Quality Review Report

2017-2018

Forsyth Satellite Academy
High School 01M458
198 Forsyth Street
Manhattan
NY 10002

Principal: Patrick Reimer

Dates of Review:
February 28, 2018 - March 1, 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

Forsyth Satellite Academy serves students in grade 9 through grade 12. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<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>Proficient</td>
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### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</th>
<th>Proficient</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>Area of Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Focus</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Focus</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: | 1.4 Positive Learning Environment | Rating: | Proficient |

#### Findings

The school’s approach to culture-building, discipline, and social-emotional support values student voice and aligns family outreach and student learning experiences.

#### Impact

A safe and inclusive culture is conducive to student and adult learning and promotes the adoption of effective academic and personal behaviors.

#### Supporting Evidence

- **Student voice** is valued through a student leadership team meeting held every Wednesday during lunch. This meeting is also attended by representatives from each family group. A student reported during the meeting, “Yes, we have a leadership team, and it gives us an opportunity to bring information back to our family groups. We had a field day, and we chose our trip. We wanted to go go-carter and we let student leadership talk to the principal.” Another student shared, “We have connections with all students and teachers.” A student reported their thoughts on the importance of family group to a welcoming and inclusive environment, “Family group is the best. I didn’t know nobody. It’s a cool community; we communicate with each other; it’s like a home away from home.” Another student added, “We do different activities in family group; we break the ice to see how our day is going. They place an effort on speaking to each other. They create an exercise that helps us to have a voice.” A safe environment and inclusive culture are in place at the school.

- **School staff** identify the academic and social emotional needs of each student, assign a family group advisor and create an academic plan aligned with each student’s needs during initial intake meetings. Family group advisors are the primary means of communication between families and the school. Students remain in the same family group until they graduate. Family group advisors work in collaboration with the guidance counselor to keep students up to date on their individual graduation plan. This year, family group time was moved to a different time slot during the day, which resulted in an increase in overall family group attendance compared to last school year. The school has provided professional development to build the capacity of family group advisors, such as training on circles and restorative justice. A student responded about how the school has promoted effective academic and personal behaviors, such as motivation, “This school gave me faith in becoming somebody. I love coming to this school. I travel one hour and twenty minutes, and it’s worth it.”

- **This year**, the school has addressed family outreach by hiring a new parent coordinator. The school also uses online resources to reach out to families and shifted parent meetings to Saturdays to meet the needs of parents. The school makes daily phone calls home for absent students and home visits for repeated absences. Report cards are provided to parents quarterly, along with parent teacher conference sessions aligned to the quarterly reporting cycles. Student progress is also shared with parents as needed via parent engagement Tuesdays. Parents reported, “The counselor will call you and let you know. She gives you the grades and lets you know what classes the student will get next semester. She is always in contact with the parents. She is available to meet with you. They call when your child is absent; they call often, not just once.” The school promotes the adoption of students’ effective academic and personal behaviors.
## Area of Focus

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Developing</th>
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### Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured professional collaboration teams. Teacher teams analyze data and student work for students they share.

### Impact

Use of an inquiry approach is developing across teacher teams. Analysis of assessment data does not yet typically result in progress toward goals for groups of students.

### Supporting Evidence

- The observed team meeting involved teachers designing intervention for two students in a modified kid-talk structure, which was more focused on social-emotional and behavior concerns rather than instructional inquiry work. Teachers had specific roles, such as facilitator, time keeper, note taker, and a social worker was present. During most of the team meeting, the team discussed strengths and struggles from a social-emotional standpoint of two particular students. For the first student, teachers noted that he’s very kind, has a good sense of humor, and he is respectful. Struggles were identified by the group as balancing his outside life with school life; being here consistently; and staying in class for the entire period. During a brief portion of meeting time, the teachers looked at his work and made notes on a note catcher regarding glows and grows. The group discussed next steps including setting clear goals, needs to be prompted to stay on track, and plan for shorter goals. The team discussed strengths of the next student as being very kind, positive and honest as well as getting along well with other students and being a good basketball player. Struggles for the second student were identified as reading comprehension, staying on task, following multi-step tasks, and writing stamina. Next steps for this student were determined to be brainstorming his ideas, restating what he wrote to clarify if that is what he wants to say, reading his writing aloud, and building self-advocacy skills. This team spent more time discussing social-emotional concerns of the individual students rather than inquiry work rooted in student data and student work.

- Teacher teams have engaged in work related to the development of coherent teaching strategies and the planning of common performance-based assessment task (PBAT) outcomes. Additionally, intervisitations are planned during these meetings. Review of social studies teacher team agendas and minutes reveal that work they have conducted around students’ pacing calendar, schedule of assessments, structures in co-teaching, student newsletter, English Language Learner (ELL) support, and the use of a data tracking Regents/PBAT repeaters. However, this data has not yet been used to identify a target group of students that share a common deficiency with the goal of creating the interventions that will assist these and future students. In addition, there is not yet evidence of the inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote the achievement of school goals, the implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts and strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers.

