Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 035
K-12 All Grades 75M035
317 West 52nd Street
Manhattan
NY 10019

Principal: Marta Barnett

Dates of Review:
May 8, 2018 - May 9, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
# 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


## School Quality Ratings

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></th>
<th><strong>Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Rating</strong></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>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>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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
<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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through its staff handbook and professional development (PD) plan. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

**Impact**

Written feedback and constant communication and support has increased teachers’ understanding and awareness of school leaders’ expectations around teaching and learning. Communication with families provides opportunities for them to partner in students’ education.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism and high-quality instruction. School leaders support teachers in understanding their instructional expectations by conducting informal classroom visits that are followed by a write-up, summarizing what was seen, providing feedback, and transparently identifying the next-steps for which they will be looking upon their next visit. A PD plan makes clear that school leaders support teachers in their understanding of expectations in addressing topics such as classroom management, text-based discussions, providing feedback, and differentiated assessment. Mutual accountability is evident at the school as all staff members are collectively responsible for creating and implementing the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each and every student enrolled in the school.

- Partnerships with families support students in their progress toward college and career readiness. Parents participate in trainings to help them support their students. Parent workshops are designed not only to inform parents, but also to include topics that help parents to be successful partners in their student's education, such as How to Organize All Your Important Documents & Records, IEP Workshop, Future Planning, and Transition Workshop. Academic school data focuses on credit accumulation and student progress towards graduation. Each student has a graduation worksheet that allows school staff to track academic progress. These worksheets are shared and reviewed with the students and their families so that all stakeholders are aware of the progress towards graduation. To support students in college and career readiness, students, teachers, and parents complete vocational assessments. Students participate in a work-based learning curriculum aligned with the State Standards for Career Development and Occupational Studies and work at fifteen worksites. Parents reported helping their students register for college and obtain financial aid using the step by step information from the school.

- High expectations for all students are effectively communicated to parents who are kept informed continuously through phone calls, texts, newsletters, and the school website. Progress reports and an online grading system were reported by parents as resources to help them monitor student progress. Parents spoke about how the school has supported their student's academic progress, "He wasn’t supposed to graduate in June. They doubled up on some classes and he’s now going to graduate in June," Another parent reported, "My granddaughter is in a college program already. Once a month they take them to the college, they get exposed to how to fill out the paperwork. It’s like a job training program, like an internship program for her, to decide which college she wants to attend, a four-year or two-year college." Another parent shared the result of the school’s high expectations for students, “He’s graduating a year early. He is so motivated and the support he’s getting here is so focused on kids emotionally and academically.”
## Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the articulated belief that students learn best when they have a voice in their education. Across classrooms, student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

## Impact

Student work products and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking and participation, although not in the vast majority of classes. Articulated beliefs and student ownership were not yet evident in all classes.

### Supporting Evidence

- During a math lesson, students used iPads and were responding to questions about interpreting different types of graphs. While some students did not correctly answer the questions, the teacher announced that the class would return to those concepts later and transitioned the lesson to learning about whales near NYC. During a Living Environment lesson about human evolution, the teacher used visuals to help promote discussion, asking students to compare and contrast using a guided-notes sheet. However, the discussion format limited the number of students that could participate. During a Global lesson, students circulated through stations focused on Cold War events where students read and assessed text documents to determine whether the documents prove that the winner of the cold war was the United States or Russia. At stations, students were to start writing a paragraph with a claim about who won the cold war based on info they had gathered regarding certain Cold War events.

- During an early-childhood lesson about apostrophes and contractions, students discussed the definition of contraction and how to create one by combining words together. During an English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, students had a text-based discussion with the teacher and the lesson was cognitively challenging. Discussion was teacher to student and lacked opportunities for more student participation and ownership. During a U.S. History lesson on the Cuban Missile Crisis, students read primary sources and answered questions from the teacher about what Khrushchev and Kennedy wanted, and the resolution to that crisis. While the discussion was teacher centered with the teacher posing questions to students, rather than turn-n-talk or smaller group discussion, the discussion was text based.

- During an ELA lesson about romanticism and Mary Shelley’s experiences as a young girl that included a lengthy video, students answered questions about how Shelley’s experiences led her to write *Frankenstein*. During an Algebra I lesson about finding linear regression and calculating with the correlation coefficient using a graphing calculator, the teacher modeled on a SmartBoard. Students followed along on their worksheets and used graphing calculators. There was some discussion about rounding. Although the teacher tried to get other students involved in this discussion, only one student was predominantly involved in the class-wide discussion.
Findings
Curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills are emphasized in academic tasks that support students with IEPs across grades and subjects.

