Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. X012 Lewis And Clark School
Secondary School 75X012
2555 Tratman Avenue
Bronx
NY 10461

Principal: Kuvana Jones Sanders

Dates of Review:
March 20, 2018 and March 27, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Adam Breier
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. X012 Lewis And Clark School serves students in grade 6 through grade 12. You will find information about this school, including enrollment, attendance, student demographics, and data regarding academic performance, at http://schools.nyc.gov/Accountability/tools/report/default.htm.

School Quality Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</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>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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School 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…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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</thead>
<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>Area of Focus</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>
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</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated belief about how students learn best. Students engage in high levels of thinking, participation and exhibit ownership over their learning.

Impact

Shared beliefs among staff about how students learn best lead to data-driven student groupings across classrooms. Student discussions and goal-setting practices evidence high levels of thinking and student ownership.

Supporting Evidence

- Apart from the classrooms in which all students required one-to-one adult support from either the teacher or a paraprofessional, students in all classrooms were purposefully grouped so that all students could engage in peer-to-peer collaborative work. This was observed in classes across grades and content area specializations. For example, students in a science class worked in small groups to determine whether various statements about landforms were facts or perceptions. Similarly, students in a social studies class conducted a similar activity when they compared their individual findings as to the facts and perceptions they highlighted in a text about the U.S. Constitution. Students reported that their teachers used data in order to place them in leveled groups and shared that they feel proud of themselves when they either warrant a change in group assignment or can serve as a support for fellow students.

- There was evidence of high levels of thinking and student-to-student discussions in every class visited. In a social studies class, students turned and talked with their partners about knowledge they already possess about the U.S. Constitution during a do now activity. During another social studies lesson, students discussed the U.S. Bill of Rights. Students then discussed a set of rights that they would create for a new government that they were tasked with forming. In an English as a New Language (ENL) class, students asked each other questions about a common in-class text. During a math lesson, students worked with a partner to break apart pretzels rods and uncooked spaghetti and measure each new piece. Additionally, students worked to divide a subway sandwich into different parts given a variety of scenarios in which numbers of people needed to receive a piece while talking through the process with each other.

- In classes where all students struggle with communication and are offered one-to-one adult support, students engaged with those adults through appropriate modalities such as adaptive devices. During a lesson on social skills, students were communicating with partners through facial expressions, taking ownership over the ways in which they would personify the emotions depicted on emoticons.
Area of Focus

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

Findings

School leaders support teacher development with effective feedback and next steps from frequent classroom observation cycles. Written feedback issued after classroom observations accurately captures teachers’ strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

Although school leaders support teacher development through feedback to teachers from classroom observations, this same support does not consistently occur between teachers. Additionally, while feedback to teachers makes clear the expectations for teacher growth and the supports available to help teachers meet them, alignment of this feedback to teachers’ goals for professional growth is inconsistent.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders begin each school year by establishing classroom observation cycles. Teachers are observed by their supervising assistant principal (AP) as per teachers’ content specialization. The principal observes all new and at-risk teachers that need support during the second and third observation cycles for the school year. Observation reports include feedback that is actionable and often revisited in subsequent observation reports, evidencing the time-bound nature to these recommendations. Although teachers reported that they conduct intervisitations to offer feedback to peers aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching, teachers also shared that there was no formal structure that they could use to share their feedback with each other in a way that would allow for revisiting or monitoring that feedback for continued growth. Two examples of the school’s Intervisitation Log form were provided for review during the school visit. Teachers’ lack of awareness of this tool, along with the number of teachers reporting that there was no structure, evidence the inconsistent processes at the school that would support peer intervisitations, thus limiting its impact.

- Observation reports include feedback that captures teachers’ strengths and weaknesses and are accompanied by next steps teachers should take to improve their practice and student success. For example, a school leader praised a teacher for pushing students to explain their answers. This teacher was advised to not only include a modeling session so that students can see and hear an example of verbally supporting one’s argument, but also to consistently employ this strategy. In another observation report, the school leader advised the teacher to carefully design discussion prompts so that student-to-student discussions will be less likely to veer off task, as had been observed. Additionally, multiple examples of feedback are accompanied by website addresses that teachers can visit where specific teaching tools can be downloaded and tutorial documents and videos can be accessed so that the tools can be effectively used.

