Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 096 Richard Rodgers

Elementary 11X096

2385 Olinville Avenue
Bronx
NY 10467

Principal: Marta Garcia

Dates of Review:
November 8, 2017 - November 9, 2017

Lead Reviewer: Jorge Estrella
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**

### 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>Additional Finding</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 Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

*To what extent does the school*...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Maintain a culture of mutual trust and positive attitudes that supports the academic and personal growth of students and adults</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3.4 Establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations to staff, students and families, and provide supports to achieve those expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Area of Celebration</strong></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><strong>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</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</strong></td>
<td><strong>Additional Finding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>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</strong></td>
<td><strong>Area of Focus</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

**Quality Indicator:** 3.4 High Expectations  
**Rating:** Well Developed

Findings

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations to staff that are aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* during professional development, one-to-one conferences, and other forms of communication. High expectations connected to a path of college and career readiness are effectively communicated by school leaders and teachers to students and families.

Impact

There is a system of accountability that promotes strong partnerships with families, resulting in a culture of mutual responsibility that supports students attaining college and career ready skills, as well as supports teachers to meet expectations on teaching and learning.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders use a variety of communication tools, such as the handbook and dedicated professional collaboration session at the beginning of the school year. Teachers are guided to deepen their understanding for professional learning, school culture, and operations. These expectations were also apparent during discussions at regular teacher meetings, initial planning conferences, observation conferences, as well as ongoing professional learning sessions. School leaders have provided professional learning sessions on the instructional components of the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* aligning to the expectation of quality instruction. Teachers are expected to participate in intervisitations and external professional learning opportunities, which trained teachers then turnkey for their colleagues. This collaboration demonstrates a collective accountability for pedagogical growth.

- Teachers shared that the feedback received for school leaders has been meaningful and constructive. Observation report feedback to teachers identifies targets with clear next steps and instructional resources. For example, “Provide a variety of appropriately challenging resources that are differentiated for students in the class. I have attached an article, ‘Methods of Differentiation in the Classroom’ that explains various ways to differentiate in the class.” Thus, there is a mutual accountability for supporting teachers to reach the high expectations.

- School leaders and teachers agree that, to be college and career ready, students need to be engaged in highly cognitive learning experiences via targeted instruction based on multiple sources of data. Planning for students’ groupings were evident in planning documents and across classroom visits. Students shared they work on challenging tasks that require them to help each other to better understand concepts, such as working on multi-step word problems. Parents reported that students work very hard for their science projects which are presented in a schoolwide exhibition. Students and parents know the expectations and goals that culminate in rewards such as the “Star Student of the Month” recognition ceremonies, “Bucket fillers” winners, and perfect attendance monthly awards. Parents valued the prompt response from teachers, adding that teachers always provided them with resources to support their children at home.

- School leaders and teachers consistently communicate to families bilingually through a monthly principal’s letter, grade specific newsletters, and informational flyers. The widespread use of an online platform allows parents to monitor their child’s academic and social-emotional welfare as well as their current grades, school announcements, and directly communicate with teachers. Parents also added that throughout the school year, they are offered several workshops to support their children at home.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: | 5.1 Monitoring and Revising Systems | Rating: Developing |

Findings
School leaders and faculty have an inconsistent process of evaluating and adjusting curricula and instructional practices in response to student learning needs and the expectations of the Common Core Learning Standards. School leaders and faculty are beginning to implement a system to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of teacher teamwork.

Impact
Inconsistent implementation of monitoring policies and practices means the work of teacher teams is yet to effectively provide effective teaching practices supports that promote student achievement of the Common Core Learning Standards.

Supporting Evidence

- The school leaders and faculty have adopted a data-driven instructional model in response to student learning needs, as observed from New York State (NYS) assessments data and internal assessments. They have focused on teachers using multiple sources of data, designing differentiated lessons, providing students with a variety of resources and engaging students in highly cognitive learning experiences as demonstrated in their participation, performance assessments, tasks, exit tickets, homework, and grades. Staff meet regularly to make decisions about adjustments to curricula, teaching strategies, assessments, and resources as well as to support teacher development. Modifications to the curricula reflect the findings about gaps in teaching and student learning. Earlier this school year, the principal communicated and offered recommendation based on the findings from the 2016 NYS English Language Arts (ELA) and math assessments results. Findings for ELA revealed that the areas of concern were inferencing, questions about text, identifying details, as well as locating and interpreting information. As a result, school leaders have started a process to evaluate and adjust curricula, pedagogy, and assessment in response to student needs.

- School leaders collaborated with teachers for the initial data analysis for the 2016 New York standardized assessments, where the principal provided guidance on the next steps for making curricula and instructional adjustments across content areas. However, these next steps are yet to be implemented as they were not evident in reviewed documents or in conversations with school leaders and teachers. Lacking a system of an effective and transparent process to purposefully evaluating the curricula adjustments with specific metrics of impact on student success by lessening opportunities for staff to discuss the implications for instruction, curricula, and assessment practices.

