Quality Review Report

2017-2018

M.S. 358
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 2BQ358
88-08 164th Street
Queens
NY 11432

Principal: Brendan Mims

Dates of Review:
April 18, 2018 - April 19, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Kimberly Bradley
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

M.S. 358 serves students in grade 6 through grade 8. 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>
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<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>
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## School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</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>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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<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>
<td>Well Developed</td>
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</tbody>
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## Systems for Improvement

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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</table>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training and support to the entire staff. Teacher teams establish a culture for learning that communicates a unified set of expectations for all students through the school’s core values.

Impact
School staff provide clear, focused, and effective feedback and guidance supports to ensure that students own their educational experience and are prepared for the next level.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders consistently conduct classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School leadership sends out weekly newsletters that include expectations and information about upcoming events. School leaders and teachers are mutually accountable to each other as teachers have the opportunity to give feedback to school leaders regarding how to best support their professional learning. This data is used by school leadership to refine supports for teachers. As a result of school leaders’ communication and structures for teachers to provide feedback, the school has a culture of mutual accountability to meet schoolwide expectations.

- School leaders communicate to teachers the school’s mission and vision that all students graduate and learn through Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM) and that student learning is supported through rigorous instruction that incorporates passionate speaking, purposeful writing, powerful presentations, and digital literacy. The school’s instructional focus states, “If teachers design lessons and deliver instruction that incorporate ‘purposeful writing’ activities and opportunities for ‘passionate speaking’ then students will be able to make their thinking and reasoning visible through writing, speaking and other work products” Through frequent and consistent communication and feedback, teachers understand the school’s mission and visions for student learning.

- School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for teaching and learning through regular professional development aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. During each marking period, teachers participate in a professional learning cycle of their choice from among options including formative assessments, differentiation and tiered instruction, establishing a classroom of respect and high levels of civility, giving clear directions and communicating with students, and Teach Like a Champion strategies. There are five stages of each professional learning cycle that includes Goal Setting, Launching the Professional Learning Cycle, Implementation of Strategy, Impact of Cycle, and Closing and Celebration of the Cycle. Through the school’s structure of professional learning cycles, teachers are supported in meeting the school’s expectations.

- All students benefit from frequent feedback and guidance with individualized supports. Students reported that the school communicates its expectations through Advisory and the school’s core values of Fellowship, Integrity, Resiliency, and Excellence (FIRE) and the school’s daily pledge of the phoenix, the school’s mascot. Students share their progress with families through student-led conferences and shared that they participate in high school application workshops and field trips to NYU, York College and Microsoft. Students are recognized for embodying the school’s core values and are nominated by other students or staff members and presented with a school hoodie. Through feedback and guidance, students can articulate the school’s expectations and are prepared for the next level.
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

Across most classrooms, teacher strategies provide multiple entry points into the curricula and student work products reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

Impact

Most students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities engage in high-level discussions and demonstrate high levels of thinking and participation as evident in student work products and discussion.

Supporting Evidence

- In a sixth-grade science class, students reviewed new content vocabulary related to the study of weather. Students looked at a graphic organizer that listed the new vocabulary with a definition and a graphic representation of each term. Students identified the terms they had seen before. The teacher guided the students in annotating terms they had seen before or terms the teacher wanted to emphasize with students. The teacher explained to the students they would be organizing weather data on a chart and they would use a graphic organizer to record the data including the temperature, precipitation, wind direction and speed, humidity, and air pressure. The use of graphic organizers and review of lesson-specific content vocabulary at the beginning of the lesson supports the engagement of all learners in appropriately challenging tasks.

- During an eighth-grade social studies lesson on the reasons for the internment of Japanese Americans, students wrote a response to the Do Now prompt, “How would you feel if the police arrested you as a suspected terrorist with no evidence? What would you do? What about if you were forced to move in a short amount of time because of your race, ethnicity, or gender? How should the United States treat resident enemies in wartime?” Students sat in small groups and shared their Do Now responses with their group before sharing out with the whole class. Students then watched a short video about the Japanese internment and responded to the following questions using the teacher-provided graphic organizer, “What is the argument made in the newsreel? What evidence is included to support that argument?” During the lesson, all students analyzed primary source documents and students needing additional language supports used primary source documents translated into students’ primary languages including Spanish and Bengali. Providing documents in the students’ native languages provides some learners additional entry points into the curricula.

- In a math lesson, students completed problems with their table teams with a focus on the lesson’s essential question, “How can we find the area of right triangles, quadrilaterals, and polygons when applying these techniques to real-world problems?” Students were grouped by their mastery of previous learning in the unit and the co-teachers walked around the class and provided additional support to specific students. During the lesson, students rotated to different stations and determined the answer of each problem. Different groups had varying levels of scaffolds to support their work. Near the end of the lesson, the students completed a lesson quiz and submitted their responses using Plickers that record and display the responses from students on the screen at the front of the classroom, allowing the teacher to immediately check for students’ understanding. In the majority of classrooms, student work products reflect high levels of student participation and thinking.
Findings
Curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and strategically integrate the instructional shifts. Academic tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact
Curricular alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards and instructional shifts results in coherence across grades and subject areas, promoting college and career readiness for all learners. Students, including the lowest- and highest-achieving students have access to the curricula and cognitively engaged.