- The school produced data that claimed to show student progress toward goals as evidenced by courses that culminate in PBATs compared from 2016-17 to 2017-18, though the courses across years in this comparison are different titles and involve different students. In social studies, 91 percent of students passed the PBAT course, compared with 81 percent in 2016-17. In math, 75 percent of students passed the PBAT course, compared with 44 percent in 2016-17. In science, 96 percent of students passed the PBAT course, compared with 73 percent in 2016-17. However, teacher team inquiry practices are not yet consistent and do not always result in improved teacher practice and progress toward goals for groups of students.
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

**Impact**

Purposeful decisions to build coherence have resulted in the promotion of college and career readiness for all students so that a diversity of learners has access to the curricula through PBAT preparation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A review of curricular documents revealed alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and New York State content standards, where applicable, as well as integration of the instructional shifts. In a plan for the course Destiny and Power: The Power of Creating Change, students read for and gather evidence from texts that support their claims from the novel, memoir, and informational texts. In a unit plan entitled Facing Ferguson: Race, Digital Literacy, and Activism, students are to cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole. A math lesson plan from the course Algebra for Athletes and Gamers, includes the learning target, “I can explain what an exponential function is and generalize with an exponential function to model a video game console processor speed for a given year.” Another math lesson plan in statistics and injustices, includes the learning target, “I can identify mathematical evidence to support my claim about possible solutions for food deserts.”

- Unit plans consistently challenge students to utilize rigorous habits in the course of instruction. Learning objective statements in lesson plans include, “I can justify how my work is relevant to the larger science community” and “What factors play into mass incarceration in the US? What populations are disproportionately affected?” Additionally, students are to consistently write and connect their writing to evidence from the text. Lesson plans consistently detail high-level questions. Examples of higher-order questions found in curricular documents are, “What is the role of journalism in a democratic society?”, “How can we become vigilant consumers and producers of media in the digital age?”, and “What role does race and bias continue to play in the United States?”

- Curricular documents provided evidence of emphasis on rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students, including ELLs and students with disabilities. An English Language Arts (ELA) lesson plan on analyzing a draft and peer revision, includes specific supports for students with disabilities including an article organizer for paragraphs used only for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) who need linear organizers and are not focusing on developing the skill of creating their own draft maps. A Weak Words Scaffold was created for students who want to target revising for clarity, tone, and stronger writing. The scaffold is organized to ensure that all students can easily follow the layout. There are further supports for ELLs in the second and third column which provide a metalinguistic analysis of why the word is weak and what revision action should be applied. A Plural Words Guide was developed for an ELL who elected to focus on plural words. It is meant to be a cheat sheet with common plurals on the front, less common plurals and irregular nouns on the back. Models and examples are provided for each pluralization. The lesson also included modifications specific to accommodations identified in students’ IEPs and appropriate for ELLs based on their New York State English as a Second Language Assessment Test level.
## Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect the articulated set of beliefs that students learn best when they are known and cared for. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

### Impact

Students produce meaningful work products and take part in discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

### Supporting Evidence

- During an Algebra for Athletes and Gamers lesson, students were working on laptops to look at a video game montage. Some students were using graphing paper and rulers to draw and label graphs of what they noticed. Other students were reading instructions from the screen. Instruction transitioned to a back to back activity talking about their learning. During a history class looking at Civil Rights, five student groups with three levels of texts worked on laptops and researched the Little Rock Nine, Eisenhower's speech, and a timeline of events. During a neuroscience lesson, student groups were charting how they were going to create a hypothesis. Student groups were using cards to sort the order of their experiment process. Generally, the group activities showed evidence that students were known and cared for across classrooms.

- During an English class, students were discussing quotes from *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. Student groups of two were assigned a specific quote from the text. The teacher also passed out a conversation starter for students as they wrote down their questions for Soccer seminar. Two students shared out from their tables and the other students shared out from the other table before transitioning. During a social studies lesson about the Rwandan genocide and the role of the UN, a student group that the teacher was first working with proceeded to have a discussion about the work and another group focused on the intended task when the teacher came over and sat with them to check on their progress. Some groups sat quietly and moved forward when prompted by the teacher. Across classrooms, generally there were high levels of student thinking and participation.

- During a social studies lesson involving interpreting a political cartoon about colonization, students went up to the board to circle parts of the cartoon. During the whole-class discussion, some students could answer why certain parts of the cartoon had been circled. There were opportunities for students to answer the teacher’s questions during the whole class discussion. During a statistics lesson, students led a discussion in Socratic seminar format as students discussed food deserts and economic decisions. Across classrooms, there were high levels of student thinking and participation.
Additional Finding

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

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics and grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula. School leaders use common assessments of PBATs to determine student progress toward goals.

