Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 290 Juan Morel Campos
Elementary 19K290
135 Schenck Avenue
Brooklyn
NY 11207

Principal: Brigitte Newell

Dates of Review:
May 29, 2018 - May 30, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Marion Wilson
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. 290 Juan Morel Campos 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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<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>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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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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<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

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

<table>
<thead>
<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>
</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>Area of Celebration</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>Area of Focus</td>
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</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

Teacher teams systematically analyze key elements of their practice, multiple sources of data, and student work for representative groups of students. Distributed leadership structures are embedded in daily school practice.

Impact

Teacher practice and mastery of standards-aligned student goals have both been significantly improved due to the work of teacher teams. There is effective teacher leadership and teachers play an integral part in making decisions on a day-to-day basis across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- Teacher teams effectively implement systems to monitor a variety of student data and classroom practices that inform instruction leading to the mastery of goals for groups of students. Evidence reviewed during the school visit revealed that teacher teams created a document to help analyze students’ long term and interim goals for the year in core subject areas. Students jumped at least three reading levels and demonstrated significant growth and mastery on key priority standards. Teachers shared during one of the interviews that they have been able to improve their practice in strategically planning lessons and activities aimed at meeting the needs of their most struggling and high performing learners.

- School leaders and teachers articulated clear examples of how teachers initiate, facilitate, and lead professional learning sessions, make decisions concerning school improvement efforts, and serve as grade level leaders. Teacher leaders play a vital role in school-level decision-making for a safe and inclusive culture at the school. For example, teachers and administrators shared that teacher leaders took the lead in developing the school’s positive behavior intervention support expectations matrix that outline the school’s motto of, “Be safe, be responsible, and be respectful.” This color-coded matrix highlights student behavior for when they are traveling in the hallway, how to conduct themselves in the hallway, and while working in the classroom. Teachers shared that they can make creative decisions on developing incentive programs to encourage students to make positive behavior choices. As a result, teachers are empowered to play an integral role in key decisions that affect student experiences at the school.

- Teachers are considered leaders in the building and serve as leads for many different committees to help with the school’s day-to-day operations. Teachers and school leaders articulate specific examples of how teacher leaders led the changes to curricula planning documents after working with the district team to audit curricula. Teachers are using the suggested templates to plan for strategic differentiated groups across the school resulting in coherence of planning rigorous tasks for students. During the teacher team meeting, teachers shared that they have a voice in changing or eliminating the types of resources teachers will use, such as, schoolwide strategies that are used for teaching and assessment tools. Teachers go out to visit showcases provided by vendors and have autonomy to decide the best and most suitable teaching materials. When teacher leaders noticed that one reading program was not meeting the needs of the bilingual students, teachers organized vendor presentations, and then presented the new program they wanted to use to administration. There are opportunities for teachers to lead lesson studies, serve as coaches, grade and cluster leaders, which has resulted in strengthened teacher capacity in designing coherent challenging curricula and assessment tools. Teachers are empowered and vested to make decisions that will affect teaching and student learning.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 5.1 Monitoring and Revising Systems | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

School leaders and faculty have a regular process in place to evaluate the instructional core, school culture, and systems for improvement within the school.

Impact

While the instructional cabinet meets regularly to evaluate systems and structures to increase the coherence across grades and departments, the process is not yet being done purposefully to include all staff members.

Supporting Evidence

- During instructional cabinet meetings, which include teacher, leaders and administration, curricula documents and assessment tools are revised to ensure that they provide access to all learners. Conversations are held regarding how well teachers across grades are using the suggested common lesson plan templates and reflecting on how well lessons are taught. Each semester the cabinet reviews assessment data including performance tasks, running records, curricula-aligned assessments to make correlations between what is taught and how well students are understanding the content. If a change to the instructional core needs to be made, cabinet members make note to address during summer planning or later in the school year. While these conversations take place within cabinet meetings, there is not a formalized system to ensure that the entire school community has this knowledge so that if more changes that are purposeful need to be made, they can be done in a timely fashion. Grade leaders are privy to information that would enable other staff to be able to make strategic decisions related to elements of the instructional core.

