Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 274 Kosciusko
Elementary 32K274
800 Bushwick Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11221

Principal: Maritza Ollivierra Jones

Dates of Review:
November 9, 2017 - November 10, 2017

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

School Quality Ratings

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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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>
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<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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## Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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 assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that aligned with the school’s curricula as tools for giving clear feedback to students that they then actively use toward improving their achievement. In addition, common assessments are analyzed and used to adjust curricula and track student progress.

### Impact

Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. As a result of effectively using common assessments, all students including English Language Learners (ELLs) have demonstrated increased mastery.

### Supporting Evidence

- Students came to a quick consensus when reporting on the use of assessments, rubrics, and feedback around their attainment of mastery. After receiving rubrics with comments that include teacher-written feedback with next steps, students then conference with the teachers on the feedback and how it can impact their work. Students then improve their work by implementing the next steps detailed in the feedback. One example of feedback reads, “Next time, be sure you show not tell.” The student explained that he has to include more details, descriptive words, and dialogue, which he has done in his next story. Another example asks a grade-two student to use the high-frequency wall chart to assist with transition words and spelling. The student reported he always refers to that chart now. Displayed work in the classrooms and portfolios included multiple drafts along with the final draft, reflecting students’ application of the teachers’ feedback on earlier drafts of the same work. Additionally, a grade-five student reported that student-groups change based on feedback. For example, when she received feedback to use the read, draw, write strategy in math, she was grouped with other students working on that strategy. This practice allows teachers to provide targeted small group instruction. Thus, feedback provided is both actionable and meaningful allowing students to utilize feedback.

- Common assessment results are used to track student progress and adjust curricula so all students demonstrate increased mastery. For example, during instructional cabinet, school leaders and instructional leads reviewed the data from the New York State Math exam, including the item analysis. Based on this review, administration identified gaps in student learning, including solving multi-step problems. Administration, in collaboration with instructional leads, added EngageNY as an additional curriculum resource to support students in this skill. Additionally, they developed a multi-step problem-solving strategy to use throughout the school. Because of these adjustments, there was ten-point increase in the number of students scoring a Level 3 or 4. Additionally, students with disabilities demonstrated a fifteen percent increase and English Language Learners demonstrated an eight percent increase in average proficiency scores on the NY State Math exam.

- Fountas and Pinnell (F&P) running records are used throughout the school to track student progress, identify guided reading groups, and make adjustments to curricula and instructional strategies. For example, it was determined that kindergarten students needed additional support with print concept awareness. Therefore, educators at the school decided to administer an additional common assessment to evaluate their letter recognition. This data was used to adjust the guided reading curriculum to include early literacy behaviors to meet the students’ needs.
Area of Focus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts and academic vocabulary. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact
Curricula development builds coherence and promotes college and career readiness for all students; however, it has yet to result in coherence across grades and subject areas. Curricula and tasks provide necessary instructional modifications across grades and subjects so that all students, including students with disabilities and ELLs have access.

Supporting Evidence

- Review of curriculum maps and lesson plans across grades and content areas reveals alignment with the Common Core and integration of the instructional shifts. The instructional shift concerned with text-based answers is evident in numerous documents. In grades three, four, and five, text-based answers are highlighted as an instructional shift in the pacing maps. In a grade-four reading lesson plan, students engage in a discussion around a shared text and use supporting details from the text. In a grade-five reading lesson plan, students participate in a Socratic seminar and are required to cite evidence from the text to support their opinions. Additionally, a grade-three science lesson plan includes academic vocabulary for student use throughout the lesson. While science and social studies pacing maps, integrate the instructional shifts, they do not align the instructional shifts to the units of study taught in English Language Arts classes. Thus, the instructional shifts are not strategically integrated throughout grades and content areas.

- While curricula and academic tasks are planned to support students with disabilities and ELLs, the instructional supports do not consistently provide all students including, the lowest and highest achieving students, access to cognitively engaging tasks. A grade-three lesson plan tasks students with teaching other students about a topic and providing feedback to each other. The lesson plan includes modifications for students with disabilities, such as checklists for students to generate feedback, paper choice, frequently used words list, word wall, thesaurus, highlights, and a copy of the anchor chart. A grade-one lesson plan requires students to revise their how-to book using the writing process. The plan includes the following supports, more visuals and examples, differentiated writing booklets, and modeling. However, extension or enrichment tasks were not included. Additionally, a grade-three lesson plan for an integrated co-teaching class did not include specific supports to ensure all students could access the task.