Impact
Curricular alignment to the Common Core and instructional shifts results in coherence across grades and subject areas, promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills require that all students demonstrate their thinking.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits during instruction. Learning objective statements in lesson plans include, “The learning objective is for students to understand that certain combinations of transformations are equivalent to others. Students should also start developing their ability to break down a composition of transformations into its original parts, as well as their ability to visualize movement across a coordinate plane.” “By the end of the lesson students will be better able to analyze word choice and character motivation based on multiple readings of a selection from the text.” Additionally, students are to consistently write and connect their writing to evidence from the text. Lesson plans consistently detailed high-level questions. Examples of higher-order questions found in curricular documents include, “How would you analyze bivariate data using your knowledge of proportions?”, “In what ways did technology enrich the lives of the Hadley’s? How did it negatively impact them and their relationships?”, and “How do we interpret and present data in visual form?” Rigorous habits are embedded in a coherent way across content curricula as the school focuses on supporting students with disabilities.

- Lesson plans, unit plans, and curriculum maps reflect strategic integration of the instructional shifts and the Common Core across content areas, as most lesson plans include a section titled Instructional Shifts Addressed. For example, lesson plans in English focus on students’ use of text-based answers and academic vocabulary. An example of the inclusion of the English instructional shift to grounding reading and writing in textual evidence is evidence in a lesson on making logical inferences from the text and to cite evidence from Animal Farm about how Squealer manipulates the other animals and the impact this will have on the farm’s future. One example of the inclusion of the mathematics instructional shift of real-world application is in a lesson that has students interpreting data using line plots and line graphs to track whales’ migration patterns.

- A review of curricular documents demonstrates academic tasks that promote college and career readiness for all students. A geometry lesson includes students working on analyzing movements of a figure within a coordinate place and breaking it down into its smaller parts. The lesson includes modifications for students with IEPs, including preprinted notes, visual manipulatives, and assistive technology. Lesson plans involving English Language Learners (ELLs) include the use of graphic organizers, one-to-one assistance, definitions of key vocabulary terms so that ELL students can demonstrate their thinking according to the same high-level standards expected of all students. Coherence across content areas is evident in curricular documents that outline clear supports for students with IEPs across content areas and grade levels. For example, classrooms that include paraprofessionals for supports have specific sections included in lesson plans outlining what they will do and which skills they will be reinforcing with identified students.
### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and checklists aligned with the school’s curricula. School leaders and teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals.

### Impact

Students receive actionable feedback regarding their achievement. Data from common assessments, such as mid-term and final exams, are used to adjust curricula and instruction.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher-written actionable feedback. Feedback consistently reminds students to refer to research conducted and textual evidence to support claims. Some examples of that feedback were: “The time you spent on your Cold War and dropping the atomic bomb essays shows you understand the materials. Next step: Draw/use an outline to help you write a paragraph without teacher guidance. Replace the teacher with a guide/outline.” Another example is, “Good job describing the historical context behind the image. Next steps: We will work on an analysis using sentence starters.” One student shared students’ perspective regarding feedback from teachers, “One way we can always speak with them, and then make a correction. They will tell us this is pretty good or whatever, and we also get feedback that helps us improve our work.”

- Across classrooms, rubrics and checklists are used as tools of support for student growth. Rubrics that are aligned with the curricula are used across grades and content areas. Rubrics include an essay-writing rubric and a short-response rubric in English, and a digital-film performance-based assessment (PBA) rubric. Evidence of students’ use of these tools are posted on classroom walls, on hallway bulletin boards, and reported by the students themselves. One student reported, “We use rubrics in ELA, when we’re working on essays.”