- School staff utilize informal surveys to measure if culture building and communication efforts are effective across all grades. Both students and teachers said during meetings that they can share ideas and feedback with school administration, regarding discipline and incentives for students. In addition, school leaders and teachers can name how recidivism plays a role in the low disciplinary occurrences and the supports for those students. They are working on correlating incidents that they memorialize to ensure incentives are working the way they should, so that more students internalize the promoted key academic and personal behaviors. Even though informal conversations are taking place around school culture, they are not occurring purposefully, so that school leaders can gauge the effectiveness of changes made in response to parent feedback on the learning environment survey. In addition, school leaders are streamlining communication efforts to ensure parents’ needs continue to be met.

- The use of resources, including programs, instructional materials, technology, professional learning offerings, and other decisions align to the school’s goals and overall mission via conversations with the instructional cabinet. In addition, teacher and school leaders regularly try to norm their understanding of highly effective teaching practice, as it relates to teacher teamwork and teacher supervision. While there are high levels of teaching and student performance in most classes, additional memorialization of these efforts is needed to build greater alignment and coherence between what is taught and how it is taught across grades. School leaders and faculty acknowledge that there are pockets of highly effective practices in certain classes. Most systems and structures for improvement are helping increase coherence of the use of resources, professional development work, and the efficacy of teacher teams across the school, so that more students demonstrate mastery of the Common Core standards.
# Additional Finding

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

There are well-aligned curricula documents that strategically integrate the instructional shifts across the majority of subject areas. Rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills are deliberately planned and revised using student work and data.

## Impact

Curricula planning documents coherently promote key college and career readiness for a variety of learners. English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and high-achieving students all have access to rigorous curricula, cognitively engagement, and must demonstrate their thinking.

## Supporting Evidence

- Written curricula documents are strategically aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards, content standards, and Next Generation standards. There is curricular coherence across grades and subjects including having learning objectives, content standards, assessment strategies, small group instruction, and a reflection section. The majority of curricula activities encourage student reflection, research, analysis, and students having to make their thinking visible. For example, a science plan was written to have students create presentations about matter, energy, simple machines, and plan and animal adaptations by performing experiments in class and researching topics. For math, there were activities centered on the standards for mathematical practice written into unit plans encouraging students to communicate precisely by using appropriate math language and by engaging in discussion to express mathematical reasoning. Social studies maps include activities requiring students to explore the concepts of communities around the world by researching various aspects of continents such as Africa, Asia, and South America. Curricula documents have resulted in schoolwide coherence across the school.

- Rigorous habits and higher order thinking skills are purposefully embedded within curricula and academic tasks ensure there is coherence in all core subject areas. Curricula and academic tasks afford students many opportunities to think critically, consider varying perspectives, synthesize information from multiple sources, and conduct research and analysis. For example, in a grade 3 literacy task, students had to write an autobiographical poem to display their ideas. The task was strategically organized into color-coded sections with the blue group having to work individually with a peer; the green group worked with the teacher and included a model and working with a partner; the yellow group had visuals, small group structures, and sentence starters; and the red group had one-on-one intensive support with repeated directions and explicit modeling. This type of task was evident across the majority of subject areas and grades with teachers using a similar format to plan challenging activities, so that all students must demonstrate their thinking.

- Teachers across grades and subjects use student work, performance task results, and other data to plan and refine curricula and academic tasks to cognitively engage all students, including the highest and lowest achieving students. After reviewing on-demand narrative writing tasks administered to students, teachers noticed that several students, including high-performing students, did not include transitional words, nor constructed a well-structured essay. All teachers decided to modify the Teachers College Reading Writing Program task to incorporate a checklist as a reminder to students. Similarly, a math task was revised requiring students to write a riddle about what they knew about quadrilaterals by listing the attributes and using certain criteria from the built-in checklist. Teachers across grades make similar modifications to tasks for math, science, and social studies tasks to accommodate the diversity of learners in the school. As a result, all students have access to rigorous curricula tasks and are cognitively engaged.
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

Teaching practices across most classes reflect the articulated beliefs of how students learn best aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teaching strategies include multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression for most students.

