Quality Review Report

2017-2018

I.S. 117 Joseph H. Wade
Junior High-Intermediate-Middle 09X117

1865 Morris Avenue
Bronx
NY 10453

Principal: Delise Jones

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

Lead Reviewer: Kevin Bradley
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

I.S. 117 Joseph H. Wade 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To what extent does the school...</td>
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<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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## School Quality Ratings continued

### School Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2 Engage in structured professional collaborations on teams using an inquiry approach that promotes shared leadership and focuses on improved student learning</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</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>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Area of Celebration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.4 Positive Learning Environment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</thead>
</table>

Findings

The school’s approach to culture building, discipline, and social-emotional support results in a safe and inclusive environment. Structures are in place to ensure that each student is known well by at least one adult.

Impact

The school’s safe environment and inclusive culture is conducive to student and adult learning and student voice is valued. Students are well known by at least one adult who provides guidance and supports that align with student learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- The Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS) team meets weekly to discuss student infractions and incident levels ranging from 1-5. This team is responsible for tracking the number and severity of incidents. Specific attention is given to the students that are repeatedly involved in incidents as well as the locations where incidents occur. This year, the school has added conflict resolution student-team leaders to social work caseload teams. The Online Occurrence Reporting System (OORS) shows level 1-5 incidents have decreased by three, from 69 to 66, as compared to the same time period last school year. Suspensions have decreased by six, as compared to the same time period in the previous school year. Student voice is welcomed and valued by student council members monitoring the Word on Wheels and Game Stop programs. During lunch periods, these programs allow students to select a book of choice using a check out the book app or to sign up to play a game during their lunch recess. A student reported on how they initiated the programs, “We did a survey to ask students about having a little library. Most of us said yes, and we also wanted board games.”

- The school has established a series of classroom expectations called The Wade Way, which refers to works well with peers, accepts responsibility, demonstrates respect, embraces learning community (W.A.D.E.). In addition, PBIS requires consistent behavioral practices from all staff and students. These practices are communicated through PBIS lessons which teaches students how to earn their behavior bucks. The Student Intervention Team (SIT), PBIS team, and attendance team focus on student progress, attendance, and the reduction of infractions. All three teams meet for a specific purpose. In order to ensure that all students in need are supported by at least one adult in the building, the school assigns success mentors for chronically absent students, advisory periods for all eighth-grade students, the school social worker along with three social work interns facilitate weekly counseling and conflict resolution groups, and gender-based groups to discuss developmental and other issues and support sessions for students in crises.

- The SIT team meets weekly to discuss students that have been referred by their teachers and or have been deemed in social emotional crisis. The team consists of an assistant principal, the guidance counselors, a social worker, members of the School Based Support Team (SBST), Substance Abuse Prevention/Intervention Specialist (SAPIS) counselor, a dean and a teacher. Collectively the team discusses student cases and creates an action plan for identified students. When the plan is developed, the referring teacher is invited to participate and provide additional information about the student. This action plan can range from a simple class change to therapeutic counseling and/or family counseling outside of the school. Depending on the severity of the case, this plan of action is revisited after 6-8 weeks to assess student progress. Members of this team are also responsible for facilitating in class sessions with students on bullying, cyber-bullying, sexual harassment, and forming healthy relationships. Professional development for teachers includes programs such as de-escalating situations and identifying student behaviors.
Area of Focus

| Quality Indicator: 2.2 Assessment | Rating: Developing |

Findings

The school is developing in their use of common assessments to measure student progress toward goals across grades and subject areas. Across classrooms, teachers’ assessment practices inconsistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and self-assessment.

Impact

Assessment results are inconsistently used to adjust curricula and instruction. Across classrooms, there are missed opportunities for checks for understanding to result in effective adjustments to meet students’ learning needs.

