Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 091 Richard Arkwright

Elementary 24Q091

68-10 Central Ave
Queens
NY 11385

Principal: Gregory Filippi

Dates of Review:
January 3, 2018 and January 5, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Robin Posner
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. 091 Richard Arkwright 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></td>
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</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>
</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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings
High quality assessment practices in the form of teacher-, self-, and peer-assessments are embedded across all subjects and grades and evident on display in hallways, on classroom walls as well as in student work portfolios. In addition, teaching practices are adjusted to meet students’ learning needs made evident by in-class assessment practices.

Impact
Assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement. Teachers’ assessment practices result in student groupings that are differentiated by both content and all individualized students’ needs, and are flexible and change in response to current assessment data.

Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, students use checklists and rubrics as self-assessment tools during the completion of work. Examples of the checklists and rubrics used are posted on classroom walls, hallway bulletin boards, and within student work portfolios. The math rubric guides students to ensure that they show their work or explain it and make sure their answers makes sense. The grade-five narrative writing rubric includes high-level statements such as, “provided precise details and used figurative language to bring forth my meaning,” and “used transitional phrases to show passage of time in complicated ways including flashback and flash-forward.” An exit-ticket rubric guides students to create relevant thinking maps or diagrams used to visually organize information in order to ensure that responses address all parts of the assignment and are completely accurate. A rubric for short, written responses has students providing two relevant text-based details to support their answers.

- Completed assessment worksheets are evident across grades in classrooms, on hallway displays as well as student work folders. In a grade-two class writing assignment, teacher feedback includes encouraging the student to write without sentence starters because his “focus is clear, and his paragraphs are detailed and organized with strong reasons and examples.” Peer feedback in a grade-three class includes asking the writer to “try to add more details and internal thinking.” In another class, peer feedback includes the suggestion to use more dialogue to “bring the reader into your thoughts.” In a grade-five math self-assessment, a student states, “I will try to use more math vocabulary and label my model with numbers.” Examples of teacher- and peer-feedback on a grade-four realistic fiction feedback form includes a teacher’s feedback to a student to “include a balance of dialogue and action” and advice from a peer to reread what is written to find inconsistencies. One student reported that her teacher gave her feedback on adding more details in multiple conferences, helping her turn a grow into a glow. Another student reported that her teacher directed her to focus on adding in descriptive language in her writing and because of this feedback, “I focus more on painting a picture for my readers and my writing is so much better.”

- Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers check for understanding in a variety of ways including turn and talk, checklists, questioning, exit tickets and quick checks to make in-the-moment flexible-grouping decisions as well as reteaching decisions for the next day. In a grade-four math lesson, students were working in groups and pairs as they completed two quick-check questions, the teacher circulated, looked at work, and quickly re-paired and regrouped some students to continue working. In a kindergarten reading lesson, the teacher quickly did a check in with a group based upon exit ticket data from the previous day. Within a few minutes, several students were sent to stations while three stayed with her on the carpet to review vocabulary.
Findings

Across classrooms, teachers provide multiple entry points via learning centers and other scaffolded supports; however, there was limited evidence of high quality extensions and supports for all learners.

Impact

Although students are grouped and engaged in differentiated work, not all lessons require that students engage other students thus taking ownership of their learning. Additionally, while student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation in most classes, this was not evident in all classes.

Supporting Evidence

- In most classrooms, students are provided with multiple entry points into the lessons via learning centers and scaffolded tasks. In the upper grades, students are assigned projects that enable them to choose activities geared to different learning styles. For example, in one class, students were assigned a research project and were able to choose a speech, written report, art project or multimedia presentation to submit as their final assignment. However, in several classrooms, there was limited evidence of high quality extensions and supports for all students. As a result, several students within a group were not able to complete the work independently as instructed. In a grade-five math lesson, several groups were not provided with manipulatives during a lesson on fractions, resulting in a group of students being unable to complete the task. For example, in a kindergarten class, an independent worksheet was not scaffold.

