Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 053 Basheer Quisim

Elementary 09X053

360 East 168 Street
Bronx
NY 10456

Principal: Collin Wolfe

Dates of Review:
December 7, 2017 - December 8, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Edward Hazen
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. 053 Basheer Quisim serves students in grade pre-kindergarten through grade five. 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

### Instructional Core

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<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>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 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>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Culture

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</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>Area of Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Evaluate the quality of school-level decisions, making adjustments as needed to increase the coherence of policies and practices across the school, with particular attention to the CCLS</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.3 Leveraging Resources</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

The school leader prioritizes resources that are well-aligned to the school's instructional goals and schoolwide goals and action plans. Teacher time is purposefully structured to improve instructional capacity.

Impact

The alignment of resources to the work of teacher teams and targeted interventions and extension activities has resulted in meaningful student work products for all students and improved instruction that engages students in rigorous academic tasks.

Supporting Evidence

- The use of resources and other organizational decisions are well-aligned to and support the school's instructional goals and long-range action plans. In its Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), the School Leader Team (SLT) identifies creating opportunities for students to make explicit and inferential statements from literary texts through the implementation of rigorous curricula and instruction that is aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards as a prioritized goal. To ensure accessibility and support for a diversity of learners across all grades and content areas, the school leader sets aside a substantial amount of time for teachers to work collaboratively to make modifications and revisions to curricula and instruction, and plan multiple entry points and extension activities to support all levels of learners. As a result, the percentage of students in grades three through five that met proficiency New York State (NYS) English Language Arts (ELA) assessment increased from 21 to 37 percent from 2015 to 2017. Similarly, proficiency on the State math assessment increased from 33 to 44 percent from 2015 to 2017.

- One of the action plans in the CEP clearly states that teachers will “work collaboratively to create appropriate goals and intervention and enrichment action plans for groups of students and individual students.” To accomplish this leadership added a double preparatory period to provide teachers with the opportunity to meet on grade levels for common planning and collaborative inquiry teams. This allows the inquiry teams to meet on a regular basis to support curricula refinement and revisions. Teacher teams use the additional planning time to share best practices in pedagogy and to add high level questions, scaffolds, rubrics, and checklists intended to engage students in challenging tasks. Across the majority of classrooms visited, teachers elicited high levels of student discourse by utilizing effective questioning techniques and the provision of scaffolds such as accountable talk stems, sentence frames, and visual aids that were created during teacher collaboration time.

- A review of meeting minutes and agendas indicate that teachers’ inquiry work is focused on improving pedagogical practice and increasing levels of engagement and cognitive challenge for all students, which aligns to the CEP’s instructional goals. To monitor the efficacy of teacher teams and facilitate the sharing of information on and across teams, leadership added an additional Assistant Principal position. The additional responsibilities include providing professional development (PD) support to teachers and reporting teacher development progress to the SLT to inform next steps in PD planning and teacher support and progress toward meeting the schoolwide instructional goals. As a result, 88 percent of teachers were rated effective or highly effective in domain three, instruction, on the Danielson Framework for Teaching by the end of the 2016-2017 school year.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 1.2 Pedagogy | Rating: | Proficient |

Findings

Teaching strategies align to schoolwide goals and provide entry points through the use of scaffolds for all learners to participate in academic tasks and discussion.

Impact

Students engage in high levels of thinking and discussion leading to the development of meaningful work products across classrooms. However, full engagement in cognitively challenging tasks and high levels of student discourse is not yet seen in the vast majority of classes.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, instructional practices are aligned to the school leaders' articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best. One of the overarching schoolwide beliefs is that the pedagogy must engage students in rigorous tasks and purposeful discussion within every lesson in order to strengthen the capacity for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities, to exhibit high levels of learning. The school leaders and faculty identified the reading and writing workshop model for instruction as the best way to align instructional practices to the schoolwide goal and ensure that students are engaged in higher level academic tasks in kindergarten through fifth grade. Additionally, an instructional framework for teachers was created to meet this need. In most classrooms, a workshop model was observed in which students worked collaboratively in leveled groups.

- Across classrooms, lessons and teaching documents represent deep content knowledge and understanding of students' diverse needs, resulting in academic tasks and activities that engage students in high-levels of cognitive activity. Most lessons include academic tasks and supports such as scaffolds and generate challenging discourse to intellectually engage all students, including students with disabilities, struggling students, and the highest achieving students. In a second grade math class, students worked in groups using models to add two digit numbers and explain their thinking to their peers. Two groups were facilitated by student leaders while the teacher provided targeted intervention to a third group. The teacher used purposeful grouping by leveling groups by low, middle and high achieving and provided manipulatives as a scaffold for students. However, these practices were not observed across the vast majority of classrooms.