Supporting Evidence

- Review of curricular documents shows strategic alignment to Common Core Learning Standards and New York State content standards where applicable, as well as the strategic integration of the instructional shifts across grade and content areas. Project-based learning thematic units include focused standards across content areas with an emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM). Each unit has a launch, mid-unit activity, and culminating project as well as specific learning targets and skills for each week of the unit. This coherence results in promoting college and career readiness for all students across grade and subject areas.

- Unit and lesson plans reflect the school’s instructional focus on purposeful writing, passionate speaking, and powerful presentation and include essential questions that guide the focus of each unit. Examples of purposeful writing included in plans include, “Students will write informative and explanatory texts to examine information through the analysis of the primary and secondary sources they ready on Japanese internment.” Examples of passionate speaking includes “Students will discuss how many sides certain three-dimensional shapes have what the dimensions are for each of those sides/faces.” “Students will be able to give a verbal explanation that matches a written response in factoring polynomials.” Some examples of essential questions in unit and lesson plans include, “What does it mean to be a member of the community? What are the purposes and functions of government? Under what circumstances is the exercise of political power legitimate? What global connections have existed in the past, exist currently, and are likely in the future?” The alignment of the school’s instructional focus and essential questions with the Common Core Learning Standards ensures accessibility for a variety of learners.

- A review of curricular documents reflects the use of student work and data to develop cognitively-engaging tasks. Each of the four marking periods focuses on a different project-based learning theme such as “individual community and cultural development; power, authority and government; global citizenship; and humans and changes in society.” The themes presented to students in student-friendly language include, “Who Am I? Cultural Diversity; Who’s Got the Power? Rights and Responsibilities; Do the Right Thing! My Role in the World Civic Duty, One World; How Humans Change the World/Human Transformation.” The curriculum map is also aligned with the school’s core values and grade-level habits based on “Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.” Teachers reported they made instructional adjustments to unit and lesson plans and these are documented. An example adjustment states, “Students will respond, analyze, and/or summarize text that supports standards RL6.1 which will or has led to students citing evidence, supporting analysis of what the text says, determining the central idea, and/or using ELA readings. This is one of the adjustments made as a result of our schoolwide assessment given in January which demonstrated students needed additional support in these areas of reading in both literature and non-fiction texts.” The refinement of curricula based on the review of student work and data results in groups of students having access and engaging with the curricula.
Additional Finding

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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 use and create assessments and rubrics that are aligned with the school's curricula. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

Impact

Teachers’ use of assessments and rubrics provide actionable feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and teachers consistently make effective adjustments to support all students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Each unit during the school year begins with a pre-test administered to students through Mastery Connect and concludes with a post test. Students take benchmark assessments in math and English Language Arts in the fall, winter, and spring along with the Degrees of Reading Power. In classrooms and offices across the school, data walls show how each class section performed on a unit’s pre- and post-test and includes an item analysis by each question and standard. Per the school’s grading policy, students are provided multiple opportunities to demonstrate mastery and the school uses multiple pieces of data to monitor the progress of students. As a result of using multiple assessments and collecting student performance data throughout the year, staff are able to provide meaningful feedback and next steps to students.

- Across the school, rubrics are used in alignment with the school’s curricula. One example is a rubric for informative writing that is used across the school and is aligned with grade-level English Language Arts standards. The rubric describes the categories evaluated including, “Text Types and Purposes: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content; Production and Distribution: Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task and purpose; Key Ideas and Details: Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text; and Language and Conventions: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.” The use of common rubrics across grade levels provides a shared language for students and staff to use when evaluating and measuring student progress.

- Samples of student work products showed teacher actionable and meaningful feedback directing students to the steps they should take to strengthen their work through glows and grows. One example of teacher feedback was, “Strong use of ICE, diverse range of sources, ‘human impact’ is clear, sometimes the transition between past and present requires a re-read to ensure that the reader doesn’t get confused.” Students also provide feedback to peers through the use of a peer editing checklist. Examples of student peer feedback included, “She states a clear claim in introduction and backs it up in her body paragraphs. Claim is backed up with reliable sources and valid explanation. Great evidence, but in reasoning, repeats her claim in the first sentence. Instead of a counter-claim, she put more reasoning. Added a third reasoning to support her claim. There is evidence to support the claim, however there is a no counter-claim.” At the end of each marking period, students receive a student data report that tracks progress, including their lexile range, DRP range, benchmark data, and marking period grades. Students write a reflection based on their progress and identify areas that need to show more improvement and write a goal for the next marking period. The use of feedback and next steps along with student self-assessment results in teachers making effective adjustments to meet the needs of all students.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School leaders and teacher peers support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback that accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