- While feedback to teachers offers actionable next steps that teachers can use toward pedagogical improvement, this feedback is not consistently aligned with either the professional goals that teachers set for themselves or the goal embedded within the schoolwide focus. For example, feedback to one teacher states, “According to your 2017-2018 goal, to have students answer higher-order thinking questions using their critical thinking skills, ensure that you embed this strategy through the lesson by using Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) tool.” However, other examples of feedback that reference teachers’ goals lack actionable next steps. For example, one report includes, “According to your goal, students will independently ask and answer questions. Think of ways you can build students’ capacity to do this more independently.” In addition to other examples of feedback related to teachers’ goals that do not include actionable next steps, seven of the observation reports submitted for review during the school visit did not include any reference to teachers’ goals.
Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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Findings
School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts with an emphasis on the use of text-based evidence. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and assessment data.

Impact
Curricula promote college and career readiness for all students. Adjustments to material and the tools students use during instruction ensure access and engagement for diverse learners.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents across grades and content areas evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards and integration with the instructional shifts. For example, a social studies lesson plan indicates the academic vocabulary central to a reading activity focused on the United States government. Another social studies lesson plan indicates that students are to answer questions about the U.S. Constitution, citing textual evidence from the non-fiction piece students will have read. Additionally, an ENL lesson plan indicates that students will be required to cite textual evidence while answering questions about characters from the text *Dragonwings*. A math lesson plan includes an activity in which students are to apply math concepts to measure food items in wholes and halves, and then in dividing a hero sandwich into various sized portions depending on different groups of people.

- Curricula and academic tasks reflect planning so that diverse learners could have access. A social studies lesson plan indicates that students have been grouped based on assessment data. Individualized presentation methods are detailed for each student. A business skills lesson plan includes the names of students who would require support with reading, writing, and fine-motor skills. A social skills lesson plan indicates that during independent practice, one student group would complete independent work, another group would be provided with minimal support, and a third group of students would be provided with one-to-one paraprofessional support.

- A grade-eleven math lesson plan indicates that students receive a different number of questions based on their assigned groups. In addition, multiple lesson plans include students’ placement in leveled groups, students Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals, as well as the resources that will be used to differentiate instruction, such as an online portal of readings that are chosen for students based on their reading level.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<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 rubrics and checklists aligned with the school’s curricula. School leaders and teachers use common assessments to determine student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas.

**Impact**

Teachers provide students with actionable feedback that students use to improve their work. Results from academic and behavioral assessments administered across the school are used to appropriately program students and adjust curricula.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The schoolwide rubric includes visual representations of the ratings, along with areas rating students’ levels of independence and of accuracy. Also included on the rubric are sentence prompts that require students to reflect on what they did, the areas in which they can improve, as well as the ways they expect their teachers to assist them.

- Students came to quick consensus on the value of the feedback they receive from their teachers. One student shared that his teacher modeled for him how to organize an essay when he was required to write about stars. “When she showed me how to use the circle map, that really helped me write that essay. The checklist also helped.” Other students spoke about teachers directing them to offer additional evidence, analyze evidence instead of just naming it, and write out work when completing math problems.

- Student Annual Needs Determination Inventory (SANDI) data, as well as data generated from the use of a system that tracks student behavior, is tracked and monitored. This data is used by school leaders and faculty to drive decisions on how to adjust the school’s curricula. The decision to switch from two-week cycles on focus skills to month-long cycles will be implemented over the summer during pacing calendar adjustment sessions.

- Data from schoolwide use of an online reading program that provides appropriately challenging reading selections generates data that teachers use in grouping students and planning instruction. Similarly, an online reading program designed for students with severe reading deficiencies who also do not respond to traditional reading interventions is used to both provide appropriately challenging reading instruction as well as generate data that teachers use to modify instruction and inform student grouping decisions. While the school uses a variety of data points to keep track of students and their progress, there was no evidence provided to show how the school is using common assessment data to create a clear picture of student progress across grades and subjects, toward school goals.
Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:
3.4 High Expectations

### Rating:
Well Developed

#### Findings
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. School leaders and staff effectively communicate expectations connected to a path to college and career readiness with families.

#### Impact
A culture of mutual accountability exists around instructional expectations and feedback to teachers. Information sharing and communication with families through online platforms support students in their academic progress.