- In a grade-five math lesson, students were asked to engage with each other in challenging conversations about adding fractions. In a grade-four class, students were engaged in turn and talk conversations in which pairs identified the variety of ways one could check their multiplication or division. Similarly, grade-four students engaged in peer-to-peer conversation over the different ways one could divide a number and check it. In this same class, a student group was also engaged in conversation about the steps they needed to take in order to ensure they were starting with the correct digit. In a grade-five class, students engaged in a protocol-driven conversation within pairs as to how stories affect them and make them more powerful writers.

- Students were engaged in high levels of thinking and participation in most classes. During a grade-four math lesson, students worked together to develop solutions to long division problems. During a grade-three-four lesson, the teacher asked for individual students to defend their responses to a math problem and all student responses were directed to the teacher. No students were asked to defend their answers with their peers. During a grade-five writing lesson, students were asked to listen to the teacher read a story and then share her thinking on how good stories have an impact on her as a writer. They then were directed to listen to her share her own writing piece. Students were not asked to meaningfully engage in conversation as to how reading or listening to stories sparks them as a writer.

- In some classes, there were missed opportunities for engaging students in peer-to-peer conversations. During a grade-one reading lesson, students were working in small groups and completing a graphic organizer. Students were assigned to work as a group to complete this task. However, students did not speak to each other, not even to ask for help from a peer when it was clear that several of them were struggling with understanding the task. In a kindergarten reading lesson, students were asked to work in pairs to make a connection to a text they were reading. Students did not speak to each other about their connections and were not given an opportunity to share with other peers.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<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 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 curricula so that a diversity of learners have access and so that all faculty can identify where curricular adjustments are made.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents across grades and content areas evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core and the integration of the math instructional shifts. For example, in a grade-four unit plan, students are asked to apply a math concept to a real-world situation when they are assigned to use real-life objects to compare fractions. Students are asked to draw and create diagrams showing how the real-life objects demonstrated the fraction they were looking at. Similarly, a grade-five project would involve students in planning a meal and using fractions to determine how much each person would get of a particular food item. Students would also have to show their deep understanding of the core math concepts by writing out the steps and strategies they used to solve the problem.

- Curricular documents include assignments evidencing integration of the English Language Arts (ELA) instructional shifts. For example, a grade-three unit plan details an activity requiring students to identify one or more sequenced events and complete a thought-web graphic organizer in which multiple pieces of textual evidence are to be recorded in support of their findings. A grade-one lesson plan shows that students are tasked with citing evidence from the text as they observe and then work with partners to understand illustrations from the same text. Other examples include tasks such as citing text-based evidence to show understanding of explanatory details as well as supporting students’ identification of the main idea in a grade-two unit plan.

- The lesson plan for a grade-one literacy lesson includes a minilesson on locating key facts of information in a text, followed by student pairs doing the same in a familiar text. This lesson plan indicates specific students that will be grouped during the reading activity as per their need for additional supports. Those students would work with the teacher and then use scaffolded organizers to complete the task. A kindergarten literacy lesson plan indicates that the additional vocabulary and fluency supports are to be provided to the English Language Learners (ELLs) in a group with the classroom teacher.

- All faculty have engaged in a process through which they share lessons with each other and indicate which areas have been specifically adjusted as a result of the analysis of student work and data. There are examples of teachers, across grades and content areas, having adjusted curricula based on individual students’ and student groups’ needs based on end-of-unit assessment data. For example, teachers determined via a review of the unit assessments that ELLs were struggling with math vocabulary, so future unit plans were adapted to ensure that vocabulary review for ELLs was frontloaded into each unit.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to the entire staff through a faculty handbook, memoranda, and frequent walkthroughs. School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

Communication and professional development around high expectations results in a culture of accountability. Additionally, communication from school leaders and teachers provides opportunities for families to understand student progress towards college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standards for professionalism, quality instruction, and high expectations. Additionally, teachers receive hot-topic emails covering a wide variety of expectations ranging from day-to-day professional conduct as well as guidelines for instructional planning. The value of increasing the rigor of questioning, ensure authentic student conversations are taking place, as well as ensuring the alignment of curriculum to the Common Core are all emphasized.

