Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 134 George F. Bristow
Elementary 12X134
1330 Bristow Street
Bronx
NY 10459

Principal: Alison King

Dates of Review:
March 7, 2018 - March 8, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Robin Posner
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. 134 George F. Bristow serves students in grade PK through grade 5. 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>To what extent does the school…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Ensure engaging, rigorous, and coherent curricula in all subjects, accessible for a variety of learners and aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and/or content standards</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Develop teacher pedagogy from a coherent set of beliefs about how students learn best that is informed by the instructional shifts and Danielson Framework for Teaching, aligned to the curricula, engaging, and meets the needs of all learners so that all students produce meaningful work products</td>
<td>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Area of Celebration</td>
<td>Well Developed</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>Additional Finding</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>Well Developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Systems for Improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<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>
<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>Well Developed</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>Well Developed</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>2.2 Assessment</th>
<th>Rating:</th>
<th>Well Developed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Findings

Across the vast majority of classrooms, teachers use or create assessments, rubrics, and grading policies that are aligned with the school’s curricula and offer a clear portrait of student mastery. In addition, teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the varied use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self- and peer-assessment.

Impact

High quality assessment practices provide actionable and meaningful feedback to students and teachers regarding student achievement and result in effective instructional adjustments to meet all students’ needs while students are aware of their next learning steps to reach their own goals.

Supporting Evidence

- Students came to a quick consensus when reporting on the use of assessments and rubrics with regard to written assignments and clarity around students’ attainment of mastery. After receiving detailed rubrics with comments that include written feedback with next steps from teachers, students then conference with teachers on the feedback and how it can have an impact on their writing. Students then improve upon their writing by implementing the next steps detailed in the feedback and again turn in their assignments to their teachers. One student reported, “My teachers’ feedback helps me know where my Achilles heel is.” One example of feedback reads, “Your explanation is interesting, but I still have questions. Next time provide more details so you don’t leave your reader hanging.” Another example reads, “Reread again about the parts of the plant and their functions so you can ensure that you label them properly in your explanation.”

- Across the school, students use rubrics and checklists as tools for self-assessment. This data is used by students in their academic growth and by teachers in modifying lessons and student groupings. One student reported, “We usually give ourselves a glow and grow before giving the work to our teacher. That helps me because it forces me to really think about what I am writing and see if it makes sense. Then I can fix it before I give it in.” Evidence of the use of rubrics and checklists for peer- and self-assessments was observed in all classrooms and on many work samples. For example, there were copious samples of student writing on which students posted self-assessments on a feedback sheet. Additionally, rubrics for self-assessment were specific to grade level with those for the lower grades including faces indicating levels of satisfaction with the work being assessed.

- Upon entering a grade-two math lesson, the teacher was observed checking-in with each student group. After this was done, the teacher enlisted all students’ attention to announce, “I am hearing many of the same questions and observing many of the same issues in your work and every one of them is addressed on the graphic organizer you all have. Don’t forget to use the graphic organizer.” In a grade-five math lesson, the teacher asked students to use the rubric to pre-assess themselves with the knowledge that, at the end of the lesson, they would assess themselves again using the same rubric. Additionally, at the beginning of a grade-two reading lesson, the teacher identified a group that would sit in the front with the teacher for extra support based on the prior lesson. Students shared that the rubrics and checklists and teachers interventions help them know just what they need to do to successfully complete their assignments and fulfill their own goals.
Findings
Across classrooms, teaching practices such as small-group instruction and peer conferencing are aligned to the curriculum and provide multiple entry points such as scaffolded worksheets, tasks, and activities.

Impact
The school’s belief system about how students learn best is not yet coherent across all classrooms. Although teachers provide multiple entry points, not all teachers provide high-quality supports and extensions into the curricula for all learners including high performers to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills in their work.

Supporting Evidence

- Across classrooms, teaching practices reflected the school's belief that students learn best when they are placed in small groups that have been purposefully designed. In a grade-five math lesson, each table group was designed based on assessment data. Each group was using different strategies to solve fraction problems. In a grade-four English Language Arts (ELA) lesson, students were in groups of two or three based upon common assessment data and assigned to annotate several different annotated passages. All groups had a graphic organizer to remind them of the annotation process. However, the school’s belief system is not yet coherent and evident across all classrooms. In a grade-one classroom, all students worked on the same writing assignment. Students were not assigned to groups to complete this assignment. In a grade-five classroom, all students worked independently on the same worksheet with no conversation or collaboration with peers working at their table.

- In some classrooms visited, students were engaged and conducted targeted turn-and-talk conversations with partners or with their table groups to further their learning. For example, in a grade-five math lesson, students were directed to turn-and-talk about their opinion of how they solved the problem of the day. In a grade-one science lesson, students conducted turn-and-talk conversations around the lifecycle of a plant. However, in other classrooms, there were missed opportunities for student-to-student conversations.

