Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 085 Great Expectations
Elementary 10X085
2400 Marion Avenue
Bronx
NY 10458

Principal: Theodore Husted

Dates of Review:
May 17, 2018 - May 18, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Lenneen Gibson
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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</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 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 Culture

*To what extent does the school...*

<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

*To what extent does the school...*

<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>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</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>
Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in inquiry-based, grade-level team collaborations using a *Looking at Student Work* protocol. Distributive leadership structures are in place, such as the instructional leadership team.

Impact

Professional collaborations among teachers result in strengthening teacher instructional capacity and resources, such as using strategy lessons and anchor charts. Distributive practices provide teachers with a voice in affecting learning across the school by collaboratively creating the school's instructional focus.

Supporting Evidence

- A fourth-grade science team was observed conducting inquiry work by analyzing the results of a 2016 State science simulation. Using an item-skills analysis tracker that aligned questions to the New York State math, science and technology standards one through four, teachers wrote down the questions students answered incorrectly. Using a protocol to analyze student work, teachers recorded the noticing and wonderings of the students’ assessment results from the tracker. Teachers noted that students demonstrated challenges with standard four, the living environment. Teachers decided to create science stations that required students to use strategies aligned to standard four that incorporate close reading strategies used in their English Language Arts (ELA) classes. Teachers also mentioned using strategies for small group instruction that enable students to transfer their skills sets from ELA to science, such as incorporating word walls. A review of additional science team notes showed teachers planning the criteria for science fair projects and revising a unit to include the crosscutting concepts from the Next Generation Science Standards that bridge the interconnections within science into the unit plan. The impact of the science teamwork has been the sharing of best practices and the collaborative examination of specific standards that affect small group instruction.

- The majority of teachers engage in grade-level collaborations that analyze student data, resulting in the creation of lesson plans and visual supports that address student challenges in ELA. A review of a third-grade team notes showed that teachers analyzed *iReady* ELA results and noticed that students gradewide, demonstrated challenges with identifying the main idea, supporting details, and character development. Teachers used a strategy lesson plan template with categories such as connection, teaching point, teach, debrief, active engagement, and link to plan a lesson that addressed areas of student need. Teachers also created main idea and supporting details anchor charts to delineate strategies to support teaching these concepts. Likewise, a fifth-grade teacher team identified that students were not practicing strategies to answer text dependent questions, reflect, and revise their work. Using the Data Wise protocol, teachers engaged in an inquiry cycle that looked at students’ DRAs, nonfiction baseline assessments, *iReady* results, and an ELA exam item analysis. In addition to student work, teachers visited each other to observe instructional practices that modeled for students how to answer text-dependent questions. As a result of the collaboration, the teachers created a color-coded reading strategy (bull’s eye anchor chart) for students to assess if they have accurately answered their text-dependent questions.

- Distributive leadership structures are in place, such as the instructional leadership team that affects student learning across the school. This team is comprised of administrators and model teachers. This team conducts walk-throughs to observe teacher practice, fosters the collaboration of staff to create the school’s instructional areas of focus, and observes data chats with teachers based on student assessment data. In addition, while teacher teams use the Data Wise protocol, there is a rotation of roles on the team, such as note-taker, timekeeper, and facilitator.
### Findings
The school leader espoused an articulated set of beliefs that students learn best when they are engaged in challenging, complex reading, writing, and mathematical tasks, which have yet to be evidenced in student work products and discussions in a few classes.

### Impact
Students work products and discussions reflect high levels of thinking and participation, thus making their thinking visible. However, students have yet to demonstrate ownership of their learning.

### Supporting Evidence
- Across classrooms, teaching practices consistently reflect and support schoolwide beliefs that students learn best when engaged in challenging, complex reading, writing, and mathematical tasks aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and are supported with targeted feedback that develops critical thinking and communication skills. In a fourth-grade guided reading lesson, the learning target stated, “I can notice a shift in power when reading.” Using inferences, students identified characters that gained, lost, or caused a shift in power and engaged in a turn-and-talk, answering the prompt, “Who had the power?” Students were overheard stating that soldiers in the text had the power. The teacher’s feedback to the class stated that based on their conversations, some of the characters that exhibited power in their texts were the Nazis and Hitler. In another fourth-grade guided reading class, students identified the power dynamic through characters in the text. The teacher, during small group instruction, the feedback shared with the students mentioned reviewing the learning target to make an inference about who has the power, rooted in evidence from the text. Although this practice was seen across classrooms, ownership of student learning was not as evident in a few of the classrooms visited.

- Students across classrooms engaged in discussions that reflected high levels of thinking and participation. In a first-grade readers’ workshop class, the learning target stated, “I can use strategies to solve hard words.” The teacher read aloud passages from the story, “George and Martha.” Afterwards, the teacher asked the students to engage in a turn and talk responding to the prompt, “Who is faint?” A student said that when you faint you fall on the floor. The teacher asked the students to make a prediction about a previously read passage and asked the kids why a character was hiding under the seat. A student mentioned that the character was scared. In a kindergarten class, the learning target stated, “I can practice trick words in a sentence.” The teacher asked the students to engage in a turn and talk requesting that students discuss how they spelled words such as ship, bin, and sock. Students went to the interactive white board and arranged tiles to demonstrate the spelling of these words and used white boards to write down the spelling of the words, thus making their thinking visible, but are in the process of demonstrating ownership of their learning.