- School leaders ensure that teachers are involved in bi-weekly team meetings and professional development to reflect on the curricula, and to look at student work and data to make needed curricula and instructional adjustments. Furthermore, the cycles of frequent classroom observations, coaching visits, and intervisitations allow for additional opportunities to evaluate instruction. However, the interview with the principal and review of school documents indicated that they are still refining teacher team protocols to ensure work is memorialized in a way that allows it to be reflective about practices, and where teachers are putting their focus in instruction, lesson planning and assessment. As a result, purposeful decisions to the evaluate and adjust the work of teacher teams is yet to be established.
Findings
School leaders and faculty have developed curricula that are Common Core Learning Standards aligned, integrates the instructional shifts, and emphasizes rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact
The implementation of multiple strategies for developing coherent curricula across grades and content areas embeds rigorous habits that promote college and career readiness for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders and faculty have developed instructional planning documents aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and incorporated the instructional shifts. A first grade writing unit provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate learning comparing two stories, *Stella Luna* and *Dragons and Giants*. Students compare characters, write about story events, and plan for a narrative. In reading, science, and social studies, teachers plan opportunities for students to read informational text and use academic vocabulary. In third grade math, students solve word problems in situations involving equal groups, arrays, and measurement quantities by using drawings and equations with a symbol for the unknown number to represent the problem. As a result, students have opportunities to demonstrate conceptual understanding of math concepts, involving the four operations, and explain patterns in math.

- The review of instructional planning documents revealed that units of study are building coherence in the development of how tasks are being designed to allow students to demonstrate their learning. All lesson plans use “I can” statements, such as “I can make connections between the challenges two characters face in a story” or “I can subtract decimals using place value.” During the student meeting, they shared that across grades and content areas they use the essay protocol where they restate question, answer completely, cite evidence and explain (RACE). Students also use a strategy in math where they circle the numbers, underline the question, box the key words, evaluate, and solve (CUBES) problems. The use of these strategies are evident in instructional planning documents and in student work.

- Teachers plan lessons that engage students in challenging tasks and embed higher order questions into the lessons. Task expectations are the same for all students, with the necessary scaffolds and support for all students including, ELLs and students with disabilities. A fifth grade writing lesson plan includes a task for all students to learn how to use a rubric and evaluation questions to narrow their writing focus for a memoir. The lesson includes sentence frames, graphic organizers, and a translated rubric. Furthermore, lessons include a choice of strategies for students to use for completing academic tasks that require higher order thinking. Strategic choices include use of transitional phrases, discussion prompts and cause and effect cues. For an Integrated Co-Teaching (ICT) kindergarten math class, teachers planned to have students working in groups learning about comparing numbers that are less than and greater than, where each group will be playing different games based on their levels.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching strategies provide consistent supports, including targeted small group work and student engagement, creating multiple entry points into the curricula so that all learners are challenged. The use of task extensions to further differentiate learning for students at varied proficiency levels is not yet implemented across classrooms.

**Impact**

While most students engage in discussions and produce high quality work products across grades and subjects, there are missed opportunities to expand thinking and promote ownership of learning by all students, especially advanced learners.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Across classrooms, teachers used multiple entry points supported by scaffolds presented in multiple forms, hands-on activities, and small group work, to engage all students in learning activities that promote higher-order thinking. In some classrooms, teachers have resources centers where students can work on their tasks. Furthermore, classrooms are print rich, displaying routines, expectations, process charts, and resource centers in the middle of tables. During classroom visits, students were observed using those resources to supplement their writing process and solving math problems. In a second grade ICT ELA class, students were using different graphic organizers and visuals that were provided based on their progress.

- In most classrooms, teachers used group work to engage students in differentiated tasks through leveled questions, sentence frames, and a variety of manipulatives. In a kindergarten class, students were working in stations using doubles as a strategy to solve facts with sums within 20, each station had different approaches such as double dash or dinosaur doubles. Another group worked on advanced tasks using assistive technology to add two digit numbers. Even though the teacher assisted students in one-to-one sessions, some students finished their assignments quickly, remaining idle as they could not move on because others were still working on their tasks. As a result, some learning tasks missed opportunities to offer extensions to advance students to allow them to take ownership of their learning to extend attained concepts.

- In a social studies lesson, students observed pictures of physical environments of different landforms using the carousel approach where they wrote their observations, and shared their noticings and wonderings with their groups. In this activity, students demonstrated high levels of thinking and collaboration. One student said “I noticed that there is a water feature. I wonder why there is snow on the hills?” Another student replied, “Maybe because the picture was taken during the winter.” As a result, students made their thinking visible through actively engaging in their learning.

- In a grade five science class, students worked actively and collaboratively to estimate and find the volume of liquids in milliliters using containers of different sizes. Students were divided into five groups, the teacher actively engaged the students in rich group discussions. Students were heard saying, “According to my chart, my estimations are always higher than the actual measurements.” Another student said, “I had the opposite results, let’s try again with different containers.” This lesson actively engaged most students in rich discussions, leading to high quality in student work products.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Findings**

Multiple formative assessment tools are used across classrooms consistently reflecting the use of ongoing checks for understanding, teachers use rubric, and grading policies to prove feedback to students.

