Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 095 Sheila Mencher

K-8 10X095

3961 Hillman Avenue
Bronx
NY 10463

Principal: Serge Davis

Dates of Review:
March 1, 2018 - March 2, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Jacqueline King-Robinson
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. 095 Sheila Mencher serves students in grade K 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

### 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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### School 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>Area of Celebration</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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>
</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>
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<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</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>3.4 High Expectations</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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</table>

Findings

School leaders and staff consistently communicate high expectations aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* via clear expectation memoranda, such as the expectation handbook and the daily message board. School leaders and staff effectively communicate and support high expectations for college and career readiness to families.

Impact

Teachers benefit from a culture of mutual accountability within the structure of their grade teams. Explicit communications empower families to support their students’ academic progress toward college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders share what is expected of all staff through a school expectation handbook that details the guidelines for all aspects of instruction including planning, assessment, feedback to students, display of student work, anchor charts, professional responsibilities, and the learning environment. Newly assigned teachers attend a three-day institute prior to the start of the school year to develop an understanding of schoolwide expectations. Additionally, there is a daily message board to share relevant information and remind staff of goals and instructional foci. School leaders plan and deliver individual and whole school professional development aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* based on the expectations detailed in the school’s handbook, as well as those shared via memos and monitoring memos. Professional development topics covered included lesson planning, classroom environment, differentiation, and monitoring student learning. Furthermore, teachers hold one another accountable for progress in meeting expectations during team meetings, intervisitations, and during inquiry work.

- Families are provided the expectations for their children through newsletters; parent meetings, bi-monthly workshops, and monthly parent talk forums. Family newsletters clarify what is expected; inform parents of workshops and meetings and the identification of community resources. For example, the February newsletter encouraged parents to take advantage of the upcoming workshops and identified employment opportunities for family members and the classes offered at the Bronx Adult Learning Center. School staff provides families with resources enabling them to support their child’s progress toward college and career readiness.

- The parent coordinator and school leadership team host workshops for families that include health and wellness, technology resources, immigration and citizenship services. Grade level teams facilitate orientation meetings at the start of the school year that clarify expectations for families. Teachers review schoolwide policies, curricula, the school’s mission, vision, and any new initiatives. Additionally, staff identifies ways that parents can support their child at home.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and the articulated belief that students learn best when provided with clear expectations. Students engage in student-to-student discussions.

Impact
Communicating learning expectations at the beginning of the lesson fosters engagement, provides for cross-curricular connections, and addresses the social emotional needs of students. Across classes, students demonstrate high levels of thinking and participation, but as yet students do not demonstrate ownership of their learning.

Supporting Evidence

- In a seventh grade literacy class, students were provided the objective for the lesson, which was to improve the quality of their outline. Students could articulate how the outline will support engaging the reader and the flow of their report. When asked, “How is the lesson going to help with engagement and flow?” One student stated, “It helps to support and connect to the claim, unites details in a paragraph and allows the writer to elaborate more. Helps to organize the topic so that the reader understands.” Thus, the clarity of what specifically was to be learned promoted high levels of student thinking.

- During a fifth grade science class, students were expected to make inferences about the pictures in their textbook that depicted the plants in varying environmental settings. Students based their inferences on an experiment that they had conducted previously, which entailed growing plants in different types of materials. Students had to develop a logical argument. They inferred that one of the plants could be brought back to life because the roots were still underground, as opposed to the one that was completely dead and had exposed roots. “The roots are under the soil. If we water it, it should be able to drink the water.” Rigorous student thinking addressing the instructional shifts were evident throughout the lesson.

- Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the belief that students learn best when provided with small group instruction, opportunities to engage in discussions with their peers, use of academic vocabulary, and clear expectations for center work aligned to the curricula and informed by the Common Core Learning Standards. During a fourth grade math lesson, response to a check for understanding resulted in students being grouped for small group instruction based on their response. Students used correct math terms when identifying parts of the fraction and engaging in discussions with their peers. Across classrooms high levels of thinking and participation were in evidence, but students have yet to take ownership of their learning.
Additional Finding

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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Findings

School leaders and staff ensure the alignment of the curriculum to the Common Core Learning Standards and strategically embed the use of annotation and citing text evidence from nonfiction texts throughout the curricular documents for all content areas. Curriculum and academic tasks are routinely refined using student work and data.

