Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 104 The Bays Water
Elementary 27Q104
26-01 Mott Avenue
Queens
NY 11691

Principal: Kathleen Grady

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

Lead Reviewer: Carlos Perez
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. 104 The Bays Water 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>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 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>Additional Finding</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>Area of Celebration</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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the schools 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>Additional Finding</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: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

A culture for learning exists that consistently supports high expectations among all staff. School leaders and teachers effectively and consistently communicate expectations to families.

Impact

A culture of mutual accountability and a partnership between school staff and parents results in the vast majority of staff and parents taking ownership for schoolwide expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- All expectations and goals are communicated and reviewed at the very start of the school year. The staff handbook is an extremely comprehensive document that is updated on a yearly basis to include updates to goals, policy, and the school’s instructional focus. Staff are reminded daily of all expectations through the school’s morning messages that can be found in hard copy on the counter in the main office daily. School leaders continue their communication of high expectations throughout the year through instructional walkthroughs as well as through the school’s professional development (PD) plan. For example, teachers received training with respect to the Frayer vocabulary model that as a result is now found as a strategy used throughout classrooms and the school’s curricula. In addition, all expectations associated with the Danielson Framework for Teaching are most notably communicated through detailed classroom observations.

- Parents are partners with all staff members with respect to their children’s academic progress and next level learning. During the meeting with parents, all parents unanimously agreed about the effectiveness and consistency of the school’s communication. All teachers use an online platform to communicate regularly and in real-time with parents in order to share work products and student accomplishments. In addition, parents know the progress of their child through the school’s implementation of student led conferences where students share their progress with their parents, and offer reasons for areas that need further support and how their teachers and parents can help them. Additionally, parents shared how teacher informational sheets called Parent Helpers are mailed home on a regular basis. Parent Helpers provide information about each standard that students are working on in class and all of the ways that parents can support their children at home. This communication is sent home in both English and Spanish.

- Shared accountability includes an expectation that teachers lead and create professional learning opportunities for and share with their colleagues Teachers and school leaders work together through the schools PD team in order to identify the instructional and professional needs of all staff members. Teachers visit each other’s classrooms and offer feedback in a variety of areas through the school’s lesson study and intervisitation cycles. As a result, classrooms have more supports on how to include a variety of writing strategies into student work products.
Findings
Across many classrooms, teaching practices are connected to the school’s belief in how students learn best, such as following the workshop model. English Language Arts (ELA) and math lessons are supported so that students produce meaningful work products.

Impact
Student work products reflect rigor and high levels of thinking and participation but not all work products include student ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- One of the beliefs in the school is that students learn best when connecting learning to real-life situations. During a kindergarten class students worked on syllable awareness, phoneme awareness, and blending sounds to form words. During the lesson, the teacher utilized household objects such as a pen, ball, and a clip for students. The teacher whispered the segmented word to the student and they repeated it to the class. During an ELA lesson, the teacher used text excerpts from Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone in order for students to work on citing text-based evidence. In addition, a worksheet that students used to make inferences as they watched the Disney Pixar short film Birds. During these lessons, students enjoyed the connections to pop culture which helped them stay focused and engaged. However, real-world connections such as these, were not seen across the vast majority of classrooms.

- Throughout the school there were examples of student work products that evidenced high levels of rigor and student thinking. For example, evidence of student’s first grade writing examples exhibited structure and rigor. In a writing piece entitled Beauty and the Lion, the student’s writing included an introduction, well formulated body and a conclusion. The student also included creativity and imagery that helped the reader to paint a picture. For example, the student describes how the witch “Turned the prince into a lion with a big red mane and yellow body.” Several example of students’ math responses included clear steps along with academic vocabulary. For example, one student explained that in order to divide a whole number by a fraction the Keep, Flip and Change (KFC) method was used. The student explained how first she turned each whole number into a fraction, kept the dividend the same, and changed the operation from division to multiplication.

- There is a belief in the school that students learn best when engaged in lessons that follow the workshop model, and specifically student-centered instruction. During a social studies lesson, students looked to identify the three branches of government along with the responsibilities of each branch. The lesson began with a warm-up exercise that asked students why they believed there is a system of checks and balances. The teacher then modeled for students how to locate the main idea within a sentence. Students were then given opportunities for collaborative group work and read a level passaged entitled Branches of Government and answered questions pertaining to the text. Lessons with similar structure were seen throughout many, but not all of the classrooms visited.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

All curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically incorporate key instructional shifts, most notably writing across the curricula. Rigorous habits and higher-order skills for all students are emphasized in the school’s curricula and academic tasks.