- Though student-to-student dialogue was observed across some classrooms, it was not as evident in a few of the classrooms visited. A fifth-grade bilingual math class had an essential question of, “How do we plot coordinate points and use them to make geometric figures?” Students paired during partner talk to discuss what they learned when plotting points and geometric figures. A group of students discussed that they found other shapes within a trapezoid. In a first-grade math class, students were tasked with using mental math to solve an addition problem. Student pairs engaged in a discussion answering the prompt, “What does mental math mean?” A member of the pair stated, “Doing math in your head.” Students went to the board to defend the strategies used for solving forty plus twenty. One student used a number line strategy and counted by tens. However, in a fifth-grade Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) literacy class, there were missed opportunities for student-to-student discourse, thus limiting students’ ability to fully participate in class.
### Additional Finding

#### Quality Indicator:

| 1.1 Curriculum | Rating: | Proficient |

#### Findings

Teachers incorporate into curricula the Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts of citing textual evidence and writing from sources. Curricula and academic tasks demonstrate rigorous habits across content areas.

#### Impact

Curricula and academic tasks reflect an emphasis on higher-order thinking skills for all learners. School leaders and faculty make informed curricula decisions to build coherence and promote college and career readiness.

#### Supporting Evidence

- Unit plans, pacing calendars, and curricula maps across grades and content areas showed the integration of the Common Core, thus building coherence and promoting college and career readiness. The writing curriculum shows alignment to the Teachers College Reading and Writing Program (TCRWP). Unit plans show alignment to Common Core, and include elements such as big ideas, essential questions, the content and skills students need to know and understand, learning targets, and the assessment plan. Plans across the grades in the humanities showed the integration of the instructional shift of using textual evidence to support the main idea and using key details. For instance, in a third-grade lesson plan, students were required to use evidence from the text to make an inference about their text’s character by using context clues. Likewise, in a fifth-grade ICT ELA lesson plan, students are required to use textual evidence to demonstrate a change in a character in their text.

- Academic tasks consistently emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. A first-grade science task required students to write an account based on student observations about the similarities and differences of the parentage of young plants and animals. A second-grade social studies task required students to analyze urban, rural, and suburban communities via case studies and develop arguments about the advantages and disadvantages of these communities. Supports for English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities included sentence starters and scaffolds to support the writing, which demonstrates that rigorous planning occurs with all learners in mind.

- Academic tasks also require students to think critically. A fifth-grade writing piece requires students to write about their opinions about the positives and negative attributes of the American Westward Expansion. A third-grade math task requires students to use the search, translate, answer, and review (STAR) strategy to find a solution to a word problem that asks them to create a bar graph using the number of school supply contents in a set of packages of supplies, and to chart their answers. Students have to discern how many more or less of a specific supply they need. A fourth-grade math task requires students to write a situational story problem that requires addition and subtraction of fractions and provide an explanation of how they solve their problem.
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

Common assessments such as iReady are used to determine student progress towards goals across subject areas. Teachers use the TCRWP rubric and student-friendly checklists that are aligned to the school’s curricula.

Impact

Common assessments are used to inform small group instruction, identify Response to Intervention (RTI) students, and revise pacing calendars. Feedback to students is actionable and provides next steps.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use common assessments such as iReady to track progress towards goals across grades and subject areas. Fall and mid-year iReady diagnostics in math showed that the percentage of students in need of tier three RTI support (students below grade level) decreased from sixty-three percent to forty-six percent. Additionally, fall and mid-year diagnostics in ELA showed a decrease from sixty-two percent to fifty percent of students in need of tier three intervention support. Data from iReady and diagnostics are used to inform strategic groupings of students in planning and preparation via lesson planning, progress monitoring of students, and data chats with individual students. Similarly, iReady data in ELA and math also showed positive growth from the first to the second diagnostics across the grades for groups of students. For example, in ELA students in grades three, four and five showed growth of sixty-four percent, fifty-one percent, and forty-eight percent, respectively, while in math, students in grades three, four and five showed eighty-three percent, seventy-three percent, and sixty-six percent growth, respectively. These data are also used to modify curricula. For instance, the fourth-grade team modified a math unit plan by replacing a standard baseline assessment with a teacher-created assessment, and by ensuring that lessons included strategies and specific tasks to address student misconceptions about fractions, which was identified as an area of need.

- A first-grade group of teachers convened a meeting to look at students’ reading performance data from their tier three RTI support. First graders have shown an average of eleven reading levels of growth. Data from the program Reading Rescue and the Degrees of Reading Assessments (DRA) were analyzed, and teachers used checklists for their individual students to chart their strengths and challenges, such as retelling and making connections with details. Next steps cite incorporating small group instruction with decoding strategies and paired reading, thus ensuring adjustments are made to support student needs.