Impact

Students produce meaningful products, are engaged in appropriately challenging tasks, and demonstrate higher order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Most instructional practices align to standards-based curricula and reflect the beliefs, which infuse elements of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leaders and teachers believe that students should have regular debates where they have a voice and are using evidence to support their answers or position. In addition, students should be engaged in quality discussions with posing questions to challenge their thinking. Most classrooms have posted signs encouraging students to use the strategy to restate (R) the question, answer (A) the question, and prove (P) that they are right with details from the story (RAP). In one early childhood class visited, students were answering questions after reading a text and asking each other questions. In a dual bilingual class, students facilitated the discussion by using the Depth of Knowledge to ask probing questions of their peers, and control the PowerPoint. Most lessons afforded students opportunities to demonstrate the beliefs and engage with content.

- Teacher practices reflect the belief that students learn best being able to be accountable for their learning, become active problem solvers, prove their answers, while working in small groups. For example, in a math class, students worked on different levels of math word problems. In an Exemplar math task with a green circle, required students to respond to different prompts. Students had laminated cards with the standards for mathematical practice written in student friendly language in the form of, “I can,” statements. Students with the red circle had bins filled with different types of manipulatives, checklists, rubrics, note cards, and other tools needed to help them work cooperatively to solve in mixed ability groups. In another class, the teacher had several rotation stations that students had to work through including guided groups, online fluency drill practice, and extension problems in the math workbook.

- Instructional groups in most classes are organized by student strengths and weaknesses or sometimes by reading levels. In a social studies class, students worked on computers to complete a graphic organizer to help them respond to the following question related to the Westward Expansion, “What inventions do you think makes the most difference in our lives? Why?” There was a missed opportunity to support students in a self-contained class visited where the objective was, “I can write a poem with a syllable pattern.” Students were writing a Haiku poem about a topic in nature that they were most interested in and some had blank graphic organizers with pre-printed lines and other students had a worksheet. One student worked independently and used a tablet to research different types of animals to include in his poem. The student completed the planning page, which had sentence starters for each section. The student shared that the activity was easy and was finished with this activity. Most classes provided students with a binder of resources that were accessible to them while working, which included reading, math, and discussion strategies along with definitions, sentence starters, accountable talk stems, and examples of different elements of fiction stories. Most classes afforded students opportunities to work in groups with visual, print, and peer supports to help them engage in challenging activities.
Additional Finding

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

Impact

Students receive both actionable and meaningful feedback and it helps them know how to apply feedback across subject areas. The vast majority of teachers make effective on-the-spot adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs and students are aware of their next steps in learning.

Supporting Evidence

- A variety of feedback to students from both teachers and peers is accurate, specific, timely, and advances learning. The majority of teachers use a teacher created template to deliver feedback on students’ work products. During the small group student meeting, all students had similar sheets with feedback in the following areas, self-reflection, peer feedback with compliments and a next step, and then teacher feedback with a compliment and goal and next steps. These next steps correlate to the students’ interim and long-term goals in their portfolios. In evidence reviewed, all three areas of feedback included the nature of the feedback, emphasis of the high standards being used to evaluate the student’s work, and assurance of the student’s ability to successfully meet the standards. In addition, students shared that feedback received from their teachers and peers helps them to focus their efforts on how they could improve their work to get better and reflect on how well they performed the task to meet grade level expectations. For example, one feedback stated, “You have a clear understanding of consumers, producers, and decomposers play in our environment. Next time, explain the roles of the producer and consumer by picking one from each category and then letting your words create a mind movie.” Meaningful feedback aligned to personalized student goals is leading to more students demonstrating mastery of key skills.