There is an alignment of schoolwide instructional practices. Feedback articulates clear expectations for teacher practice, supports teacher development, and promotes professional growth for teachers.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders meet to review observation data and calibrate their feedback to teachers and ensure the feedback addresses a specific component from the Danielson Framework for Teaching, that the feedback is timely, there is a glow and grow and a specific next step. A review of emails and notes show that the school leaders calendar and prioritize observations for teachers needing additional support. There is evidence that school leaders conduct walkthroughs to identify trends and patterns across classrooms and to monitor instructional expectations including the use of anchor charts, sentence starters, word walls, and reference charts. School leaders identified that scaffolds and the providing of multiple entry points was not consistent across all grade levels and identified next steps to support teachers. School leaders provide effective feedback to teachers as a result of frequent cycles of classrooms visits and review of observation data.

- Observation data is used to determine the development of professional learning cycles and professional development topics needed to support teachers. Teachers can choose from different learning cycles throughout the year and topics are adjusted based on observations and teacher feedback. Teachers are also supported by a peer collaborative teacher and an instructional coach. Teachers also participate in class intervisitations. Supports for teacher development is in alignment with feedback from school leaders and results in improved teacher practice.

- Observation reports contain feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and areas for growth through glows and grows and next steps teachers should take to improve their practice and impact student success. In one report, feedback states, “A strength in your practice is your ability to respond to students’ needs in the moment. In our conversation you stated that based on your assessment after the Do Now, you determined that students were still struggling with plotting numbers on a number line. In this lesson you made an adjustment and spent unexpected time to build the basic skills of plotting points prior to teaching rational numbers and their opposite and absolute values. Please continue to take risks that will support student learning. In this lesson you took a chance to deviate from your lesson plan in order to meet student needs. Since the majority of students needed the re-teach it would have been beneficial for them to reflect on what shifted in their thinking and engage in a writing activity to memorialize their learning.” Another report included, “A strength in your practice is your ability to create an environment where students feel safe and are willing to share their thinking aloud. Students in this lesson made their thinking visible by helping you complete a KWL chart and sharing their opinions with their peers. Begin offering sentence starters to students as prompts on your slides and/or tasks. When students are given tools to encourage their thinking, they are able to focus on the content and use the time to frame their thoughts and writing strategically.”
Additional Finding

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<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

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations. Across the school, grade teams meet on a consistent basis to analyze assessment data and student work products, and to share teaching strategies.

Impact

Teacher engagement in inquiry-based, structured professional collaborations has strengthened their instructional capacity and promoted implementation of the instructional shifts. Systematic analysis of student data and work products has resulted in mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- The school’s Curriculum Revision Team (CRT) meets each week to revise the school’s curricula based on data, student work products, and teacher input. A review of agendas showed the team working on the design and revision of units of study ensuring alignment to STEAM and the Common Core Learning Standards and designing project-based learning interdisciplinary tasks. The team also works on determining mid-unit and other formative assessments and driving questions for each unit. Members of the team represent different grade levels and content areas and communicate with the members of their grade and content teams and bring concerns and feedback to the CRT. The work of the CRT and other grade-level and content teams has resulted in school-wide instructional coherence and increased student achievement for all learners.

- The vast majority of teachers participate in common planning time multiple times each week and meet by grade and content area. Teams use a Looking at Student Work protocol when meeting and analyzing student achievement data and identify focus students to monitor throughout the year. Teachers reported that the majority of professional development is led by other teachers and one of the areas of focus is identifying the traits and actions of students at level 2 on state assessments and identifying way to support the academic progress of those students. Staff participate in data dives throughout the year, identifying strategies and resources to support those students. Grade-level and content teams identify priority standards and next steps based on student results. For example, the seventh-grade English Language Arts team’s next steps are, “Focus on incorporating Word Gen words throughout the lesson, skills on using context clues, teach suffix, prefix and root words.” Because of the systematic analysis of students’ work and assessment data and identifying next steps, there is instructional coherence across most grade and content areas.

- A seventh-grade English Language Arts team was observed using a protocol to analyze student work from an analysis of specific quotes from “Lord of the Flies” including reviewing the purpose of the task, identifying the strengths of the student work, asking questions about the assignment and identifying next steps. Some of the strengths found by the team included that all students could cite evidence from the text and that some of the students could make connections between inferences and quotes being used. Some of the questions raised by the team included, “Were students limited in only using chapter 2 for quotes? Did all students have access to the guided questions? Could other scaffolds been put in place for lower level students to make connections? Were students provided with examples or models?” Some of the next steps the team proposed included, “Provide examples of specific ways to respond. Have checklists or self-assessments for level 1 and 2 students. Give personal copy of vocabulary words to level 1 and 2 students. Give level 3 and 4 students opportunity to answer questions without giving them guiding questions.” As a result of the analysis of student work with a focus on specific students, there is improvement in teacher practice and mastery of goals for groups of students.