Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S./I.S. 268
K-8 29Q268
92-07 175 Street
Queens
NY 11433

Principal: Lissa Grant Stewart

Dates of Review:
February 27, 2018 - February 28, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Luz Cortazzo
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


School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
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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>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### School Quality Ratings continued

#### 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>
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#### Systems for Improvement

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

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<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<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>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
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<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>
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</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**

School leaders and faculty strategically align curricula to the Common Core Learning Standards with intentional integration of the instructional shifts. Teachers collaborate to develop rigorous and coherently sequenced tasks for all learners.

**Impact**

All students, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs), have ready access to curricula designed to promote college readiness. Academic tasks provide opportunities for students to demonstrate their thinking.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All units of study reflect alignment to Common Core Standards and include topics, essential questions, texts, enduring understandings, embedded assessments, target vocabulary, skills, and strategies for guided and independent practice. Each unit includes a culminating performance task and a Common Core-aligned rubric for assessing levels of student mastery of content and skills taught. A unit for grade 5 Personal Narrative Writing showed a plan for students to learn strategies for writing good personal narratives, as per the Common Core English Language Arts instructional shift 5, “Writing from Sources, using mentor texts to study from and model their own narrative after.” The task required students to write a Personal Narrative/Small Moment using the writing process, foundational writing skills, as well as to experiment with authors’ craft using a variety of mentor texts. The unit included a four-level task specific rubric as a measure of student proficiency on the task.

- School leaders support the integration of the instructional shifts using Ready Gen, and Code X for English Language Arts, and Go Math! and Explorations for math to support the curricula. The school follows the New York State Scope and Sequence aligned to the Common Core for science and social studies. Additionally, the science curriculum is supported using Urban Advantage, and Passport in social studies. All these programs, engage students in hands-on activities and provide teachers with strategic approaches to engage students in critical thinking. Furthermore, arts programming is integrated throughout the school. A review of the Annual Arts in the School Report indicates that the school continues to support, students in all four disciplines according to the NYS Standards for the Arts. For example, the school is the recipient of a Disney Musical in the School’s Grant. Students benefit from mentorship and support as they produce the musical *Aladdin* resulting in students gaining self-confidence, becoming critical thinkers, problem solvers, and having a sustainable theatre program.

- Lesson plans reviewed included higher-order essential questions and a variety of differentiated strategies to support ELLs, special education students and struggling readers. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles are embedded into planning to ensure multiple entry points for all students. For example, in a sixth-grade math class, students apply percent to solve real-world situations and mathematical problems, had access to calculators, use manipulatives, word wall for language development and were asked to name the strategy they used and justify the process. In a third/fourth grade self-contained class for students with disabilities, the essential question was, “What strategies can you use to estimate products?” Each student used a different strategy to solve the problem, showed their work, and provided a written explanation of the solution and methodology.
## Area of Focus

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

Teacher practice is centered on a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best and informed by the instructional shifts and the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*.

### Impact

Teaching practices, which support the curricula, result in instruction that is student-centered, challenging and relevant so that students are active participants. However, strategic supports and extensions are not yet consistent across classrooms.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers modeled for students by using explicit teaching based on the curricula. However, in some classrooms teaching strategies did not allow students to extend their thinking and challenge their peers. For example, in a first-grade math class working on related facts to subtract, students worked with the teacher to help them solve the problem of the day. However, there were missed opportunities for the teacher to allow students who showed mastery of related facts to move on to more challenging problems.

- In most classrooms, and approaching the vast majority of classrooms, there was evidence of multiple entry points and scaffolds, such as the use of varied graphic organizers, technology supports, manipulatives, and visual aids, built into the lesson so that ELLs and students with disabilities could access curricula materials and produce student work products in their own way. However, there were missed opportunities for students to lead discussions and develop their own meaning and understanding of the work.

- Across classrooms, there was evidence of structured routines for small group work, work in pairs or individual work. However, some classes had mainly whole group activities, with one size fits all teaching practices, missing opportunities for all students to demonstrate higher-order thinking in their work products.