Supporting Evidence

- Common assessments include *iReady* diagnostic and *iReady* benchmark assessments, baseline writing in English Language Arts (ELA) and English as a New Language (ENL), long and short student writing pieces in ELA, ENL, and social studies classes, math portfolio pieces that include extended writing responses, and common unit assessments for all content areas. The school identified students in need of additional Response to Intervention (RTI) through *iReady* common assessments based on last year’s State exam results. Students identified for RTI support were assigned specific sections of the computerized program based on their performance on standards during last year’s State exams. However, at the time of the visit, the school was unable to produce data that indicated the progress of the students in the RTI program by comparing their growth and movement from beginning of the school year to the current time period. The students were still working on standards they needed support on as identified by an assessment from over a year ago, without specific data able to document their progress in those standards over the course of the school year while demonstrating the results of the intervention.

- Checks for understanding were inconsistently utilized during the classes observed over the two-day visit. In some classes teachers circulated throughout the room to check-in with students at times during the lesson. However, in most classes, teachers did not take advantage of opportunities to use checks for understanding in order to make modifications to instruction in the moment. During a seventh-grade math lesson, students working in groups on complementary and supplementary angles, transitioned to an exit ticket for last 5-7 minutes of class. There was a missed opportunity for a check for understanding in the moment with student discussion about their learning and questions that may have come out of the group work. During a seventh-grade ELA lesson, the teacher reviewed the learning target and used mentored text of *The Black Cat* to model expectations of annotation strategies for students. The teacher had pre-selected a group of four students with a planned vocabulary lesson based on a previous lesson’s check for understanding; however, a student who did not understand the next steps of the overall current lesson was added to that group without clarification of her misunderstanding.

- In some classes, students participated in self-assessment. Examples of student work gathered during the student meeting showed evidence of some assignments having peer feedback from students through the use of post-it notes noting glows and grows. However, in most classes, student self-assessment was not evident. Students reported during the interview meeting that they self-assess only “sometimes.” As a result, the use of student self-assessment was inconsistent across classrooms and effective adjustments to instruction in the moment to meet students’ learning needs was inconsistent overall.
Findings
School leaders and teachers ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and integrate the instructional shifts. Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills.

Impact
Purposeful decisions result in curricular coherence, building college and career readiness for all students, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with disabilities. All students have access to the curricula through rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills.

Supporting Evidence

- Curricular documents across grades and content areas evidence consistent alignment with the Common Core Learning Standards and the integration of the math instructional shifts. For example, in a seventh-grade math unit plan on comparing and scaling investigation, students think of commercials that compare one product to another or several others and involve a comparison using numbers to develop a real-world connection. Curricular documents included assignments evidencing integration of the ELA instructional shifts. For example, an eighth-grade unit plan on fiction reading and realistic fiction writing includes a learning target of “I can refer to the text and find specific examples that strongly support my thoughts and inferences about a story.” Similarly, a seventh grade ELA unit plan on informational texts on screen time and the developing brain includes a big idea for the unit, “How can we write an argumentative essay to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence?” A sixth-grade social studies unit on geography of the eastern hemisphere includes a learning target that reads, “Cite textual evidence to support analysis of text.” The school is building coherence with a focus on the 5 Practices Protocol in math classes and student-to-student discussions in ELA classes.

- All students have access to rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills such as in a sixth-grade social studies lesson plan on ancient Greece, in which students are hypothesizing and thinking of solutions to problems faced by the ancient Greeks and then comparing them to the actual solutions of the times. In an eighth-grade math lesson plan, students are asked to use the Pythagorean formula to find the distance between two locations as they apply their math skills to a local area map of the neighborhood near the school. In a seventh grade ELA lesson plan, students are placed in groups to critically discuss character motivation based on text evidence from All Summer in a Day. A sixth-grade math lesson plan has students collecting, tabulating, and analyzing data using a frequency chart that student groups created based on students’ favorite flavors of ice cream.

