Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 298 Dr. Betty Shabazz
Elementary 23K298
85 Watkins Street
Brooklyn
NY 11212

Principal: Jonathan Dill

Dates of Review:
May 15, 2018 - May 16, 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. 298 Dr. Betty Shabazz 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>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>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>Developing</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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Quality Ratings continued

#### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</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 Focus</td>
<td>Developing</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

Students are seen as leaders and are able to make their voices heard throughout the school. Structures such as informal meetings and community circle allow teachers to get to know their students on a deeper level.

Impact

Students help to plan, lead, and organize schoolwide events such as the morning community circle and suggest ideas for different activities related to improving the school’s learning environment. As a result of the use of the data sorter, personalized academic, social, and emotional supports are offered for all students.

Supporting Evidence

- The guidance team along with community partners helps to impact students’ academic and personal behaviors through the school’s positive behavior program known for promoting citizenship, pride, and respect (CPR). Students have internalized what the acronym CPR stands for and can articulate how the well-coordinated incentive program helps them to make positive choices. Students wear sweatshirts, wristbands, and other paraphernalia that promote the adoption of self-regulation and respect and tolerance among all stakeholders. There are more students now behaving better and attribute their decisions to self-regulate and make better choices to their participation in CPR clubs and receiving CPR incentives like trips and special luncheons with the principal.

- Students are able to participate in an all-girls group, all-boys group, and Project Blue in conjunction with the New York Police Department (NYPD), which helps to set the tone for positive behavior that students should display in class, on the playground, and in the lunchroom. Students shared that they feel safe because of the adults, programs, rules, and disciplinary structures in place to ensure their safety. The tone in the building in classrooms, hallways, and large meeting space is calm, peaceful, and supports an inclusive school culture. During the principal’s choice section of the visit, students led the community circle time, which is a morning meeting to bring positive words of encouragement for both adults and students. Students said that as a result of them leading the meeting and students hearing from their peers, it helps students make better choices and remembering the values of CPR throughout the day.

- Key stakeholders, including administrators, coaches, support staff, teachers, and community partners, utilize data from a data sorter to personalize supports for students, especially those considered at-risk. This comprehensive school-created document looks at multiple data sources and includes historical information on every child’s living situation, personality, performance levels, afterschool and Saturday school activity participation, as well as the types of counseling received. This tool helps various school teams look at data to help coordinate social emotional, academic, and behavioral supports for students. As a result, attendance of targeted students has improved and the rate of recidivism has significantly declined.

- Student government members have a voice in key decisions that affect the school. During student meetings, one student shared, “We get to meet with the teacher and share our ideas for incentives, activities, and the types of clubs we think students would like. They listen to us because we have clubs like sports, step team, dance, and other activities children our age like to do.” Students have a voice and are meaningfully involved in decisions to improve the school’s learning environment.
Findings

Some teacher teams regularly use a structured protocol to review student work and data. Teacher teams inconsistently analyze student assessment data and running records for students they share.

Impact

There are missed opportunities for achieving school goals including strengthening the instructional capacity of most teachers. While some teacher teams analyze assessment, the work is not typically result in groups of students demonstrating proficiency on key performance standards.

Supporting Evidence

- During teacher team meetings, teachers utilize color-coded iReady reports to track and analyze student performance on assessments aligned to Common Core Learning Standards. Some teacher teams are using this information to customize lesson plans, though others have not yet started this work. Teacher teams review student work for culminating projects, on-demand assessments, chapter and unit tests but do not consistently analyze how student performance connects to their teaching practice. Data does not yet reveal students demonstrating progress or making significant improvements between assessments. Analysis of student work and assessment data does not typically result in teachers using innovative strategies to help students learn challenging material.

- The school has various team structures in place, which includes cohorts, vertical teams, and grade level teams. The teams work to try to create instructional coherence leading to having similar common elements in lesson plans, looking at units of study and curricula maps, and analyzing student work and assessment data. On the day of the visit, teachers were observed using a tuning protocol and reviewed student work samples from an Exemplar task that students had to complete. The meeting was facilitated by an outside consultant who had teachers provide warm and cool feedback on the below, on-level, and above-level samples of student work in relation to the standards. After further review, teachers noted gaps in the memorializing of the impact of teacher teamwork on whether groups of students demonstrated growth or proficiency in relation to the identified geometry standards. While the work of teacher teams with a consultant is beginning to strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers, it does not typically result in improved progress towards goals for groups of students across all grades and subjects.