- Students articulate and apply an understanding of next steps for improvement based on written and verbal feedback they receive. They are also able to make meaning of criteria found within checklists and rubrics that are used to assess their work. During the small group student meeting, students shared samples of feedback aligned to rubrics and checklists customized to each task or activity. School leaders and teachers have a student profile sheet for each student to capture formative and summative assessment data, reading levels, and notes from conferences to have a clear portrait of student mastery relative to Common Core standards.

- In most classes, students consistently self- or peer-assess work against established assessment criteria and monitor their own understanding and progress. The majority of students used rubrics or checklists to utilize during lessons to assess their level of understanding or confusion. In a few classes, students used similar color-coded tools to indicate their how well they could explain what they were learning to someone else or if they needed help from a peer or the teacher. In a reading class visited, a teacher posed several questions to the students then circulated throughout the room and used a checklist to capture student responses. In a math class, the teacher asked questions to push students’ thinking, asking students, “How do you know you have the right answer? Are there any other possible solutions? Could you explain the strategy you are using to someone else?” When the teacher noticed a few students struggle with answering some of these questions, the teacher interrupted the class to redirect them to the tools they had access to: posted meta-cognition charts around the room. Teachers’ formative assessment practices are sophisticated and help to push students to understand their next steps in learning.
Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:

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<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
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### Rating:

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<th>Well Developed</th>
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#### Findings

School leaders and faculty consistently communicate elevated expectations to teachers and families, provide supports, and conduct training.

#### Impact

There is a culture of mutual accountability in the school because of the training provided by both school leaders and staff. Parents are partners with the school to ensure they understand student progress toward college and career readiness standards.

#### Supporting Evidence

- There are well-coordinated study groups, planning sessions, instructional cabinet meetings, and other professional collaborations that establish a professional culture that results in a high level of success in teaching and learning across the school. Teacher leaders, coaches, and mentors work with teachers to ensure they understand the expectations for effective and highly effective teaching practices related to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Both teachers and school leaders shared that the ongoing communication of expectations has helped the school be successful in helping students and teachers be successful. The Instructional Expectations Reference Sheet help to outline effective teaching practices, which is referred to in observations, walkthroughs, team meetings, and in informal conversations. Developed by teachers for teachers, this tool helps to breakdown and explains the non-negotiables regarding planning and preparing, instruction, and professional responsibilities for each teacher in the school. As a result, most teachers are working to meet stated expectations.

- School leaders and staff create an elevated level of clear expectations for all staff, which are evidenced throughout the community through verbal and written structures. There is a staff handbook, ongoing professional learning experiences, school website, and observation feedback that ensure that there is a system of accountability between all constituents. Many structures and activities help to improve teacher practice, as well as their content knowledge base. Through lesson studies, reciprocal peer mentoring, inter-visitations, video sharing, and teacher led professional development are integral part of the school’s learning community. Staff members hold themselves accountable, while supporting each other to meet these high expectations.

- Staff members communicate, sometimes, daily, with parents, as well as, provide ongoing, clear lines of communication, electronically, via the school website, text messages, and phone calls. During the parent meeting, the majority of parents receive information about promotion criteria, Common Core standards, and the expectations for college and career readiness. Parents commented on receiving the grading policy, assessment calendar, parent handbook, student goals aligned to the Common Core, and a parent engagement activities booklet. All tools clearly outline the expectations for students being able to think critically, work independently and as a team, and be able to persevere through challenging tasks. During the parent meeting, parents shared that communication is two-way and that they feel empowered to collaborate with the school. For example, parents shared that they organized and facilitated parent workshops related to test-taking strategies, bilingual program techniques, and arranged for English as a Second Language classes for parents. Parents and staff work collaboratively together to ensure that students make progress towards college and career readiness standards.