- School leaders utilize memoranda and letters to communicate high expectations. For example, a letter addressed to teachers makes clear that teachers are to plan for effective questioning and student engagement in learning. In addition, memoranda and communications through email and paper letters discuss the importance of students learning in groups, maintaining conference notes, planning for and delivering differentiated instruction, and the use of formative assessment to drive instruction. Another letter to teachers reminds them to take a survey and be honest in their responses to help the principal lead effectively. Teachers receive weekly professional development and a portion of it is always focused on the schoolwide expectations. Teachers report that leaders hold them accountable for following through on these expectations via feedback from walkthroughs and formal and informal observations.

- Newsletters to parents include monthly calendars containing information as to events, class trips, Parent-Teacher Association meetings, as well as workshops for parents. Some examples of parent workshops conducted so far this year include topics such as bullying, peer conflict, and building student success in reading and writing. Parents praised the school’s communication of students’ progress through parent engagement time and other web-based platforms that provide daily updates and feedback. Parents shared that most teachers send student work to the home, including tests and homework with glows, grows, and next steps on it so that parents know exactly what progress the child is making.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders support teacher development with frequent classroom observation cycles and student data analyses. Prompt written feedback captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Official and unofficial classroom visits result in written feedback for teachers that make clear the expectations for teacher practice and the supports available to help teachers meet them. As a result, teacher instructional capacity has improved across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders meet with teachers to facilitate student data review sessions during which student data is reviewed relative to achievement gaps, successes, challenges, progress benchmarks, and intervention resources. Additionally, school leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Each rated item is supported with specific evidence from the observed class. Next steps for teaching improvements are included throughout the class-specific evidence and at the close of each observation report. In addition, school leaders employ a strategy of observation cycle planning that targets teachers based on individual need as well as student need. This involves an initial prioritizing of teachers new to the school and teachers on an official improvement plan. The remaining teachers are tiered based on their previous year’s ratings as well as data gathered during classroom visits and walkthroughs.

- Observation reports contain feedback that capture teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and are accompanied by next steps teachers should take in order to improve their practice to have an impact on student success. For example, a teacher is praised in one observation report for creating genuine discussions between students within their groups and for designing the lesson to maximize student-to-student discussion in order to support their understanding. Feedback to the teacher in this report advises that the teacher unpack and utilize the listening and speaking standards to help students have strategic conversations. To facilitate this, it was suggested that the teacher have students ask each other questions in response to student questions. Additionally, specific resources are identified, along with time-bound expectations for the teacher to implement these strategies and for the principal to visit the classroom again.

- In addition to the reports resulting from official and unofficial classroom observations are conversations that follow classroom visits. Teachers all agreed that these deep conversations help them hone their practice. One teacher reported, “I received feedback on having students give written peer-to-peer feedback instead of just verbal. Now, my students can go back and review their peer feedback and I have seen several of them begin to incorporate peer feedback into their work.”
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. Teacher teams consistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations strengthen their instructional capacity. Teacher team work typically results in progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers strengthen their instructional capacity through team collaborations. In one case, a teacher reported that at a meeting a colleague spoke about how frontloading vocabulary needed to write a piece helped alleviate student confusion. She stated that this helped her class find greater success in using phrases like “in my opinion” to support their writing. As a result of these conversations, a majority of teachers have implemented this practice with success, as evidenced by the student work reviewed during inquiry.

- In kindergarten, teachers focused on increasing the amount of student writing, specifically writing a story across three pages. Teachers used the fall on-demand writing piece as a baseline, showing that the targeted group of ELLs and students with disabilities were starting at 5.5 percent proficiency. During inquiry, teachers focused on different strategies they could use to build students’ writing stamina and agreed on several strategies they would utilize. The on-demand piece analyzed at the end of the unit showed that the targeted group was now at 25.5 percent meeting or exceeding the goal.

- In September, the grade-four team met to review students’ writing products and found that students were having difficulty organizing their writing with many students not attempting to use paragraphs in extended responses. In the process of analyzing the most recent writing task assigned to their students, teachers found evidence that the interventions designed by the teacher team resulted in students’ increased use of transition words as well as basic paragraph structuring. The team also found that while some students’ organization was improving, their focus on writing to the specific task was also inconsistent. A next step discussed and agreed to was for future utilization of student written exemplars that exhibited strong organization as well as consistent focus on the writing task. In addition to this, the team assessed the tracking graphic organizer they use and reprioritized the categories. Data revealed student growth between the first and second writing assessment.