Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 223 Lyndon B. Johnson
Elementary 27Q223
125-20 Sutphin Boulevard
Queens
NY 11434

Principal: Deborah Otto

Dates of Review:
February 6, 2018 - February 7, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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. 223 Lyndon B. Johnson 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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
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<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>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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</table>
### School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Celebration</th>
<th>Well Developed</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>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 of Focus</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
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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>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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations about instruction and student academic performance to staff and families through *The Weekly Highlights and progress reports.* (a, b)

**Impact**

Mutual accountability for instructional expectations is evidenced through inter-visitations. The school partners with parents through open school week, publishing parties and opportunities for parents to volunteer at the school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders create an elevated level of clear expectations for all staff, which are evidenced throughout the community through verbal and written structures. The faculty handbook delineates the expectations for displaying student work, the availability of lesson plans and suggested items to be included such as the differentiation of student groups to support flexible grouping. Expectations for professionalism are delineated in the Classroom Must Haves 2017-2018. Itemized expectations include but are not limited to: the daily schedule, clear identification of centers, learning objectives clearly identified, student portfolios, leveled libraries, and student created goals. Written communication such as *The Weekly Highlight* apprises the school staff of instructional items such as the skills of the week across the school. This highlights specific skills of focus for the week in the area of English Language Arts (ELA). Other items included expectations such as tracking assessment data for classes and important dates and events of interest. The *P.S. 223Q Behind the Scenes* informs the school community of meetings that occurred and the outcomes and next steps for each meeting. Teachers are held accountable through instructional walk-throughs that assess the classroom environment and provides written feedback to teachers.

- The professional development plan is a four-cycled plan that is tiered by: organizing effort, enhancing ELA instruction, enhancing math instruction, and forward planning. Included in the professional development plan are: the unpacking of beginning of the year and State assessment data, incorporating science and social studies during balanced literacy, creating a student centered classroom, and focusing on the instructional shifts of fluency and coherence. Teachers are also provided a voice as referenced by the professional development reflection sheet. Teachers have opportunities to attend off-site professional development on topics such as math number talks, tier III vocabulary, and various students with disabilities centered workshops. Teachers are mutually accountable for these expectations by facilitating professional development to the staff and conducting teacher led inter-visitations that are memorialized and shared with administrators.

- Parents are aware of how their child is performing academically through multiple mediums such as *Class Dojo*, monthly progress reports, report cards, and *PupilPath*. Student led conferences provide students an opportunity to present and explain their academic portfolios to parents about their academic performance. Parents also mentioned the supports they receive to continue the education process while at home or after school through programs such as *iReady, MyON, Mathletics*, weekly tutoring, and the Saturday academy for extra academic support.

- Parents are apprised of school events through a parent calendar and newsletters. Parents partner with the school by attending workshops on *GO Math!,* invitations to open classroom week in which teacher classrooms open their classrooms for parents to visit, and monthly publishing parties where students showcase their work. Opportunities to attend workshops on the middle school admission process are also provided. Parents also serve as volunteers for the school as well and are supported in understanding student progress towards expectations.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

Teachers engage in professional collaborations by meeting in grade and vertical teams and analyze student work using *The Data Phase Action Model*. Distributed leadership practices are in place at the school.

Impact

Teacher collaborations are in the process of resulting in instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners. Distributed leadership practices are not yet embedded in the school’s practice so that student learning across the school is affected.

Supporting Evidence

- A math vertical team was observed engaging in inquiry work. Using a looking at student work protocol, two samples of a high and low piece of math student work was analyzed. Teachers discussed their noticings such as the students used the circling, underline, box, evaluate and show your work (CUBES) method to solve the problem. Teachers discussed teaching strategies to rectify the issues such as: flexible grouping, pairing the student with the teacher, and using math clinic books to target specific strategies. Teachers mentioned the impact of teacher teamwork on their instructional capacity included noting trends and patterns on the upper grades such as multiplication, and communicating the noticings to teachers in the lower grades. As a result, teachers in the lower grades are focusing on addition facts. The students demonstrated challenges in reading. Students showed struggles in reading which resulted in curriculum changes such as including more balanced literacy and guided reading into the curricula. Meeting as a vertical team informs the teachers of the commonalities on what students are struggling with. Although teachers are meeting in vertical teams, only one example of the use of CUBES was identified as a strategy that has built school wide coherence. The work of the teams resulting in instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities was not evident.

- A review of teacher team notes showed that grade level teams in ELA and math utilize *The Data Phase Action Model* to analyze student work. The five-model phase provided a framework for analyzing student work and devising action planning as a result of the data analysis. A fourth grade team looked at beginning of the year writing and State test data. Teachers noted that students were struggling with main idea, specifically in nonfiction. Teachers discussed the use of graphic organizers, pre-teaching, and chunking of the text as strategies employed. However, the documentation does not show specifically how the strategies used impacted instruction, student achievement, or resulted in instructional coherence. Similarly, a math team utilized the same protocol for looking at beginning of the year math data and chapter exams. Teaching strategies were identified such as center for reteach, problem of the day, quick checks and exits slips; however, clear plans on the implementation of these strategies and how it will result in instructional coherence and increase student achievement for all learners including ELLs and students with disabilities was not evident.