- Common assessments across the school include Scantron English and math assessments that are administered across grade levels. Scantron results revealed the average scaled-reading level was approximately four years below grade level at the beginning of the school year. The teachers review assessment data to differentiate instruction and supporting materials, and provide multiple entry points to the instruction. Across classes, midterm and final assessments are used as common assessments. Based upon students’ learning needs and IEPs, teachers differentiate the assessments used during instruction.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings
School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles. Written feedback captures teachers' strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Formal and informal classroom visits result in written and verbal feedback for teachers that make clear the expectations for teacher practice and the supports available to help teachers meet them.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Each rated item is supported with specific detailed evidence from the observed class to support the rating. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence and at the close of each observation report. In addition, school leaders discussed a strategy of observation-cycle planning that involves calibrating observation data amongst school leadership.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers' strengths and weaknesses and is accompanied by the next-steps teachers should take to improve their practice and impact student success. For example, “It may have been easier for the students to understand allegory if you introduce it at the beginning of the lesson. Introducing the concept in the middle of the lesson required the students to learn the concept and apply it to the story at the same time. Understanding what allegory is before reading the story would allow the students to look for deeper meaning in the plot.” Feedback to another teacher includes, “Economics can be a challenging topic. The more concrete examples you can give, the more tangible it will be to students. Try to give as many examples from the students’ life so they can relate to it. Predatory lending is a very interesting subject but it might have been confusing mixing it in with regular credit. Consider doing it as a stand-alone lesson.”

- Teacher support and supervision also involves school leaders monitoring Advance data from teacher observations to determine staff needs. Going into this year, the school decided to focus on the Danielson Framework for Teaching domain that addresses instruction, based upon a review of Advance data from last school year. As a result, the school’s Comprehension Education Plan (CEP) goals for Collaborative Teachers were centered this year on increases in the number of observations being rated effective in instruction. The 15 percent increase in teachers receiving effective and highly effective ratings is evidence of supports for teacher development. School leaders’ feedback to teachers is tailored to teachers’ use of questioning and discussion techniques and complemented by PD that addresses this need. PD at the school has addressed transition planning, Skedula and information systems, Webb’s Depth of Knowledge and questioning, behavior management and the Common Core. Teachers have expressed that PD has helped them track student progress.
Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Across the school, grade teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data, student work products, and share teaching strategies.

Impact

Teacher engagement in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations has strengthened their instructional capacity and promoted implementation of the Common Core and instructional shifts. Systematic analysis of student data and work products results in mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- An observed English inquiry team analyzed student work from The Central Park Five: Final Project essay assignments and noted that the students are very involved with social justice. Teachers reviewed work samples by three students. The team proceeded to discuss trends and patterns in student work to determine next steps. Teachers discussed pairing students to support essay writing. The team discussed using technology, such as tracking changes in Google Docs or Microsoft Word, as they mentioned a student who understands the track changes and would benefit from that practice. Teachers discussed students who haven’t passed the U.S. History Regents Exam and decided to focus on those students, using Miranda rights connected to a social justice theme. The teachers’ general takeaways were that students are noticing how much more they need to write on the essay, because writing is the most difficult, paired with the rigor of the essay writing, and that students are struggling, since they haven’t been exposed to a lot of writing. The team then determined the instructional strategies that would best address next steps to increase social justice to increase student engagement, scaffold writing with supports, sentence-starting rubrics, technology, and use a counterclaim to bridge students to higher-order skills.

- Ten teacher teams in the school meet weekly and focus their work through the lens of Danielson Framework for Teaching domain that addresses instruction, student engagement, assessment, and questioning and discussion. Content-area teacher teams regularly review student work and classroom practices outlined in lesson plans. The staff systematically analyzes the student work from the perspective of the student to best engage in discussions. Classroom instruction is informed by the outcomes of the teacher team meetings. A focus on assessment during teacher-team meetings correlated to an increase in teachers being rated effective and highly effective in that component. A teacher reported the impact of teacher teams working together to improve teacher practice by stating, “We take the feedback from the group and try to move on sentence starters. We started analysis of sentence starters in each subject across content classes.” The work of teachers in each subject and across content areas is evidence of shared improvements in teacher practice as documented by a 15 percent increase in the number of teachers being rated effective or highly effective in instruction during the current school year.

- Because of teacher-team work, mastery of goals for groups of students is evident in an increase in a scaled reading score of 73 points in Scantron assessments from September 2017 through March 2018. A data comparison from semester one to the date of the school visit shows increases in the number of students passing, seven-percent increase in English, a five-percent increase in social studies, and an increase in numbers of students passing math classes. Comparing credits received per content area from last year to this year, shows a two-percent increase in English, four-percent increase in science, and a 15 percent increase in social studies.