Quality Review Report

2017-2018

M.S. X101 Edward R. Byrne
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 08X101
2750 Lafayette Avenue
Bronx
NY 10465

Principal: Jared Rosoff

Dates of Review:
March 15, 2018 - March 16, 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

M.S. X101 Edward R. Byrne serves students in grade 6 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructional Core</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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></td>
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<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

**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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Establish a coherent vision of school improvement that is reflected in a short list of focused, data-based goals that are tracked for progress and are understood and supported by the entire school community</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Observe teachers using the Danielson Framework for Teaching along with the analysis of learning outcomes to elevate school-wide instructional practices and implement strategies that promote professional growth and reflection</td>
<td>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>
Area of Celebration

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

Findings

All teachers are engaged in structured inquiry-based professional collaborations across all grades and subjects. Teacher teams develop groups of students to focus upon and analyze their work as well as their assessment data throughout the school year.

Impact

The work of teacher teams has resulted in schoolwide instructional coherence, improved teacher practice, and increased mastery of goals for students.

Supporting Evidence

- A sixth grade common planning agenda focused on analyzing student work utilizing a student work protocol specific to analyzing the work of the sixth grade focus students. Student work revealed that a student had the skill set to solve the problem, but completed very little work. Teachers believed that the student is unorganized and would benefit from a study partner and color coded folders and notebooks. Additionally, the agenda included time for the team to identify ten sixth grade students to receive a perseverance award. Minutes from an eighth grade meeting also included looking at student work. All grade level teams utilize the same protocol to analyze student work and assessment data. Teachers all agreed that collaborating with their peers has led to the implementation of new strategies to support increased student writing.

- During an eighth grade team-meeting teachers were determining if the feedback and suggested next steps from their prior meeting impacted the student’s progress. The teachers noticed that the essay the student wrote had a strong thesis statement, was well organized, and aligned to the structure. Next steps included, introducing how to cite information and introduce a quote or evidence. The process was repeated for a student in an integrated co-teaching class. The task was differentiated and the student was provided a tool kit to use when writing. After viewing the tool kit, teachers decided to provide tool kits for any student who needed them. Professional collaborations are leading to increased instructional capacity for teachers through the implementation of varying effective teaching practices they develop.

- Teachers collaborate on grade and content teams to improve learning at the school. Each grade level team has identified focus students for their inquiry work. Teachers look at the focus students’ work throughout the year, decide ways to improve their practice and student achievement. The strategies that are developed based on student work are used grade-wide and schoolwide, leading to schoolwide instructional coherence.
Area of Focus

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

Across classrooms, teaching practices, such as the flow of the day are aligned to the curricula and reflect a set of beliefs that students learn best when they know exactly what is expected of them. Student discussion and participation is evident, however students have yet to take ownership of their learning.

Impact

Communicating learning expectations at the beginning of the lesson promotes engagement and supports the social emotional needs of students. High levels of thinking and participation by students are evident during peer-to-peer discussion but as of yet student ownership of their learning is not reflected across the majority of classrooms.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teachers facilitate lessons in which students are highly engaged and actively participate in cooperative learning and student-to-student text-based discussions that reflect critical thinking. During a seventh grade English Language Arts (ELA) class, students were observed annotating nonfiction texts, supporting claims with evidence from the article, and questioning the reasoning of their peers. When asked, “How do you know if you are on the right track?” One student responded, “The expectations are always posted.” The flow of the day was posted in all classrooms visited and students were aware of what they should be doing, which promoted their high levels of engagement.

- During an eighth grade math lesson, students were collaborating to identify the connection between the graph and the equation. When trying to explain why there was an absence of negative coordinates on the graph, one student stated, “Because you can’t have negative altitude or negative seconds.” Students consistently used critical thinking skills to arrive at answers to rigorous questions.

