Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 214 Cadwallader Colden

Elementary 25Q214

31-15 140 Street
Queens
NY 11354

Principal: Denise Fuccillo

Dates of Review:
October 24, 2017 - October 25, 2017

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. 214 Cadwallader Colden 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>Area of Celebration</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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</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>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

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

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

### Findings

Staff members and school leaders ensure that all curricular documents are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards in addition to the strategic integration of specific instructional shifts. The school reviews all curricular documents regularly to ensure rigor and higher-order skills are coherently embedded.

### Impact

Curricula coherence exists across all grades and subjects and promotes students’ college and career readiness. The strong, rigorous curricula allows for all students to clearly demonstrate their thinking.

### Supporting Evidence

- All of the curricula reviewed indicate alignment to the Common Core with the integration of the instructional shifts. The second grade math curriculum addressing geometry and fraction concepts provides for students to recognize and draw shapes having specific attributes such as number of angles or number of equal faces. It requires students to identify triangles, quadrilaterals, pentagons, hexagons, and cubes. Additionally, it calls for students to develop a deeper understanding of the properties that make each shape unique by providing them with opportunities to identify geometric shapes that they find in everyday items. The third grade English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is designed to help students read closely in order to make logical inferences in addition to analyzing how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop over the course of a text. The unit plan strategically incorporates how students will cite text-based evidence and use it to determine central ideas and themes.

- All Lesson plans coherently embedded higher-order thinking skills so that English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities must demonstrate their thinking. In a fifth grade reading plan ELLs and students with disabilities will work in a group having discussion buddies and engage in specific roles during group and partner discussions. Sentence starters and academic language words that would assist students during conversations were included in the plan. In a first grade math lesson students were to engage in math talk and share sessions. Each group has talking points to assist all students in engaging in rigorous discussions. Rigorous practices were seen throughout all unit and lesson plans. One second grade task required students to complete a t-chart to compare two characters with details.

- Having students work collaboratively is embedded throughout all planning documents, preparing students for future cooperative and collaborative situations as a form of college and career readiness. All curricula emphasize academic vocabulary, problem solving skills, and higher order questioning that ask students to interpret text they read and support their rationale. In addition, all lesson plans display how students are asked to regularly self-assess their work. For example, students look at every section of a student’s creative writing assignments prior to handing in a final project. Thus allowing students to learn how to react to constructive criticism, a skill that promotes readiness for middle school, high school and college.
Findings

Pedagogical practices across many, but not the vast majority of classrooms are aligned to the school’s curricula and reflect the school’s beliefs that students learn best when deeply engaged in active learning and think-pair-share exercises.

Impact

High levels of student thinking and participation are evident in many classrooms but as of yet not across the vast majority of classes. Students produce meaningful work products.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teachers shared that the school’s belief in how students learn best is accomplished by having students deeply engaged in active learning through group discussions, argumentative protocols, active turn and talks, and think pair share exercises. Students participated in group and partner discussions across the classrooms visited. Students generated their own questions and provided text-based evidence, which added to the student conversations. During a fifth grade ELA lesson, students were asked to discuss which topics they have identified from the book, *Washed Up*. Students responded with, “In chapter three I noticed” and “I found sources on page” as they engaged in active discussion. However, rigorous discussions such as these were not seen across the vast majority of classes visited.

- A fifth grade math assignment asked students not only to solve a math problem but to clearly explain in writing how they solved it, the reason for the method they selected and to justify their answer. This student assignment included academic vocabulary and clearly stated the steps the students took to complete the assignment. In addition to completing the math problem, one student wrote, “The dividend is 170. I found my answer by multiplying the divisor and quotient. I checked my work by doing an inverse operation.” A second grade science task asked students to use observation skills and identify all of the different forces and where energy is present on the playground. Students drew an example of what they saw and labeled each area. Student work products were extremely detailed. Their labeled drawings made it easy to identify the specific movements that the students were describing.