Impact

Teachers’ use of approved New York State curricula aligned to the standards ensures coherence across grades and subjects. All students have access to the curricula tasks and are cognitively engaged, thus promoting their college and career readiness.

Supporting Evidence

- The instructional shifts are evident throughout curricula documents. Across content areas, units require students to read and annotate nonfiction texts, make claims, and cite textual evidence to support their claims. Curriculum maps for math indicate that every fifth day of instruction teachers structure lessons to build procedural fluency across the grades. The essential question from a second grade writing unit asks, “How do writers utilize text evidence to support theories about a text?” This purposeful decision to incorporate the shifts and build coherence promotes college readiness for all students.

- Review of the curricular materials revealed evidence of alignment to the Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts and content area standards for all subjects. Members of the vertical team review curricular documents to ensure coherence. A second grade writing unit includes the prerequisite Common Core Standards from the previous grade and the extension standards from the subsequent grade. Thus, as in this instance, coherence is present and noted throughout curricula documents.

- Written curricula documents allow access for all students including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. Plans have been revised to include specific strategies for individual students across content areas. A third grade reading lesson plan identifies students for each group, as well as their reading levels. Students were assigned a country to research based on the levels of the informational texts that were to be used. A sixth grade math plan included different assignments based on student assessment data, identified students for small group instruction that were in need of remediation, and extension activities for students that include word problems and higher-order thinking questions. Written curricular documents evidence planning that provides embedded adjustments that promote access for all learners.
Findings
The school has assessment systems in place, such as the use of classroom-level data and data from common assessments that align to the curricula to determine scholar progress across grades. Teachers use data from common assessments to adjust instruction.

Impact
Assessment practices at the classroom and schoolwide level yield data and feedback that teachers use to develop action plans for small group instruction and Academic Intervention Services (AIS). Teachers use rubrics aligned to the curricula to assess the quality of student work.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers provide students with rubrics aligned to the curricula for all writing assignments. The use of rubrics was evident on all posted written tasks, as well as being utilized by scholars to complete classroom writing assignments. One student stated, “The rubrics help you and the teacher determine your grades, especially for writing.” Teachers provide students with feedback directly aligned to the rubric. Feedback to one student stated, “Amazing job drawing and labeling your character’s external traits. Next time, write one to two sentences describing your character’s traits.”

- Teachers administer end of unit summative assessments in math, reading, and writing. The data from these assessments reveal that students are making steady gains from grade to grade and within subjects. After administering the assessments, teachers use the data from the assessments to develop groups and then use strategic small group instruction and station work to promote student learning within a skill. Following an assessment, teachers provide students with a reflection sheet and ask them to reflect on what they did well and what needs to improve for the next time. One student’s reflection about their strengths read, “I got better on my introduction, topic sentence, and organization.” The student’s next steps read, “To work on word choice and conventions.”

- Teachers administer iReady assessments in math and ELA and utilize electronic assessment and benchmark software to analyze the data and identify students to provide for tiered interventions. Teachers are required to identify students that they will monitor more closely and create action plans based on the data. A fifth grade action plan identified early intervention strategies as a focus, which includes decoding, building fluency, vocabulary, and phonemic awareness. The plan also identifies the students who will receive AIS and the frequency of the services. Seventh grade assessment data reveals a ten-point increase for ELA and an eight-point increase for math between the baseline assessment and midline assessment.
### Additional Finding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.1 Teacher Support and Supervision</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
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**Findings**

School leaders and instructional coaches promote the development of teachers through strategic cycles of observations. Teacher feedback is aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* and the individual teacher’s annual support plan developed from the teacher’s professional needs assessment.