- In most classrooms visited, students were engaged, grouped by strengths, or areas of weakness and had opportunities to express their thinking. For example, ELLs in a 3rd grade Integrated class engaged in revising their narrative writing using descriptions to add realistic Athabascan (Native American language) experiences using related vocabulary. Through discussion, the teacher helped the students see how the writer uses description to reveal details about the characters by telling about their actions, thoughts, and feelings. Students had opportunities to engage in word work with a partner, create a collaborative poster to sort the Athabascan vocabulary, interacted with the text, *The Year of Miss Agnes*, completed a graphic organizer and individually revised their narrative to add vocabulary. Students had opportunities to turn and talk to their partner and explain their thinking, citing evidence from their reading.
## 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 assessments to analyze student outcomes that are aligned to the school’s curricula. Common assessments are used to determine students’ progress towards goals.

### Impact

Data analysis provides feedback to inform instruction and curricula adjustments and guides students toward their goals to increase achievement.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across the school, teachers evaluate multiple forms of assessment data such as Measures of Student Learning (MOSL), running records, Performance Based Assessments (PBA), as well as New York State English Language Arts (ELA) and math assessments results and normed classroom rubrics to inform their instructional strategies and to provide feedback to students. For example, an analysis of student ELA results led the school to modify and refine the literacy block and curriculum resources. Instruction is now more aligned with the instructional shifts and the standards. This intervention is leading to more positive results in ELA achievement for individual students. It also offers more opportunities to challenge thinking for accelerated students.

- Students state that their teachers review their work and provide feedback using a rubric. The feedback helps them to move toward their next goal. On student stated that her goal is to add more detail to her writing. Another student stated that his goal is to write a strong paragraph using the Restate, Answer, Cite and Explain (RACE) rubric. Students also stated that they use checklists for peer feedback, to help them understand their next steps, or self-reflect. Teachers are using norm rubrics to grade students’ work and individual conference notes to determine next steps for their students. Teachers use a 4-Square rubric to analyze students’ writing to determine grade-wide and classroom trends, to inform instructional strategies to support increased student achievement.

- Teachers regularly analyze information about individual student performance on common assessments to determine if students are making progress and to identify skills that need extra attention. Across grades and content areas, they form small instructional groups according to common need. In a grade 5 English as a New Language (ENL) integrated class, groups were focusing on self-assessing their reading comprehension of an informational text by classifying facts and details into sub-headings of a graphic organizer and identifying one or more ideas of the text. Groups were formed based on need with a focus on either fluency, close reading or main idea. Students are also identified for targeted cycles of interventions using Response to Intervention strategies. Teachers share their class level information from pre-and post-assessments using an online document-sharing program.
Additional Finding

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

School leaders and staff consistently communicate expectations for high levels of shared accountability and provide training. All staff members communicate and partner with families to support expectations for college and career readiness.

Impact

The effective communication results in a culture of mutual accountability among staff. The successful partnerships with families support children in meeting expectations.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal creates an elevated level of clear expectations for all staff, which are evidenced throughout the community in verbal and written structures, such as the school’s Staff Handbook and manual of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) publication that states school goals and the instructional focus with specific expectations for shared accountability for staff and students. The instructional focus is to use assessment in instruction to support students to clearly understand the characteristics of high-quality work, monitor their own learning, provide peer feedback and for the teacher to constantly take the pulse of the class. To support this goal, teachers engage in professional development workshops during the extended day on Mondays, led by peers and school leaders and attend citywide professional development events. In addition to the staff handbook, the principal issues a weekly memo that identifies expectations for each week and reminds all staff of the instructional focus, administrative tasks and responsibilities, assessments dates, upcoming, projects, dates and events. Teachers agreed that high expectations are set throughout the entire school.