- To address the needs of ELLs and students with disabilities, curricular documents include supports for students across grades and subject areas to have access to rigorous habits and higher-order thinking skills. According to a seventh-grade math lesson plan on angle geometry, ELL modifications include turn-and-talk, group discussions, and an angle mnemonic. Other modifications include a graphic organizer and sentence starters. A seventh grade ELA lesson plan outlines scaffolds for identified students to include sentence stems to craft a claim and participate in the collaborative conversation in their respective groups. In a sixth-grade social studies unit plan, modifications for ELLs include modified texts, vocabulary lists, and read-alouds. Modifications for students with disabilities include paired texts, sentence starters, and contextualization semantic maps.
Additional Finding

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<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>1.2 Pedagogy</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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**Findings**

Across classrooms, teaching practices are aligned to the curricula and reflect an articulated set of beliefs that students learn best when engaged in text-based and collaborative discussions. Across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

**Impact**

Students produce meaningful work products and take part in discussions that reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

**Supporting Evidence**

- During an eighth-grade ENL lesson, four large groups discussed specific questions from the text assigned to their group. Accountable talk stems were used as students answered the teacher’s questions and quoted from the text. During a seventh-grade ELA lesson, students in groups participated in using textual evidence to explain why the children bully Margot from *All Summer in a Day* by Ray Bradbury. The teacher sought a variety of voices to be involved in the discussion by random calling, cold calling, and pulling names out of a bin. There were also multiple turn-and-talk discussion opportunities for groups of students. During an eighth-grade math lesson, students learned to use the Pythagorean theorem to determine unknown side lengths before the lesson transitioned to a real-world example of local points of reference for choices of breakfast locations. Across classrooms, teaching practices engaged students in collaborations and text-based discussions.

- During eighth-grade ELA lesson with students with disabilities, students were making connections to a Langston Hughes text and elements of short stories such as text to self, text to text, and text to world. Students used differentiated graphic organizers. Two students shared out to the whole class during the lesson closure. During a seventh-grade math lesson, students worked in groups on complementary and supplementary angles and each group had different color-coded manipulatives to identify. During a sixth-grade ELA lesson, students worked together in groups with annotated texts looking for textual evidence from Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Tell-Tale Heart* to support claims regarding the main character as a calculated killer or mad man. Students used graphic organizers to chart their evidence. Students were able to speak to relevance of text to support claims.

- During a seventh-grade ELA lesson, the teacher used an annotated text of *The Black Cat* to model expectations of annotation strategies for students. During the we do portion of the lesson, the text students used gave them an opportunity to practice their own annotation and there was discussion amongst students in groups regarding their work. The teacher reviewed the rubric and asked students how to get a zero, one, or two, and students were able to participate in class-wide discussion based on their understanding of the rubric. During a sixth-grade social studies lesson on Greek civilization changes, students were asked to participate in think-write-pair-share and the teacher followed up with questions to the students. During a sixth-grade bilingual math lesson, groups of students worked collaboratively and created data and frequency charts regarding preferences of ice cream, colors, and food. Students charted tables of data in their group papers, and each group had a student who spoke out to explain their groups thinking to the rest of the class. Generally, across classrooms, student work products and discussions reflected high levels of student thinking and participation.
Findings
School leaders consistently convey high expectations to staff through ongoing feedback and professional learning aligned to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. The school provides ongoing information to families regarding student progress toward college and career readiness.

Impact
Effective communication and professional development results in a system of accountability for high expectations. Families understand student progress towards meeting standards.

Supporting Evidence

- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations and provide feedback utilizing the Danielson Framework for Teaching as the standards for professionalism and high-quality instruction. One example of this feedback was "Plan opportunities for students to talk to one another (in pairs or small groups) at different points during the lesson. Students learn best when they have the opportunity to share, elaborate on their responses and question and argue each other’s point." Another example of feedback is "While noted in the lesson there was no evidence of the teacher checking for understanding. It is expected that during the lesson there are three opportunities that the teacher checks to assess student understanding and the teacher is responsive when determining that students are struggling." As a result, school leaders communicate high expectations to teachers through ongoing feedback via observations.