**Impact**

Rigorous tasks and access for all students result in students being able to demonstrate their high levels of thinking and cognitive engagement, as well as college and career readiness.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers use the online component from the math program that includes videos, extended responses, and re-teach and enrichment activities. During the meeting with teachers, teachers shared how the math curriculum supports the workshop model and that the language component found within the curriculum provides tools to teach the math language that aligns to the instructional focus of the lesson. There is constant and continuous modifications and reflection across curriculum maps most notably in ELA and math. This, along with consistent assessments in writing and math, ensure alignment to the Common Core and the instructional shifts coherently throughout the grades. Curriculum maps reflect grade level curricula, standards, unit overview, enduring understandings, essential questions, end of unit projects and assessments. Many teachers also utilize the school’s recommended common lesson plan outline.

- All students are exposed to rigorous curricula through challenging texts, and real-world connections. Examples of texts such as *Awaiting Dad*, *Daylight Savings Time*, *The Lincoln Presidency*, and *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone* engage all students in reading grade-level appropriate text on which instruction and resources are focused. A kindergarten lesson plan engages students in transitioning from syllable awareness into phonemic awareness in order to blend sounds and form words. Differentiation for students include a wide variety of activities to support low level students, as well as enrichment for students who fully complete their work before others. For example, English Language Learners or students who require additional language support are asked to say, write, tap and read smaller specific Frayer model words than other students. Other students who complete their work before others, will read through a grade appropriate text or complete an activity on a tablet.

- Instructional shifts are strategically infused into the curricula. The ELA curricula balances informational, narrative and persuasive writing across all grades. Kindergarten teachers use Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) leveled questions in their lesson plans and instruction. A special education teacher outlined DOK questions within her plan, which were aligned for specific groups of students. Vocabulary development is also evident across content areas. Teachers are utilizing new vocabulary acquisition strategies acquired at an outside PD session, focused on students’ responses and engagement. Evidence of strategies such as these were visible in a grade five teacher’s plan, as students were to be organized in triads to answer questions on text-based vocabulary.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
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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 create and use rubrics and assessments that are aligned to the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices include consistent on-going checks for understanding, including student self-assessment.

**Impact**

Teachers provide students with feedback that is actionable and specific to their tasks. Teachers take data collected throughout lessons and make adjustments to meet the needs of all learners.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teacher feedback identifies student strengths and offers actionable next steps. For example, feedback to a student’s extended response writing piece identified her strength as having a clear introduction and how her writing showed she understood the text. Student next steps included using more transitions words to make the text flow better between each thought. Feedback to a student’s chapter reflection math worksheet commended the student for completing all tasks correctly and offered feedback to let the teacher know why they would like to learn more about dividing fractions. Feedback to a student’s writing assignment on the Civil War movement included how the teacher enjoyed the way the beginning of the story helped the teacher learn about the characters. Next steps included adding more to the story such as “actions, thoughts, and feelings.”

- Throughout the classrooms visited, teachers used conferring with students as a means to engage in ongoing checks for understanding. For example, during a math lesson, the teacher conducted conferences with groups and individual students and used a checklist in order to document all meetings. The teacher spent additional time with students or groups of students who needed additional assistance based on the information gathered during conferences. In addition, the teacher called on individual students randomly by drawing sticks with student names prior to and after student conferences. During an ELA lesson, the teacher conferred with students and used a checklist to memorialize responses. As students worked an independent reading assignment, the teacher worked with groups of students to address misconceptions that were identified during conferences.

- During the meeting with students, they shared their knowledge about what feedback is and how it has helped them. For example, one student shared how feedback is something that he can refer to for future assignments. A second student explained how feedback tells her what she needs to do to improve, as another student added “I like receiving feedback as it gives me a perspective other than my own.” Students also were able to elaborate how rubrics and feedback are tied together. Many students explained how they see the language of rubrics often written in the teacher feedback. Students went on to explain how “A lot of times you see key words that you see in the three or four column added to our feedback.”
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Teachers are supported by school leaders through effective and specific feedback from frequent classroom observations. Feedback accurately capture classroom events, is actionable and offers clear next steps.

Impact

Feedback to teachers articulates clear expectations and helps to elevates schoolwide instructional strategies.