- A review of two grade-five math lesson plans reveals students in both classes are expected to complete the same rigorous task of designing a theatre using multiplication and long division. One class includes ELL’s and the other is a special education class. Supports for ELLs include frontloading vocabulary, additional modeling, and reading the problem aloud. Supports for students with disabilities include varying the numbers from single to double-digits and providing paper choice. Additionally, extension activities are usually indicated for a group of students. However, extension activities were not included in most of the lesson plans. Therefore, the highest-achieving students did not consistently have access to cognitively engaging tasks.
### Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teaching strategies consistently provide multiple entry points into the curricula. In addition, students are engaged in creating meaningful work products.

**Impact**

The consistent use of scaffolds and student-student discussion protocols result in students demonstrating higher-order thinking in work products and discussions that reflect high levels of thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, a variety of teaching strategies provided multiple entry points into the curricula for all learners, including students with disabilities and ELLs. During a grade-four reading lesson, a small group of students met with the teacher for a guided reading lesson to support their reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. In a grade-five math class, two different graphic organizers were provided to assist students with the read, draw, write problem-solving strategy. One student shared that she uses the graphic organizer to help her remember all the steps. Additionally, an English as a New Language teacher was seated with ELLs in a separate section to provide vocabulary support. In a grade-one reading lesson, students had leveled texts based on their needs. In a grade-three science class, students were presented with different levels of questions to discuss, based on their groups. For example, one group was to explain why they chose a certain tool, while another group discussed if two people could measure the same object and get the same result.

- During a grade-four and five self-contained math lesson, manipulatives and multiple scaffolds were provided to students. Several students were working with base ten blocks, and dry erase boards to solve long division problems. Other students used one-inch graph paper to support themselves in completing the task. Additionally, while all students were expected to design a movie theatre to demonstrate their mastery of long division skills, the complexity of numbers varied, based on individual needs. For example, some students had single digit numbers, while others had double digits. However, this strategic level of support and extensions was not evident in all classrooms.

- Students demonstrated high levels of thinking through student discourse. In a grade-five ELA class, students participated in a Socratic Seminar. The students led the discussion on if the main character in, *Night of the Spadefoot Toad*, made a good choice. Throughout the class, students used accountable talk stems to build on or refute each other's statements. For example, one student said she agreed with a peer because on page 44 it says that Ben, the main character, should help because he likes animals. Another student disagreed with his peers and cited evidence from a different page to support his claim. In a grade-four class, students discussed how the main character's motivation changed. A small group of students discussed how the main character was motivated by money but has changed and now he has a heart. In a grade-four science class, students predicted what tools they should use to determine mass. Thus, high levels of students thinking was evident across classrooms, student ownership was present in some classrooms.
**Additional Finding**

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<tr>
<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. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness.

**Impact**

A culture of mutual accountability exists around observation feedback and transparency about the administration’s focus for the week. Information sharing and communicating through verbal and written reports with families support students in their academic progress.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, which has been adjusted to include school-specific examples of effective and highly effective practices, as the standard for high-quality instruction. Additionally, school leaders provide professional development aligned to the school-specific examples and conduct school-wide norming sessions aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Teachers are encouraged to seek administrators out if they have not received feedback from a lesson within five days, which is the school goal. Teachers reported that this creates a culture of mutual accountability with their administrators.

- School administrators share high expectations with teachers via an online staff handbook, which is adjusted each year to reflect current priorities and weekly memorandums. For example, the staff handbook includes expectations for accountable talk and student-to-student discourse, which is the instructional focus for the year. Additionally, the handbook conveys expectations for lesson structure, classroom environment, and communicating with parents. Staff also receive weekly memorandums which include expectations for providing written feedback to students, upcoming professional learning sessions and options of tasks to complete during the other professional work period. School leaders provide transparency to staff by including the administrative foci for the week in a memo, as well. This includes completing environmental walkthroughs, supporting reading lessons, and implementing the gradual release model of instruction. Taken together, this level of communication and transparency provides teachers with an additional level of accountability and support from administration.

- School leaders and staff members use phone calls, in-person meetings, letters, and the school’s website to communicate with families. Families receive letters that include their children’s current level, as well as projected benchmark scores and a target goal. Teachers provide additional support to families through conferences. Several parents shared that teachers provided specific strategies to use at home to support their child’s continued progress. One such strategy was for her child to write in a journal. The parent was then to review the journal nightly for proper paragraph structure and supporting details. Additionally, parents attend monthly coffee with the principal where strategies to build a reading life at home or addressing bullying are discussed. Therefore, families are partners and have the necessary supports to help prepare their children for the next level.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders and teacher peers support the development of teachers with effective feedback and next steps from strategic cycles of observations that includes both evaluative and non-evaluative observations. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching, which was modified to include school-specific examples.