**Impact**

Formative assessment structures that exist across classrooms results in data driven feedback, student self-assessment, and teachers making needed adjustments to meet all students’ learning needs.

**Supporting Evidence**

- During the student meeting, students shared work from different subject areas and reported that the feedback they receive contributes to having a better understanding of their work and provides guidance to move to the next level. Students use rubrics in their assignments and articulated their next steps to improve in their assignments. For example, one student said, “One thing I liked about this activity was that it was really creative and I need to work on is my math. I was a 2 because I did not write neatly and I did not understand the math.” Another student mentioned, “I have a 3 in my essay, I did good sharing important details, but need to be more careful with capitalizing names.” Furthermore, the review of students work revealed that teachers provide actionable rubric-based feedback in the form of glows and grows, presented in language and form accessible for the student. For example, “Super job. Your paragraph has facts about how the communities are the same and different. Remember to put spaces in between your words. Also use your word wall to check your spelling.”

- Teachers consistently check for understanding using systems including wireless tools to capture students’ responses, color cards, targeted questions, exit slips, and written reflections. Teachers are provided with immediate data about student understanding to guide adjustments to groupings. In most classes, as the lesson progresses, teachers conferred with students and noted responses in their assessment tools. Then, based on data gathered, some teachers adjusted the lesson using different scaffolds, reteaching or assigning students to different groups. During an observed math lesson, the teacher noticed some students did not understand how to line up the decimals. She asked students to explain to their peers for further clarity. She then circulated about the room to ensure students were on task. However, this level of implementing checks for understanding is unevenly implemented across classrooms. Teachers also mentioned that the data from formative assessments is used to design future group work. During lessons, students were observed using the self-assessment tool of green “I am working fine,” yellow “I need help but I can keep working,” and red “I need help and I can’t keep working.” In a lower grade class, students used monkey face cards, with different expressions indicating the level of progress or challenges they were facing during the lesson. Based on their card display, teachers assisted students by conferencing or being reassigned to work in different groups, there were also times where teachers adjusted instruction to meet students’ needs, including redirecting students to sit in alternate areas, based on needs detected via ongoing assessment of their work during the class period.

- During the meeting with students, they revealed that in most assignments, they are engaged in self-assessments practices using rubrics or checklists. They added that this practice is being used on a daily basis. Conversely, teachers shared that they incorporated self-assessment activities as part of their regular practice. This was evident in the review of student work products where students self-assessed their work as well as it was observed during instruction.
Additional Finding

| Quality Indicator: | 4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development | Rating: | Developing |

Findings

All teachers engage in professional team collaborations that are beginning to connect to the school leaders’ goals. Teacher teams inconsistently analyze data and student work for students they share.

Impact

An inquiry approach where teachers analyze assessment data and student work is at the early stages of development during teachers’ professional collaborations. This approach results in hindering opportunities to improve teacher practice or progress toward goals for groups of students.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders ensure that all teachers in each grade has two common planning periods per week in which teachers collaborate to look at data, analyze student work, and make adjustment to their lessons. During these meeting times, teachers adjust lessons based on students’ needs. School leaders shared that in teachers’ sessions they focused on the instructional focus and use the Common Core Learning Standards as a guide in all subject areas. Furthermore, school leaders shared that each team keeps a notebook of meetings, topics discussed, and outcomes. The supervisor on each team then has access to look at the notebook whenever they cannot attend a meeting. During the meeting with teachers, they shared that the collaborations with their colleagues has been instrumental to improve their practice as well as receiving support from special education and English native language specialists for planning lessons that address the needs of all students. The work is reflected in reviewed instructional planning documents. However, the actual process of collaborative planning work was not evident in received documentation.

- During the fifth grade teacher team meeting, teachers collectively analyzed student work related to a math word problem assignment. Teachers took terms to determine how many students passes/failed the test. Then, teachers identified which type of questions the students had the most struggles with. Teachers determined students did not understand that this was a two-step problem. Students did not ask what operation should they use with these numbers and students just check CUBES without doing the work. Then, teachers, discussed recommendations such as, hone in clue words, give cheat sheet of commonly used words, give simple word problems to just tell what operations should be used and reteach using CUBES. Teachers also reflected on the problems they will use to assess the students, they solved the problem, addressed misconceptions, and one teacher went to the board to solve the problem. Teachers shared that they are yet to identify the group of students they will focused.

- During the teacher meeting, they shared that collaborate during their teaching team meetings, conducting inquiry work based on individual students, determine interventions, and informing curriculum and teaching. However, there was no evidence provided to show that any teacher teams other than the grade five team are engaging in inquiry work based on the analysis of student work. The review of agendas and minutes did not reflect basic levels of structured team work. For example, there was no clarity in the goals for the agendas, or in the use of protocols to conduct the inquiry work, as well as the inconsistent use of data to determine modifications in teaching and learning. Furthermore, it was not clear how the findings are disseminated or shared with the other members of the faculty.