Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Business of Sports School

High school 02M393

439 West 49th Street
Manhattan
NY 10019

Principal: Joshua Solomon

Dates of Review:
October 26, 2017 - October 27, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Clarence Williams Jr.
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>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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>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>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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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 Focus</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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</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>
</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>Area of Celebration</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>Additional Finding</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>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Area of Celebration

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Proficient |

### Findings

The principal supports teachers including first year teachers with feedback based on observations. The feedback reflects strengths and areas for growth.

### Impact

Feedback to teachers is designed to promote and improve on teacher methodology and individual growth with clear expectations.

### Supporting Evidence

- The principal and assistant principal use a log of assistance to provide support for teachers, including new teachers. The logs list the teacher’s name, the supervisor, the title of the course the type of observation that took place and the next steps. An example that was reviewed from the log of a teacher demonstrated that the principal participated in an instructional walk-through. Feedback to the teacher included getting the seniors more involved and challenging them with rigor, because senior students have stated that the content is beneath them. The principal also provided feedback stating, “Choose students in advance to explain the do now and there should be at least one critical thinking skill in the do now.” An additional example of feedback was seen in a log for an initial planning conference. The assistant principal discussed using higher order thinking questions for students in history. Examples given were, “How do empires spread?”, “What causes empires to decline?” and “Describe the cause and effect of the Boxer Rebellion.”

- School leaders use formal observations to capture strengths and weaknesses for first year teachers. The principal provided a formal observation report on a first-year teacher. The report was aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. It reflected that the teacher was developing in managing student behavior, and was effective in demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy. Feedback to capture weaknesses to the teacher included, “Standards of conduct appear to have been established, but implementation was inconsistent. Several students were off task.” The principal suggested that the teacher scan the room more effectively to better gauge student involvement and focus. The principal also stated that the teacher provided clear explanations of the content and to continue working with the mentor teacher in all areas of pedagogy.

- An informal observation of a teacher from an assistant principal highlighted how the teacher can improve on instructional methodology. The teacher was rated developing in using question and discussion techniques. The assistant principal stated that the questioning led students to a single path of inquiry. The assistant principal recommended that the teacher incorporate a “cold call to go over each question in their task,” allowing students to be exposed to different forms of thinking. Additionally, the administrator stated that the teacher must prepare differentiated tasks for students who possess varying degrees of comprehension and to track the progress during the actual lesson.
Area of Focus

Quality Indicator: 1.4 Positive Learning Environment
Rating: Proficient

Findings

Advocacy circles and principal meetings are structures that are in place so that all students are known well by at least one adult who supports student guidance and development.

Impact

Student voice involvement has resulted in the formation of student government service projects and fundraisers. The school has an approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional supports that results in an environment that is safe and inclusive.

Supporting Evidence

- Students have an active voice and role in the school culture’s development. Through the student government, they have worked on service projects such as a schoolwide book drive that resulted in books being shipped to a school in Texas. Students have also implemented clubs. Some examples of the school’s clubs and organizations are, The Gay-Straight Alliance and the Borough Student Advisory Council (BSAC) that represented a student voice in the reconstruction of the school lobby. Additionally, students meet with the principal, monthly to discuss issues that include redesign of the school uniform, senior fund raisers, such as bake sales. They are currently working with the administration to create a web site to represent the different clubs that the school offers. Although there are programs in place to support student voice, it is not derived from a theory of action that is tied to school improvement efforts.

- School leaders and teachers have structures in place that allow for every student to be known by an adult in the building to support social-emotional support. Teachers use advocacy circles to support students. These small group meetings take place every three weeks. Each teacher/advocate tracks their students' progress in areas of attendance and social-emotional support, while taking on the role of primary caretaker for the student while they are in school. A tracking sheet was provided that showed an advocate recorded a student's progress. It showed that they checked in with the parent to discuss academic progress, confirmed parent/teacher conference dates and addressed discipline issue that the student was having with another teacher. Every student is partnered with an advocate. One student stated, “Working with my advocate allows me to express myself and it keeps me on track for graduation.” Although the program supports close relationships with students, there was no evidence that demonstrated the personalization of attendance monitoring.