- In addition, teachers receive a staff handbook that covers a wide variety of expectations ranging from schoolwide professional expectations, structures, and protocols for staff. The Wade Times weekly newsletter reinforces The Wade Way with clear focused ways to be expected to be seen in classes such as quick writes, the flow of the period, and being mindful. Professional development is aligned to the school leader’s instructional focus and provides support for teachers to meet the expectations of the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Examples of professional development topics include writing appropriate learning targets that are meaningful, manageable, and measurable as well as incorporating student to student discussions through turn and talk, think-write-pair-share, and shared inquiry discussion. A teacher reported, "The professional development offers accountability from school leadership as we are all involved in learning together to be on the same page to work together to help our students."

- School leaders and staff communicate expectations to students and their families through regular communications via phone and email as well as a handbook for parents in English and Spanish. Communication to parents also happens through School Leadership Team meetings and a monthly family calendar of events including academic-based workshops, family fun events, and parent-requested events based on surveys sent to parents. Additionally, teachers use an online grading program, Skedula, that keeps families informed regarding academic standing. The school community has also utilized a social media app, Remind, to inform parents of their child’s academic progress. One parent reported about how the school faculty helps parents to support the students at home, "After school, teachers say how to help the kids with programs to support mathematics, and the bilingual Saturday program for math and ELA. They use the time to prepare for the test."
Additional Finding

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<tr>
<th>Quality Indicator:</th>
<th>4.2 Teacher Teams and Leadership Development</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
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</table>

Findings

The majority of teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations that promote achievement of school goals and implementation of the Common Core Learning Standards. Distributed leadership structures are in place.

Impact

Teachers’ collaborations strengthen their instructional capacity. Additionally, teachers have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning across the school.

Supporting Evidence

- At an observed ENL content meeting, teachers used an inquiry-cycle protocol as they looked at the implementation of the Analysis of Student Work (ASW) to inform modifications to the next unit of study. Two student work samples were reviewed, including a sample from September for reference and one piece of current work from each student. One group of teachers examined the work of a transitioning ELL student and the other group of teachers examined the work of an expanding ELL. Teachers reviewed student work and used notes on a graphic organizer to track their noticings and wonderings. The team proceeded to notice students were having problems with past tense and the use of words from the word bank was incorrect. The team then determined instructional strategies to best address the problems that students were having. Next steps were identified as structured sentence frames with words from the word bank, assess every Friday a part of grammar, and give them a passage in present tense and ask them to change to past tense.

- Teachers participate in teacher teams that are grade- and content-specific. Content inquiry teams meet after school twice a month. Teams are facilitated by teachers and use the Data Wise protocol. They look at student work using a common student-work-analysis tool to identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps, and the task as well as strategies the teachers may use to support students. Teacher teams identify scaffolds and multiple entry points to support students with disabilities and ELLs and discuss individual students and develop action plans for targeted students based on student needs. The teacher teams make ongoing curriculum modifications based on student work and data. In teacher team meetings, teachers focus on the use of the Common Core Learning Standard tasks and exemplars to support the promotion of higher-order thinking skills. A teacher reported the effect of the teacher teams, “Working with each other is always an opportunity to learn something new, we try new things. We do use protocols from Data Wise, so we search for answers together and we find answers together. For example, in social studies, it’s really nice to have teams. We can share those experiences and I can try something that is really helpful.”

- The school’s instructional cabinet team consists of content-area and grade-level lead teachers who meet three times a week to focus on the school’s instructional program. The team collectively adjusts or modifies the instructional program where needed, as they analyze student work and data. The instructional cabinet team tracks progress toward achieving the school’s instructional goals. A teacher spoke about the influence of the team, “All the decisions are collaborative. We discuss at the common planning with teachers in our department, and we bring those thoughts to the cabinet, their voices are heard.” Teachers are also sent to professional development and they have opportunities to turnkey to their colleagues back at school. As a result, teachers have built leadership capacity.