Quality Review Report

2017-2018

P.S. 146 Edward Collins
Elementary 08X146
968 Cauldwell Avenue
Bronx
NY 10456

Principal: Ronald Laurent

Dates of Review:
March 8, 2018 - March 9, 2018

Lead Reviewer: Clarence Williams Jr.
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. 146 Edward Collins 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>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To what extent does the school...</strong></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>Area of Focus</td>
<td>Developing</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>
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<tr>
<td>2.2 Align assessments to curricula, use on-going assessment and grading practices, and analyze information on student learning outcomes to adjust instructional decisions at the team and classroom levels</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<td>Proficient</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### School Culture

<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>Proficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Systems for Improvement

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<tr>
<th>To what extent does the school...</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Rating</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Make strategic organizational decisions to support the school’s instructional goals and meet student learning needs, as evidenced by meaningful student work products</td>
<td>Additional Finding</td>
<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>Area of Celebration</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>
Findings
School leaders support the development of teachers, including those new to the profession, with effective feedback. Feedback to teachers accurately captures strengths, challenges, and next steps using the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Impact
The principal uses frequent cycles of observations that include informal observations and instructional walkthroughs for all teachers. Feedback to teachers includes clearly articulated next steps with supports and follow-ups.

Supporting Evidence

- The principal supports first-year teachers with informal observations that provide feedback and follow ups. Feedback from an informal observation for a first-year teacher included comments from the principal in areas of demonstrating knowledge of content and pedagogy and designing coherent instruction. Feedback included, “Ensure that units and lessons align to outcomes that reflect important concepts of the content." The principal also provided resources that included utilizing a math workbook and citing pages to support developing a mini-lesson. Additional supports included an action plan from the instructional coach that highlighted areas to be worked on based on observations. During the review of an action plan for the teacher, areas to be strengthened included, “differentiation needs to be incorporated into lessons” and “improve the pacing of the lesson to allow more student practice.” The action plan support is followed by additional observations from administrators.

- The principal uses instructional walkthroughs to support teacher growth. The principal provided a walkthrough memorandum that stated the focus area, questioning and learning alignment. The principal observed that the area teachers need to improve on is, “allow students to engage in robust conversations with teachers asking higher-order thinking questions to push student thinking.” The principal further stated, “The lack of synergy between the learning target and student task is the antecedent to our instructional mission and vision.” The principal provided recommendations that included making sure that teachers encourage students to summarize, justify and interpret discussions to promote critical thinking skills, and gather data for future lessons.

- Informal observations include areas of strength and areas of growth that is tied to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. In an informal observation conducted by the principal dated February fifteen, the area of strength was growing and developing professionally. The principal stated, “The teacher seeks out opportunities for professional development and makes a systematic effort to conduct action research.” The principal cited engaging students in learning as the area of growth. Feedback to the teacher included, “How do you structure the lesson so that students are intellectually engaged throughout the lesson?" Suggestions included, “Keep an organized agenda with flexible time frames to ensure appropriate pacing. Also, have students who know the answers explain it to other students to create dialogue.” An additional example was noted in a November ten informal observation. The principal cited designing coherent instruction as the area of strength stating that the teacher aligns activities with instructional outcomes. The area of growth was using questioning techniques. Feedback and support included using accountable talk stems and turn and talks to help students verbalize ideas based on questions.
Area of Focus

Quality Indicator: 1.1 Curriculum  |  Rating: Developing

Findings
Curricula and academic tasks emphasize rigorous habits and higher-order skills inconsistently across grades. Academic tasks reflect planning to provide students access to the curricula.

Impact
Unit plans and lessons do not consistently support English Language Learners (ELLs) or reflect higher-order-thinking skills for students with disabilities. The curriculum does not always support cognitive engagement for students with disabilities and ELLs.

Supporting Evidence

- An English Language Arts (ELA) unit demonstrates a mini-lesson that included the learning target, “Students with be able to understand that folktales have common elements and often explain something that happens in nature and conveys a certain truth about life by exploring folktales.” The mini-lesson includes teachers introducing the components of folktales to students. The unit states that ELLs will work in a small group with the teacher. Although the unit provides a section for ELLs, it does not provide scaffolds or specific supports that will contribute to their learning or reflect how they will be cognitively engaged while being exposed to the curriculum. An additional example is evident in a kindergarten ELA unit. Instructional outcomes are aligned to goals for students with disabilities such as retelling, identifying characters and answering “Why” questions. These outcomes are assigned to specific student needs. However, similar examples are not evident in most lessons reviewed, nor is their evidence of curricular documents being refined to provide supports.

- Across subjects, lesson plans do not reflect consistent evidence of emphasizing higher-order thinking skills for students with disabilities. For example, in a grade-two math lesson plan, under differentiation and modifications section, students with disabilities are required to develop sight vocabulary to support critical thinking skills, have questions read aloud, and review vocabulary in small groups. This was not evident in a science lesson on magnets which did not provide a section for ELLs or students with disabilities in the lesson on how they will be challenged to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills. The activity included, “Have students work in pairs to create a lock for a paper door using the materials given.” Questions are lower level. They included, “Which object worked best for you? And how do you know?”