- In a fifth grade English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were required to close read an excerpt from an historical fiction book about slavery and make inferences about the main characters based on their character traits. All students were provided with a sentence frame to answer the essential question, "What can we infer about Miss Laura?" Students were divided into three groups based on ability levels and provided with scaffolds including a guided reading conferencing log which served as a checklist for students and a “Why Pie” graphic organizer. The teacher checked in on the groups to provide hurdle help and reminded students that they could use the role of the writer, audience, format, topic (RAFT) strategy to help them formulate their written answers.
Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact

Curricula are coherent and promote college and career readiness. Additionally, through the refinement of curricula all students including students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) are supported.

Supporting Evidence

- The instructional leaders and faculty ensure that the curricula and academic tasks are aligned to the Common Core Learning Standards by opting to create an instructional framework for teachers to follow when designing lessons. The instructional framework requires teachers to include fifteen minutes of direct instruction, twenty minutes of academic center work, followed by fifteen minutes of “inquiry and reflection” time to sum up their lesson to build coherence across grade and subjects and promote college and career readiness. Teachers are also required to identify the learning target of the lesson and create student task cards that serve as a scaffold and opportunity to assess if students can demonstrate their learning throughout the lesson. Teacher collaboration on the refinement of curricula and academic tasks has resulted in improved coherence and implementation of the instructional shifts and progressions of the Common Core.

- In addition to utilizing the instructional framework, lesson plans are expected to include the following aspects to ensure academic tasks that align to the Common Core: high level of discussions among students, rigorous learning tasks, opportunities to apply newly learned concepts and skills, and frequent assessment of student learning. A review of lesson plans indicated that teachers use the instructional framework to incorporate instructional shifts such as using varied sources and providing text-based answers. Across grade levels and subjects, learning targets focus on citing textual evidence to support arguments in student writing and discussion. The reading and writing curricula emphasizes identifying key details and text features which support content-related skill building such as making inferences and predictions.

- School leaders have a regular cycle in place to review and revise curricula documents, unit plans, pacing guides, and lesson plans based on the analysis of student data and work products so that lessons are accessible for all students. A review of curriculum documents and meeting agendas indicate that grade level teachers meet weekly to collaborate to revise the curricula and create supplemental instructional materials and resources to provide multiple entry points into lessons for student with disabilities and ELLs, such as inclusion of specific instructional strategies in teacher lesson plans, translated student materials, graphic organizers, guided notes, and accountable talk prompts.
Additional Finding

### Findings

Across classrooms, teachers use a variety of common assessment data to set classroom and individual student achievement goals and plan next steps for instruction.

### Impact

Students are provided feedback with actionable next steps leading to improvement in the quality of student work products. Assessments are used to make adjustments to curricula, determine students’ progress toward meeting classroom and individual goals, and plan supports for students.

### Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use checklists, rubrics, and common assessments to monitor student progress and provide actionable feedback with next steps for improvement. Additionally, teachers hold conferences with students to provide opportunities for students to assess their progress toward meeting academic goals and proficiency in reading, writing, and math across grades levels. A review of student work samples showed evidence that most students receive rubric-based feedback with next steps to improve their writing. Students reported that feedback from teachers has helped them improve their writing. However, not all students could identify their reading goal or what steps they could take to move up a level.

- Teachers regularly administer common grade level assessments such as mid- and end-of unit assessments in English Language Arts (ELA) and math. Additionally, the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA) benchmark assessments are administered to students three times per year to measure student progress in reading. Similarly, the Measure of Student Learning (MOSL) is used as a summative assessment. The results are used to measure student progress toward individual, classroom and schoolwide goals. Assessments are also used to provide feedback to students and families, plan next steps for improvement, and make ongoing adjustments to curricula and lesson plans.

- Teachers use a structured protocol to analyze assessment data on a regular basis to identify gaps in proficiency. Specific skills are identified and previously taught lessons and modules are revised. Data is used to develop strategic learning groups within classes in alignment with the schoolwide goal of creating leveled instructional groups. Furthermore, data is used to determine interventions for the after school program and Saturday academy where teachers re-teach concepts and content to ensure that deficit skills needed for future lessons will be learned. A fifth grade ELA module was adjusted to provide modeling of exemplary writing because student data from the end of unit assessment indicated that students could benefit from identifying how to move from a level 3 to level 4 by including more academic vocabulary and better use of transition words in their writing.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings
The school leader communicates high expectations to staff through professional learning opportunities. Staff provides feedback to parents on their children’s academic progress in school.