- Multiple entry points allowed many learners access to the material. In a grade-four math lesson on fractions, differentiated supports such as visuals on the whiteboard, and manipulatives were made available for each student group. In a grade-five ELA lesson on determining details versus non-details, each table group had scaffolded readings that students, including ELLs and students with disabilities, were to use. However, this was not evident in all classrooms visited. In a grade-three classroom, all students were assigned to write about a text without any scaffolds or differentiation provided for high performers who completed the assignment quickly. In a grade-five math lesson, all students were given the same problem to solve, without any opportunities for high performers to demonstrate further higher order thinking skills or extension activities provided for early finishers.
Findings

School leaders and faculty ensure that curricula are aligned to Common Core Learning Standards and the instructional shifts. Curricula and tasks are planned and refined using student work and data.

Impact

Purposeful decisions build curricular coherence across grades and promote college and career readiness for all students. Faculty members adjust curricula so that a diversity of learners has access and so that all faculty can identify where curricular adjustments had been made.

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 grade-four lesson plan, students are asked to apply a math concept to a real-world situation by being assigned to figure out how big their play area is and using multiplication and division. They would then be expected to draw each diagram, write a number story, and an equation with symbols representing unknown quantities. A grade-three lesson involves students partitioning different models of wholes into different parts and show their deep understanding of the core math concepts by writing out the steps and strategies they used to solve the problem.

- Curricular documents include assignments evidencing integration of the ELA instructional shifts across grades. For example, a grade-two unit plan details an activity requiring students to identify the main character’s traits and complete a thought-web graphic organizer in which multiple pieces of textual evidence are to be recorded in support of their findings. A grade-one lesson plan shows that students are tasked with citing evidence from the text and then work with partners to understand illustrations from the same text. Other examples include tasks such as citing text-based evidence to show understanding of explanatory details as well as supporting students’ identification of the main idea in a grade-three reading pacing calendar.

- A grade-five lesson plan indicates that specific students will be grouped during the reading activity as per their need for additional supports including differentiated texts and graphic organizers. A grade-one writing lesson plan indicates that the additional vocabulary and fluency supports are to be provided to the English Language Learners (ELLs) in a group with the English as a New Language (ENL) teacher. Additionally, students’ placement in flexible groups for reading, writing and math that served as foundation groups were often adjusted in individual lesson plans, based on the prior day’s lesson. Supports such as different groupings, re-teaching groups with teachers and differentiated tasks for groupings were noted in reviewed lesson plans.

- All faculty engage in a process through which they share lessons with each other and indicate which areas have been specifically adjusted as a result of the analysis of student work and data. Any items adjusted in this way are shared during team meetings or on Google Drive in either the lesson or unit plan by the individual teacher or teacher team making this adjustment. There are multiple examples of teachers, across grades and content areas, having adjusted curricula based on individual students’ and student groups’ needs such as pulling small groups of students for re-teaching or further curricular support.
Additional Finding

### Quality Indicator:
3.4 High Expectations

### Rating:
Well Developed

**Findings**

School leaders consistently communicate high expectations and provide training to the entire staff. Teacher teams and staff establish a culture for learning that systematically communicates a unified set of high expectations for all students, and provide clear, focused, and effective feedback.

**Impact**

Consistent communication of high expectations has resulted in a culture of mutual accountability for teaching and learning allowing all students to own their educational experiences and preparing them the next level.

**Supporting Evidence**

- The principal provides opportunities for professional development (PD) that communicates high expectations and fosters the school’s culture of mutual accountability. Through ongoing PD opportunities on the school's instructional focus of all stakeholders working together to provide rigorous and challenging instruction for all learners, the entire staff can examine ways to support high expectations across grades and subject areas. Some topics include planning and preparation, looking at student work and analyzing data. Across classrooms, the impact of this PD was evidenced in lesson plans and in flexible student groupings.

- School leaders and teachers regularly discuss issues of curricula, instruction, and the identification of classrooms to which teachers are free to visit and learn from colleagues. One teacher noted; “It was at an intervisitation where we visited to see specific practices that I learned the real use of anchor charts. It was great.”

- The principal uses the Danielson Framework for Teaching to inform classroom instructional practices and communicate expectations regularly to teachers and staff via email, memorandum, individual and group teacher conferences as well as in the faculty handbook. PD workshops have included focus on Domain 1 of the Danielson Framework for Teaching and the Common Core Learning Standards, planning and preparation, while other sessions emphasized designing student assessments and using them for planning.