- Teachers use assessment tools such as the TCRWP rubrics and student-friendly rubrics to evaluate student work and providing actionable feedback. A sample of feedback on a student’s writing piece commended the student for writing about a topic he found interesting, video games. The feedback recommended that the student organize paragraphs so that each paragraph detailed a specific facet of videogames, thus incorporating a new idea for each paragraph. Feedback on another piece of student writing recommended ways to make the student’s claim stronger by using quotes, examples, and facts. A sample of math work commended the student for using equal groups and repeated addition, but recommended the student use a third strategy of area model.
School leaders consistently communicate high expectations for instruction and professionalism through weekly reflections and projection emails. High expectations are conveyed to families through report cards, weekly parent engagement meetings, and monthly breakfast with the principal meetings.

**Impact**

A system of accountability for high expectations is upheld for the staff through instructional walks and the observation process. The school staff help families understand their children’s progress towards those expectations through parent-teacher conferences and workshops.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders convey high expectations for instruction and professionalism through written structures, such as the principal’s weekly reflections and projection emails. For instance, one of these emails emphasize the need for students to have a minimum of forty-five minutes per week of *iReady* instruction in ELA and math, with a specific focus on identifying details in both informational and literary texts. Other emails highlight classrooms visited, and the instructional strategies utilized during the visitations. Professional collaborations are also mentioned, such as the professional learning communities working with one another in conducting math talks and using Data Wise to address problems of practice across grades. In addition, teachers are held accountable via classroom observations and learning walks conducted by the leadership team.

- High expectations for instruction and professionalism are delineated through differentiated professional development sessions. The professional development plan shows differentiation for the teachers across the different grade bands, such as early learning (prekindergarten through grade one), expectations (grades two and three), and scholars (grades four and five) academies. Sessions for the early learning group included looking at TCRWP and DRA data while the expectations academy conducted data chats, created action plans for students, and worked on shared reading instructional delivery strategies. The scholars’ academy analyzed *iReady* data in ELA and math and planned units for all subjects. Teachers are beginning to conduct intervisitations and collaborating with one another during Data Wise meetings.

- School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations to families that are connected to college and career readiness. Quarterly report card distribution, progress reports, weekly parent engagement meetings, and parent-teacher conferences keep families abreast of their children’s progress towards grade level expectations. During the monthly breakfast with the principal, parents receive information on schoolwide academic performance, presentations of student work, and an articulation of the instructional strategies employed by teachers that demonstrate rigorous instruction. Parents also mentioned the importance of the opportunities to visit their children’s classes. Parents are invited to workshops on the Individualized Educational Plan process, on public library resources to support learning in the home, and on social-emotional strategies to mitigate their stress and frustration while learning how to communicate with their children.
### Additional Finding

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

#### Findings

School leaders provide feedback to teachers that includes strengths, challenges, and next steps. Summary data from *Advance* is used to plan differentiated professional development.

#### Impact

Feedback to teachers about instructional practices and targeted professional development promotes teacher professional growth.

#### Supporting Evidence

- A review of observation reports showed that teacher feedback was aligned to the instructional focus of providing students with engaging tasks and was targeted to develop critical thinking and communication skills. Observations capture teacher strengths and challenges and outline next steps for improvement. Trends in the feedback shows teachers commended for questioning and discussion techniques aligned with this component of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*, such as asking open-ended questions and offering questions specifically aligned to the learning target. For example, an observation report reviewed commends the teacher for posing questions that were aligned to the teaching point. Next steps cite the need to “explicitly share the assessment criteria with students and provide them with opportunities to peer- and self-assess.” Using assessment in instruction, such as peer- and self-assessment, is cited as a next step, with recommendations of creating student-friendly checklists and anchor charts that students can refer to as when completing their work. As a result of the feedback, seventy-nine percent of the teachers are effective in using assessment in instruction.

- Trends in next steps for teachers also showed teachers posing a challenge in the area of engaging students in learning, as per the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. Recommendations include modeling decoding strategies during Fundations lessons and using texts to model for students the attributes of a high-quality response using student-friendly language. For example, an observation report recommends that the teacher implement turn and talk strategies in the lesson to maximize student engagement and to hold students accountable for the success criteria. As a result of the feedback, eight-two percent of the teachers are effective in engaging students in learning.

- The trends in observation data from *Advance* are used to inform the differentiated professional development provided to teachers. Each grade band of teachers engages in professional learning sessions that support their professional growth and development. Sessions in the lower grades showed a focus on looking at TCRWP, shared reading, and DRA data using the Data Wise protocol. The upper grades showed topics such as math data chats, science pacing and planning, and looking at ELA and math data to create small groups and determine instructional decisions. School leaders discussed the succession plan of one teacher’s trajectory from teacher, to coach, and currently to an assistant principal. The model teacher and the peer collaborative teacher pipeline foster leadership learning opportunities in the school.