- During the meeting with families, they all stated that they are regularly invited to participate in frequent sessions, where they learn about expectations for their children. Several noted that they attended open-school week which offered an overview of curricula, expectations for class work, homework, and grading policies. The families also expressed appreciation for the many layers of communication which staff members provide, such as: the school’s website where resources are posted, ClassDojo, Remind 101, Skedula, phone calls and email communications. Progress reports during marking periods, provide updated information to help students and families monitor progress. Additionally, events such as meet the teacher night, and parent engagement Tuesdays, allow families to interact in-person with staff members. But also, they are given the opportunity to hear the school’s expectations to support their children towards college and career readiness.

- During the teacher meetings, several teachers stated that the principal sets clear expectations for teaching and learning through an explicit school-wide focus on student engagement, and “The Theory of Action.” The staff handbook shows that their theory of action holds all teachers accountable for delivering high quality data-driven instruction, with multiple entry points and questioning and discussion techniques linked to “rigorous common core-aligned performance tasks that reflect student diversity and maximize student engagement.” In alignment to the theory of action and the Danielson Framework for Teaching, observation reports provide teachers with specific, feedback addressing the targeted elements of their practice, such as questioning and discussion practices, strategies for differentiation of learning, and ways to foster high levels of student engagement in learning.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
Administrators and teacher leaders support teacher growth with effective feedback and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Teachers benefit from collaboration, coaching, inter-visitations, and effective feedback from administrators and teacher leaders. Feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and teacher peers support the development of teachers, including new teachers to the school, as well as new teachers who are mentored by a certified teacher. Teachers share best practices to impact and improve student achievement. Teachers lead professional development sessions on relevant practices that align with the school goals such as unpacking mathematical standards, differentiation strategies, English Language Learner (ELLS) objectives, and implementation of guided reading to create a schoolwide continuum on how to gauge students’ reading progression. Teachers stated that these practices are helping them grow in their instructional practices.

- During the teacher meeting, multiple teachers indicated that next steps received in observation reports consistently align with the school goals and is resulting in improved teacher practice. Throughout the school year, administrators revisit data sources and refine professional development. The year concludes with end of year conferences discussing teacher practice related to the Danielson Framework and next steps for professional support, both individually, as well as school wide. In addition, the administration ensures that Measures of Teacher Practice (MOTP) feedback is connected to the schoolwide pedagogical practices and instructional frameworks. This promotes better conversations and implementation of best practices throughout the school.

- As part of the school’s instructional practice, administrators utilize various data sources to inform not only professional development, but also targeted instruction, Academic Intervention Services (AIS) and instructional focus. A review of observation reports reveal that teachers are improving in the use of assessments during instruction. For example, next steps given to a teacher resulted in an increase of one level in component 3d, from developing to effective, as noted in two observation reports.
## Additional Finding

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

There is structured professional collaboration on teams that use an inquiry approach, that promote shared leadership, and focus on improved student learning.

### Impact

Teacher practice has improved and there is improved progress towards goals for groups of students. Teachers have a key voice in decisions that positively impact student learning across the school.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teams use the common planning periods and extended time on Mondays to meet and make decisions that include the support of ELLs, students with disabilities and the integration of out-of-classroom support personnel. Data is examined from a cross section of team members to look for gaps in the curricula and check for coherence across practices which helps guide classroom practice and student work in the coming weeks or months. Teams meet at least twice per week in both vertical and horizontal teams along with coaches to monitor instructional practices being used and discuss effective strategies that are helping students meet instructional objectives. This work continues to grow, as teacher capacity is built.

- Teacher leaders serve as leads for ELA and math. These teachers attend Borough Field professional development and are responsible for turn-keying information to all staff members. Expert teachers design professional learning community activities for teachers and facilitate, based on conversations at the team levels. For example, teachers make changes based on the needs of students, as evidenced during the vertical math team. Teachers discussed trends noted on a math performance task.

- During both teacher team meetings, teachers stated that shared leadership is demonstrated via school leaders’ designation of Grade Leaders; Lead Teachers; Professional Learning communities (PLC’s) created on agreed upon lens/interests and informed by school data. All of which confer responsibility for high level decision making, in collaboration with administrators. Furthermore, teachers collaborate with peers to implement professional learning sessions and intervisitations, based on the needs and/or interests of staff members.