- Student voice is demonstrated within the school community with the implementation of Peer Group Connection, (PGC). PGC allows students to have a voice with their peers. Juniors and seniors work with the lower-class students on transitioning to high school. Teems of ten to fourteen meet once a week to discuss issues such as bullying, study habits and family. One student stated, “I look up to my peer mentor because he’s been through what I’m going through and it's good to have a voice in the building to express myself.” A Peer mentor stated, “I was a mentee when I was a freshman, so I know how important it is to have a voice and be heard. I am still friends with my mentor and he is in college now.”
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum
Rating: Proficient

Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Curricula promote college and career readiness for all students. Faculty members adjust instructional materials so that lessons are accessible to the school’s diversity of learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Lesson plans reflect Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts. An example was provided in a global studies lesson on the Mesopotamian and Babylonian empires. Reading standards included citing textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources. Instructional shifts included the use of vocabulary. Students were required to determine the meaning of words and phrases that are cited from the text. The use of the Common Core and instructional shifts were evident in most instructional documents presented. An additional example was seen in a grade ten English Language Arts curriculum map. The Common Core standards included reading informational text on institutionalized racism. Writing standards included developing and strengthening writing by planning and editing a piece. This was evident as students were required to analyze a character in the play *Fences by August Wilson*. After writing the analysis students were required to answer the following question, “What is our responsibility to ourselves versus families and society?”

- The curriculum promotes college and career readiness for all students. School leaders and teachers have increased the focus on research papers, throughout the four-year sequence. After completion of the eleventh grade, students will have completed ten research assignments. This was evident in a document entitled, “Common Core Short Research Projects.” Students will be required to complete a narrative writing project that can be either a journal or a research project on a historical figure. Students can also create a short video with a script in the form of a documentary of a community concern. The document also includes argumentative writing which can be an editorial, a persuasive speech, or a mock trial. By grade eleven, students must complete a ten to twenty-page college research paper using ten sources and must include research from U.S. history, government or economics. Grade twelve students must complete a sociology research paper that is how they will receive college credit for choosing their own topic citing five to six sources.

- Teachers use High Level Learning Targets (HILT) trackers to monitor student process and adjust the curriculum to meet the needs of students. A HILT tracker presented showed how English as a New Language (ENL) students were struggling with grammar and syntax. Scaffolds were added to the curriculum to include bilingual dictionaries, sentence frames, sentence starters and work sheets in native languages. This was impactful as a student stated the following, “as an ENL, I always had supports in the classroom in Spanish to help me in social studies. Now I don't need them.”
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated belief that students learn best through engagement. Students are engaged through peer discussions and group work.

Impact

Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation. Students conduct discussions including Socratic seminars that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Students were observed working as a group demonstrating high levels of student thinking and participation. In a grade eleven English Language Arts class, students were working in a Socratic circle discussing racism. During the discussion, the teacher asked the inner circle to provide texted based evidence from the book *Bodega Dreams* to support their statement. A student said the following, "In the book on page thirty-nine, it said, any Puerto Ricans that buy drugs don’t belong in my neighborhood. This shouldn’t be tied to Puerto Ricans but only to drug dealers." Another student stated, "I agree everyone should be responsible for making their own destiny and it should have to do with race." All students observed in the outer circle were taking notes on the discussion. The teacher continued to observe the discussion while taking notes.

- Students have stated that they learn best through engagement and discussions of real world connections. In a grade eleven economics class, students were observed engaged in a discussion on health care reform. Students were in small groups discussing the question presented by the teacher, "Should people have healthcare after the age of 21?" In one small group observed, a student stated, "I believe that it should be extended because everyone doesn’t have a job and it's not always their fault." Another student stated that they disagree because after eighteen a person is considered an adult. Another student stated, "I would support Obama care because it allows people to stay on until they're twenty-six." An additional student in another group stated that they did not like it because you must accept everything about it, whether you like it or not. When asked why this topic is important to them, a student stated, "I have to know how I will be taking care of myself when I get older."