Supporting Evidence

- Feedback to teachers was consistent and offered teachers a variety of supports, thus supporting their development. For example, feedback to one teacher commended the teacher for allowing students to work independently in their math notebook as the teacher circulated the classroom monitoring student work. The teacher was offered next steps that referenced a prior observation that reminded her to implement more of a variety of checks for understanding, such as a checklist so that more ways to informally assess students is available. Feedback to a teacher following a math lesson included commending the teacher for the exciting learning environment she created while next steps included reminding the teacher of the need to have students monitor their own learning and allowing students to reflect in math journals would be an effective way to do so.

- Teachers are supported throughout the school thorough cycles of frequent classroom observations. School leaders shared how there are specific guidelines used for observations, such as time of the day and specific classes. For example, school leaders prefer to conduct observations in the morning as they find that student’s engagement is on a higher level. At the start of the school year, the principal conducts the observations for all of the “testing grades,” grade three, four, and five while the assistant principal conducts the observations for the primary grades. Prior to beginning classroom observations, the school principal explained how school leaders visit classrooms together as part of a norming process that assures that teachers are offered feedback in a similar manner. There was evidence of feedback to teachers from both the school principal and assistant principal that accurately captured all of the events during the observations, pedagogical strengths, actionable next steps, and additionally, reference to prior feedback to either celebrate the implementations of that feedback or remind the teacher that there was no evidence of prior recommendations being implemented. In addition, teachers and school leaders review students work products and assessment data connected to the lesson during the post-observations conferences.

- Teachers feel supported through the observation process and the feedback that is offered. Many teachers believe there is coherence in the feedback that is offered to them. They shared how feedback is timely, actionable and as one teacher shared and many agreed, “most of the suggestions offered, I usually agree with.” Another teacher shared how the feedback is not the same language used for all. They explained how feedback is specific to each teacher, and their strengths. Teachers get together at times to review their feedback in groups and talk to each other about how they can implement various strategies in order to address the feedback offered to them, a reflective practice to advance improved instruction.
### Additional Finding

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

All teachers are engaged in professional inquiry-based collaborations and actively take part in the school’s distributed leadership practices.

#### Impact

There is increased instructional capacity and schoolwide instructional coherence. Teacher voice plays an integral part in key decision making that impacts student learning.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Distributive leadership structures are embedded throughout the school and allow for ample teacher voice and teacher ownership throughout. There are instructional teacher leaders on every grade that act as valuable support for colleagues and work closely with school leaders to assure the school’s instructional focus is always first priority. Teachers were responsible for the implementation of the Data Wise inquiry approach that is now used for all teacher inquiry cycles. Teachers and school leaders share how through the inquiry cycles, all teachers have opportunities to take on leadership roles in presenting and facilitating teacher meetings. Through inquiry cycles, teachers focused on implementing strategies to improve writing across the curriculum. As a result, student writing has improved dramatically, most notably how students site and support text-based evidence in their writing.

- The vast majority of teachers are involved in inquiry that looks at student work products and teacher pedagogical practice. Through inquiry, teachers have developed the school’s intervisitation program that allows teachers to visit each other’s classrooms and ample opportunities to meet after each observation to discuss and debrief. Teachers believe that as a result of this, collaboration amongst teachers “has grown immensely.” In addition, as a result of teacher teamwork, writing across the curriculum was implemented this year that reflects instructional coherence, specifically the implementation of writing strategies which has led to a higher quality of students’ constructed responses across all subject areas. Teacher team work has impacted students, especially those who have graduated and are now in middle school. Last year, the school's former fifth-graders in their sixth-grade classes in math, English, social studies, and science had a 96 percent passing rate in those subject areas. This can be attributed to the Common Core-aligned foundation that the students received in the school.

- Teachers felt that they needed to do something more than just the traditional teacher intervisitations and have implemented lesson studies. Teachers get together in teams, and review one teacher’s lesson plan, and offer suggestions for improvement. Teachers observe the teacher and return as a group to discuss the lesson and offer next steps and ways that the teacher can improve that lesson. Teachers feel that in addition to the support they receive from school leaders during the observation process, and the intervisitations from other teachers, lesson studies have impacted their instructional capacity in a very positive way by allowing them to meet to discuss students they share in order to implement instructional strategies that will support these students. For example, the grade three integrated co-teaching team implemented modeling strategies that were successful with their students and shared these strategies with colleagues.