- In each of the classrooms visited students engaged in group conversations and used argumentative skills. During a fifth grade ELA lesson, students were engaged in discussions relating to the theme of the book they were reading. One student shared, “I think the theme of the book is making smart choices.” A second student responded, “I don’t see that as the theme, I think it is more about family relationships.” During a fourth grade science/ELA lesson, students conversed with their peers and were able to support their claims by citing text-based evidence. The teacher asked the students to select the ideas the author used that stood out to them. One student explained, “I thought these words stood out to me, on page 17 it says that crocodiles have strong jaw bones for gripping.” A second student shared a fact regarding amphibians having an exoskeleton and how that meant that their skeletons are on the outside of their body.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 2.2 Assessment | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms teachers create and implement assessments, rubrics and grading policies that are aligned to the school’s curricula and offer students personalized and meaningful feedback aligned to the school’s Criteria for Success. A varied use of ongoing checks for understanding takes place across all classrooms that help to assess student learning.

Impact

Teachers provide actionable and meaningful feedback to all students that allow all students, including English Language Learners (ELL’s) and students with disabilities to understand their next learning steps.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers provide students with actionable feedback that is personal and unique to each student. During the meeting with students, every student shared how they receive feedback on every assignment in every class. They believe that the feedback makes them “better students” and allows them to get “better grades throughout the year.” Feedback on a second grade writing assignment included praising the students on how they structured their narrative by including multiple temporal words, while offering next steps that included adding a specific problem that the student’s characters will face. Additional feedback to a group’s second grade toy car project gave the students a glow for being correct in their hypothesis and their efficiency as a group. It also gave them next steps in the form of a grow suggesting that their hypothesis needs to be more specific. The recommendation stated, “Instead of saying you think it will go far, tell us how far you think it will go.”

- Every classroom visited exhibited a variety of ways that teachers are checking for student’s understanding. During a fifth grade writing lesson, the teacher conferenced with individuals and groups of students while using a check list to memorialize the conversations. During a fourth grade ELA lesson, the teacher conferenced with students while taking anecdotal notes which are used as additional assessment data. During a math lesson, the teacher continuously did quick checks to assess student learning and further understand when students needed assistance. The teacher then worked with the student to address the error or misconception. During the teacher meetings, teachers explained that the data gathered from quick checks and conferencing is used to drive their small group instruction to ensure that student misunderstandings were addressed and clarified.

- Rubrics were used during every lesson observed. Students were able to clearly articulate the use of rubrics and the effect they have on their work products. They shared that rubrics are used as they do their tasks in “every class” and for “every assignment.” Furthermore, students, along with the teacher often create rubrics for assignments. Students stated that by creating the rubric they know exactly what is needed to get the highest score on a project, because “we wrote it, so we should know.” Students explained that the school has a “Criteria for Success” and that it is embedded in all their classes. They believe that is definitely helps them focus on always doing their best.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 3.4 High Expectations | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings

The school consistently communicates high expectations connected to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to the entire staff most notably through the use of an Administrative Bulletin Binder. Families partner with the school community and understand the school’s criteria for students to be college and career ready.

Impact

A culture of mutual accountability for all expectations is a result of the training offered to all staff and families to support student progress toward reaching these goals.

Supporting Evidence

- From the start of the school year, all expectations are given to the teachers in the form of an Administrative Bulletin Binder. The binder includes a list of administrative bulletins, which address specific areas such as bulletin boards, and the expectations associated with each. For example, Administrative Bulletin #2 focuses on bulletin boards. This section gives the location of each bulletin board and the person responsible for displays throughout the year. Expectations for presentations on bulletin boards are also discussed during formal and informal teacher observations. At one of the meetings, the teachers referenced this binder and expressed that they use it as a resource during the school year.

- The school has built a successful partnership with families to support all school-wide expectations. Parents, and teachers shared how the principal holds a meeting every morning in the gym in order to set the tone for the day and remind everyone of what is expected of them. Families voiced that they are kept up to date with respect to “everything that goes on in the school.” They are sent copies of everything, including the schools Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) and the school’s instructional focus. During parent teacher conferences, they were given a copy of the school’s grading policy, which informs them as to how their children will be graded. A review of the teachers’ and administrators’ parent communication logs revealed numerous amounts of family contact taking place on a daily and weekly basis.

- The Danielson *Framework for Teaching* is the basis for all the expectations associated with preparation, planning and learning. According to teachers and school leaders, all staff members are expected to have a fully defined and developed lesson plan that is available at all times. Teachers explained that they develop these by regularly sharing their lesson plans with colleagues and school leaders to receive feedback to improve their planning. School leaders provide teachers a self-evaluation checklist for their lesson plans to ensure that they plan for differentiation, independent work, and interdisciplinary instruction. At the start of every year a Webb’s *Depth of Knowledge* (DOK) wheel is distributed to staff. Teachers use the wheel regularly as it helps them understand the various DOK levels and increase the rigor of the tasks and questions they plan.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision | Rating: | Well Developed |

Findings

School leaders support the development of teachers and teacher peers through the use of effective feedback that provides clear next steps.