- Lesson plans do not always reflect planning for students with disabilities to be cognitively engaged. In a grade-three math class, the teacher lists accommodations and modifications for students with disabilities. They include using iReady computer program for fluency and using exemplars. Modifications include color-coded text, graphic organizers and manipulatives. However, in a grade-one writing lesson, the learning objective included students being able to express their opinions by listening to a story. The section under describing modifications for students with disabilities lists, “Students will work with the students that need extra support.” The lesson does not provide instructional practices that will enable students with disabilities to demonstrate cognitive ability or engagement.
## Findings

Across classrooms, teaching practices reflect an articulated set of beliefs about how students learn best in small groups and sharing out during class. Student work products and discussions reflect high levels of student thinking and participation.

## Impact

The principal and teachers stated that students learn best by sharing out which is informed by the Danielson Framework for Teaching. Students use share-outs and small-group discussions to participate and reflect on their thinking.

## Supporting Evidence

- Teachers have stated that the use of small-group instruction allows for students to demonstrate their thinking while providing opportunities to participate. In a grade-five math class, students were working on fractions in small groups. One group observed was discussing different strategies they used with each other. One student stated to a peer in the group, “I was wondering how you had the answer four eighths when everyone else came up with five eighths.” The student responded, “I used multiplication to get the denominator of eight, but now looking at the fraction strips I can see that the numerator is five.” Another student stated, “To add fractions with unlike denominators I have to change the fractions to equivalent.” Student conversations about their work were evident in most classes visited.

- Teachers have stated that students learn best by sharing out during class to express themselves and receive feedback from peers. Students were able to share out to explain their thinking in most classes visited. During the observation of an ELA kindergarten class, students were observed working on a story about personal experience. After working on their stories, students were randomly selected to share their stories. One student stated, “My story is about how my brother received new glasses and his first day of school with them.” A student stated, “I like your story, especially the picture of the school bus showing how he went to school.” Another student discussed a story about the day he had at the playground. A student stated, “I like the clouds and sun that you put in the story, but is it a cloudy day or sunny day?” An additional example was seen in a grade-three ELA class. Students were sharing out their explanations of the fables they were reading. One student stated, “We’re reading the story of The Shepherd and the Wolf and the moral of the story is lies can catch up with you.” Another student stated, “Our group is reading City Mouse and Country Mouse. The moral of the story is it is better to live in safety in the country than fear in the city.” Students have stated that by sharing out with their peers they get to express their own learning.

- The principal stated that students learn best by being engaged. In most classes visited, students were engaged in the lesson. In a grade-four science class, students were engaged in discussing science vocabulary words. Students were observed sharing their words during whole-group instruction. One student stated his word to work with was decomposing. The student stated, “Decomposing is when something separates into parts.” The student was also required to provide an example. The student stated, “Bacteria helps matter to decompose.” An additional student was working with the word attract. The student explained that magnets attract certain metals and the opposite of attract is repel. The teacher stated that students take responsibility for their learning when they are engaged in the lesson by being introduced to vocabulary words in the beginning of the lesson.
**Additional Finding**

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

Across classrooms, teachers use rubrics that are aligned with the school’s curricula. Teachers’ assessment practices consistently reflect the use of ongoing checks for understanding and student self-assessment.

**Impact**

Teachers use writing rubrics and student work to provide actionable feedback to students. Students use ELA and math checklists to self-assess their learning and lead to modifying instruction.

**Supporting Evidence**

- Teachers provide feedback to students that include commendations and next steps on student writing samples. An example was seen in a student-writing journal. The teacher used a sticky note on the work sample stating, “You did a good job of realizing spelling patterns to help spell and edit before you completed the assignment. Next time make sure to use deliberate word choices to help teach readers.” An additional example of actionable feedback by a teacher stated, “Great job of teaching readers about the subject while using ideas, observations and questions. Next time write a conclusion that restates the main idea and offers a final thought or question.” Students have stated that they receive actionable feedback in all classes. This was evident in folders in different subjects including social studies, science, and math.

- Students and teachers have stated that self-assessments help students to better understand their work and allow teachers to adjust their teaching. An example was seen on a math rubric checklist. The checklist enabled students to self-reflect on areas including clear and well thought-out explanations, extending answers to make connections to prior skills, and all answers and diagrams and illustrations are labeled. The student did not check off including math vocabulary words in the explanation. The teacher stated that the student reflection will be used to place them in a small group to work on vocabulary building in math equations. An additional example was seen in a student poetry checklist. The student checked off that he has a topic, has a strong ending, the poem tells a story and spelling has been checked. The student did not check off that the poem had repeated phrases, words or rhymes. The teacher stated that because these struggles represented a trend, poetry structure will be retaught.

