionalism, instruction, and communication. School staff sends regular reports, newsletters, and emails to parents connected to college and career readiness.

**Impact**

There are coordinated supports, such as professional development offerings, tailored feedback given in observations, and support from instructional coaches and consultants, to help teachers achieve expectations. Parents receive ongoing feedback and have an understanding of grade-level expectations for their children’s performance.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Parents receive information via email, telephone calls, and newsletters on what is being taught in the school, explanations about the Common Core, as well as about school procedures and policies. During the parent meeting, parents shared that they receive monthly newsletters and a handbook that include the topics of study in each subject area, upcoming meetings, and important events. There are midyear interim progress reports that include a child’s current reading level, expected level of performance, and other information about their child’s progress. Parents commented that most teachers are very helpful in providing them with a deeper understanding of math and reading standards as well as how to use the computer and tutoring programs to help children be more successful readers and writers. In addition, some parents shared that they have opportunities to serve as class parents and reading parents which helps keep them informed about what happens in the school on a regular basis. As a result, parents know what reading level their children should be reading on during the different intervals throughout the year and have a working understanding of the rigor from Common Core-aligned tasks. Most parents also have an understanding of students’ technology skills, personal goals, and how these areas will help them when they transition to college or the workforce because of the efforts of teachers and staff.

- The school’s vision is, “Success for All, Achieved by All,” which is reflected on walls, posted throughout the building, and mentioned in most documents. There is a staff handbook with instructional expectations for how teachers should act as professionals, design and teach lessons, as well as expectations for communication. Regular grade meetings are held to reiterate these expectations and discuss ways to support instruction for all teachers. Teachers are held accountable for components in lesson plans, student voice throughout the school, integration of technology into lessons, and creating higher-order thinking questions. Administrators along with teacher leaders help to support growth through professional development sessions and help teachers achieve the expectations through a continuous observation cycle. Most teachers receive support and are held accountable for meeting schoolwide expectations for teaching and learning.

- Most teachers receive glows and grows based on administrators’ focused learning walks and are held accountable through regular feedback conferences and sessions. Written feedback is provided with an explanation of developing practices as it relates to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. During one of the teacher team meetings, a teacher shared, “We attend weekly meetings with a staff developer and learn more about how to improve teaching and learning to get better results for our students.” Most teachers agreed that feedback from observations helps to hold them accountable for what is expected of them in school. As a result, expectations are regularly communicated and structures for accountability and support are built in.
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

Most teacher teams consistently analyze varied standards-aligned assessment data. There are distributed leadership structures in place so that teachers have built leadership capacity.

Impact

Teachers' instructional capacity has been strengthened and students' reading and math proficiency levels have improved due to the work of teacher teams. Teachers are part of the school's instructional cabinet and as a result have input about decisions regarding the use of curricula resources, planning documents, and schoolwide instructional strategies.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use common planning time to design and analyze assessments and discuss actionable next steps for improvement in student learning. Some teams are involved in lesson study and review qualitative and quantitative data on student work. Teachers use a protocol that includes reviewing their teaching practices, suggesting new ideas and changes to curricula, and suggesting professional learning to address gaps in student performance. For example, after reviewing assessment data from a reading assessment and noticing the trend of students not being able to accurately make inferences or cite textual evidence, teachers realized that their learning targets and objects were not clear and not closely aligned to the Common Core. In turn, lesson-planning documents were updated to reflect the use of student-friendly "I can" statements. In addition, teachers also saw the need to include specific strategies to help support the needs of English Language Learners and students with disabilities in curricula planning documents. During the teacher team meeting, one teacher shared, "I have incorporated multiple means of expression and engagement in lesson activities and my students' reading and math test scores have increased."

- Teachers regularly have input on decisions that affect student learning when they are a part of weekly instructional cabinet meetings. Teachers shared that they were able to suggest the elements for the common planning lesson-planning template that most teachers are now using. In addition, teachers said that school leaders are supportive of them when they want to try new teaching strategies or programs in their classrooms. For example, teachers contributed to the core beliefs and common look-fors that should be evident in most grades and subject areas. As a result, more teachers have made sure that their learning targets are clear and aligned with rigorous standards. In addition, teachers have increased their capacity to check for understanding and make on-the-spot adjustments in response to students' learning needs due to the work of teachers' teams, as shared by most teachers during interviews. Most teachers help to make decisions that affect student learning.

- An artifact reviewed during the school visit was a teacher-created collaborative assessment analysis tool being used by the grade two teacher team. This plan requires teachers write a description of the data they are reviewing based on the assessment administered, draw tentative conclusions, provide an action plan of support for students, and consider the logistics and time needed to address the gap. After reviewing assessment data for the math standard for understanding that the two digits of a two-digit number represent amounts of tens and ones, teachers included more examples in the problem of the day to launch their lessons. Documents also revealed that students needed more use of base ten blocks and picture representations to show numbers. Teachers indicated that they provide additional learning opportunities for students to better be able to understand place value for two-digit numbers. As a result, students are demonstrating greater proficiency for place value for two- and three-digit numbers.