- Teachers, administrators and students all agreed that students also learn best through working with hands-on tasks. In a grade nine Algebra class, students were in small groups engaged in writing function rules from table graphs. Students were observed working with partners on graphs to determine the slope and rate of change. Some students were observed using calculators and some were using graphs. When asked why a student was using a graph they stated, "I like to see the whole process and I can correct my work." All students observed were on task recording their answers on dry erase boards and work sheets. One student stated, using graphs and calculators will help me in my career because I’m interested in business." Another student stated, "I learn best with hands-on activities or I will get bored, that’s why I like this class."
Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teachers and students use rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding.

Impact

Teachers’ use of assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students. Additionally, teachers use self-assessments and continually check for understanding during lessons and make adjustments in order to ensure all students’ learning needs are being met.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers use HILT tracking sheets for ongoing checks for understanding during instruction. The tracker displays the date, teacher name, source of the data, how many students got it, how many almost, how many need more work, major trends and specific intervention plans. In a science class, a teacher noted that nine students out of twenty-six struggled with the do now, which asked students to determine if a virus was living or non-living. The teacher modified the instruction to include a vocabulary review defining non-living, living and viruses. An additional example was seen in a history class. Students struggled with a previous exit slip on analyzing the effectiveness of the early American governments. The teacher began the class citing that half of the class needed work on the topic. The teacher pulled students to work in small groups to reteach the lesson which included writing their own ideas and thoughts on American government.

- Across classrooms, rubrics are used to give students actionable feedback. An example was seen in a Common Core argument writing rubric. The rubric contained four points from emerging to exemplary. On a writing piece, a student received three proficient ratings and a developing. The teacher provided the following feedback, “You need to use more formal language the next time. Also check your claim and add more information to support it.” An additional example was seen that showed a student receiving a developing in introducing precise claims and distinguishing from opposing claims. The teacher’s feedback included, “Great voice and in depth analysis. Continue to work on including transition sentences to introduce the next paragraph. Be sure to include evidence to support your rebuttal."

- Students use self-assessments during classroom instruction to inform their learning. Students proof read their work and annotate as they read and record their notes to share with a partner. This was evident in a grade nine English Language Arts class. Students were reading *Romeo and Juliet* on their laptops. Students were assessing how an image from the text relates to the theme of love. One student stated after reading the text, “I have a better understanding of how the love they had for each other conflicted with the family feud. I think I need to read more carefully for meaning.”
Additional Finding

Quality Indicator: 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development  
Rating: Proficient

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations have strengthened their instructional capacity. Additionally, teacher voice has driven school goal adjustment, as well as, the implementation of learning environment improvement efforts.

Supporting Evidence

- A science team meeting was observed. Teachers were engaged in an inquiry–based collaboration. The team used, “I saw, I think”, patterns and implications protocol. Recaps and follow-ups from the last meeting, including giving students a scaffolded version of a work sheet to let them know how many vocabulary words they need to look up. They also discussed the interventions used on students, based on the last meeting. On teacher shared observations from their class. They stated that they observed a student adding carbon dioxide and water in an illustration. The student also underlined the word glucose. The teacher wondered if the student understood how glucose is made because she did not reference the leaf. The teacher stated, “I wonder if showing her a different process of what comes out, can reinforce the materials for photosynthesis versus the products of photosynthesis.” A teacher suggested using a checklist to make sure students complete all procedures. An additional math team meeting was presented that followed the same protocol that looked at students being able to use annotation purposefully and construct viable arguments.

- The school leaders support distributive leadership in the school environment. An example was shown as teachers demonstrated how as department chair and grade chairs, they make decisions about resources. The history department made the choice to use Google classroom and modeled it for other departments. Another example of distributive leadership was the formation of a professional development committee. The committee made up of teachers creates the professional development calendar and initiates school-wide instructional routines. Examples included, think/talk/exchange, and small group discussions work stations. Impact of the committee be seen, as these practices were evident in most classes visited.

- To demonstrate teacher collaboration to strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers, the English Language Arts team presented minutes form an October meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to improve teacher practices using “Text Flex”, a rubric based method of instruction that looks at a student writing sample and scores it according to “almost there” to “got it”, and discrepancies and comments. The student performance is tracked over time. The team looked at one student who was rated, “almost got it” in coherent writing. A team member suggested providing specific steps to follow for the analysis of text evidence (recall, retell and link) and expanding vocabulary by helping students use a thesaurus, such as a Merriam Webster app.