- Teachers use an informational writing rubric to provide feedback to students. The rubric records the level the student is functioning on from grades one to four. A grade-three example was presented in which the student was performing on a grade-two level in structure. The teacher feedback included, “Try to hook the reader in the beginning of your story and try to teach them something exciting.” An additional rubric demonstrated that a student was performing on level, but the teacher provided feedback to help the student improve. The feedback included, “You did a really good job hooking your readers and letting them know what they will be learning about. Next time use a dictionary and other resources to understand what you are saying.” Rubrics are used on all grade levels in most subjects.
Additional Finding

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<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 to the entire staff related to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. School staff consistently communicate high expectations to families that are connected to a path to college and career readiness.

Impact

The principal communicates high expectations to staff using newsletters and memorandums. The principal uses parent workshops and letters to communicate college and career expectations to parents to help them understand what their child needs to be a successful.

Supporting Evidence

- Memorandums to staff are used to reinforce the expectations pertaining to the Danielson Framework for Teaching. In October, the principal sent a memo to all staff discussing one of the focus areas of instruction, assessment and pedagogy. The memo was the result of an instructional walkthrough conducted by administrators. It mentions that learning targets must be connected to student discussion and the lesson structure should be designed to gauge student comprehension. It also mentions the utilization of questioning techniques. The principal stated, “Questioning techniques have been prioritized by our instructional vision; however, in some lessons, questions were asked but the wait-time between asked question and selecting a student to answer the question was inconsistent.” The principal stated that these are areas of high expectations for the school year.

- Parents have stated that the school is consistent with communicating college and career expectations. This was evident as parents attended a college awareness day in January. The event covers areas including, “practice different ways students with disabilities can be independent, how to plan early for your child’s college career and what scholarships are available.” The event was attended by parents from grades one to five. During a parent interview, a parent stated, “The workshop helped prepare her child who has an Individualized Education Program (IEP) to help choose a college that will support her needs.” An additional example was seen in an academic after-school parent orientation for grades three, four and five parents. The orientation highlighted test-taking strategies and the rigor of the curriculum. The principal has stated the Parent Teacher Association and the school-based leadership team are other vehicles for ongoing communication with parents. Also, the school has Super Tuesday, once per week. These meetings are to inform parents of their child’s progress. During an interview, parents have stated that the meetings are well attended. Parents also receive progress reports that precede each report card to inform parents of academic performance so that parents know how to support their children before the final report card grades. As a result of these procedures, parent surveys showed that ninety-one percent of parents feel that the school communicates effectively with parents regarding their child's education.

- Administrators use newsletters to communicate expectations to staff. In a February newsletter, the principal highlighted expectations that included reminders and communal concerns related to instruction. They included, “all literacy classes should be incorporating guided reading.” An additional expectation included, “When you are establishing student ownership of their learning, teachers must have students prepare artifacts that will be displayed for peer observation.” During a teacher interview, a teacher stated, “The newsletters really help inform us of administrative expectations and reminders for classroom instructional protocol.”
Additional Finding

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

Findings

Most teachers are engaged in structured, inquiry-based professional collaborations. Teacher teams consistently assess student work for students they share.

Impact

Grade team meetings are designed to strengthen the instructional capacity of teachers. Vertical teacher team meetings result in improving student results.

Supporting Evidence

- Teachers use an inquiry-based tuning protocol to assess student work. The minutes of vertical math team meetings demonstrated how teachers improve student results. The meeting began with a review of the protocol, stating that a presenter with bring in a student work sample and receive feedback from peers. In the minutes, the presenter used student work from a student with an IEP. The teacher stated that the student receives modifications that include questions and directions being read and testing in a separate location. The student work presented included a short-response question from a previous math exam. The student needed help with multi-step word problems and help with strategies to solve them. Feedback to the teacher included using the, SOLVE (Study the Problem, Organize the facts, Line up a plan, Verify your plan, Explain your answer) technique by having the student restate the questions and using a blank SOLVE graphic organizer. The teacher stated that the feedback helped to provide scaffolds needed that were aligned to the child’s IEP. The impact from the work of this meeting was all IEP students receive individual instructional assistance through this protocol. As a result, students with disabilities performance in classroom assessments continuing to improve in all grades.

- Teachers have stated that grade-level teams strengthen teacher instructional practices. Minutes from a grade-three meeting recorded teachers collaborating to discuss teaching strategies. Notes included, ensuring that before teaching a specific skill, use an introduction from a previous grade level to represent foundational standards from the previous year. The minutes also included how teachers will form instructional grouping based on beginning-of-the-year assessments. Teachers suggested using flexible grouping based on the data to maximize peer tutoring. This was evident in most classes visited as they demonstrated flexible grouping based on assessments.

- Teachers team collaborations have resulted in adjustments to teaching practices. An example was demonstrated by teachers during a teacher interview. Teachers stated that the kindergarten team looked at iReady data and discovered that their students were struggling with phonics, so the schedule was modified so that every student will receive phonics instruction five days per week on iReady as opposed to less time based on the needs of the students. They also noticed that students were having difficulty with consonant blending. The team decided to put them in small-group activities to practice the skill. Teachers stated that teacher collaborations support communication on grades and subject levels.