Impact

Feedback to teachers articulates actionable next steps, supports teacher growth and development, and aligns with teachers’ professional goals.

Supporting Evidence

- The observation process is strategic and ongoing throughout the school year. School leaders begin the school year with a norming process that includes members of the leadership cabinet visiting teachers and discussing their findings in order to ensure that feedback the teachers are offered is uniform and aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Teachers believe that school leaders are aware of what they need as a result of the observation process. The areas that a teacher needs to improve determine which administrator will observe them. One teacher shared, “They know us well as a staff, and are always strategic when assigning administrators to certain teachers.” Teachers and administrators review student work and data after each classroom visit. Teachers are regularly given opportunities to self-reflect on the lesson during each post observation meeting.

- Feedback to teachers is actionable, timely and is aligned to individual teacher goals. This was evident in the teacher observation reports. Teacher responses during the meetings validated this as well. In one report, feedback to a teacher outlined the steps necessary to move to the highly effective level in the area of questioning and discussion. This was a goal developed at the teacher’s initial planning conference at the start of the year. Feedback included ways to have students create their own questions, initiate topics and challenge themselves during lessons. School leaders regularly inform teachers when they will return to their classes in order to assess if the recommended strategies are being implemented. Another report offered feedback to a teacher in the area of assessment practices. This was an area that the teacher identified as in need of improvement. The school leader reminded the teacher that not only is assessment an area they wanted to work on, but using assessment in instruction is the school’s instructional focus. Clear steps were provided and the teacher was asked to send a brief reflection by email describing how the feedback would be implemented.

- All school leaders, as well as teacher peers, offer feedback to teachers that clearly captures all of the events of the intervisitation. The feedback is direct and specific suggesting the ways to improve future lessons. Various resources are offered and shared with teachers. For example, one report offered specific suggestions, such as creating a sample graphic organizer for students to use when comparing an author’s purpose for two texts. Reports also included examples of specific tasks that provide opportunities for students to work collaboratively and explain their thinking. Each report had a specific timeline for implementation and the expectations for the implementation were clearly communicated.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

There are both vertical and horizontal teacher teams that meet regularly in order to analyze student data and pedagogical best practices.

Impact

The work of teacher teams supports, strengthens and improves teachers’ instructional capacity. Progress towards goals for specific groups of students increased.

Supporting Evidence

- During a teacher team meeting, teachers worked on selecting a strategy that would support students in the bottom third of each of their classes. The common goal of the inquiry session was to be able to design strategies that enable students to ask and answer higher order thinking questions in order to improve their ability to deepen their class discussions. A third grade math team session focused on ways they could supplement the curriculum. The teachers targeted strategies to be implemented, prioritizing what was important, what would fit their student’s needs, and the resources that could be used in their classes.

- Distributive leadership structures are in place throughout the school. Teachers lead professional development sessions. The school year began with two six-week cycles of professional learning in the areas of reading and math. Grade specific and vertically grouped teams, each led by teacher leaders provided the professional learning utilizing the Professional Learning Protocols. The sessions centered on areas such as the introduction of new units, performance task revisions, and the development of authentic problem solving tasks. These same teacher leaders work with their peers and meet regularly with school leaders throughout the school year. During the teacher meeting, teachers expressed the value of peers acting as leaders and they reach out to them regarding curricular and pedagogical issues and concerns.

- Teacher teams analyze student data to support specific subgroups of students. Teacher teams are engaged in several cycles of professional learning centered on reading strategies. Their goal is to “increase student performance through the use of vetted reading strategies.” Vertical ELA teams met for several weeks and targeted subgroups of students that consisted of the following: English as a New Language (ENL’s) students, lowest third, highest third, middle third, males, females, and black/Hispanic students. During these sessions the teacher teams identified a common goal. Additionally, an action plan was developed that included an instructional sequence of reading strategies found in the Reading Strategies text by Jennifer Serravallo. Recent grade five English Language Arts (ELA) data indicates former grade four students in the Black and Hispanic sub-group, who were taught these strategies, demonstrated an above the 50 percent growth percentile with many scoring above 80 percent.