**Impact**

Schoolwide professional learning structures foster improved instructional practices, resulting in improved quality of scholar work products. Teachers receive feedback that articulates clear next steps for their practice and supports their professional growth.

**Supporting Evidence**

- At the start of the school year, teachers complete a professional needs assessment. School leaders develop an annual support plan aligned to these needs. The support plan identifies the support that will be provided, who will provide the support, and a timeline for implementation of the plan. Progress monitoring will occur through a teacher’s work with students, observations, and professional development with instructional coaches. At the end of professional development cycles teachers have the opportunity to provide feedback on the support they have received. Clear and specific feedback aligned to each teacher’s support plan is provided and evidenced in teacher’s individual observation reports.

- School leaders conduct eight cycles of observation based on individual teacher needs. School leaders provide teachers with feedback based on the observation, student work, and assessment data that clearly articulate expectations for teacher practice. Feedback to one teacher required the teacher to meet with the instructional coach during “open access” to plan a writing lesson that is developmentally appropriate for her bilingual students. She was to make sure to include a language objective and plan differentiated tasks to meet the needs of all students. Additionally, it was recommended that the co-planned lesson be used as a model for all future writing lessons.

- School leaders develop a professional development plan that aligns to the school’s goals and is differentiated based on grade level bands. The plan articulates intended outcomes and rationale that are aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching*. The plan identifies the resource or person that will provide the support, the duration, and how the impact of the support will be measured. At the end of each professional development cycle teachers complete a teacher reflection. One teacher reflected that she was to make sure lessons aligned to the power standards. Formal and informal assessment data is used to develop flexible student groupings. She also noted that the cycle was beneficial because it provided additional help on problem-based learning which addressed one of her teaching goals. All teachers agreed that their professional growth is leading to improved student achievement and is evidenced in recent assessment data.
Findings

All teachers are engaged in grade level teams and cycles of inquiry. Teachers actively address areas of student need that is revealed from the analysis of student work during meetings.

Impact

Professional collaborations on grade level teams have strengthened the instructional capacity of teachers and promoted implementation of Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. The work of teacher teams results in the establishment of learning goals and planned interventions for students leading to mastery of goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders are members of each grade level team. School leaders meet to discuss patterns and trends from each meeting, which informs the upcoming professional development cycle and individual teacher supports. School leaders facilitate data meetings to analyze data from common assessments and subsequently develop action plans for their respective grades. A seventh grade action plan for math identified the math standard addressing the solution of real-world and mathematical problems involving operations with rational numbers and the action steps that will be taken. Action steps included, reinforcement of the concepts through differentiated centers, scaffold word problems, and rotate the groups based on the data. The plan for ELA identified determining a theme or central idea of a text and determining the author’s point of view and purpose. Planned practices included, using iReady data to group students, target specific students in small group instruction, and use articles from NEWSELA that align to the identified standards. The identified interventions resulted in increased student achievement as evidenced in recent assessment data.

- Teacher teams analyze student work and assessment data to identify students in need of AIS. Identified students are assigned to an AIS provider who provides targeted instruction to support students in meeting grade level goals. Plans include the Common Core Learning Standards that will be foci for the AIS cycle. Additionally, providers share the interventions and identify in-class strategies that teachers should employ. Vertical teams assess the curricula, identify focus standards, and develop coherence across grades and subjects. Curricula documents evidence the adjustments that have been made to meet grade-level expectations for each grade, as well as the prerequisite standards and subsequent standards for each unit. All teachers agree that teacher teamwork has promoted the implementation of the instructional shifts, increased their instructional capacity, and resulted in improved student achievement.

- Teacher teams meet for common planning. The meetings are goal oriented and focus on improving student performance and teachers’ instructional capacity. A review of meeting agendas and minutes for the third grade team indicated review of student assessment data to identify the instructional practices that they want to commit to implementing for their grade-level. Based on the data analysis the team developed grade-level goals in reading, writing, and math. Data from summative assessments evidence an average 20-point increase for all third grade students, including those with disabilities and ELLs.