- Teacher teams have established a culture for learning by designing and delivering engaging classwork, resulting from the inquiry-based analyses conducted by teacher teams as well as in-class checks for understanding. Parents praised the practice of challenging all subgroups of students to prepare them for the next level. Teachers hold all students to the same high standards while individually challenging learners through rigorous curricula. One parent said, “I know that my son is always in a group he should be in. The teacher always knows what he needs. He is always challenged here.” Students report that they not only are expected to be responsible for themselves, but they are to be mentors and supports to each other during partner and group work. A student reported that during group work “I really have to be sure that when I say I understand something that I really do understand it since I can be called upon to mentor and support group members who are struggling.” Another student reported that she needs to really pay attention to the feedback she needs to improve her work to ensure that she is ready for middle school and beyond.
Findings
School leaders and teacher peers strategically use effective feedback and next steps from classroom observations to support teacher development. Feedback that expresses clear expectations to teachers is constructed using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
Consistent and focused feedback from observations and support cycles are aligned with teachers’ professional goals, supports the development of teachers and elevates instructional practices.

Supporting Evidence
- School leaders conduct frequent classroom observations that have been strategically planned. School leaders conduct pre- and post-observation conferences beginning with a baseline round of observations at the beginning of the school year and examine data as part of the observation cycle and use it to track teacher progress towards meeting school and personal goals. Feedback to teachers is often timebound and accurately captures their strengths and weaknesses and details next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching, supporting the goal that teachers increase the level of planning and preparation and the use of assessments. For example, one observation report advises the teacher to break her lesson plan down to five- to ten-minute intervals. Another teacher was given praise on her constant monitoring of the pulse of the class and her decisions in the moment to group students and provides differentiated work.

- In addition, there are multiple examples of observation reports that reinforce feedback offered in earlier observation reports. For example, one observation report includes feedback that the teacher needs to ensure students are able to identify the teaching point. A subsequent report noted that the teacher was successfully implementing this strategy. The fact that this specific recommendation was made in a previous observation report is also noted. In another sample observation report, a teacher is advised to provide students with more time to elaborate why they selected a particular book. A follow-up observation indicated that the teacher had implemented this successfully. One teacher reported growth in her ability to regroup students, as a direct result of the principal’s suggestion that she takes notes to monitor students during class.

- Teachers and school leaders shared that teachers meet with the leadership team in the beginning of the school year to create their goals for the year. They review their Advance data from the previous year, their class data, school data, and schoolwide goals. They have high expectations for themselves in order to meet school goals and impact student learning. Teacher goals included attending more out-of-school professional learning to expand her toolbox, more interactions with parents, and greater use of the interactive whiteboard. Teachers and leaders shared that the goals are revisited throughout the year and progress towards meeting goals is tracked, discussed and adjusted as necessary. A review of Advance data indicates teacher growth in areas that match school goals.
**Additional Finding**

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

**Findings**

All teachers are engaged in teams that consistently analyze student work in cycles of inquiry that reveal targeted areas of student need and actively address them in their work toward fulfilling the school’s goals. Teachers are empowered to positively affect student learning through service as grade-team leaders as well as the open-door policy in bringing ideas for initiatives and professional development to school leaders.

**Impact**

Collaborations within the inquiry teams strengthen teachers’ instructional capacity while data reveals increases in student achievement. Across the school within a variety of team structures, teachers have built leadership capacity and have a voice in key decisions that affect student learning.

**Supporting Evidence**

- All teachers take part in grade-level teams in which teachers analyze lessons, co-plan instruction, analyze student work samples, and conduct inter-visitations. Teachers reported improvements they were able to make to their instructional practices as a result of these inter-visitations. One teacher spoke about delving into the changes that she needed to make in her practice and her classroom. She reported that she is now using different types of groupings and scaffolding and her students have evidenced improvement. Another teacher reported that teacher feedback has created a culture of collegiality that has led to a common vision across the grades and helped fill in the gaps. Review of other team minutes and agendas evidences that teams use a protocol to review student work and assessment data, make adjustments to their curriculum and track student success toward goals.

- Teachers and leaders shared that inquiry work has also led to increased student achievement as evidenced by examined data. The grade-four team examined the on-demand writing piece for the beginning of the year and when they examined the unit’s post on-demand piece, discovered that what they were teaching in the moment did not match the task. The inquiry team determined what needed to be taught and re-taught prior to the next unit and adjusted their instructional practices accordingly and as a result had increased achievement for all learners.

- Teachers play a vital role in school-level decision-making. Grade leaders lead the teams they participate in, both grade-level and vertical teams. The team leader collaborates with his or her colleagues to set the agenda, find additional resources and assign next steps. Teachers have a voice in instructional initiatives and work with administration to come up with the focus for the various inquiry teams. Teachers lead Professional Learning Communities, design professional development and cycles of support, serve as model teachers, and lead intervisitations. Teachers have the opportunity to work with outside coaches and come back and turnkey coach colleagues. Teachers shared that they love the confidence in their leadership abilities and it makes them strive to do even more.