Impact

Feedback to teachers from classroom observations is used to elevate instructional practices and promote teachers’ professional growth. Additionally, feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice, supports teacher development, aligns with professional goals for teachers, and the instructional goals for the school.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Each rated item is supported with specific detailed evidence from the observed class to support the rating. Included at the end of each report are next steps for teacher improvement. For example, one observation includes feedback to “Use the discussion stem tool to support students in deepening their discussion.” Additionally, school leaders plan strategic cycles of observations. An annual schedule is created to provide teachers with an observation every six weeks. School leaders believe that this provides teachers with enough time to implement the feedback provided. Also, teachers new to the profession or those identified as needing additional support based on the previous year’s data, receive three non-evaluative observations with feedback, before evaluative observations. Thus, these practices elevate instruction and promote the professional growth of teachers.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and is accompanied by next steps so that teachers can improve their practice and impact on student success. Next steps are directly connected to the school’s instructional focus and teachers’ professional goals. For example, one observation report praised a teacher for setting clear expectations for student work and suggested assigning writing buddies to provide peer feedback. The report ends stating she would return in a couple of weeks for a non-evaluative observation. Another report stated, “To further promote our school’s instructional focus, as well as build students’ ability to engage in authentic discussion with peers, pose the initial question and then encourage students to respond to each other, rather than calling on individual students.” Additionally, a teacher shared that one of her professional goals was to use classroom assessment effectively. In an observation report, she is praised for taking conference notes, and the next steps include using those notes with students during individual writing conferences to deepen students’ understanding of their feedback.

- Teacher peers support the development of teachers through intervisitation and conversation logs aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. For example, before an intervisitation or demonstration lesson, the literacy coach meets with a teacher to review the upcoming lesson, clarify goals for student learning and determine evidence of success and student learning. During the demonstration lesson, the visiting teacher writes notes on teaching strategies used by the coach and student responses to those moves. The lesson is then debriefed by the literacy coach and teacher. Teachers shared that this practice has led to an improvement in their lesson planning and guided reading instruction. Thus, leading to improved instructional practices.
**Findings**

The clear majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations such as grade level teams and the students with disabilities cohort team. Across the school, teacher teams such as the ELLs cohort, or data inquiry teams systematically analyze assessment data and student work for students they share or on whom they are focused.

**Impact**

Teacher engagement in inquiry-based collaborations has strengthened teacher instructional capacity and resulted in school-wide coherence and increased student achievement. The results of teacher teams’ analysis of student work and assessment data have led to shared improvements in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All teachers are part of a grade team that meets regularly to review student work. During a grade-five teacher team meeting, student work samples were analyzed to identify strengths and areas of concern from an on-demand narrative writing assessment. The current focus of this team is to determine the extent to which students mastered the Common Core for narrative writing. Teachers used a protocol accompanied by a graphic organizer to guide their analysis. Discussion of student work included implications in curricula and teaching practices. After reading through student work samples, one teacher noticed the inconsistent use of dialogue and below grade level transitions. Next steps included additional dialogue lessons in the next unit, creating small group lessons on using higher-level transitional words and phrases, and creating anchor charts with different transitional phrases for students to use to self-assess their work. An increase in grade-five student narrative rubric scores from September through November demonstrates the impact of this type of work on student performance.

- A grade-four teacher team identified twenty-one students who were performing below grade level in citing textual evidence to describe in depth a character or event in a story. The team developed small group mini-lessons, integrated question stems, and provided additional graphic organizers to support the selected students. At the end of the cycle, the team noted that all twenty-one students had shown improvement on the post-assessment. A grade-three team following the same protocol identified solving two-step word problems using the four math operations as an area of need based on benchmark assessments and class assessments. It was noted students struggled to separate and sequence the steps properly. One identified group to focus on was students with disabilities. Teachers developed a graphic organizer and taught students to highlight the different steps. Students with disabilities scores increased 50% as measured on the post-assessment. Taken together, the systematic analysis of student work has resulted in mastery of goals for groups of students.

- The ENL teacher team, reviewed the New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT) results, along with student reading levels and writing scores to adjust instruction and form student groupings. For example, the team determined a group of grade-one emerging students to support in writing how-to books. The team identified additional texts and graphic organizers to use to support this group of students. One teacher reported that students demonstrated growth in writing and that she forms student groups differently based on this work.