- The math team observed during the visit was engaged in professional inquiry using the Tuning protocol for looking at students’ strengths and weaknesses on performance tasks. Teachers were determining how grades-three-to-five students looked at whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Teachers then answered the questions to address their continued use of an instructional strategy where students mark up the problem, organize their work using pictures, look for a solution, and evaluate their answer (MOLE). While prior minutes from the upper-elementary department’s meeting had documentation of the use of a structured protocol to review math tasks, the early-childhood department’s artifacts did not reflect the same frequency of usage. Teachers review and analyze assessment data from chapter tests, performance tasks, and teacher created problems during structured professional collaborations. However, some teacher teams do not regularly document their analysis and then use this information to plan for strategic group activities in their respective classes to note progress towards goals.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator:

<table>
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<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and power standards throughout most core content areas. Curricula and academic tasks emphasize higher-order thinking for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Impact

Common lesson planning elements help to build coherence across grades and subjects and provide opportunities for students to engage in rigorous lessons. Schoolwide strategies, such as a graphic organizer tool for math, help to ensure a diversity of students are supported and have access to challenging content.

Supporting Evidence

- There are lesson plans and pacing calendars aligned to power standards chosen by the school based on assessment data reviewed earlier in the school year. Written curricular documents include a learning target or objective, lesson steps, materials, and resources that will be used, and motivation for the lesson. Social studies and science lessons are often embedded into literacy units and also have literacy and content standards, materials, resources, anticipatory set, and the assessment for the lesson. The school's instructional focus is providing students with a rigorous curriculum while allowing them to provide evidence that supports critical thinking and discourse and explain their thinking in writing across subject areas. Most plans included opportunities for students to display thinking skills such as by researching famous Black Americans in history. Teachers embed science and social studies topics such as the Civil War and the life cycle of plants and animals into literacy units across most grades.

- Pacing calendars and overarching units of study are prepared to show topics at-a-glance that will be covered during a period of time and are displayed outside of each classroom's door. Tasks reviewed during the visit required students to conduct research on different animals, use cooperative group roles to find out about different aspects of the animal's life and then display what they learned. An on-demand writing activity required students to modify a modern-day fairytale to include a different type of change to occur to affect the characters and theme. In a third-grade task, students had to conduct surveys based on topics of interest, tally results, compose a tally chart and bar graph, and write to explain their findings based on the data they collected. A fourth-grade lesson plan provided various types of leveled fairytale books for students based on reading levels, a list of frequently used vocabulary words, and a laminated sheet of common themes, character traits, and different types of paper to guide writing.

- The school created a graphic organizer tool to help students to markup problems, organize information, label the parts of the program, and evaluate or explain their thinking and answers. A similar graphic organizer is used as part of most planned activities. Some graphic organizers are scaffolded to provide additional support for ELLs and students with disabilities by providing cartoons or diagrams under each section. Lesson plans contain multiple entry points with visual cues, videos, colored markers, highlighters, post it notes, and leveled books. Curricula and tasks are aligned to the Common Core and include various resources. Curricula and academic tasks are aligned to Webb's *Depth of Knowledge* levels two, three, and four to provide a range of challenging tasks such as researching, analyzing, and synthesizing information from various sources. As a result, curricula are challenging and rigorous and include supports for diverse learners.
Findings

Teaching practices across most classrooms do not regularly reflect the articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best, which includes student participation using accountable talk. Teaching strategies do not consistently provide appropriate multiple entry points based on students’ learning needs.

Impact

There were missed opportunities for students to be engaged in appropriately challenging tasks and for them to make their thinking visible and participate in lesson. As a result of teacher-centered lessons, students do not yet regularly produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers believe that students should have an opportunity to be engaged in challenging activities, provided with explicit modeling, and be able to demonstrate ownership of their learning through meaningful dialogue. In an early childhood math class, students worked on math word problems and had to answer questions such as, “Does your answer make sense? Can others understand it? Explain your answer to someone else.” Students had to write an explanation of their word problem and use accountable talk to share their answers. However, in a kindergarten class, students completed a math worksheet and did not have additional work to complete while they waited for others to finish. There were missed opportunities for teaching practices and strategies to provide meaningful engagement, opportunities for students to demonstrate their thinking and actively participate in lessons. Supports for students including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, and students performing above level were inconsistent.

- While there were planned supports listed in written curricular documents, teaching strategies across some classrooms did not consistently provide multiple entry points for students into the lesson. In a math class visited, the teacher had students seated on the rug while she modeled how to figure out which line was shorter or longer than the other one. However, in a reading class, students used various research materials, worked together to chart their responses, ask and answer questions posed by their classmates and then provide feedback on the quality of their thinking and work products. Also, some teachers’ questions often times led to a single path of inquiry and students responded with one-word answers or short phrases. For example, teachers’ rapid-fire questions included, “Which one is longer? Is this one shorter? Where did the story take place?” Effective teaching strategies, including questioning and discussion techniques to promote student thinking and participation are not yet evident across most subject areas, grades, or classes.