#### Supporting Evidence

- High expectations regarding the design and delivery of instruction, as well as professionalism and day-to-day operations for this multi-site school, are shared with staff through a variety of tools, including an after-school program handbook, website, newsletters, and through professional development (PD) sessions that occur throughout the year. Handbook topics include the professional behaviors applicable to all adults, effective facilitation of homework help, and the collective and individual responsibilities for teacher-paraprofessional instructional teams, such as the cooperative supervision of students during instructional activities as well as during transitions between in-class activities and between locations. Additionally, the handbook contains introductory materials, accompanied by the web addresses that can be accessed for additional information about the different online resources teachers and paraprofessionals are to use to plan and monitor students’ assignments. Topics covered during PD sessions as well as the P12 Teacher Connection newsletter include the school's Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP) goals, questioning strategies to increase student engagement, building a classroom culture of total participation, increasing the use of academic vocabulary, and strategies to be used for addressing the different needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

- Additionally, teachers hold each other mutually accountable as per their reliance on each other for professional growth through intervisitations, and curriculum design and delivery. It was also reported that there was never a time when teachers reached out to administration and received no response to an inquiry or request for assistance. Teachers also praised school leadership for always ensuring open lines of communication, despite how challenging communication could be for a multi-site school. One teacher stated, and all present agreed, “We never have to hold the principal accountable because she always comes through.”

- Teams and staff establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations through the school’s micro-business initiative. This program requires classes to write and submit micro-business proposals. School-based micro-businesses include the Eagle Print Shop, a business that produces artwork, and another that produces chocolate novelties. Other in-school programs that prepare students for post-graduation readiness include an initiative to produce and distribute items such as slime putty to be used as a sensory tool, organic soaps, jewelry, and food from the school’s culinary arts lab. Out-of-school work-based learning programs allow students to engage in work-based learning at a local pharmacy, three local hospitals, along with other opportunities available through a citywide program. Prior to participation in these programs, students engage in pre-training activities that involve learning about career goals, personal values that influence career choices, the labor market, resume writing, punctuality, and effective interviewing strategies.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

All teachers are engaged in teams that consistently analyze student work in cycles of inquiry that reveal targeted areas of student need and actively address them in their work toward fulfilling the school's goals. Teachers are empowered to positively affect student learning through service as grade-team leaders, as well as through an open-door policy in sharing ideas for initiatives and professional development with school leaders.

Impact

Collaborations within teacher teams strengthen teachers' instructional capacities while data reveals student achievement increases. Teachers’ voices are integral to programming decisions that affect student learning.

Supporting Evidence

- One of the three teacher teams that focus on students requiring one-to-one adult support in a class of no more than six students met during the school visit. The meeting was launched with a discussion of the article, “What is rigor?” by Richard Lee Colvin and Joanne Jacobs and the different ways in which rigor can be increased in their classrooms. This was followed by a review of the data from a pre-assessment on fact and perception and found that students largely guessed on the pre-assessment as there was no discernable pattern. Teachers then decided to begin the unit with a lesson on fact, apart from perception, to allow students to process the two concepts separately and to come to the next meeting with proposals for increasing the rigor of this unit. Minutes from Professional Learning Committee (PLC) meetings show that teachers across teams are focusing on scholarly articles about increasing rigor in the classroom, teachers’ roles in moving students from below grade level to grade level, and differentiated methods of grouping students with disabilities, evident across all applicable classrooms. Data indicates that across the school, students have improved in reading, writing, math, and communication.

- All teacher teams select the team members who will lead those teams and as such, have an integral voice in initiatives that have an impact on student learning. Additionally, teacher voice resulted in the decision to departmentalize which began this school year. Culinary arts class programming was adjusted when teachers decided that students would benefit more from taking that class as one group for an entire school year as opposed to having between eight to ten classes cycle in throughout the year.

- Teachers shared that they determine the topics covered, and set the agendas for, the PD that is delivered at the school. Additionally, teachers spoke about their impact on a major programming decision that had an impact on classes across the school. Given their experiences during the prior year, along with their review of student data disaggregated by classrooms, teachers decided that students might benefit from being programmed into classes that contained students of more similar abilities, as opposed to the prior school year when classes had a wide range of student abilities. One teacher shared, and all present agreed, “We brought this to the administration and so last year in May and June, we all worked on class lists in teams. This has resulted in a greater level of attention to students’ needs so that a student who can’t handle noise is not in a class with a noisy student.”