Impact
Systems of accountability ensure that families are aware of their child’s progress toward advancing to the next level and understand a clear pathway to college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leaders are committed to communicating expectations to teachers and holding them accountable to them as well as providing the ongoing support that is required in order to improve their professional practice. Expectations addressing curricula, pedagogy, and assessment are shared with faculty at the beginning of the school year. The school leaders have prioritized their pedagogical initiatives which require students to be reading at or above grade level by the end of each school year. To achieve this goal, school leaders have made the adoption of literacy skills across grades and subjects through the implementation of rigorous curriculum and instruction and ongoing student assessment a primary focus. Substantial collaboration and professional learning time has been scheduled for teachers to meet school leaders’ high expectations.

- The schoolwide instructional foci has been clearly articulated to teachers at professional learning sessions and teacher team meetings from school leadership and via a monthly newsletter that outlines the instructional focus by grade level for the upcoming month. The school leaders provide teachers with support in advancing their professional practice and aligning their instructional strategies and curricula through a series of professional learning sessions and grade level collaboration. Additionally, school leaders share trends and patterns from data gathered from instructional walks with teachers so they can assess the level at which the initiatives are being implemented in their own practice and schoolwide.

- There is a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) program in place to create a culture of mutual respect and to promote the adoption of personal attributes required to be college and career ready. Additionally, students are expected to meet or exceed proficiency by the end of the school year in reading, writing, and math. School staff provides students with frequent progress reports and additional guidance and advisement to individual students as needed. Parents reported that the expectations for staff and students have been clearly articulated by school staff and feel that the school leader sets high expectations of the entire school community. Students report that the work in the majority of their classes is challenging and there are supports in place to assist them if they struggle. Teachers report that they frequently reference how the Common Core Learning Standards and becoming good readers and writers will prepare students for college and a career.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: Well Developed |

Findings

The vast majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based collaborations that align to the school leaders’ goals and promote professional growth and improvement in student achievement.

Impact

The increased instructional capacity resulting from teacher team inquiry has strengthened and improved teachers’ pedagogy, positively affecting student learning across grades and content areas and increasing the number of students meeting or exceeding mastery on common grade level assessments.

Supporting Evidence

- The vast majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based professional collaborations to ensure the implementation of the Common Core and instructional coherence across grade levels and content areas. The work products generated by the collaborative teacher teams such as lesson plans, unit plans, and student materials are shared at grade level and vertical team meetings. A review of kindergarten through fifth grade team meeting agendas and curriculum maps generated by the teams indicate that teachers work collaboratively to create essential questions and learning targets aligned to the standards and have identified expected outcomes for each unit of study. Likewise, teacher teams create and analyze assessments to determine whether students are able to demonstrate their learning for each unit of study. Teachers reported that the time allotted for collaborative inquiry team work affords them the opportunity to plan strategic interventions and supports for the students they work with, resulting in improved teacher practice and improvements in student achievement, as evidenced by a nine percent increase in the percentage of students achieving level 4 on the NYS math assessment from 2016 to 2017.

- Grade level teacher teams meet weekly to systematically analyze student assessment data and student work products to identify patterns and trends and devise strategies to help close identified achievement gaps. Teacher teams to determine if changes to student groups should be made for in-class Tier I targeted instruction for students in need of academic support to meet the reading and writing benchmarks or acceleration for those that are achieving at or above grade level. All teachers have a “data wall” in their classrooms to set goals for students, plan scaffolds, and determine instructional groups. As a result, the number of students with disabilities meeting or exceeding proficiency on the NYS math assessment increased from 10 percent in 2016 to 24 percent in 2017.

- The fifth grade teacher team utilized a structured protocol to analyze students’ ability to write accurate, concise constructed responses from a Common Core end of module assessment. Analysis revealed students were able to accurately annotate and cite textual evidence; however, the quality of the use of academic vocabulary and transition words varied by student. Consequently, the team decided to provide students with exemplary writing samples that they could use as a model and provide explicit instruction using strategies such as modeling and think alouds to demonstrate how to make good choices and use of transition words to improve the quality of the body of their paragraphs.