- Distributed leadership practices are in place whereas teaches have a voice; however, these practices are not embedded so that teacher voice plays an integral role in decision-making that affects learning across the school. Examples of distributed leadership include the student with disabilities teachers serving as the special education liaison for the school. In this role, the teacher attends professional development and turnkeys the information to the staff. Teachers serve as grade leaders on vertical teams, facilitate professional development, and a teacher has been identified as the sole mentor in the building, which is embedded in the teacher’s schedule.
Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula and academic tasks are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS), emphasize rigor, and integrate instructional shifts such as academic vocabulary, balanced literacy, fluency and deep understanding.

Impact
The integration of instructional shifts builds coherence and promotes college and career readiness so that all learners have access to the curricula.

Supporting Evidence

- Pacing calendars across grades and content areas showed the topics to be covered in the curricula. Curricular planning documents showed teachers incorporated the Common Core Learning Standards. In ELA, the instructional shifts of focus are academic vocabulary and balanced literacy. Lesson plans in the humanities showed a commonality in the Common Core standard of referring to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says when drawing conclusions. Lesson plans across grades showed the learning objective, and differentiation of guided reading groups based on Fountas and Pinnell data. In mathematics, the instructional shifts of focus are fluency and deep understanding. A fifth grade lesson plan showed a focus on the Common Core standard of multiplying mixed fractions, while a fourth grade lesson plan showed a focus on subtraction of mixed fractions. In addition, the lesson plans across the grades cited the learning objective, essential question, and noted the differentiation in the task based on student performance on quick checks, thus building coherence and supporting college and career readiness.

- Academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. In a science task, students read a story entitled, *Sneezey the Snowman*. Based on their reading, students were required to discuss how the snowman changed into the different states of matter, such as a solid to a liquid. Students also drew a picture to demonstrate their thinking. In another science task, students read texts about animals such as an owl, frog, dolphin, and monarch butterfly. Students recalled how these animals adapted to the environments, and devised their own higher-order thinking research question. The culmination of the project required students to write an essay using their student generated research questions. All tasks included scaffolds such as differentiated graphic organizers for diverse learners.

- Rigorous habits and higher order skills require students to create their own meaning. An ELA task based on the reading *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio asked students to reflect on a major influence of characters actions in the book. Students were tasked with analyzing and interpreting "precepts" or mottos and to make meaning of a precept in their own words, as well as connect the precept to their own lives. Differentiated scaffolds were used in order for diverse learners to have access to the task.
Findings

Across classrooms, teaching strategies such as stations activities and student-to-student discourse allows for multiple entry points that foster student discussions.

Impact

Multiple entry points into the curricula ensure that diverse learners are engaged in challenging tasks. Student discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Supporting Evidence

- Teaching strategies and instructional tasks address the needs of diverse learners such as students with special needs through multiple entry points. In a third grade 12:1:1 English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were tasked with examining parts of a drama by listening to *Master Man A Tall Tale of Nigeria*. Small group instruction occurred in the rear of the classroom as students reviewed their essays. The teacher posed clarifying questions to the students in order for them to revise their writing based on evidence from the text. A scaffold was available to students on how to handle unfamiliar vocabulary in a text. Another group of students were analyzing the parts of a drama in their groups and responded to teacher posed questions on scene analysis. A whole class discussion ensued about the definition of a drama, followed by a turn-and-talk about the elements of a drama. Students were overheard explaining elements such as setting. In a first grade ELA class, students discussed features of a biography and began drafting their own biographies. Students were working on differentiated tasks such as small group instruction in the rear of the classroom while another group of students created a graphic organizer to chronicle facts about themselves. When a student was queried, he stated that he was working on his biography.

- Across classrooms, teachers used varied strategies for students to access the content or task. In a fifth grade ELA class, students worked on center activities such as a literature circle that emphasized reading comprehension, students analyzed a poem using differentiated graphic organizers and engaged in a share out about their poems. Additionally, students worked on social studies skill cards on various explorers such as Christopher Columbus, completed comprehension questions, and researched an explorer of their choice on the computer. Another group of students worked on teacher facilitated test sophistication by reading a poem, answering multiple-choice and constructed response questions based on details from the poem. In all groups observed, students were working collaboratively and engaging in student-to-student discourse around their differentiated tasks. In another fifth grade 12:1:1 class, students were working on differentiated center activities such as science centers that required students to place specific foods into their food groups and create a well-balanced meal, while a small guided reading group in the rear of the class analyzed the lyrics to “The World’s Greatest.” Students used a scaffold entitled, “analyzing poetry” to identify alliteration and metaphors. Students were tasked with identifying the literal meaning of the metaphor. Another group conducted close reading of a text and identified words with “oo.” In all groups, there was student-to-student discourse and differentiated tasks.