- A sixth grade history lesson required students to develop an understanding of the Han Chinese governmental structure and create an organizational job chart. Students examined the *Salary Schedule of Officials in Han Dynasty China c. 106 B.C.E.* to determine which positions would be more powerful based on their salaries. Students were not sure if the Emperor’s wife had more power than the Emperor’s son. To help put it into perspective the teacher asked the students to think about President Trump and his wife’s role in the United States government. They were able to determine that the Emperor’s son had more power than the wife because he was being groomed to succeed the Emperor. Additionally they were able to use their knowledge of New York States’ governmental structure to make sense of the Han Dynasty’s governmental structure. Students were observed justifying their reasoning and questioning the reasoning of others. They determined the roles for their groups and were able to facilitate their own learning. However, this level of ownership was not observed in the majority of classrooms visited.
**Additional Finding**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.1 Curriculum</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

**Findings**

School leaders have adopted Common Core aligned curricula with the instructional shifts being fully integrated. Teachers plan and refine the curricula to meet student needs while maintaining alignment to the standards and instructional shifts.

**Impact**

The leaders' purposeful curricula decisions build coherence across grades and subjects while promoting cognitive engagement for diverse learners, including ELLs and students with disabilities. Teachers are aware of what content is being taught across the grades they teach.

**Supporting Evidence**

- School leaders and faculty have adopted common curricula in grades six through eight to ensure coherence and alignment to Common Core Learning Standards. Teachers integrate opportunities for students when developing an argument to engage in evidence-based conversations about text, develop academic vocabulary, and use of evidence from varied sources. A sixth grade unit plan requires students to draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Additionally, the unit requires students to cite textual evidence to make a claim. A sixth grade history lesson required students to determine the central idea of a primary source and develop an accurate summary of the source regardless of their prior knowledge or opinion. Curricula documents consistently integrate the instructional shifts and promote college and career readiness for all students.

- Teacher teams plan and refine academic tasks based on student work and assessment data. During an eighth grade teacher team meeting, teachers looked at student work to determine what was needed to ensure student success. Next steps included, introducing how to cite information and how to introduce quotes and evidence. A special education teacher shared a tool that is provided to students with disabilities, so they have access to the task and are cognitively engaged. *The Power to Persuade Toolkit* offers students a variety of graphic organizers, strategies, checklists, as well as models of what completed tools should look like. General education teachers agreed that the tools would be helpful to all students, so they incorporated them into the writing and argumentative essay unit providing access to all students.

- Teachers use student work and data to plan and refine academic tasks. An eighth grade lesson plan involving document analysis included student-learning groups based on previous assessments. Teachers incorporated the use of visuals and provided students with definitions of each category to offer a deeper understanding of the concepts being assessed and to serve as a guide for internal questioning when reviewing the documents. A seventh grade ELA plan included student groupings that were based on students’ Core Ready assessment data. The plan designated those students who would receive small group instruction, as a well as those who would work in an independent group and be provided with a more advanced text. All students will complete the same independent assessment and utilize the writing strategy that includes the Restate the question, Answer the question being asked, Details, and text evidence in the form of quotes, Explanation and analysis of the text, and a Concluding sentence that mirrors the opening one.
## Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:

| 2.2 Assessment | Rating:       | Proficient |

### Findings

Across classrooms teachers use content specific rubrics and grading policies that are aligned with the curricula. Teachers and staff use baseline, benchmark, and pre- and post-unit assessment, as well as data captured on formative data trackers to determine student progress toward goals.

### Impact

Teachers use feedback from assessment data and student work to make adjustments to curricula and instruction and provide students with actionable feedback on their academic progress.

### Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms teachers utilize data trackers to record data from formative assessments. The data is used to identify which students met the learning goal, are approaching the learning goal, and which students still need additional support. The data is further used to inform adjustments to future lessons and plan targeted instruction to meet the needs of individual students.

- Teachers use data from assessments and student work to provide students with actionable feedback both verbally and in notes and revisions to student work. Teachers hold one-one conferences with students to review their work and provide feedback. A two-point writing rubric is utilized on all writing assessments adapted from *Writing Pathways* and Engage New York to provide students with actionable feedback. Written feedback to one student read, “Your claim and your evidence align – good job. Using evidence from more than one source will help you to make your argument stronger.” Writing conference notes reveal that teachers identify strengths and weaknesses for individual students and provide them with next steps during individual conferences. Next steps provided to one student stated, “Make sure you look through the text to incorporate the ‘why’ behind your claim.” During the small group meeting, all students agreed that they receive specific feedback about what was done well and what needs to improve.