Impact

Students utilize teachers’ actionable feedback in order to increase their achievement. Staff analysis of data from common assessments informs schoolwide curricular and instructional adjustments.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, samples of student work products showed teacher-written actionable feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work. One example includes, “I love how you described your thought process. However, you haven’t really spoken about the shape of your blade and how it is designed to reduce drag.” Another example reads, “You’re missing axis titles on this graph. There also should be two. Use your checklist.” Another example is, “THIS is analysis. You are finding patterns and adding original thoughts. Can you add more of this to the rest of your essay? Great thinking.” Finally, another example reads, “Why are these stereotypes dangerous? Do you have any other examples from history or society today?” A student reported during the student meeting, “We get constructive criticism from teachers; positive and negative feedback. I get what I need to improve on and/or work on. They send it to me over the weekend in Google Classroom.”

- Across classrooms, rubrics and checklists are used as tools to support student growth. Rubrics that are aligned with the curricula, along with checklists, are used across grades and content areas. A New York Performance Standards Consortium Performance Assessment math department rubric outlines criteria for the performance indicators of problem solving, reasoning & proof, communication, connections, and representation. The English department uses a literary analysis rubric for essays that includes performance indicators such as thesis, organization, analysis, style and voice, connections, and conventions for writing assignments or presentation for oral component. Evidence of students’ use of these tools is posted on student work examples and reported by the students themselves. A student shared, “We use rubrics based on what kind of assignment we’re working on. It gives you a clear outline of what you’re expected to do. It gives you expectations for a low grade and an A+. They give you everything you need in the classroom on an app that you can use at home. The rubric is emailed to you through Google Classroom. All students use Google Classroom.”

- The school uses common assessments by developing and revising Performance-Based Assessment Tasks (PBATs) that are aligned to the state Regents standards in core academic subject areas. PBATs are aligned to New York Performance Standards Consortium subject-area rubrics which are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards. Students present PBATs to panels of teachers and community members who evaluate the work using the Consortium rubrics. This year the school has entered disaggregated PBAT information into Google Docs in order to collect, share, and analyze PBAT data and adjust practices. While the common grading of PBATs occurs twice a year, the ongoing focus this year has been on increasing rigor by incorporating more of the writing process across content areas. Adjustments to the curricula as a result of the common assessments, such as the addition of the engineering rubric from the Consortium in the science curriculum and adding more student choice, has led to demonstrating some student growth through increased credit accumulation between September to current date of this school year.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders communicate high expectations to the entire staff and teachers establish a culture for learning that consistently communicates high expectations for all students.

Impact

School leaders provide training and have a system of accountability for high expectations for staff. Teacher teams and staff offer ongoing and detailed feedback and supports that prepare students for their next level, whether college or career.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standard for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. Teachers receive a professional development plan. For example, specific professional development topics include curriculum tuning, student-centered protocols, and building equal partnerships through co-teaching. Teachers are held accountable through formal and informal observations along with one-on-one meetings between school leaders and teachers. School leaders give feedback on teachers' lesson plans. For example, "This is more than one learning target. Break them out separately." Another comment includes, "Where is this in the body of the lesson plan? You have two questions listed under "reading response" yet there is no evidence of differentiation." Learning targets are established for staff and reviewed for accountability during the year. As a result, staff are held accountable for high expectations.

- The school provides students with progress reports, report cards, and transcripts during the school year to support students' progress to the next level. A student reported, "We check our grades, and if we feel like we're not on track, we can talk to the teachers. We work as a whole to help us. Our family group teacher has a chart and they highlight what we passed and what we still need. They all help us. The school lets you know what kinds of credits you need. We use PupilPath, and you can look day by day to see comments and grades. That helps us out a lot." All students at the meeting indicated that they use PupilPath and that all teachers put in grades. All students reported that they are also using Google Classroom. A student added, "It makes it easier to figure out what you need and get organized, very organized. It's up to date; everybody is included. We speak to the guidance counselor and during working Wednesday we check our grades in our family groups, we work as a whole to get our grades."

- The school's culture for learning consistently communicates high expectations that help prepare students for the next level of education. A student reported, "They have Regents preparation classes. This office is futures office; I come and speak to the guidance counselor about colleges; we have trips to colleges. We have guest speakers to talk about tuition. They tell us step by step about the application process." Another student spoke about how the school informs them about career options, "For careers we used mynextmove.org to explore what we want to do next. In family group we have working Wednesdays and we talk about what we want to do." One of the other students at the student meeting mentioned how the school's efforts regarding ongoing and detailed supports has helped him prepare for the next level, "We get personal information about colleges and what we should study. I found out about a program called ASAP and it helps you with CUNY applications."