- Multiple entry points into the curricula allowed for all students including ELLs and students with disabilities to have access to the curricula and challenging tasks. In a first grade math class, students were required to model, read and write numbers from one hundred ten to one hundred twenty. Students were engaged in differentiated station activities contingent on skill and teacher support. Students used manipulatives such as base ten frames and ones stamps to model numbers over one hundred. Small group instruction occurred in the rear of the class. Students used marshmallows and fruit loops as manipulatives to construct two-digit numbers based on place value.
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
Teachers use rubrics and their line of questioning to consistently check for understanding.

Impact
Feedback from teachers and peers provide actionable next steps regarding student achievement. Teachers and students check for understanding and make adjustments to meet the learning needs of all students.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers monitor student understanding during the lessons through questioning for explanation. This practice leads to on the spot adjustments to the lesson to meet all students learning needs. In a fourth grade math class, during the instructional period, students answered two problems that assessed subtraction with mixed numbers as a check for understanding. Students who demonstrated difficulty in answering the questions were pulled into a small group in the rear of the classroom to work on remediation. Students who were at grade level were assigned additional questions from their textbook and advanced students received an enrichment activity on mixed fractions. In a first grade math class, the teacher adjusted the pacing of the lesson by providing the students an additional two minutes on their station activity. In one station activity, the student self-assessed their work and noticed that he incorrectly represented one hundred six with the ten frame and showed forty-six. The student corrected his mistake by adding more ten-frame stamps to show one hundred.

- Teachers were taking the pulse of the class by checking for understanding and making adjustments to the lesson. In a kindergarten class, student reviewed “ed” ending words and used sentence frames to create and complete sentences. During the lesson, the teacher conferenced with student groups and checked for understanding through the line of questioning and statements. Questions posed to the students were, “What is missing at the end of the sentence?” “Don’t forget your spacing.” “Should a capital be in the middle of your sentence?” Students were observed making changes to their work as a result of the checks for understanding. In a fourth grade ELA class, students were engaged in a scavenger hunt to discover text features in non-fiction. This class showcased fourth grade students partnering with second grade students in discerning the text features in a non-fiction text. The teacher circulated around the groups and noticed that one group was not properly using the text feature scaffold. The teacher posed questions such as, “Did you read this?” “What is our next step?” The teacher instructed the fourth grader to guide the second grader to use the text feature scaffold.

- Teachers use standards aligned rubrics, student friendly rubrics, peer and self-assessment strategies to provide actionable feedback to students. Samples of student work showed teacher feedback in the form of glows and grows. A sample of ELA work commended the student for including details in the writing piece, but recommended that the student focused on a moment in their writing that read like a story. Another writing piece showed the teacher’s feedback as well as the student’s self-reflection. The student noted that more information needed to be included in their captions. A peer commended the student for giving a lot of details in their writing. During the student meeting, a student mentioned that he received a 1.5 on his writing assignment. The student revised the assignment using the peer feedback and the grade increased to a 4. Students attested that the feedback received from peers and their teachers helps them improve their work. Students also track their progress from assessments through literacy and math portfolio assessment checklists.
**Additional Finding**

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
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<th>Proficient</th>
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<tr>
<td>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</td>
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**Findings**

Feedback to teachers cites strengths and challenges and next steps that are aligned to the school's instructional focus of questioning and discussion. School leaders use metrics from Advance to design professional development.

**Impact**

Feedback articulates clear and next steps to elevate schoolwide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and development.

**Supporting Evidence**

- A review of observation reports showed school leaders provided teachers with feedback on their practice that is aligned to the school's instructional focus of questioning and discussion. A report commended the teacher for providing the students with opportunities to engage in turn-and-talk and students questioning one another; however, students were not explicitly justifying or explaining their reasoning during discussion. Recommendation to the teacher was to ask the students more challenging questions so that they may explain their thinking. Subsequent observations showed that the teacher utilized the recommendation and incorporated a mixture of low and high level questions that promoted students justifying their thinking. The next step required the teacher to hold students accountable for explaining their reasoning. The teacher demonstrated effective practices based on the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Another observation report recommended that the teacher incorporate differentiation in student tasks through the use of scaffolds, and including student choice in the activities. The next observation commended the teacher for posing questions that made student thinking visible through discussions, thus impacting the rating from effective to highly effective in the area of questioning and discussion.

- During the teacher meetings, teachers mentioned that support for their practice is garnered through inter-visitations with colleagues. Observation reports recommended teacher inter-visitations to support teachers via the sharing of best practices. An observation report cited a teacher for using students as table leaders during activities that supports students in ownership of their learning. The teacher's class was cited as a model classroom to highlight this practice. Additional reports recommended challenging students through questioning and discussion, and reading professional literature to support teachers in improving this practice. Advance data showed teachers either vacillating between effective or developing ratings or demonstrating effective and highly effective ratings for questioning and discussion.

- School leaders articulated that trends in observation data revealed that there needed to be a focus on questioning and discussion, which is also the school’s instructional focus. Currently in the second of a four cycle professional development cycle, teachers in grade bands receive and facilitate professional development in incorporating constructive responses in math instruction, and creating student-centered classrooms through skill emphasized tasks and student performance. The school is currently working towards differentiated professional development based on teacher evaluation data. Succession plans include a teacher who is designated as a mentor for it is embedded in the teacher’s program.