- Rubrics are provided with all formal and informal assessments. In all classes the use of rubrics was evident on posted student work as well as on classroom tasks. All content teachers use the writing rubric that was adapted from *Pathways* curriculum and Engage New York to provide feedback to students using a common language. In the math department, teachers use a Study the problem, Organize the facts, Line up a plan, Verify your plan with action, and Examine your results (SOLVE) rubric to assess students problem solving ability. Several students stated that the rubrics help them to make improvements on their work products. Teachers also agreed that the students use the rubrics to measure their progress as they complete tasks.
### 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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**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations as determined by the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* to the entire staff through weekly emails and the staff handbook. Staff members establish a culture for learning that communicates high expectations through the use of modeling what is expected, task based rubrics and goal-setting.

**Impact**

By consistently communicating high expectations to staff and creating a system of accountability for those expectations, school leaders and teachers establish a culture for learning that supports the academic growth of all students and prepares them for high school.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Each new teacher attends new teacher orientation at the start of the year and is partnered with a master teacher to ensure they improve their teaching practices. Teachers receive ongoing support from instructional coaches that have expertise with the adopted curricula. School leaders have partnered with two additional schools to maximize the number of coaching days that teachers receive. Frequent cycles of observations are conducted and school leaders share the observational data among themselves using a Google document. Lesson plan checks are conducted to ensure that the plan matches the flow of the day that is posted in each room daily. Teachers are provided the support needed to meet high expectations for teaching and learning.

- Staff are provided a faculty handbook that addresses high expectations for teaching and learning aligned to the Danielson *Framework for Teaching* including the expectations for lesson planning, use of formative assessments during instruction, and outlining the need to provide actionable feedback to scholars. Expectations are reinforced in a weekly email, which also serves as a reminder of upcoming events and deadlines, shout-outs to staff, expectations for classroom environments, as well as identifying resources that the staff can access and use.

- School counselors conduct articulation meetings with the eighth grade students. They administer a survey to determine student interests in special programs, so they can pair them with just the right high schools. Alumni students return to the school on college and career day to share their high school experience. School staff provides academic support during lunch and after school to ensure that all students have the support to meet expectations. Two classes on each grade are taught accelerated work and prepare for three regents exams at the end of their eighth grade year. The eighth grade ELA course is designed to prepare the students to align with an eleventh grade ELA course. Students agreed that the staff has made them aware of the expectations for high school beginning in the sixth grade. Students were proud to explain, “Our classes are run like high school classes. We are expected to meet the same expectations as high school students.”

- Students receive a student handbook which establishes clear expectations for attendance, assessments, school website information, email addresses for school leadership, and use of the student planners. Students are expected to use rubrics and self-assessment checklists to monitor their progress. Additionally, students have access to PupilPath to see their grades and receive teacher feedback on their work. Students receive detailed feedback and support that prepares them for high school.
Additional Finding

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

Findings

School and teacher leaders promote the development of teachers through frequent cycles of intervisitations and formal and informal observations. Teacher feedback is aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact

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

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent cycles of observations based on individual teacher needs and provide feedback aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Feedback is based on the observation, scholar work, and assessment data and clearly articulates expectations for teacher practice. Feedback to one teacher stated, “While you did circulate the class and take data based on the probability task, moving forward use the formative assessment data tracker that was shared during the eighth grade math team meeting.” Feedback to another teacher included, “You have a wonderful rapport with your students. Please continue to build those relationships. Try to take the lead more and plan with your co-teachers with fidelity. You have good ideas, try to be more vocal about them.” Teachers are encouraged to collaborate, in order to increase teachers’ instructional capacity and support one another as they develop professionally.

- School leaders have an effective system for managing observations. There is a shared calendar that identifies the number of observations that each teacher needs. Additionally, the calendar identifies who conducted the observation and how many more need to be completed prior to the end of the year. School leaders normed their observation feedback to ensure that teachers receive feedback that is aligned, regardless of who was conducting the observation. Thus, ensuring that the feedback to teachers promotes their professional development.

- School leaders and teacher peers support the development of teachers by modeling, and leading teachers through intervisitations and discussions surfacing from professional articles and books that they read and instructional videos they viewed. All of these activities are aligned to the school’s instructional focus of providing students with daily opportunities to engage with challenging tasks, supported by multiple entry points. Additionally, after the intervisitations, teachers collaboratively examine student work and develop strategies to improve student work products during team meetings. Teachers explained that these professional collaborations are resulting in increased instructional capacity.