- There were several missed opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations with their peers. In one class, students listened compliently as the teacher provided explicit instruction. Some students were fidgeting on the rug and not paying attention while others were distracted. In an early-childhood math class, students had to use a concrete model to make a new shape. Students were provided with manipulatives to help them demonstrate their thinking. One student was able to complete the task and said the task was easy. In a collaborative team-teaching class, both teachers dominated the lesson’s conversation and provided limited time for students to turn and talk about their writing activity. Teaching practices across grades and classes were uneven.
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment  Rating: Proficient

Findings
Rubrics, checklists, and curricula-aligned assessment tools are used across most grades and subjects. Teachers use common assessments such as iReady and running records to determine student progress across grades.

Impact
Most students receive actionable feedback and next steps to help them improve their work. Teachers use the results from common assessments to inform modifications of lessons to meet students’ needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. The results from GO Math! performance tasks, on-demand writing tasks, and iReady assessments are compiled into a color-coded spreadsheet that lists students' performance levels. The data spreadsheet shows that teachers use the information to determine student progress towards goals listed on portfolio cover sheets. Teachers utilize assessment data to group students and provide differentiated worksheets for students to use. In a sample first-grade spreadsheet reviewed, students were showing progress on addition and subtraction strategies like counting on, making ten, and using doubles, so they grouped students accordingly and the six students who did not demonstrate progress received additional homework assignments and worked with an Academic Intervention Services (AIS) teacher to strengthen their use of strategies.

- There are rubrics aligned to standards posted on student work. One student completed an activity and had to read passages about a monarch butterfly. The feedback on the work stated, “Good job. You clearly stated your main idea with five details to support. Your next step is to explain how these details support your answer.” The student referred back to the rubric and was able to state what she would do differently on her next writing assignment. Most students shared that their teachers conference with them and review examples with them so they know the expectations for quality work. On bulletin boards, there are post-it notes with student-friendly language which describes an aspect of the rubric that the student should focus on from either the organization, introduction, conclusion, or skill of the task that they need to improve. Similarly, students received feedback on math tasks regarding the quality of their explanation and use of the schoolwide math strategy mark up the problem, organize the information, label the parts, and evaluate the answer (MOLE). Most students were able to understand their next steps after completing quizzes, tasks, or projects but did not internalize how the feedback could be applied to other lessons, classwork, or activities.

- The results from running records are used to plan small-group instruction based on quarterly administration of assessments. For example, when teachers noticed data that students were struggling with answering constructed responses, teachers incorporated the use of additional word problems of an increased level of rigor to supplement the current curriculum. In addition, teachers also revised the pacing calendar to ensure they were addressing the power standards that they felt were important for students to learn. The use of constructed responses and extended writing responses was increased after a review of class and grade-level data from the June instructional reports and common assessments. Teachers also review running record data four times during the school year and provided leveled texts for students during reading activities.
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for teaching, learning, and professional practice to the faculty. Teacher teams establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations for student performance in middle school and beyond.

Impact
As a result, teachers are held accountable through formal and informal feedback from observations and supported by consultants, teacher leaders, and instructional coaches. Students receive support that prepares them for the next level in their schooling.

Supporting Evidence

- The school has a staff handbook that clearly suggests the elements to include in lesson planning and pedagogical practices that should be utilized while teaching. Most feedback reports include references to the school's instructional focus. Teachers shared that the focus is posted throughout the building, referred to in weekly newsletters, and shared by coaches, teacher leaders, and administration on a regular basis. In a coaching guide, teachers were reminded to include opportunities for students to have regular practice with complex texts and use academic language. As a result, lesson plans include varied anchor texts and highlight key vocabulary from texts and articles. During the teacher team meeting, teachers shared that they are held accountable for ensuring that they follow the curricula and demonstrate fidelity in delivering the mini-lesson and explicitly modeling for students.

- Staff members receive weekly newsletters highlighting effective practices, participate in intervisitations, and receive written feedback about their strengths and areas of growth. One teacher commented, “I was struggling with formative assessment and how to conduct guided reading and it reflected in one of my observations.” As a result of this feedback, the teacher’s ability in conducting guided reading groups improved in subsequent observation reports. Teachers shared that administration identifies an area of strength and growth in observation feedback and then refers them to follow up to receive additional support and training from the peer collaborative teacher, Teaching Matters consultant, model teacher, or universal-literacy coach. As a result, communication about expectations for professional practice are consistently shared by school leaders and then provide coordinated supports to help teachers show improvement in their practices.

- Teachers share college experiences and expose students to research, teamwork, and learning how to communicate with others in order to help prepare students for middle school and beyond. Students receive messages from school staff and hear about the degree of difficulty of the work that will ensue when they graduate or when they go to the next grade. During the large group student meeting, one student shared that she knows that she will have different teachers for each subject when she gets to middle school, so her teacher told her to have different notebooks and be organized. Other students shared career aspirations, which included doctor, lawyer, detective, and chef. Students are able to articulate a clear understanding of how their schoolwork relates to their intended various fields of study. Teachers consistently help expose students and provide guidance and support to help them know about what will happen in the next grade including showing them work and having conversations with them.